

# The Sovereign: Episode 8 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](http://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](http://www.bellevuechristian.church/sermons) or subscribe to the Bellevue Christian Church on your favorite podcast provider.

*If you were meeting with your DC virtually, it can be helpful to start with a check-in: "How is everyone?"*

## 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 whole story 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)
  - Episode 7: "The War" (Esther 9:1-19).

This week is the series finale: Episode 8, "The Feast" (Esther 9:20-10:3).

- **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?**
- This episode is all about a tradition called the Feast of Purim that was established at the very end of the events that unfolded in Esther.
  - According to this text, **why was the Feast of Purim established?**
  - **What could have happened if God's people (the Jews) didn't do this year-after-year?**
- While we don't celebrate the Feast of Purim, we still need traditions of our own. Without traditions, it's easy to forget our story.
  - **What are some *cultural* traditions or holidays we have? What stories are these traditions meant to remind us of?**
  - **Does your family have any traditions that remind you of who you are? How so?**
  - Think about celebrating Christmas and Easter.
    - **What are some reasons why these traditions are helpful for remembering our story?**
    - **What could happen if we just got rid of these traditions?**
    - Sometimes instead of reminding us of the gospel story, these traditions can just reinforce the story of our cultural moment (like consumerism). **What are some ways these traditions have lost their focus in our cultural moment?**
  - **In what ways are our reasons for celebrating Easter similar to their reasons for celebrating Purim?**
- One thing we know about the story of Esther is that it contains echoes of the larger (or meta-) story of the whole Bible. One way we see that is in the way that both the story of Esther and the story of the Bible contain feasts at the beginning, middle, and end.
  - **What are the feasts at the beginning, middle, and end of Esther?**
  - **What are the feasts at the beginning, middle, and end of the Bible?** (The Garden of Eden / Gen. 2:16-17, the Upper Room / Matt. 26:26-29, and the Wedding Feast of the Lamb / Rev. 19:6-9.) (There are more feasts than these, but these are the ones we mentioned on Sunday.)
  - **Why do you think "feasting" is good language for talking about what life with God will be like?**
- On Sunday, we mentioned that communion is a weekly "feast" for the church that reminds us of our story. **How does communion remind us of our story?**
- (Leave some extra time for this question.) We just finished reading the whole story of Esther in eight weeks. **What are some of your biggest takeaways from this series?**

## Respond

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