

Esther 9-10

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[0 : 00] It is. It's always a joy to be gathered together with you. Take your Bibles and go into the book of Esther. Esther chapter 9. We'll look at chapters 9 and 10 this evening. Chapter 10 is only three verses. We can wrap up those three verses in that 10th chapter, that little addition there at the end.

We'll be completing the book of Esther tonight, which means, I've been thinking about this for the last several weeks, that Wednesday we'll start the book of Job.

So, some very powerful passages in the book of Job. I've never preached through the entirety of the book of Job. So, yeah, it'd be challenging to us as well, but I think it'd be encouragement as we get into it.

We'll seek to be challenged and encouraged from the word tonight, so let's open up the word of prayer. Father, we come before you with so much thanksgiving and rejoicing, rejoicing in the day you've given us and the opportunities you've presented to us, Lord, the abilities we've had to enjoy today or to be used in the day.

And, Father, just the time to come together and to fellowship and to be encouraged through the reading of your word and the study of it. And so, Lord, we pray that you lead us tonight as we continue to study the word of God.

[1 : 15] And we're looking at the book of Esther and seeing the historical account of your dealings with your people. Father, I pray that you give us wisdom and discernment in the passage before us.

And you help us to see your guiding hand. Help us to see the story of God's working for your glory. And, Father, we pray that as we see it, we would be drawn closer to you, that we would not stand amazed at a particular group of people, but rather we would stand amazed at you.

And we would be captivated by your splendor. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Esther chapter 9 and 10. And as we get into it, we know that by this time, the plot of this wicked Haman, the enemy of the Jews, has been disclosed.

He has been hung on the gallows in his own home, which he had erected from Mordecai. The letter has been written by Mordecai as he has been promoted because it was revealed what he was to Esther.

We'll see that in just a little bit, too. And so now he has a place within the court of the king. And Susa, no longer is he at the gate of the kingdom, but now he is inside the court.

[2 : 31] And with that new position, having received the ring that was on Haman's hand at one point, that had the seal of the king, he'd written that letter in the name of the king and sealed it with the seal of the king, that the Jews would have a right to defend themselves.

Because we could not overturn the law of the land. And the law of the land was, and the law of the Medo-Persian Empire, that once a law was established, the law was irrefutable.

It could not be overturned. It could not be changed. It was everlasting. And the law of the land was that there was a particular day marked on the calendar for the destruction of the Jewish people. A day for the removal of all these people across the realm of the kingdom of King Ahasuerus.

And as we have noted, that would include the people who had returned to Jerusalem because of the decree of King Cyrus, because at that time it was still very much under the control of the kingdom of Persia.

And so with that ruling, that law, there was not only the removal and destruction of a number of people, but it also would be thwarting the plan and purposes of God for the rebuilding of the temple, the reestablishment of the city, the very city that Nehemiah would come to sometime after this.

[3 : 45] And they would reconstruct the walls and the gates in which our Lord and Savior would ride in as a fulfillment of Zechariah. And all these word of promises that have been declared on that

place through those particular people, that this is the purpose and plan of God.

So more so than Haman being a wicked man, we have seen also that the enemy is wrestling in the spiritual battleground with the plans and purposes of God.

Ever since the garden, there has been this ongoing battle where the enemy is utilized and used individuals to try to thwart what God had determined to be.

We see it at the very beginning with Cain and Abel. And the enemy so moves Cain to slay his brother. And we've seen that God still continues because Eve had yet another child.

We see it during the time of the flood, but God found Noah. And we see it during the time of the captivity and their failures. But then God raised up Moses.

[4 : 50] And it is this theme that continues to be repeated throughout Scripture, a theme that finds its culmination ultimately in Jesus Christ, where the enemy himself goes and fights battle with him as he is fasting in the wilderness in 40 days and 40 nights.

And he leaves him until the opportune time. Satan once again finds that opportune time. We know in the person and the work of Judas Iscariot that when his time had fully come, and that great culminating battle that was fought on Mount Calvary, or the cross where Jesus did so much more than just pay for our sins, he did that.

He paid it in full. He declared it is finished. It is done. It is absolute. But also it sealed forever the promises, the covenantal promises of God.

For in that great last attack, Jesus could rise from the tomb, and we could declare with Paul, Death, where is your sting? Because the sting of death and the fear of that has been removed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And we've seen that the Scripture tells us that, of this grand battle that has been going on, of which the book of Esther is just one part and portion. We don't want to get lost in the historical narrative of it.

[6 : 01] There is a historical aspect to it, sure. There is a historical celebration that is established because of the results of it. But we can get lost and get so caught up like, well, who are these people?

Why are these people so special? So why is God doing this, and why this, and why that? And we can get so caught up in the narrative that we forget the grand narrative. That is, the redemption of all who place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ hinges upon this historical narrative.

So we don't want to get lost in that. We don't want to get so caught up in God's sovereignty, using whom he has chosen for his purposes to be a blessing to the nations, and be so caught up in the fact, why would he preserve those people?

So we have to be cautious there. But we see here the culmination of this in Esther 9 and 10. It says, And they rested on the 15th day and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing. Therefore, the Jews of the rural areas, who live in the rural towns, make the 14th day of the month, Adar, a holiday for rejoicing and feasting and sending portions of food to one another.

[9 : 41] Then Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, obliging them to celebrate the 14th day of the month, Adar, and the 15th day of the same month annually, because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies.

And it was a month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday, that they should make them days of feasting and rejoicing and sending portions of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

Thus the Jews undertook what they had started to do and what Mordecai had written to them. For Haman the son of Hamadathah, the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews, had schemed against the Jews to destroy them and had cast Purr, that is, Lot, to disturb them and destroy them.

But when it came to the king's attention, he commanded by letter that this wicked scheme which he had devised against the Jews should return on his own head and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

Therefore they called these days Purim, after the name of Purr. And because of the instructions in this letter, both what they had seen in this regard and what had happened to them, the Jews established and made a custom for themselves and for their descendants and for all those who allied themselves with them so that they would not fail to celebrate these two days according to their regulation and according to their appointed time annually.

[11 : 05] So these days would be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, every family, every province, and in every city. And these days of Purim were not to fail from among the Jews or their memory fade from their descendants.

Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abahel, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm the second letter about Purim. He sent letters to all the Jews and to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, namely words of peace and truth.

To establish the days of Purim at their appointed times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had established for them and just as they had established for themselves and for their descendants with instructions for the times of fasting and their lamentations.

The command of Esther established these customs for Purim and it was written in the book. Now King Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land and on the coastlands of the sea and all the accomplishments of his authority and strength in the full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king advanced him.

Are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the Jew was second only to King Ahasuerus and great among the Jews in favor with his many kinsmen, one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.

[12 : 25] Esther chapter 9 and 10. We should see this evening an overruling word. An overruling word. It has been telling that throughout this book we have not seen a single mentioning of the name of God.

It is silence and it takes us aback just a little bit when we very clearly can see so much activity of God yet there is not even the slightest recognition of it seemingly.

There are no great times of sacrificial celebrations. There are no grand times of corporate prayers and thanksgiving like we see in other records when we see God deliver his people and we see what they do yet if we are mindful we also understand that when we read of the records of times of repentance and times of prayer and times of celebration and times of rejoicing in who the Lord God is it is always in the Old Testament in connection to the people being present in the promised land. And we are reading a historical account of what took place among the people in exile. A people without a temple a people without even a tabernacle a people with no altar and no opportunity to worship as the Lord had described and commanded throughout the book of Leviticus and Numbers and yet God is still active among his people for it is his purposes that he is caring about.

Worship is for the edification of the people. It is to remind them of what God is doing and who he is. Even when we gather together the command in scripture to forsake not the assembling together of one another is not so that we can legalistically check a box and say yes we went to church and everything is good.

[14 : 19] It is because we are mutually encouraged in our worship and adoration of the Lord. We are challenged by being around one another. Our countenance is lifted up by those who rejoice in the Lord.

There are moments of fellowship where we can lift others up. There are moments where we need others to lift us up and it is to our own detriment that we would forsake the assembling together. But yet if we were to forsake that that if we did not meet together with one another we can be most confident that God would continue to bring about his purposes.

If we didn't recognize it if we didn't acknowledge it if we didn't give him the glory for it we would not hinder nor impede his purposes. It is an astounding miracle that God would use people such as I, the church to accomplish his plans in history.

It has always astounded me that God chooses to use us for his glory. But his limitations those limitations are not implied upon him.

[15 : 29] That is he is not limited by us. His purposes and plans are so great that even at times when we do not acknowledge his presence he is still moving.

This is what I believe what Paul says in Romans 8 that God causes all things to work together for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purposes.

All things I believe is all things and too often when I look at my life sometimes the all things in the midst of those there are certainly times when I do not recognize what God is doing until I look back. When we see the book of Esther what we see is that God had called the Jews for his purposes. There were a remnant that were returning back to rebuild the temple.

There were a remnant sure that had a heart for him because at this time we know that God always has his people. We know that there are the Ezra's that were setting themselves to study the word and to know the word and to teach the word.

[16:37] Yet God is still bringing it about. He is overruling on the battlefield when the enemy is attempting to hinder and impede and stop what God has set his face towards and that is the redemption of mankind that all the planning and purposing of the enemy even as he utilizes others as tools in his hand one such as Haman God overrules them with a word.

As we read the book of Esther there has been this repetition of letters that were sent throughout the kingdom and it was the word of Haman that appointed the day but it's the word of the king's seal that also gives them the right to defend themselves and it is the word that would cause them to continue to remember to remind themselves through a celebratory feast named Purim.

But we see this overruling word and as we notice this in these last couple of chapters I want you to see just a few things and we'll see them rather quickly.

The first thing that we notice is the conflict itself. Look at the conflict which is fault. And we paid a little bit of attention to this last time we were gathered together and I asked you to be kind of mindful of it when we read it because at face value if we were to read the word we're like wow they killed 500 on one day in the capital city of Sioux so the next day they killed 300 and then outside of the capital city on the 13th they killed 75,000 people.

that's 75,800 lives lost in two days. And how is God good in that?

[18:21] Where's the goodness of God in the loss of 75,800 individuals? But we also took note of the fact that this was on the 13th and 14th day of the 12th month but there was a day on the third month when God had previously moved Mordecai to issue a letter into all 127 provinces and every tongue and every dialect and every native language so that all people in all places could hear it read and it came with such royal authority that it was on the steeds of the royal horses and it came in haste and it made its way quickly and the news spread fast that if you attack the Jews they have a right to defend themselves.

So the warning had been issued. God in his grace and his mercy said these are my set-apart people. Now not so much so in wording here but the wording was leave them alone.

And we notice in this passage when we look at that that what the Jews do is they defend themselves against those who sought their harm or pursued them to kill them.

And we take special note of this because the Jewish individuals during this conflict are not only offensive but rather they are defending their lives.

They didn't go out and knowingly intentionally seek out and hunt individuals. It is clear to us from the text that it was those who had a hatred for them a hatred such that they were seeking to harm them and kill them that the Jews killed.

[20:17] And it was a matter of preservation. But it wasn't done quickly either. It wasn't done overnight.

In the third month the letter was issued it was until the twelfth month so we know that not only did the Jews have time to prepare but the enemies of the Jews had time to repent because prior to that Haman had been discovered and it was Haman who had written the letter in the king's name and Haman had been hung in the open square of his own home on a gallows so high that everyone would have known of it.

Mordecai the Jew by this time his heritage being completely known to everyone had been promoted not only had he been honored publicly on a couple of days before the execution of Haman he had been promoted into the king's palace and it was through his writing that the second letter came out. And so as long as the Jews had the opportunity to prepare so too did the enemies had the opportunity to repent. One refrain that we notice because when the question is asked where is the goodness of God in all of these things?

How do we defend the fact that an innumerable amount of lives are lost throughout scripture even in the offensive narratives when the people of Israel go into the promised land and people say God is not good there's only about two cities that we know of that are completely raised and you know them for the walls of Jericho fell down and then the city of Ai it was not completely going to be raised it was not going to be knocked down until they went and the sin of Achan because of what happened at Jericho and then a little bit later they went and they defeated and they completely raised the city.

[22 : 06] Those are the only two that we have told that are completely wiped out and if you remember God himself drove the people out and he drove them out through what bees and all these wild beasts and all these things and God in his grace and mercy continued to push out.

He said yeah but God displaced these people and we should just have a heart for these displaced people and I'm not saying we shouldn't but I want you to stay with me. Some 400 years prior to that displacement God had a man named Abraham walking around the same land building altars and calling on the name of the Lord God and in calling on the name of the Lord God what he was doing was not just going oh God you're awesome oh God this is your name.

Scripture tells us that when those days men began to call upon the name of the Lord God the original wording I've told you this before means they were declaring the goodness of God to those around them and yet God is patient for 400 years.

The testimony of Abraham resounds because he's got a foothold and he's got a place that he bought. His wife is buried there. He gets great and he's there.

He's defeated some of the kings of that land there. God makes him a very public display right. He lies. God restores him. God honors him. He has to pray for the king that he lied to about so that the king's family is not barren anymore.

[23 : 31] You remember all these stories that you see what is God doing? God is making a public display of Abraham as Abraham is walking around the land calling on the name of the Lord God and declaring how good God is and 400 years later when God brings his people there God says their wickedness has reached me and it has come to its end.

There's this refrain in the Old Testament that says that the people of Israel were in captivity for the sin of the Canaanites had not reached its peak. It's kind of a paraphrase of it.

It had not come to its fullness. God gave them 400 years to repent. You say all the people there didn't hear about it. No but the ones who knew about it were also offering their children as child sacrifices.

Don't be so quick to make everybody good and God will not be mocked. And so when we see this conflict in the book of Esther we find the same thing. God cannot wait 400 years but he gives them ample time.

And yet still on that day notice in our text it says on that day when the decree of the king was to come about that is the first decree and the people sought to displace what is the word tell us when the people hoped to gain the mastery over the Jewish people.

[24 : 50] they wanted to annihilate them. And yet God empowered them to preserve their life. But we see also this conflict is so much more than what the nation of Israel could do.

Because what does it tell us? It says that the reason they did not gain the mastery over them is because the people's hearts hearts.

It says in verse 2 and no one could stand before them for the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples. Now we know that refrain. For when the nation of Israel went into the promised land God said I will put the fear of you in the hearts of all the people that you encounter.

Why is there a prostitute in Jericho that hides the spies on the wall? For she had heard about the people of God and everybody in the city was afraid to them. God had went before them.

And so in this battle we see this same refrain they couldn't stand before them for the fear of them. They were fearing some people that they had just shortly before planned to kill. That is a testimony to God's movement.

[26 : 03] But not only that not only did God empower them by trapping the people around them in fear and dread it tells us even all the princes of the provinces the satraps the governors and those who were doing the king's business assisted the Jews.

That is God rose up aid and deliverance through those in powerful positions. So when we look at this conflict notice the hand of God moving in all of it.

God didn't allow the Jews to go unchecked on the offensive. God gave time for those of the land to take notice and to repent.

But when the judgment day came God ensured their deliverance. Notice the conflict. Second, we notice the concern.

And this is a furtherance of the conflict that's fought and it's something that is so different and so unique. when we look at the people of God. Notice the concern even in the midst of the battle.

[27 : 14] When Haman had written his decree, his decree was that on the 13th day of the 12th month that everybody should gather together and let's kill all the Jews that are found in the kingdom.

Now he did that because he hated Mordecai. Now let's not be lost on the fact that he hates Mordecai while Mordecai is sitting at the gate.

And we've taken notice as we went through the text that to sit at the gate didn't mean kind of like what we used to see. We don't see it as much anymore. We used to see people just sitting at the gas station whittling a piece of cedar or you would see people sitting on the small town squares with a whittle stick in their back pocket.

I remember that as a kid and you would see people just sitting around. People had time to sit around because we couldn't call each other. You know, you understand that's the only place you could find out anything is to sit around. In scripture when you're sitting at the gate, it's not like he's sitting at the gate of the capital city whittling a stick.

To sit at the gate means you are holding a position of influence and being able to make decisions as it pertains to current events. You're not a ruling authority but you are one who can speak to what's going on.

[28 : 25] And that implies that Mordecai is a man of means. And so when Haman's hatred for Mordecai begins to grow, Haman's decree was on the 13th day of the 12th month we should all assemble and kill the Jews and take their possessions.

See, Haman was going to be enriched at the expense of Mordecai's life. And he was encouraging every other enemy that kill them and take what is theirs.

So the motivation wasn't the fact that all the Jews are bad, the motivation was go get what is theirs and make it yours. Here the battle is so different because three times it is repeated in the text before us that they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

Now, admittedly, when Mordecai wrote the second letter, Mordecai declared that on the 13th day the Jews had a right to defend themselves and in that letter he also stipulated that not only could they defend themselves but they could reap the plunder of those who came against them and said that they could also kill the women and the children.

Notice the text on the fulfillment, we never have the record of women and children being slain, we only have recorded those who hated them and attacked them being slain. So the wording is important.

[29 : 59] So don't try to read into the text what the text does not say. I was asked this week, had someone say, hey pastor, any points you have, I'm getting ready to share a devotional with a group and these are my texts, what should I do?

I said, always let the text speak for itself. That is, don't try to prove the text, don't try to let the text prove anything for you, let the text say what the text says. That is a pretty transparent way to be. Because if anyone says, see all the women and children they killed, I'm going to ask them, show it to me in the text. He said, well the letter from Mordecai said they could, right? But the record found in the word of God doesn't say they did.

And furthermore it says in the letter from Mordecai that they could receive the plunder. But three times the next chapter tells us no one laid their hands on the plunder.

So their concern was not a concern of hatred. Their concern was not a concern of greed. 75,800 individuals lost their lives.

[31 : 07] I am certain that they left behind great wealth but no one touched it. We know that the battle is a just and good battle when we judge the concerns in the midst of the battle.

They were not seeking to enrich themselves at the expense of another's life but rather they were seeking to defend themselves and preserve their own life with the God given ability that they had and the right to do it.

It was simply to defend their lives and rid themselves of their enemies not to enrich themselves at the expense of the enemies. And after this battle was fought and the victory is won if you want to call it that.

It's not really a victory. It's not celebrated as a victory. It's celebrated as a deliverance. Someone once said this is the second of only two recordings in the word of God where God delivers his people outside of the promised land.

The book of Exodus is one and the book of Esther is two. That he delivers his people outside of the promised land. We'll conclude in just a moment and I'll show you a number of similarities there. [32 : 37] But because of that deliverance they are giving a charge. And really it's a charge that they had already begun to do. I love the honesty of scripture and it tells us probably by the time this letter was written there was some kind of confusion.

Maybe why out in the country do they celebrate the festival of Purim on the 14th day and in the city they're doing it on the 15th day. It seems kind of crazy. Why do we have two days? Well it tells us in the text why they do it because those in the country on the 13th day they defended themselves on the 14th day they celebrate in the capital city of Susa.

Queen Esther made a request of the king and extended it to a second day. The hanging of the ten sons of Haman was a display of the shame that rested upon their family because cursed is everyone who hangs upon a tree.

It was a fulfillment of the word of God. It brings the curse upon that family and it declares that God's judgment was true. It defiled their bodies. One of the greatest defilements that is found in all of scripture was to leave a body exposed overnight.

And yet there is the reasoning why there is a celebration. But by the time the 15th day comes the people in the countryside had already been celebrating and now the people in the city are going to begin to celebrate and they had already begun this rejoicing.

[33 : 56] But to make it official Mordecai wrote a letter and it's really there's two more letters that are written but the first letter is that he records them before he sends the first letter out among all the provinces he records it in the annals of the kingdom.

Now I love that because he wants to ensure that everyone can always know for when it is written in the annals of the media Persian empire that it stands forever that God had indeed delivered his people and this is how he had done it.

So there's a recorded reality that is historically marked. But then he issues a letter and he follows it with a second letter that they should do this every year.

They should gather together. Now this is not one of God's decreed festivals throughout the year that we find in the book of Leviticus. But rather this is a national celebration.

But it is a national celebration to remember a deliverance. It is a charge that the people not forget that they had been delivered.

[35 : 00] It was a charge for the people to remember that there was a day appointed for their destruction and yet they had not died that they had been delivered.

For too often as days go by and years pass the people of God inevitably forget that there was a time when they were on a path of destruction but someone intervened.

And the charge is that they would gather together annually and they would celebrate this festival and that they would recognize God had worked. And if we look at this and we think well that's just a national celebration and it was even until the time of Christ the nation of Israel was still doing it as a national celebration.

Jesus uses this opportunity to point to himself as one of the celebrations. We kind of can read it not that we read it into the text but we know where Christ is at and what's going on at that time. We can see it in the calendar of events and we would have to take time to do it in the New Testament but we notice here why God charges them.

If you notice this repetition that we find in Scripture we always say Scripture tells one grand narrative. And here's the narrative. That there is an exiled people who are held captive beyond their control.

[36 : 18] And these exiled people are unable to deliver themselves for they were powerless. They cannot do it on their own. And in the midst of their powerless ability there is a condemnation placed upon them in which there is certain death that is imminent and it is awaiting them and they are powerless to do anything about it for on their own they do not have the ability to deliver themselves.

But God in his sovereign grace and mercy raises up an individual. Puts them high in a position. And they are in such a position that they can intervene and they can indeed save the life of his people. We see it all throughout Scripture. We have the Noah's who built an ark and preached righteousness for 120 years.

We have Joseph who is sold to Pharaoh's home. over and over again we have someone who is exalted in a position that God raises them up.

We have Moses. Here we have Esther. They are all pointing to someone greater than them. They are pointing to this reality that God takes notice of the exile.

[37 : 45] Those who are awaiting an imminent death and yet are powerless to deliver themselves from it. And the only hope they have is that God would raise someone up. And that that one would be in such a position as Job said that he could lay his hand on a powerful God and lay his hand on sinful man and say I am here to intercede between the two.

The charge is that God's people won't forget it. They would remember it. That God does indeed take notice and God is indeed concerned and he has made a way.

That brings us to the last thing that we notice in this text is the character that is displayed even by Mordecai. The entirety of the book of Esther really though it is silent on the name of God is full of the activity of God.

And one of those activities that we see being played over and over again is the character that is displayed by Mordecai. Mordecai is introduced to us first and foremost as a kinsman redeemer of his cousin.

He is raising up his cousin for she has no father and mother. In scripture we call that a kinsman redeemer. You know another one from another book bearing a lady's name the book of Ruth and you find Boaz the kinsman redeemer.

[39 : 24] And kinsman redeemers are important in scripture for kinsman redeemers are the near relatives the one who is close enough that they can redeem and powerful enough to sustain them.

Jesus is our kinsman redeemer. This is why he had to take on flesh and blood and to dwell among us. He had to become fully man for without bearing our humanity he could not be our kinsman redeemer.

He would have been powerful enough certainly but he would not have been near enough. We see Mordecai as a kinsman redeemer of Esther.

We see him as a faithful uncompromising individual setting at the gate. when he discloses to the king the plan that is against him to kill him and yet even though no honor is given until multitude of years later he is still sitting at the gate.

He was not doing it so that he could get recognition. He was doing it because it was the right thing to do. And because of that we find in this little last chapter of three verses where it just tells us that the king went about doing his daily business that even after his promotion and exaltation within the kingdom the character of Mordecai did not change.

[40 : 47] It tells us in chapter nine that Mordecai became greater and greater. It tells us in chapter ten that the greatness of Mordecai was really astounding as the king advanced him.

But then it discloses that even in his greatness for greatness has a way of puffing individuals up. Greatness and position has a way of changing an individual and really what happens is that greatness is a revealer of character more than anything else.

But yet the book ends with this. Mordecai is described as one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.

Not one who sought the good of himself was only concerned about personal growth. He is one who sought the good of his people and the literal wording is there and sought for the means of their peace.

May we be those people of character who seek the good of those around us by pointing them to the ultimate source of peace found in Jesus Christ alone. Because character is revealed as the word overrules the charge against us.

[42 : 17] Let's pray. Father we thank you for this night. We praise you for your word. We praise you for this book of Esther. This book that is silent concerning your name.

But speaks boldly concerning your work. May we be those who allow you to move into work in our lives as you see fit.

May we do it with the utmost of character for the glory of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We can't thank you enough for the fulfillment of all of these hopes and anticipations that we find in the historical writings.

The one that they're pointing to for Jesus and drawing near to us and becoming our kinsman redeemer. You fulfilled every hope. You fulfilled every promise.

You fulfill every longing. And may we ever live for your glory. Be with us as we leave here and as we prepare for the week ahead of us.

[43 : 24] Father may you use us as you see fit. We ask it all in Jesus name. Amen. Thank you guys.