

16. On the surface what has changed at this point regarding the plan and decree to kill all the Jews?

17. It appears that the King did not previously know about what Mordecai had done, or had forgotten it. What do you think the effect of this incident has on King Ahasuerus and his attitude towards Mordecai and to Haman?

*Keep this in mind your answers to questions 15 to 17. This incident could be seen as a diversion from the account of Esther's plan but we will want to consider how it affected the success of the plan.*

*If you find yourself unable to sleep tonight why not read the Book of Esther.*

## Pray

Pray for the Christmas Fair on 5th December, particularly for Tracy and Sara in organising it again. Pray that it would be an opportunity for fun and fellowship and to invite or meet others who might not otherwise come into church or to a service.

As we approach Christmas pray that we would keep the celebration of Christ's birth the main thing and that the festivities more widely would help rather than hinder in sharing the gospel message.

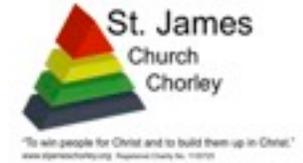
Pray for contentment, that recognising God's blessing to us would help us with the sort of mood swings and discontent we see in Haman.

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## Real Lives

### Week 8 - Esther part 3

(Chapters 5 & 6)



*Remember that in the background to these chapters is a decree, brought about by Haman, that all the Jews be put to death.*

## A Plan Begins

### Read Esther 5.1-8

1. What risk was involved in what Esther was proposing to do? (See also ch4 v11)
2. What preparations had Esther made before she acted and for when she tried to see the king? (Note the days in v1 & ch4 v16)
3. Do you remember to commit your plans to God in prayer? Are there big things that you have not only prayed about but fasted for before undertaking?
4. What do you think is the significance of James 4.13-15 for us as Christians when making plans?

5. The King made an amazing offer to Esther in verse 3. Why do you think Esther did not jump in with her request at this point? Was it that she just lost her nerve? Was she just sticking to the plan? Or did she feel the time just wasn't right?

*Chapter 5.9 to chapter 6.14 might seem like a diversion from the main event but we will pick up the plan again in chapter 7 next week.*

## **Haman's wrath**

### **Read Esther 5.9-end**

6. Why was Haman so angry? Is it just his nature, or is he typical of many people, or indeed of all of us?

7. Haman was able to boast to his friends and his wife about his special relationship to the King and Queen (v11-12). Why was this so spoilt by his anger at Mordecai?

8. Do you find that anger, or bitterness, or frustration, or anxiety can so overtake you at times that you find it difficult to remember the good things you have?

9. How might reading and meditating on verses like Ps 103v2 or Phil 4.11-12 help? (also Lam 3.2 & Eph 5.20)

10. What additional dimension do Rom 8.18 or 1 Peter 4.12-13 add?

## **A series of fortunate events?**

### **Read Esther 6**

*Also Read, or recap on Esther 2.19-23*

11. What do you do if you can't sleep at night? Do you read? Would listening to a book of memorable deeds help you to drop off? (v1)

12. In study 3 on Ruth chapter 2 we asked was it just chance that "she happened to come into Boaz's field" (v3). How did you answer that question?

13. Was it just chance that King Ahasuerus couldn't sleep and heard about Mordecai's action? Was it just chance that at the very moment Haman entered the court to ask for Mordecai to be killed the King asked Haman to reward Mordecai? (Don't forget your answer to question 2.)

14. Is it appropriate for believers to talk about "chance", "luck", or being "fortunate"? If not what would you say instead? How does faith affect how we understand a verse like Ruth 2.3?

15. What impact did this incident have on Haman?