



HER STORY:

# *Redeemed*

A STUDY OF  
TWELVE WOMEN

OF THE BIBLE

TRANSFORMED

BY GOD'S

REDEEMING GRACE

EMPOWERED WOMEN'S MINISTRIES



*empowered*

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES  
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF GOD

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HER STORY

# Redeemed

The *HER STORY* Series  
Volume Two

EMPOWERED WOMEN'S MINISTRIES  
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF GOD



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*Redeemed*

FROM DISADVANTAGE  
TO PURPOSE

## SESSION ONE



*HER STORY*

# *Esther*

By Olivia Welch

*"If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?" ESTHER 4:14 (NLT).*

I grew up as the youngest of two children, in a home where alcohol and abuse were commonplace. When I was eight or nine years old, my father got terribly sick, and eventually passed away from cancer. He was a heavy smoker, so it shouldn't have been surprising, but losing him was a hard thing for me to comprehend at that age. On top of all of that, I was bullied by classmates for various reasons that I had no control over. I dealt with things no child should ever have to deal with and ended up on a path riddled with doubt, depression, and shame in my teenage and early adult years. Any time I attempted to change course, I would often question my ability to make good decisions or advocate for myself, let alone anyone else. In my mind, I was getting exactly what I deserved, so why try to do anything different? It wasn't until I started leaning on God in those moments of uncertainty that I witnessed how He

could move in my life and use me in the lives of others. Seeking God is how Esther came to make her courageous decision to speak up for her people. This one courageous act would have a lasting impact for generations. In spite of her disadvantaged background, she found favor and discovered her purpose.

**In spite of her disadvantaged background,  
she found favor and discovered her *Purpose*.**

### FINDING IDENTITY

The relatively short, yet significant, story of Esther begins with a tragedy. She becomes an orphan at a young age. My experience tells me how hard it is to grow up without one parent, but both? I can't imagine how difficult that must have been for Esther. Then she, along with many other Jews, had been exiled from their homeland for committing idolatry and disobeying God. It's unlikely that Esther was disobedient. However, sometimes we can suffer the consequences from the poor choices of others. From experience, I can tell you, this comes with a certain level of guilt. Esther found herself living in a foreign land among Gentiles, which basically forced her to hide who she really was so she wouldn't be treated differently. She had many disadvantages in life. But disadvantages can be transformed by the Redeemer as we will see!

### FINDING FAVOR

So how did Esther, an impoverished, disadvantaged, Jewish orphan, find herself in the ranks of Gentile royalty? This is the part of the story where we meet Esther's cousin, Mordecai. After the death of her parents, Mordecai raised her as his own. When the position for Queen of Persia *conveniently* opened up, he took Esther to the palace. This was the beginning of a string of events that would eventually lead Esther to the throne.



**Esther did not look for favor, nor did she obtain it by her own efforts. She exercised wisdom to submit to Mordecai's judgment and to Hegai's advice.**

In preparation for her presentation to King Xerxes, Esther with other young women were gathered and supervised by the king's chief eunuch, Hegai. He was impressed with her and offered her treatment beyond what the other women received. Esther never requested preferential treatment, but it was given to her. When offered her choice of clothing and jewelry, she requested nothing. She went to the king only with what Hegai suggested. When it was Esther's turn, everyone who saw her was delighted in her presence and the king was instantly enamored. He practically declared her queen on the spot! The common theme here is that Esther did not look for favor, nor did she obtain it by her own efforts. She exercised wisdom to submit to Mordecai's judgement and to Hegai's advice. These things exemplify God's redeeming ability to grant unmerited favor to those that exercise humility, as noted in 1 Peter 5:6 (NLT): *"So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor."*

### **FINDING PURPOSE**

Esther's story doesn't stop there! Soon after taking her place at the throne, she was burdened by another troubling situation. Haman, the king's most trusted (and prideful) advisor, found out from other palace officials that Mordecai was a Jew. After Mordecai refused to bow down to him, an enraged Haman convinced King Xerxes that all Jews should be executed for his protection. Mordecai learned of this plan and disclosed it to Esther, pleading with her to go to the king and stop it. Her immediate response was basically, "No." In those days, anyone who approached the king without being summoned risked death. Esther had not revealed her own Jewish heritage to the king and not even her position as queen exempted her from the consequences.

Mordecai stressed to Esther that if she didn't act, the Jews would eventually be saved, but she and her relatives would not survive. She reconsidered Mordecai's request and called for all Jews to gather and fast for three days. Afterward she

approached the king to spare her life and the lives of her people, finally revealing her own Jewish heritage. And guess what? It didn't even matter. The king had already resolved to give Queen Esther whatever she desired.

With the strong encouragement of her loving cousin, she courageously risked her own life, blocked Haman's evil plan for Jewish genocide, and obtained special protection for all Jews in King Xerxes empire. If Esther had never been chosen as queen, this story would have had a very different outcome. In spite of her initial identity as a disadvantaged poor orphaned Jew, God beautifully redeemed her life and gave her transforming favor that led to His mighty purposes being fulfilled.

### **LIFE LESSONS:**

1. **FINDING IDENTITY-** Your identity is not found in your upbringing, past, or social status. These are irrelevant to God. God had a plan for Esther long before any of her disadvantaged circumstances occurred. Find comfort in this and know the things that happen(ed) won't prevent you from receiving what God has for you. Galatians 3:27 states, *"for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."* As a follower of Christ, your identity in this world is lost so that you can embrace your identity in Him.
2. **FINDING FAVOR-** It's important to remember that God is *always* working, whether we can see it or not. Esther's abundance of favor was a clear sign that ***God was working***. The name of God is not mentioned once in Esther's story, but His presence is evident throughout. When we practice humility and trust in God's power instead of our own, the result is redeeming, transforming favor! God's power is at work within us! He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20 NIV).
3. **FINDING PURPOSE-** God's plan for your life will not always align with your own, nor will it always be easy. It may be downright terrifying, but thankfully you don't have to figure it out alone. We can devote so much time and energy to finding our purpose, but without taking the time to ask God for direction, it will be fruitless. When you find yourself at a pivotal point, do as Esther did; Pray to your Redeemer, and seek support from fellow believers. It's important to remember that God can transform situations

and cause things to work for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28, NIV).



## ***YOUR STORY:*** Personal Reflection

More than likely you have felt as if you were at a disadvantage at some point in your life. Whether it's career, relationships, service to God, or just life in general. You may feel as though your past or current circumstances disqualify you from God's favor or being used for His purpose. There are many others mentioned in the Bible that also experienced things that disqualified them in the eyes of man. Yet, God still made a way to use them for His purpose.

**List some ways you have felt you were (or are) at a disadvantage:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Our disadvantages do not disqualify us in Christ.

**Read Hebrews 13:21.**

***What is the writer's prayer for you?***

***Have you ever prayed according to this scripture? Why or why not?***

**Read Romans 8:28.**

**According to this verse what two phrases describe the person God works His good purposes for?**

**1. Those who** \_\_\_\_\_.

**2. And are** \_\_\_\_\_.

Redeemed Woman you are qualified to walk out the purpose the [Father](#) has placed in your heart.

**Fill in the Blanks.**

*“The One who calls you by \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ and will \_\_\_\_\_ His work in you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:24 TPT.*

**Read Colossians 2:6, 7 and Psalm 1.**

Jesus has redeemed you for His good purpose. You, like Esther, are a tree rooted in Christ.

**On the branches below write down the good works and purpose God has put in your heart to accomplish for Him.** (Even if you are not doing them yet, they are still part of your story. As you grow in Him, you too will flourish like the person in Psalms 1— **ROOTED IN CHRIST.**)



God has taken into account everything you may think or feel regarding the purpose He has birthed in your heart. He has already answered your questions with His promises.

**Read Job 42:2.**

**Considering what the bible says about your purpose and your God-gifted ability to walk it out, complete the sentence below:**

**“The next time I feel unworthy, unqualified or at a disadvantage regarding my purpose, I am going to \_\_\_\_\_**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.”



## ***HIS STORY:*** Digging Deeper

### **SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: Read HER STORY!**

Esther 1-10

#### **SIGNATURE:** Name

ESTHER [EHS-ter: “star” or “hidden”]

Also known as HADASSAH [huh-DAHS-suh: “myrtle tree”] (Hebrew name).

#### **SETTING:** Background

[Date around 483-473 B.C.] The Jewish people had been dispersed and many were in Suza, the capital of the Persian empire. A plan to exterminate the Jews comes to the attention of Esther’s cousin Mordecai. God gives Esther favor with the King and places her in a position to be used by God for a divine purpose.

The book of Esther is one of only two books in the bible that does not mention God by name, but that certainly does not mean He was not in control. Esther’s redeeming journey to her purpose was one of many indications of God’s sovereignty, His ultimate power and authority over EVERYTHING. Redeemed Woman, even when God seems silent, He is present. There is never a moment when He releases control of your story to the destroyer. In every disadvantage that

suggests you will miss out, lose or be left behind, El Elyon, the God is steadily working His purpose in your life with divine precision.

**Fill in the Box.**

<b>SCRIPTURE</b>	<b>SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD</b>
<b>Psalm 103:19</b>	
<b>Psalm 135:6</b>	
<b>Proverbs 16:9</b>	
<b>Proverbs 16:33</b>	
<b>Proverbs 19:21</b>	

**Read Colossians 1:15-20.**

***Whose image is Christ created in?***

***What part did Christ have in creation?***

***What does Christ hold together?***

***What is Christ the head of?***

***Why is God pleased?***



***What did Christ do for the earth and all its inhabitants?***

***Is Christ capable of taking your life and bringing His purpose out in it?***

Esther's former name, Hadassah, is of Hebrew origin. It would have likely revealed her Jewish background before her presentation to the king. To prevent this from happening, her name was changed to Esther to hide her identity. Many times, in scripture we see someone's name being changed. Some were changed by God and some were not. In any case, God was working His sovereign purpose in that person's life.

**Match the individual with their changed name.**

Daniel	Sarah
Naomi	Zaphenath-Paneah
Ben-Oni	Esther
Sarai	Benjamin
Joseph	Mara
Hadassah	Belteshazzar
Simon	Peter

**Read Isaiah 43:1.**

***Which is the most crucial to walking out your God-given purpose?***

**Circle one, and answer why?**

**What God calls you?      What others call you?      What you call yourself?**

Jesus steps into our story at the perfect time. Even when we don't feel qualified, He knows the exact time we are ready to step into our purpose.

**Read John 4:6-42: HER STORY: the Woman at the Well.**

**Mark each statement with an (A)-Advantage or (D)-Disadvantage**

- ☐ She had multiple husbands.
- ☐ She had few friends.
- ☐ She had a broken heart.
- ☐ She came to the well alone.
- ☐ She understood how she was perceived.
- ☐ She wanted something she had never experienced.
- ☐ She had an understanding of spiritual things.
- ☐ Her reputation became part of her testimony.

Things that seem like a disadvantage are often the very things God uses to work His purpose in us.

***Did Jesus show her favor? Explain.***

***What was this Samaritan Woman's God-given purpose?***

***What was the result of her walking out that purpose?***

Only two women in history have the honor of their story being told in a book of the Bible named after them, Esther and Ruth. Ruth also experienced loss, heart-ache, uncertainty and, ultimately favor. Both women humbly stepped into the purpose for which God had redeemed them. They were both instrumental in His plan to reconcile humanity back to Himself. Consider the similarities in their stories.

**Read Ruth 1-4.**

How Are They Similar?	RUTH	ESTHER
Losses Suffered	Ruth 1:5	Esther 2:7
Challenging Situation	Ruth 1:19-20	Esther 2:8
Cultural Challenges	Ruth 1:22	Esther 2:10
Favor Shown	Ruth 2:16	Esther 5: 3
Story Redeemed	Ruth 4:9	Esther 8:5
Purpose Celebrated	Ruth 4: 13-20	Esther 9:29-32

*How is the relationship between Esther and Mordecai like that of Ruth and Naomi?*

*How is it different?*

*Who has the Lord prepared to walk alongside you in your purpose?*

**Fill in the Blank.**

*Let the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!*

**Psalms 90:17 ESV.**

**Read Luke 2:14 NIV.**

***According to this scripture, what is the greatest demonstration of the favor of God?***

Esther trusted in God's providence and His protective care at a critical moment in her story. This gave Esther peace to approach the king even though the law forbade it. It did not come automatically. Esther understood that she had to prepare herself for this moment.

**Read Esther 4:14.**

***How does Mordecai explain God's providence in this verse?***

**Read Esther 4:15-17.**

***What is Esther's response?***

***What does her statement in verse 17 say about her trust in God?***

**How is God's providence displayed in:**

***Esther's life?***

***Ruth's life?***

***The Samaritan Woman's life?***

***Your life?***

Esther was hesitant in her decision, but she didn't let her fear overcome her. She leaned on God for courage and completely trusted Him with the outcome.

**Fill in the Blanks.**

*"\_\_\_\_\_ in the LORD with \_\_\_\_\_ your heart; do not depend on \_\_\_\_\_ understanding. Seek \_\_\_\_\_ in all you do, and He will show you which path to take."*

**Proverbs 3:5-6 NLT.**

**Describe a time when you leaned on God's providential care. *What was the outcome?***

Like Esther and the other two women detailed in this chapter, you have been redeemed for a purpose bigger than any disadvantage you have encountered or any situation you may be going through. Even if you don't see it now, submitting yourself to God's will and embracing your identity as His daughter will allow His favor to follow you and His grace to transform you.

**Complete this verse.**

*"For we are God's \_\_\_\_\_. He has created us anew in \_\_\_\_\_, so we can do the \_\_\_\_\_ He planned for us long ago."*

**Ephesians 2:10 NLT.**



## **SIMPLIFY:** Personal Application

Esther's story is a prime example of how God can work in us, through us, and for us. Whenever your circumstances or problems seem overwhelming, remember that nothing is too hard for God. He already has a plan for you to prosper. Humble yourself before Him and seek His word. Be confident that He will see you through to the end. When you add God to the equation, you have the power to overcome every obstacle and disadvantage you face so that you can fulfill your God-given purpose.

**What is one circumstance or disadvantage you can hand over to God to open yourself up to His purpose for your life?**



## **SUPPLICATION:** Prayer Focus

*Lord, thank You for Your unmerited grace and favor. I may never understand why certain things happen, but I know that You are an intentional God. Some things happen in order to achieve my divine purpose. I ask that You help me recognize that despite any disadvantages I may have, You have redeemed me for a purpose. Help me to remain humble and remember to seek You. Help me to remember who I am and "whose" I am. Grant me the strength, courage, and wisdom to overcome any situation. Lord, I surrender my all to You so I can be fully used for Your purpose. In Jesus name, Amen.*

**I know the work can seem hard, sometimes overwhelming, and God can send someone else to do the work. But *Redeemed* daughter, have you stopped to think that perhaps, YOU have been born for such a time as this?**

-Kimberly Ming



## *Fun Facts:* About Our Girl Queen **ESTHER!**

- Esther's given queen name means "star" or "hidden." Her Hebrew birth name was Hadassah.
- Esther is King David's great-niece.
- Esther is one of only two women with her own book in the Bible; the other is Ruth.
- The name "God" or "Jesus" is never mentioned in the book of Esther, however it is inferred or symbolized throughout the book.
- The Temple was rebuilt about 40 years before queen Esther became queen, and Nehemiah rebuilt the Wall of Jerusalem about 30 years afterward.
- Her marriage to the king must have given Jews great prestige. It is impossible to guess what might have happened to the Hebrew nation had there been no Esther. Except for her, Jerusalem might never have been rebuilt, and with the annihilation of the Jews it would have changed how Christ came into the world to provide ultimate deliverance. Without her there may have been a different story to tell.



### ***STORY BOARD:*** Journal Notes

***What was revealed to you about the Character of God through HER STORY?***

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# *Don't miss the HER STORY companion book:*



The voices of twelve women come together in this devotional to reflect on the stories of twelve other influential women of the Biblical narrative, each chosen by God to fulfill a divine purpose. These are true stories of God's great love, compassion, and overwhelming forgiveness. These are the stories of God's faithfulness to His chosen daughters for all-time. In this twelve-session study, you will discover that: (1) you have been chosen by God, (2) you have a divine purpose, and (3) your story is worth being told.

The book takes a deep look into the lives of:

*Deborah*

*Ruth*

*Achsah*

*Jael*

*The Isaiah 54 Mother*

*Lois and Eunice*

*Hannah*

*Mary the Mother of Jesus*

*The Samaritan Woman*

*Priscilla*

*Rebekah*

*The Women at the Cross*

**"You have not CHOSEN Me,  
but I have CHOSEN you...  
and I have appointed and placed  
and purposefully planted you..."**

JOHN 15:16 AMP

Book 1 of 2 in the "HER STORY" devotional study series.  
Soft cover, 216 pages; Released 2022

\$12.99



## *ADDITIONAL EMPOWERED RESOURCES:*



### **UNLIMITED: POWER OF ONE**

(Connecting with God and Others)

A devotional study on connecting with God and others. Watch the unlimited power of God unfold when we unite our hearts and minds together as ONE with God through understanding:

- Who God is
- Who we are in God
- How we can represent God to the World

Book 1 of 3 in the “ONE” devotional study series.  
Soft cover, 135 pages; Released 2019

\$12.99 Amazon or \$9.99 [Pcg.org/resources](http://Pcg.org/resources)

### **UNRIVALED: PASSION OF ONE**

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In this devotional study, discover the passionate love of God, a redefined true love that is completely unrivaled and unequal to any earthly love. While taking a deeper look in Scripture, learn what it looks like to LIVE LOVED. Together we will understand:

- We are passionately Loved by God
- We can fully trust in the Love of God
- We can passionately Live Loved to the world

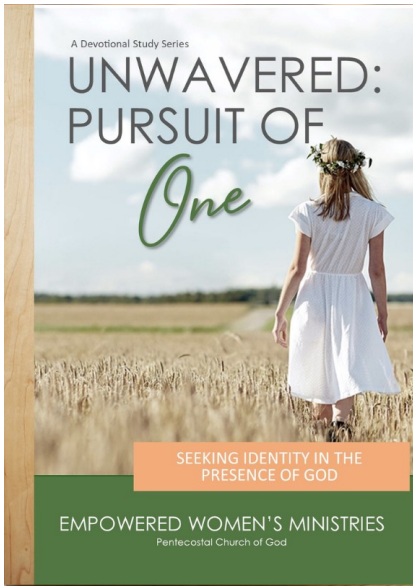
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Also available in SPANISH

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## UNWAVERED: PURSUIT OF ONE

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In this devotional we will discover that our identities are not found in a life position and that the opinions of others cannot inform us of who we really are. Instead, true identity is and can only be found in relationship with God the Father. Throughout the 12 study sessions included, you will be challenged to seek God's Presence and discover the biblical truths that stand in contradiction to cultural lies— truths that unveil:

- Who we are in Jesus
- Who He created us to be
- And how we are relentlessly and unwaveringly pursued by Him

Book 3 of 3 in the "ONE" devotional study series.

Soft cover, 175 pages; Released 2021

\$12.99 Amazon or \$10.99 Pcg.org/resources

### WHAT READERS ARE SAYING:

*I totally love having tools that make our ministry role more effective and, honestly, a little easier. My goal was never to just have a 'chat time,' but, instead, to have times of connecting that would challenge women of all ages from our church to see things different. To have them believe and dream again so they can live more than a "getting by" mentality. These devotionals are a great tool in accomplishing those goals. I'm amazed at how these studies speak to our current season.*

**Susan Dawn Coffman**— Co-pastor of Echoes From Calvary  
Salinas, California

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Pentecostal Church  
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# *EMPOWERED WOMEN'S MINISTRIES:*

Empowered Women's Ministries is an active ministry of dedicated women of the Pentecostal Church of God. Thousands of women are inspired and motivated by the ministry through prayer, support, and outreach endeavors.

The women's ministry operates under the organizational structure of the Pentecostal Church of God on local church, state/district, national, and international levels.

Empowered Women's Ministries exist to represent Jesus Christ throughout the earth. By the power of the Holy Spirit, our mission is to EMPOWER, ENCOURAGE, and EQUIP women to live the Empowered life in Christ.

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