

THE STORY

READ THE STORY. EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE.

AS YOU READ CHAPTER 20

Journal your answers to these questions as you read through the chapter this week. You may wish to read one day and journal the next, or spread the questions over the whole week.

1. Choose a few of these characters to consider: Queens Vashti and Esther, Mordecai, and Haman. What motivates their behavior? In what power do they trust and root their identities? Consider what motivates your behavior.
2. Mordecai seemed to have God's Upper Story in view when he sent word to Esther, "And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?" When has God most recently placed you in a position to serve a greater purpose than you desired or realized? How did that make you feel?
3. Review the correspondence between Mordecai and Esther concerning an appeal to the king. What is the relationship between God's providence and our responsibility?
4. The book of Esther has been called the "godless book" because God's name is never mentioned. Prayer, the law, sacrifices and temple worship are also conspicuously absent. Yet ancient Israel included this book in their scripture because they saw God's Upper Story at work all over. Where can you find God's hand and heart at work? Where might God be powerfully at work in your life in a behind-the-scenes kind of way?
5. Briefly list all that Haman boasted of to his wife and friends. Why then was he not satisfied? What does this teach you about pride and discontentment?
6. How does the Lower Story of Esther fit into the covenant that God made with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3)? How does it fit with God's Upper Story of redemption?

PRAYER

God,
Thank you for the ways in which you are always at work in my life, regardless if I recognize it or not. Lord, let your spirit lead and guide me daily, that I may be open to follow you courageously as Ester did. Jesus, help me lay down my life to follow you always.