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Esther 8 - 10

*"Turning the Tables"*

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In this closing look at the book of Esther, we see God's providential hand intervening to save the Jewish people from annihilation. God put three great "reversals" into motion, and he turned the table on the Persian people in favor of the Jews. At the same time, there is wonderful symbolism about God's grace over our lives to save us too. And, while this was a miraculous, historic event in rescuing the Jewish people (Jews still celebrate today with the Festival of Purim), we should also celebrate God's miraculous rescue from death!

### Mordecai's Position

1. Because of the grace given by King Xerxes, Mordecai was welcomed into the king's presence and was given favor, a new identity, royal robes, the signet ring, and a crown.
2. At first, Haman was "the guy," and it was Haman who was the chief noble, the one who knew the favor of the king, kept the king's signet ring, etc.
3. In a dramatic reversal, Haman was killed and Mordecai was promoted to a place of authority and honor!
  - a. **Esther 10:3** - *"Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes, preeminent among the Jews, and held in high esteem by his many fellow Jews, because he worked for the good of his people and spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews."*
4. Mordecai is a picture of our life in Christ, in that we are welcomed into God's presence by God's grace, and we are given favor, a new identity, royal robes, and a crown.

- a. [Esther 8:15](#) - *“Mordecai left the king's presence wearing royal garments of blue and white, a large crown of gold and a purple robe of fine linen. And the city of Susa held a joyous celebration.”*
  - b. [Revelation 19:7-8](#) - *“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory. For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. ‘Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.’ (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)”*
  - c. [Isaiah 61:10](#) - *“I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.”*
  - d. [1 Peter 2:9](#) - *“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”*
5. The Bible tells us there are five types of crowns the Lord will distribute to the Saints.
- a. [2 Timothy 4:8](#) - *“Now there is in store for me the crown of the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day - and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”*
  - b. [1 Corinthians 9:25](#) - *“Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.”*
  - c. [Revelation 2:10b](#) - *“Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.”*
  - d. [1 Thessalonians 2:19](#) - *“For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.”*
  - e. [1 Peter 5:4](#) - *“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”*
6. The Bible tells us that we will be so enthralled in the presence of the Lord that we will cast our crowns at his feet in worship.
- a. [Revelation 4:9-11](#) - *“Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ‘You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.’ ”*
7. Everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ will be sealed with the Lord's

signet ring, which will show they belong to him.

- a. **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** - *“Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.”*

### The Jews' Condition

8. The edict of the king was irrevocable, and the only thing the king could do would be to issue a second edict that would counter or negate the first edict.
9. The king gave instructions to Mordecai to write and seal with the king's signet ring, an edict that would permit the Jews to defend themselves against the Persian army.
  - a. **Esther 9:1-5** - *“On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, the edict commanded by the king was to be carried out. On this day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, but now the tables were turned and the Jews got the upper hand over those who hated them. The Jews assembled in their cities in all the provinces of King Xerxes to attack those seeking their destruction. No one could stand against them, because the people of all the other nationalities were afraid of them. And all the nobles of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and the king's administrators helped the Jews, because fear of Mordecai had seized them. Mordecai was prominent in the palace; his reputation spread throughout the provinces, and he became more and more powerful. The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.”*
  - b. The Bible records the fact that there were more than 75,000 Persian soldiers killed in battle.
  - c. The Bible is silent on whether or not there were any Jews killed in battle.
10. The Jews' condition turned from a death sentence to a life status.
11. Like the Jews, Believers have also passed from death to life, through faith in Jesus Christ.
12. Pastor Gary said: “The Jewish people, in a larger sense, were a type of humanity. Humanity is under an edict; it's a death sentence. We are all going to face destruction. There is a day appointed [for each of us] to die. We are on a path of death. It's like the first edict was implemented as a result of our great forefather, Adam, who sinned against God and rebelled against God, and so the

sin nature was passed down through the seed of humanity. Therefore, we are born into sin and conceived in sin, [and] we are given birth by our mothers, and we are sinful from birth and we are sinful on the day we die. We inherit a sin nature, and by nature we sin.”

- a. **Romans 3:10-11** - *“As it is written: ‘There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.’ ”*
  - b. **Romans 3:23** - *“... all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”*
  - c. **Romans 5:12-13a** - *“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man [Adam], and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned - for before the law was given, sin was in the world.”*
13. Pastor Gary said: “When God intervened providentially, because of his grace towards us, and [offered] his son, Jesus, on the cross, he [didn’t] revoke the first edict. Humanity is still on a path of death and destruction. What God did do was he initiated a second edict that [nullified] the first. [In] essence, the second edit was given unto us through the cross, that as many as who would believe and receive can have their sins forgiven and be gloriously saved. [Our] death sentence can be converted to a life status.”
- a. **John 1:12** - *“Yet to all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God...”*
14. **Romans 8:1-2** - *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.”*
15. There are two laws in place:
- a. The law of sin and death.
  - b. The law of the spirit of life that sets us free from the law of sin and death.
16. The reverse of the curse is a life status for all who believe!
17. **John 5:24** - *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

#### Everyone’s Disposition

18. Everyone’s disposition turned from mourning to rejoicing.
19. **Esther 9:20-22** - *“Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all*

*the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far, to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving present of food to one another and gifts to the poor.”*

20. As a result of this great historical event, the Jews enacted the Feast or Festival of Purim.<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Pur is a Hebrew word, which means, lot.
  - b. Haman cast lots, like rolling dice, to determine the day on which the Jews would be annihilated.
  
21. In a similar way, God turns our life from mourning to rejoicing because of his grace and forgiveness!
  - a. **Jeremiah 31:13b** - *“I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.”*
  - b. **Isaiah 61:1-3a** - *“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor... to comfort all who mourn...to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”*
  - c. **Psalms 30:11-12** - *“You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever.”*
  
22. Salvation turns our life from mourning to rejoicing.

### The Book Of Esther

23. Pastor Gary said: “God’s name is [not found] in the book of Esther, but he is everywhere revealed. I want the book of Esther to be a reminder for all of us that God is at work behind the scenes in your life and in my life. You may not be able to see him, but please know this; his silence is not his absence. His silence is not his absence. His silence is his providence. [God] is at work to accomplish his perfect plan and purposes in your life, whether or not you can see it or appreciate it at the moment. Know this about God, that his visible hand of miracles is just as powerful and just as spectacular as his unseen hand of providence. Trust him! Some of you are at a place right now in your [life] where you are wishing to see some visible, tangible evidence that God hears you and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/Dictionary/viewTopic.cfm?topic=IT0007173>

God knows what you're going through and that God sees. Know [that] the book of Esther is that visible, tangible reminder to us that even in those unseen times, God is at work in your life. God is at work in your life, and he is about reversing things that seem hopeless to you and [you] feel helpless about. God reverses things, and God does it for his good name, and to accomplish good purposes in your life. Trust him!"

### Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [Esther 8:1-17](#) to provide the foundation for this study.
3. How would you describe "the reversal" you experienced when you, like Mordecai, received the blessing of God's grace and favor, plus a new identity as a Believer in Christ?
4. Read and discuss [1 Peter 2:9](#) and [2 Corinthians 1:21-22](#).
5. In what ways does your life show the evidence of your having been sealed with the Lord's signet ring, so to speak, and that you belong to him?
6. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about the Jewish people being a type of humanity. (See #13 above)
7. Read and discuss [Romans 3:10-11, 23](#), and [Romans 5:12-13a](#). (See #13a-#13b -#13c above)
8. In what ways has your mourning turned to rejoicing because of the grace and forgiveness of the Lord?
9. Read and discuss [Jeremiah 31:13b](#), [Isaiah 61:1-3a](#), and [Psalm 30:11-12](#). (See #22 above)
10. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's concluding remarks concerning the book of Esther. (See #24 above)
11. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).