

Home Group notes for the week following Sunday 18^h October 2015

**HEROINES OF THE FAITH – ESTHER
(Playing my part in the community)**

As We Gather

The Book of Esther is set in a time when the Jewish people had been in exile for about 100 years. Although the first wave of exiles had returned to Jerusalem about 50 years earlier under the reign of Cyrus, many families had established comfortable lives and remained in the Persian Empire. Esther (Hebrew –Hadassah) was a young Jewish orphan who had been raised by her father's cousin, Mordecai, an official in the court of Xerxes, the Persian king.

Reading Scripture RUTH 1 – 10 (especially Esther 4 : 13 - 16)

Thinking together

Esther knew the danger there was in going against custom and Persian law, yet she risked her life in coming before the king without being summoned [Esther 4:1 – 5:2]

What did Esther do to prepare for going before the king? Discuss
[see Esther 4:15-16 and 5:1]

How do you react when confronted with a difficult situation? Discuss

How do you prepare for making life-changing decisions? Discuss
(see Ezra 8:21-23)

How can the faith community support / assist members in difficult times? Discuss

Although God is not mentioned on this Book, His presence is obvious in the lives of Esther and Mordecai [see Esther 2:3-4 + 17 & 21-22; and 6:1-3]

Is God's presence obvious in your life? Discuss
(see Romans 8:28)

Are you willing to give up everything to put other's needs ahead of your own? Discuss
[see Esther 8:3-6]

In Closing

Although we may not understand everything happening round us, God can, and does, use Christ-followers to accomplish His purposes.

The price to be paid for serving God is long-term commitment.

To what community ministry / service have you committed your life / self?

