

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 9TH, 2022 // BOOK OF ESTHER

READY TO DEFEND (ESTHER 9:1-19) THE TABLES WERE TURNED

Nine months had passed since Mordecai's decree was sent out. The thirteenth of Adar had come. The Jews throughout the city and the provinces were ready for the attacks.

- Enemies who **"had hoped to overpower them"** with imperial forces, were defeated and **"not a single person could withstand them."**

REPORTS AND ADDITIONAL REQUESTS IN THE CITY

It was reported that 500 men, including Haman's 10 sons, were killed in the fortress city of Susa. The king asks Esther about the rest of the royal provinces and if there is anything else she wants.

- Esther requests for an additional day to carry out the decree in Susa and that Haman's sons be hung on the gallows.

GOD KEEPS HIS WORD

Esther was aware that there were still people who wished to harm them in the city, so she wanted to ensure that the threat was removed entirely.

- The removal of this remnant of those who followed Haman and hated the Jews had to take place to fulfill what God said to Moses in Exodus 17:14.

The Amalekites spotted two million former slaves wandering in the wilderness and gathered an army to wipe Israel off the face of the Earth and take their possessions. Israel was given victory, yet the Amalekites continued to raid Jewish villages.

- Saul was given authority to put an end to the Amalekites and bring peace to the Jews.

Saul lets one man live, instead of killing everyone as he was told. A man named Agag, and a hundred years later, his descendant, Haman, does exactly what his people have done from the beginning.

- By extending the decree one day, the lineage of the enemies of the Jews would finally be removed as God said they would.

WAS ESTHER BEING EXCESSIVE?

Why did Esther want Haman's sons hung on the gallows? Was it to display the power and authority the Jews had in the Persian Empire?

- Perhaps it was to show that Haman tried so hard to kill the Jews, but he and his family were under God's curse. In the law of the Jews, being hung on a tree showed you were under God's curse (Galatians 3:13b).

THE GOAL WAS RELIEF, NOT GAIN

After the second day, an additional 300 men were put to death in Susa, and a total of 75,000 in all the provinces.

- The author tells us three times that they did not plunder any possessions. This shows they fought a holy war, ordained by God, and were not allowed to take any possessions.

REMEMBRANCE (ESTHER 9:20-32)

DIFFERING DAYS OF CELEBRATION

The author tells us in verses 18 and 19 that the Jews in the city assembled on the 13th and 14th days of Adar. They rested, feasted, and rejoiced on the 15th day, while those outside the city only fought on the 13th and celebrated on the 14th day.

- The Jews were not unified on the day of feasting and rejoicing.

UNIFICATION AND OVERVIEW OF EVENTS

To unify the Jews within the city and those outside of it, Mordecai sent letters throughout the provinces instructing everyone to celebrate on the 14th and 15th of Adar.

- Since most people outside of the city only knew of the edicts that were sent out, Mordecai recounted all that had taken place with Haman inside the city of Susa.

ASSURANCES OF PEACE AND SECURITY

To ensure future generations would know how God delivered His people, Esther and Mordecai sent a second letter confirming Purim and had it written into the record.

- The Festival of Purim is still celebrated today and is one of the more popular Jewish festivals.

FAME (ESTHER 10:1-3)

ABOUT THE KING

All the information we are given is that King Ahasuerus imposed a tax throughout all his provinces.

The language around this seems to be positive, so it appears to be a good thing.

- It's possible these taxes were a source of wealth for the kingdom and were used as a substitute for war. This would have brought further peace to the provinces.

ABOUT MORDECAI

Unlike Haman, who held this position before Mordecai, he used his position, not for selfish gain, but to faithfully serve the king and help his people, the Jews.

- Mordecai the Jew was second only to the king, and all the events of Esther were written in the Book of the Historical Events of the Kings of Media and Persia.

WHO IS THE AUTHOR?

The author never identifies themselves, and there is debate among scholars as to whether it was Mordecai, Ezra, or Nehemiah, who penned the book.

- The book ends by telling of Mordecai's fame among the Jews and how highly he was esteemed by his relatives.

GOD IS WORKING

- We live in a broken world, and sometimes it can be hard to see what God is doing.
- The Jewish people in Esther trusted God's promises. They knew the final outcome and that God would deliver His people.
- **We can trust that God is working in the middle (Romans 8:28).**
- Think of all that God arranged in the Book of Esther.
- Queen Vashti being removed, a competition for a replacement, Esther gaining favor, the casting of lots, restraint of Haman's anger, Esther's delay, the king's sleepless night, and the book read to the king.

WE MUST COMMIT!

- Verse 27 says they **"bound** themselves, their descendants, and all who joined with them to **a commitment** that they would not fail to celebrate."
- **What have we bound ourselves to? Does it retract from our commitment to Jesus or strengthen that commitment?**

WE MUST NOT FORGET!

- Verse 28 says, "these days are **remembered** and celebrated by every generation, family, province, and city, so that these days of Purim **will not lose their significance** in Jewish life and **their memory will not fade from their descendants.**"
- **Have we failed to remember God's promises and allowed them to fade from our memory?**

WE MUST REMEMBER!

- It is important to remember the deliverance of God's people. In Esther, the Jewish people remember their deliverance from Haman's schemes with the Festival of Purim (Lots).
- **We can remember that God delivered us from the schemes of Satan each time we take communion.**