

The Sovereign: Episode 7 Discussion Guide



This week we're worshipping from our homes instead of gathering together at our church building. We've also asked discipleship communities to adapt and find new ways to be in community with one another in a season where it's recommended that we limit physical gatherings. For more information and other updates, visit www.bellevuechristian.church/coronavirus.

You can use this discussion guide on your own, with your family, or virtually with your discipleship community. For audio or video of the sermon, visit www.bellevuechristian.church/sermons or subscribe to the Bellevue Christian Church on your favorite podcast provider.

Read

We're in a series called *The Sovereign: An 8-Episode Series on God, Esther, and the Rest of Us*. It's the story of young Jew, exiled from her homeland, wrestling with her identity as she rises from orphan nobody to Persian royalty—just in time to save her people from genocide.

- Can someone recap the story so far in less than two minutes?
 - Episode 1: "The Refusal" (Esther 1:1-22)
 - Episode 2: "The Contest" (Esther 2:1-18)
 - Episode 3: "The Letter" (Esther 2:19-3:15)
 - Episode 4: "The Plea" (Esther 4:1-5:8)
 - Episode 5: "The Fall" (Esther 5:9-7:10)
 - Episode 6: "The Reversal" (Esther 8:1-17)

This week, we're in Episode 7: "The War" (Esther 9:1-19).

- **Can someone read this week's episode for us?**
- **When we're finished, can some recap (or paraphrase) the episode in your own words?**

Reflect

It's okay if you don't get through all the questions. These questions are nothing more than a launching point for moving toward everyday life like Jesus. Feel free to add additional questions of your own. If

you're with kids, feel free to rephrase some of the questions or add questions of your own that might be more suitable for them.

- **What is something that struck you from an initial reading of the text?**
- A few weeks ago we said that sometimes the only difference between us and Haman is the degree of power we have. In this episode, Mordecai is starting to seem a bit like Haman as he rises to power (9:3-4).
 - **What are some ways Mordecai is starting to look and act like Haman?**
 - **What is it about "power" that can bring the worst out of us?**
- In this episode, just over 75,000 are killed (9:16). People have all kinds of different reactions to violent episodes like this one in the Bible. Some people aren't bothered at all, some people find them really disturbing, and some people have never really thought much about them.
 - **What's your gut response to an episode like this in the Bible?**
 - **How do you think your unbelieving friends might respond to an episode like this?**
 - **What are some ways you might explain a scene like this one in the Old Testament?**
- Esther asks for a second day of killing (9:13). It seems unnecessary and it feels like she's just being vengeful at this point, and it's a reminder that *"The Bible is remarkable in revealing the darker side of God's chosen leaders"* (Karen Jobes, *Esther*, 201).
 - **Who are some other characters in the Bible who had profound faults?**
 - **Why is it a good thing that the Bible includes the faults of its main characters?**
 - **How does the fact that all the Bible's characters have faults point us to Jesus?**
- Esther's actions in this episode opens up questions about vengeance:
 - **What does it mean to seek revenge?**
 - **What are some reasons why we want to get to revenge when someone hurts us?**
 - **Have you ever had a situation where you sought (or thought about) revenge?**
 - Instead of seeking revenge against us for sinning against God, **what did Jesus do?**
 - **How does the gospel change how we think about revenge toward others?**
- **What is the main thing you feel like God wants you to take away from this week?**

Respond

Spend some time responding to this week's discussion in prayer.