

If the Jews did what was right this too shows us that this story does not contain the final hope, because a

_____ victory was still needed for God's people.

The reference to Ahasuerus's _____ and _____ remind us of the danger of a sinful king and our need for a perfect one.

The references to Mordecai remind us of our need for an eternal and perfectly powerful _____ and _____.

The entire story shows the need for God to _____.

1 Peter 1:3-9

Reversal, Celebration, and Hope Esther 6:12-10:3

1. This story proves the impossibility of destroying God's people

2. This story illustrates the biblical theme of _____

Purim today:

*In the Jewish calendar today, the Sabbath preceding Purim is called Shabbat Zachor (the Sabbath of remembering). On this Sabbath the readings are Exodus 17:8–16 (the instruction to Moses to write down what Joshua needs to remember, i.e. that God will wipe out the memory of Amalek) and Deuteronomy 25:17–19 (the instruction to Israel to remember what the Amalekites did, not forgetting that God will give them rest from their enemies so the memory of the Amalekites will be wiped out). Far from distracting from the story, these verses aid our appreciation of its meaning and historical significance.... The festival of Purim is still celebrated in Jewish communities today. The festival celebrates the inviolability of the Jewish people due to God's decisive acts of deliverance for their sake, and it provides a religious framework for the interpretation of the events of the story. The Purim festival has become a Purim season that begins with the Shabbat Shekalim (the Sabbath of Shekels) that occurs on the Sabbath before the beginning of the month of Adar. The readings on this Sabbath commend the giving of money (shekels). The Sabbath immediately before the fourteenth of Adar is called the Shabbat Zachor (the Sabbath of Remembrance, see notes above on 9:27–28) when the history of the enmity between Jews and Amalekites is recalled. On the thirteenth of Adar, the Jews fast as they remember the risk Esther took on behalf of her people. The requirements on this solemn day include abstention from eating, drinking, wearing of leather shoes, washing and engaging in sexual activity. At the conclusion of the fast (on the eve of Purim), the book of Esther is read out in its entirety, preceded by the pronouncement of three blessings that praise God for his miraculous deeds. The concluding blessing reads: "Blessed are you Lord our God, King of the universe, who has contended for us and defended our cause, avenging us by bringing retribution on all our mortal enemies and delivering us from our adversaries. Blessed are You, Lord, who delivers His people from all their adversaries—God who saves." On the morning of Purim the Esther scroll is read again in the synagogue, but the mood is lighter. In fact, children dress up as the main characters in the story, and the carnival atmosphere is enhanced by the telling of jokes and the singing of songs. When Haman's name is mentioned, children make a loud noise using various homemade shakers. Two types of gifts are sent: food parcels to friends and family, and charitable donations for the poor. Towards the end of the day, Jewish families gather together for a relaxed meal. Today it is only the Jews in Jerusalem (a walled city) who celebrate Purim on the fifteenth day of Adar—all other Jews celebrate on the fourteenth of Adar. So the Purim celebrations today follow the events and procedures laid out in the book of Esther, providing a theological framework for its interpretation. The festival is thus a vivid reminder that unexpected reversals do happen in history, and such reversals have a permanent impact on the life of the community of faith who celebrate the powerful presence of God among them. (Reid, D. (2008). *Esther: An Introduction and Commentary* (Vol. 13, pp. 148–151). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.)*

3. This story reminds us that God's people should _____

4. This story does not contain the final _____

Did the Jews do what was right?

Why does the story end the way that it does?

If the Jews did not do what was right this shows us that this story does not contain the final hope, because they needed a

greater _____ .