



Providence

Presbyterian Church

The Hidden Hand of God
and the Great Battle
Esther 8:1-9:1; 9:11-16
November 6, 2022

Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

Icebreaker

Question: What is the most difficult part of asking for a raise?

- Asking
- The amount
- Waiting
- Trying not to look greedy
- I have no problem asking for a raise.
- I'd rather get a new job than ask for a raise.
- Other: _____

Political Drama

Before the victors give away Haman's estate, what must happen first (vv1-2)?

Why do you think Esther is so full of anguish in verse 3 even though she's already had Haman killed and has the favor of the king?

- She wants more
- She's realized that Haman wasn't such a bad guy after all.
- Haman's plan to kill the Jews is still in motion.
- She's had a rough few days and she's letting it all out.
- Other: _____

What is the problem with getting the king to reverse the death sentence on the Jews (verse 8)?

What evidence do we have that Esther has risked her life once again?

- She is talking to the king - and that is dangerous.
- The king shows his scepter again.
- You never really know what this king is going to do next.
- Other: _____

Why do you think Esther was willing to risk her life once again?

Why do we tend to forget about our own mortality? Would you live any differently if you were more aware of your mortality?

Military Reversal

The king can't, and won't, reverse his edict. But he does provide a solution to Esther's problem. What is the solution (v 8)?

Notice the reversals in what has happened. Compare Esther 1:19; 3:1-4:3; 6:10. How is this new edict similar (vv9-14) and what about its timing?

Just as this king could not simply revoke his first decree of death, our God could not simply revoke the decree of death that he pronounced in the Garden of Eden against humanity. Instead of revoking the first decree, he has issued a counter decree of life. And we see this counter decree in the gospel.¹

How does a person receive the counter decree of the gospel

- Work hard and try harder.
 - By Faith
 - Tithing
 - Teaching Sunday School
 - Other: _____
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What are the celebrations in this passage a foretaste of?

This text shows us what the fight against sin and evil looks like, it points us to the gospel, and it helps us look forward to the new heavens and new earth. Which of these reminders do you need to be most of aware of today?

Work It Out!

One thing I'll do differently because of this sermon:

¹ The NIV Application Commentary by Karen Jobes; pg 191