

The Great Gift Exchange

11 - Nehemiah: A Time for Restoration

Church on the Park | Christmas Sunday, 20 DEC 2020 | Glen Gerhauser

Texts: [Esther 9:19, 22](#)

“That is why rural Jews—those living in villages—observe the fourteenth of the month of Adar as a day of joy and feasting, a day for giving presents to each other” (Esther 9:19, NIV).

Theme: No _____ can compare to God’s _____.

Intro: In the book of Esther (about 35 years before Nehemiah), the people celebrated God's salvation by giving _____ to one another. God’s people were in an extremely challenging situation: they were facing annihilation. The king sentenced all of the Jewish people to death. But Esther, a Jew herself, found herself in a place of influence—she was the queen. Mordechai (Esther's guardian) encouraged: "And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" ([Es 4:14](#), NIV). The people fasted and prayed, and Esther used her position to change the king's heart. God _____ the Jews through Esther, and they celebrated with joy and feasting, as well as giving _____ to one another and the poor. This upcoming year, Purim, the feast that started in Esther, falls on the 25th and 26th of February 2021. It's a fun feast, and many aspects of it remind us of Christmas. In Israel, they dress up in customs, and when they read Esther, they rattle noisemakers when they hear Haman's name (the archenemy of the Jewish people). Today, we will be giving gifts to one another, but it's all because of the greatest gift ever given.

1) G - _____ gives the _____ ([John 3:16](#)).

2) I - I _____ his gift by ([John 1:9-12](#)).

3) F - _____ and ([John 1:9-12](#)).

4) T - _____ my brokenness for his _____ ([Romans 6:23](#)).