

# 2020 Community Groups

## WEEKLY GUIDE

### October 4th

Pastor Aaron, wrapped up the Series this weekend entitled: "Maybe, Just Maybe." His topic was on "Purim": A Jewish holiday that celebrates how God rescued the Jewish People during the time of Esther. It encompasses exchanging gifts of food and drink, donating to the poor, eating a celebratory meal, eating Hamantashen (triangular pastries made to look like Haman's hat). It also includes the public reading of the story of Esther and God's deliverance. As we close out, we see that God's name is not found In Esther, yet the entire story was about God's providence.

Check out this entertaining video on Purim: [Click Here](#)

#### Community Prayer:

Father, we thank you for all that we have learned from the book of Esther, and how you have revealed new things in our lives from this study. Help us to remember this journey, and how you continue to bless us, use us for your glory, honor, and praise, and how faithful you are to us, even when we are not consistent in being faithful to you. As we conclude our study today, help us to grasp how much you want us to be more like Jesus, and prepare us for His return; in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

#### Opening Questions

1. Describe a celebration you participated in that allowed you to sense God's presence in a profound way. How did it make you feel?

### EXPLORATION

Read the passages below...what can you learn about what it means to follow Jesus from these passages? (Have someone read from their bible)

#### Esther 8: 15-17

2. Why was it important that the Jewish People to celebrate on the King's new edict that they were allowed to protect and avenge themselves if necessary?
  - a. Did they celebrate too soon?
3. What message did the celebration send to potential adversaries? What was the result of this celebration in the lives of non-Jewish people?
4. What does this teach us about celebration in the midst of our hardships and struggles, knowing that God is on our side? (2 Chronicles 20: 15)



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### **Esther 9: 1-2**

5. Why do you think that dread fell on all the people who meant the Jewish people harm? Can you see God's providence in this situation?
6. Did Mordecai's favor with the King have anything to do with this? (Esther 9: 3-4)
7. Describe a time when you were in a situation that required God to intervene, and He came to your rescue. Was there celebration?

### **Esther 9: 20-23**

The Jewish people celebrated prior to their victory over their adversaries; now they have a national holiday to remember how God brought about a Turning Point in their time of need.

8. We (as a culture) celebrate so many things. Do any of you celebrate days to remember what God has done for you? Is this something you would consider doing?

### **Simple and supernaturally:**

"Divine providence means that God governs all creatures, actions, and circumstances through the normal and ordinary course of human life, without the intervention of the supernatural."

Karen Jobe.

9. We so often celebrate the supernatural and lose sight of the ordinary. Where have you seen God move in the ordinary?

### **Providence and participation:**

God's hand is at work and is always inviting us to join Him.

10. When is the last time you felt like you were joining God in his work? What was it?

"Our generation is no less a living link in God's work in history than were Esther and Mordecai. Christ has come, but the gospel must still go out to all nations in every generation until He returns."

Karen Jobe

11. Have you ever shared your story with a non-believer? Talk about your comfort level...your feeling afterward.



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### Decree and counter decree:

There was a decree of death pronounced in the Garden of Eden against humanity. That decree still stands to this day, but God in His grace issued a counter decree, Jesus the Word in human flesh. His death on the cross, and his resurrection from the grave is the great reversal and counter to death.

John 3: 16

### **Ephesians 6: 12**

12. What does this verse say about Democrats and Republicans, Husbands and Wives, etc...? Who are we in conflict with? How do we win this battle?

### Intervening and Interceding:

#### **Romans 8: 34-39**

13. Why do we let the Devil condemn us when Christ has redeemed us?
14. Why is it important to know that Christ is praying for you?
15. Share your feelings in knowing that nothing can separate you from the Love of God. Are you willing to share this assurance with someone else?

## **THE TAKEAWAY**

### Persecution and Purpose

God sometimes allows His people to be tested so His purpose can be fulfilled.

Throughout history Esther is read not just as history, isolated from the rest of the story. Also, its reading has symbolized future deliverance and final salvation for God's people at the end of time.

### **Revelation 21: 4-5**

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

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The story of Esther is not about Esther! Esther is not the heroine, Mordecai is not the hero. The story of Esther is the story of God. That can be said of every character in the Bible: The story of Abraham, Moses and David are all stories of God.

Your story is a story of God! He loves you, He is for you, He wants to give you life, Re-write, reverse, and restore the broken and harmful parts of our stories.

### PRAYER REQUESTS

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