

## **life groups discussion guide**

### **series: big idea - Esther**



We read in Deu 25:16-19: *For the LORD your God detests anyone who does these things, anyone who deals dishonestly. Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and attacked all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God. When the LORD your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land he is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you shall blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget!*

In the ancient world, the Amalekites were known as plunderers. They not only attacked the Israelites when they were weary, but they practiced child burning, torture as public entertainment, and sexual immorality as sport. Centuries after God gives this warning, he gives a direct order to Saul, to annihilate these people for the preservation of Israel.

**Read:** 1 Sam 15:9-33

This passage, that occurs roughly 500 years before Esther's story, gives us a glimpse into the danger that these people, led by King Agag, posed to Israel. How interesting that centuries later, it is Haman the Agagite (direct descendent of Agag) that tries to exterminate the Jews? In rabbinical literature and Jewish tradition Haman is said to have embroidered idolatrous images into his clothing, so those bowing to him to honor the king would be forced to bow to the image. This shows Haman's hatred was not just for a people group, but was a deep spiritual defiance of the one true God. Perhaps this was even more reason for Mordecai to take his stand.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

What does this pattern teach us about the leaving an ungodly legacy with the generations we raise?

Conversely how important is it to leave a godly legacy for the next generation?

Discuss the importance of fighting for a godly heritage in an age that revels in moral decay.

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In chapter 7, Esther so eloquently pleads for her life. "The king must have looked at her in stunned silence when she asked for her life and also for the lives of her people. It probably took him some time to grasp the fact that she also was a Jew. The abruptness of her words (Heb., "my life as my request and my people as my

request”) may reflect the queen’s desperation and her anxiety about the king’s response to her petition.”- the Expositor’s Bible Commentary.

**Read the following short passages:**

Ps 25:9

Ps 55:19

1 Peter 5:6

James 4:6

**Discussion Questions:**

What can we learn from the manner in which Esther approaches the king?

How can we apply this to the way we approach our God and King?

Esther bore the weight of representing her nation as she spoke, so her words and attitude were important. We represent Christ in our daily lives. How can we apply Esther’s attitude in our dealings with others?

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Once Haman is defeated and his sons are killed, what do the Jews do with the plunder (Est 9:10 & 9:15)

Why is this their reaction and how does this separate them from the legacy of their long term enemy the Amalekites?

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**Read Est 10**

The story of Esther ends with Chapter 10. Three sweet verses that conclude in a victory of good over evil.

What happened to Mordecai?

Why is this ending so ironic in light of what Haman was original agenda?

Thinking back to the initial passage we read, how does this ending show the supreme power of God over evil?

Discuss how this story is a picture of the ultimate battle of good versus evil that concludes in Rev 20?

**Closing Prayer**

*Lord, you are a God of justice. Thank you for the example of Esther and Mordecai. Help us to boldly stand for what is right regardless of the cost. Thank you for your promise; that righteousness will ultimately triumph, just as it did in the story of Esther. Amen.*