

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 9:20 – 10:3
February 21, 2012

- I. Where Are They Now?
 - A. Return to Own Time
 - 1. First readers
 - B. Very Different Origin
 - 1. Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread – Exodus 12:14–17
 - a. Notice...
 - C. Jewish Feasts
 - 1. Most feasts
 - a. Initiated by _____
 - b. Celebrating that _____ has done exactly what He said He would do
 - 2. Two feasts
 - a. Hanukkah and Purim
- II. The Feast of Purim – Esther 9:20–28
 - A. Mordecai’s Command – Vv. 20–22
 - 1. Relief from their enemies
 - 2. Day of celebration
 - 3. To be fair...
 - B. Authority
 - 1. Mordecai’s command
 - C. Two Days
 - 1. Two possible interpretations

D. Today

1. Celebration on one day

2. Celebration

3. This year

E. Explanation - Vv. 23-28

1. Who gave them relief?

2. Irony

3. The name

4. Double entendre

III. Purim in Light of the Holocaust

A. Irony

1. Difficult to celebrate

2. Proof that God will not allow his people to be destroyed

IV. Purim in Light of Jesus

A. In Light of the Resurrection

1. The resurrection of Jesus transforms the meaning of Purim

B. Foreshadowing

1. Not an isolated story

2. Eschatological link

- a. The story of Esther is a link between God's covenant with Israel and our ultimate destiny
- b. Even the name hints at this

V. Esther's Part – Vv. 29–32

A. Obscure Hebrew

1. How many letters

2. Full authority

VI. Xerxes Part – Esther 10:1–3

A. What is the point?

1. The more things change, the more they stay the same

VII. Final Thoughts on Esther

A. God's Providence

1. Two truths

a. God is _____

b. God works in _____ with human action

“Neither of them (Mordecai and Esther) aspired to the role; perhaps neither of them deserved it. It was thrust on them by a series of improbable circumstances largely beyond their control. Nevertheless, their unlikely partnership accomplished God's ancient promise, and the Jewish race was preserved until in the fullness of time, God entered history through this people as the Messiah. How marvelous are God's inscrutable ways!”¹

2. Applying this to ministry

“As we continue to live faithfully in Christ, we can be sure that whatever happens to us – the decisions we make, the mistakes we regret, and even the sins that shame us – are all links in God's plan not only for our individual lives

¹ Jobs, Karen. The NIV Application Commentary on Esther. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 228.

but for his greater work in history. Through his inscrutable ways, along paths that are sometimes dark and treacherous, he brings his people to that day when all creation will rejoice that our sorrow has been turned to joy and our mourning into celebration.”²

VIII. The Story

A. Time of the Judges

1. Chaos

B. Author and Date

1. Author

2. Date

IX. Key Themes

A. Hesed

1. No English equivalent

- a. Carries with it the ideas of covenantal loyalty, faithfulness, kindness, goodness, mercy love, and compassion

2. Key to understanding Ruth

B. Some Aspects of Hesed

1. Emanates from and based on _____

2. Tied to the concept of _____

3. It is fundamentally an _____

4. It is performed by a situationally _____ person on behalf of a situationally _____ person

5. It is voluntary

C. Our Model of Hesed

1. God is our model

2. Proper response

² Ibid, pg. 231.

D. Go'el and Levirate Marriage

1. Kinsman-Redeemer

- a. It was the nearest male blood relative who served as an advocate for any less fortunate members of the family or extended family (clan)

2. Some functions of the go'el

- a. To redeem _____
- b. To redeem relatives who had to sell themselves into _____
- c. To assist a relative who is in _____ need or in _____ proceedings
- d. To care for an indigent _____ of a deceased relative
- e. To redeem the _____ of the deceased (Levirate marriage)

3. Responsibility

4. The Great Go'el