BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, October 1, 2006   **Passage: Esther 3**

Memory Passage: James 4:6

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT   **READ THE PASSAGE**
(a) **Read Esther 3:1-2.** Haman is promoted "after all these events." What event is this referring to (Esther 2:21-23)?

(b) Why might this have happened? How would this increase Haman and Mordecai's hatred for each other?

(c) What was Haman's reaction to his promotion (Proverbs 12:8)? How can promotions bring out either the best or the worst in us?

(d) Do those who deserve promotion and honor always get what they deserve (Ecclesiastes 9:11)?

(e) If we are not recognized for what we do, why should we do what is right (Colossians 3:22-24)? What is God's promise to us (Hebrews 6:10)? When is this promise fulfilled?

(f) *Family*: Read Esther 3:1-2 and Colossians 3:22-24. Discuss fairness. Do people always get rewarded properly for everything they do? Who should we be serving—God or man? How should this affect the work we do and how should this affect our motivations? Does God always reward the good that we do? When do we receive this reward? Thank God for His faithfulness even when all men will fail us and pray that you might desire His reward above all the honor of men.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT   **READ THE PASSAGE**
(a) **Read Esther 3:3-4.** What was Haman's ancestry? What had God said about these people (Exodus 17:16)? How is this continuing even in Persia? Why does Mordecai refuse to bow down (Exodus 20:3-5)?

(b) Had anyone else in the Babylonian Captivity done something similar? Briefly review Daniel 3 and Daniel 6. What happened? How were their situations similar to Mordecai's?

(c) What was Haman's response to Mordecai's refusal? How did it affect Haman personally? How does anger affect us all (Proverbs 14:16-17; Proverbs 14:19; Proverbs 25:28)?

(d) How should we deal with anger (Proverbs 19:11)? Is pride connected with anger? Consider Genesis 4:1-4.

(e) Read James 1:19-22. What does James tell us about the wrath of man? What solution does he propose in verse 19?

(f) *Family*: Read Esther 3:3-4 and James 1:19-22. Talk about anger. Why do people get angry? How is pride connected with anger? What are some reasons you get angry? Is pride a factor in any of these? How would our anger be controlled if we followed James 1:19? Pray together for someone that has an angry spirit. Also, pray that you might have a humble heart rather than an angry spirit.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT   **READ THE PASSAGE**
(a) **Read Esther 3:5-9.** How does Haman overreact to Mordecai's refusal (Proverbs 29:11)? What does the Lord hate according to Proverbs 6:16-19? What does He love (Psalm 51:17; Isaiah 66:2; James 4:6)?

(b) Why does he want to kill all the Jews (compare Genesis 3:15 and Revelation 12:1-5)? Who is behind Haman's hatred for all the Jews (Psalm 83:4)?

(c) What process did Haman use to discover the day on which all the Jews should be killed? Who is in control of the lot (Proverbs 16:33)?

(d) What claims does he make about these people (verse 8)? What in verse 9 indicates *how much* Haman hated the Jews?

(e) Is this also true about believers today (John 15:18-19)? Why?

(f) *Family*: Read Esther 3:5-8. Why have the Jews been hated by people throughout their history? Are believers hated today? Should we be surprised by this? How should we respond to persecution? Pray for believers in parts of the world where persecution is especially severe.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT   **READ THE PASSAGE**
(a) **Read Esther 3:8-15.** How does the king respond to Haman's request? What questions does he fail to ask? What does this tell us about his character (Proverbs 28:20; 1 Timothy 6:9-10)?

(b) What was true of the law of the Medes and the Persians (Esther 1:19; Daniel 6:15)? Read Esther 3:13 carefully...what is the meaning of the words "each, every, all?" What is the scope of Haman's plan?

(c) *When* is this decree issued (Esther 3:12)? What is to take place on the next day (Exodus 12:6; Lev. 23:5; Numbers 28:16)? What is the significance of his choice?

(d) What was the reaction of the people of Persia to this decree? Are these only Jews or are others distressed (Proverbs 29:2)?

(e) What do Haman and the king do? What was their concern? How does Mordecai react (Esther 4:1-3)?

(f) *Family*: Read Esther 3:8-15 and 1 Peter 5:5-7. How do people usually react to tragic situations? How does Mordecai react? What are we told to do in 1 Peter 5:7? Pray together about a difficult situation in your lives or in the world.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT   **READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Psalm 37:1-29.** What does David say about evildoers (Psalm 37:1-2)? How is this similar to Haman's exaltation?

(b) What does David tell us to do when evildoers are in control of events in our lives (Psalm 37:3-7)?

(c) What does he warn us against doing (Psalm 37:8)? How have you seen this in the life of Haman?

(d) What other encouragements does David give to believers who are oppressed (Psalm 37:23-29)?

(e) *Family*: Read Psalm 37:1-29. Talk about why God allows evil people to have the "upper-hand" for a time. What will eventually happen to them? What does God promise will happen for His people? What are some things that we should do when we are living under evildoers? Pray that you will learn to grow in faithfulness during times of persecution and trouble. Also pray for someone today that does not know the Lord.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT   **READ THE PASSAGE**

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Esther 3. Why does pride lead to destruction? Review your memory verse ... what does it tell you about pride and destruction? What does God do for us when we are humble? How does He respond when we act in pride? Pray for your worship service tomorrow that many will humble themselves before the Lord and be changed by hearing His Word.

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Why Pride Leads to Destruction
"For God is opposed to the proud..."