

# YOUR BIG M O M E N T

## PART TWO: SETTING UP YOUR BIG MOMENT

Both Mordecai and Esther had a painful past. Mordecai in captivity, and Esther was an orphan. What do you do with painful memories and a painful past? Should we be consumed by our past and be held in bondage to it? Should we pretend that our past just never happened and repress it? Or is there a third option—allowing God to use our past turning it into a wonderful plan for our future?

**BIG IDEA:** Your past sets the stage for your big moment.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What would your ideal ‘big moment’ (your big breakthrough, your dream come true) look like?
2. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Esther 2:5.* Contrast how Mordecai is described with Ruth (Ruth 2:2) and Uriah (2 Samuel 11:6). This is the first and only time in the Old Testament that a person of Jewish descent is given the tagline “a Jew.” Why is that?

*The Jews living in Persia could have gone home to Israel but chose not to. The Jews in Persia have done everything they could to try to fit in—to not be foreigners. So much so that they had compromised their very beliefs and morals, and are a people who are almost assimilated and secularized.*

3. What hope does that give you and me that God used Esther and Mordecai, even though they had compromised their lifestyle and beliefs and lived morally ambiguous lifestyles?
4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Esther 2:6.* What one painful thing defined Mordecai’s past and story? In Esther 2:7, what one painful thing defined Esther’s past and story?
5. What one painful thing (being held captive to something or experiencing the loss of something or someone) defines your story? Share this with the group.
6. We have two tendencies in dealing with pain and trauma in our past—to be consumed by our past and to be in bondage to it, or to pretend like it never happened and repress it. Why are both of these unhealthy?

*Just like Esther, God is setting up for your big moment, but you can’t separate your past—however painful it may be—from God’s plan. You cannot become the person God has planned for you without your history. God’s plan for your future is tied to your past. You may hate your past and would do anything to forget it, but God wants to use it for an amazing plan for your future—just like Esther.*

7. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Esther 2:1-4.* What process did Xerxes agree to find another wife? How would this be scandalous today?
8. If you were one of these women who were forced to be a part of this beauty pageant, what positive reactions might you experience?
9. What do you imagine some of the negative reactions might have been? Knowing what you know about Esther’s past (she suffered the loss of both her parents), how might this experience of being selected or rejected by King Xerxes be doubly difficult for her?
10. Chris talked about two extremes when we deal with our past. *The first extreme* is allowing our past to hold us in bondage, keeping us from moving forward. Are there some things in your past that are holding you in bondage? How can you keep your past from defining and confining you?

Scars remind us of where we’ve been. They don’t have to dictate where we’re going.

11. *The second extreme* is pretending like our past never happened and repressing our past. Why is this not healthy? Do you think the Apostle Paul ever forgot what he was before meeting Jesus or where God rescued him out of?

12. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Jeremiah 29:11.* What painful parts of your past can God use in your future?

The Hebrew word for *future* (אֲחֵרִיתָהּ) at the end of verse 11 has a very rich meaning. It can mean *after, later, behind, and following*. What is behind and what is future have the same source. Going into the future is like rowing a rowboat. Your back is turned so that you can't see where you're rowing, but you can see clearly where you have been. We don't need to be obsessed with our past and not get on with living our future. But what God wants us to understand is that, "In God—your past and your future share the same source—that source is Jesus!" When I am in Jesus, my past isn't just a terrible blight on my record, but it is something that He takes hold of and turns a history into a God-given destiny. God can take your past and turn it into a wonderful plan for your future. Your pain and your past aren't just to forget. Your past is to learn from and for God to use.

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#### THINK ABOUT IT

Your pain and your past aren't just to forget; it is to learn from and for God to use. There may be a horrible experience of loss and pain and even abuse. And though God didn't cause it, He can use it, because God is setting you up to influence others. God wants to use your story to change the stories of others. Because only people who have walked down some roads can help people walk down those same roads.

#### WHAT WILL YOU DO?

What are you going to have to start doing to allow God to help others with a similar story as yours? (Options: Stop being held captive to a sin. Stop running from your past and start facing it. Start telling your story to others.)

#### CHANGING YOUR MIND

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a **future** and a hope."* Jeremiah 29:11

All the pain of your past has prepared you for your big moment.  
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HOW DO YOU PREPARE  
FOR YOUR BIG  
MOMENT



WHEN EVERYDAY  
SEEMS SO  
ORDINARY?