

## LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

## ESTHER SERIES

These questions are for the **February 25, 2018** sermon, "The Ride of Honor." Please read the sermon passage (Esther 6:1-14) together out loud.

### SERMON OUTLINE

IN LIFE'S CHAIN OF EVENTS, GOD CAN ORCHESTRATE . . .

1. The recall of overlooked people to fulfill his purposes (1-3)
  - a. After prayer and fasting, yet before Esther had requested anything, God worked in the situation by disturbing Xerxes' sleep and bringing Mordecai to mind.
  - b. God used ordinary means (disrupted sleep) to do an extraordinary thing.
    - i. Xerxes recalls an overlooked Mordecai in order to fulfill God's purposes.
    - ii. When you feel undervalued and overlooked, wait on the Lord.
2. The timing of unlikely encounters to fulfill his purposes (4-11)
  - a. Haman thinks he is the "insider" who is in control of the situation.
  - b. Mordecai seems to be on the "outside" and about to be executed.
  - c. Be careful!
    - i. God has a way of turning the tables, making outsiders into insiders.
    - ii. Do not treasure any position more than you treasure your salvation.
  - d. Sometimes God causes our dreams to go "up in smoke" while he uses the "smoke signal" from our burning dreams to produce a rescue beacon for something better.
  - e. Don't focus on the intent of your enemy, but on the intent of God himself.
3. The reversal of human destinies to fulfill his purposes (12-14)
  - a. Mordecai "returned to the king's gate" after having been publicly honored.
  - b. Haman "went home" in mourning, having been greatly disappointed.
  - c. And while he was still mourning, Haman gets an invitation which will seal his fate.

### Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: How has God used disrupted sleep in your life? How do you handle disrupted sleep? Do you keep/make lists? How do you pray when God withholds sleep? Note in this case that God used insomnia to direct the heart/mind of an unbeliever.
2. Based on #2, above: Our enemies have evil intentions toward God (first) and toward us (second). God has a way of taking the evil intentions of his enemies, and turning the tables on them. When your fears are raging, what are some practical ways that you can focus on God's intentions towards you (Romans 8:28), rather than the intentions of your enemies? How have you seen God "turn the tables," in protecting, providing for or advancing his cause for you?
3. Based on #3, above: Haman (the bad guy) began mourning because God lifted up Mordecai. At this point, the "death threat" against Mordecai and the Jews was still intact. But God can take your current direction, and cause a substantial reversal. But it is required of you to remain faithful. No matter how dark it seems, God will work in time and in your life to keep his promises faithfully. Talk about the hope that comes to your soul as you believe this truth.