

# LEADER DISCUSSION GUIDE

## citygroups

Spring 2022

Week of February 6

Studies in Esther

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Rooted Event: Friday, February 11th at 7pm
- Equip Classes are currently meeting on Sunday nights from 5-6:30
- Young Professional Gathering: Monday, February 28th at 6:30pm

### DISCUSSION FOCUS:

Read (Primary Text): Esther 4:13-14

Supporting Texts: Romans 8:28; Romans 5:6-11

### MAIN IDEA:

Esther teaches that, in His providence, God is working out the salvation of His people.

### BOOK OVERVIEW:

The book of Esther tells the story of a Jewish girl who is chosen to be queen in Persia. When Haman, one of the King's advisors, devises a plot to kill all of the Jews in the Persian empire, Esther courageously risks her life to intervene and plead with the king to save the Jewish people from execution. God is not mentioned by name in the book of Esther, but his divine providence is evident throughout the story. It shows clearly that, even when God is most hidden, He is still working to bring salvation and deliverance to his chosen people.

### OBSERVE

God's promise to deliver His people is fulfilled ultimately in the person and work of Christ. Esther is part of a much larger story of God's providence that is evidenced all of the way from the people of Israel in the Old Testament to the church today as he works out the salvation of his people.

Throughout the book of Esther there are a large number of seemingly unrelated details and occurrences that all combine and significantly affect the eventual outcome of the story. Very few of these significant actions are knowingly done by any of the human characters. **How does this show God's providence and faithfulness?** *God is the only one who could have brought all of this together in exactly the right way at exactly the right time.*

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### INTERPRET

Read Esther 4:13-14

What elements of Mordecai's message to Esther point to his faith in God's providence, although God is not specifically named?

- *His assurance that relief will come for the Jewish people, is rooted in God's covenant to Abraham and the nation of Israel.*
- *His belief that there is a reason for Esther to be where she is, that she was placed there intentionally for a greater purpose points to a faith that God is sovereignly directing her life and is actively working for the good of his people.*

How do we see this same promise in Romans 8:28?

- What does it mean to be "Called according to His purpose?"

### RESPOND

While the Jews were living in exile and in fear under the threat of Haman's plot, God was already at work in the story of Esther faithfully fulfilling His covenant to preserve His people and bring them a Redeemer. We see in this that God's faithfulness *to* his people is not dependent upon the faithfulness *of* his people. The Jewish people were in exile as a consequence of their sin. And yet, in the midst of this devastation, God in his sovereignty preserves and protects them.

Read Romans 5:8: God provides a provision for our redemption before we have done anything to earn or deserve it, while we are still separated from him by our sin. What response does this prompt in you?

What ways can you see that God has been faithful in your life even when you may have been unfaithful?

### APPLY

As we go through our day to day lives, do we have hearts and minds that look for, and praise God for his providence in the ordinary?

Do we dismiss the ordinary events of our lives as coincidence, or do we see God at work in our lives in the midst of the circumstances He has placed us in?

How can we acknowledge His providence in the ordinary circumstances of our lives and live differently in light of it?

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City Groups exist as an extension of our Sunday gatherings, providing an environment for spiritual formation through intentional study, prayer, and fellowship, to equip Christ followers to make disciples.