

ESTHER 8-10

REVIEW...

- When Mordecai learned about the command to kill all the Jews – he went and told Esther...
 - He wanted Esther to plead before the King for her people – but she was afraid...
 - It was well known – anyone who went before the King without being invited – death...
 - Mordecai replied - who knows whether you have come for such a time as this!
- So Esther went to the King – and found favor – he offered to give her up to half his Kingdom!
 - Esther only asked that the King and Haman come to a special banquet...
 - But she did not make any request of the King – instead she asked for them to return the next day...
 - Haman left the banquet elated – until he saw Mordecai outside refusing to bow to him...
 - So at the encouragement of his wife – he built a 75' high pole to impale Mordecai on!
- That very night the King could not sleep – and so the book of records was read to him...
 - And the account of Mordecai saving his life was read to him – **Esther 2:21**
 - Haman arrived early in the morning – to request the execution of Mordecai...
 - But instead – the King had him put royal robes and a crown on Mordecai to honor him...
 - Then Haman was taken to the 2nd banquet with the King and Esther...
 - This time she answered when the King asked – she wanted her life / and the lives of her people...
 - The King flew into a rage – who would dare to touch his Queen – she answered - wicked Haman!
 - The King demanded Haman to be the one impaled on the pole he built for Mordecai!

FEAST OF PURIM... (3 THINGS)

- **1st – TURNING THE TABLES... 8:1-17**
 - 1st – Great rewards... vs. 1-2
 - After the death of Haman – Esther came to see the King Ahasuerus...
 - The house of Haman – all his possession – were given to Esther by the King...
 - Esther then revealed that Mordecai was her cousin / and adopted father...
 - The King gave him his signet ring – making Mordecai the head of the princes of Persia...
 - Then Esther gave Mordecai the responsibility of overseeing the house of Haman!
 - Everything that Haman had – from position to possession – was given to Mordecai!
 - Haman may have appeared to have it all / while Mordecai had nothing...
 - But appearances can be deceiving – a day of judgment was coming!
 - When we look at the evil world around us – it can be very upsetting...
 - We see people living immoral lives – rejecting the knowledge of God...
 - And the worst part is they seem to be getting away with it...
 - They are not suffering – they may even prosper – and it seems unfair!
 - **Psalm 73:16-17** – “I tried to understand why the wicked prosper. But what a difficult task it is! Then I went into your sanctuary... and thought about the destiny of the wicked.”
 - Just because God has not judged yet – does not mean God will not judge...
 - Many assume they are ‘ok’ because God does not immediately punish them...
 - They make mistake of interpreting God’s ‘patience’ for God’s ‘acceptance’...
 - Just because God has not judged yet – does not mean God will not judge!
 - No matter how we sin – in the end there are consequences – **Numbers 32:23**
 - Yet our reward for living for Jesus is not always immediate...
 - You do not plant a seed - and expect there to be fruit on the branches in the morning...
 - And if you sat there and waited for the plant to grow - you would likely give up!

- o The solution is to keep busy - weeding / plowing - in time the fruit will come!
- o So often we want to see the good fruit from our efforts right now!
- o When the fruit does not come - we get tired - assuming nothing will ever happen...
- o It is easy to get frustrated with the failures in our Christian walk...
- o It can be tempting to want to 'give up' - thinking things will never change!
- Do not give up - good fruit takes time and patience to grow...
 - o **Galatians 6:9** - "Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart."
 - o Rather than looking for the fruit - we just need to keep busy serving Jesus...
 - o As we are faithful to abide in Jesus - stand up for His Word...
 - o In God's time we will bear great fruit - be used powerfully for the Lord!
 - o So keep doing good - especially to those who are brother and sisters in the Lord!
- o 2nd – The counter law... vs. 3-14
 - Esther spoke again to the King – pleading with him to counteract the evil of Haman...
 - How could she – a Jew - sit by while her people were subject to destruction!
 - It is not enough that we have been saved from death by the Grace of God...
 - What about the rest of our family / our friends – those who do not know Jesus...
 - We know what happens to those who do not have a relationship with Jesus...
 - Yet so often we hesitate – are more concerned about what others might say or think of us...
 - We must recognize what is at stake – be bold and tell those we love they need Jesus!
 - Although Haman was dead – the law he had inspired remained in place...
 - On the 13th of Adar – all of the Jews were destined to be annihilated by their enemies!
 - He could not take back what he had said / or undo the decree he had signed...
 - Because according to Persian Law – no edict could be revoked – **Daniel 6:14**
 - **James 1:19** - "My dear brothers, be quick to listen, slow to speak..."
 - Because it is easy to say something – but almost impossible to take our words back...
 - Better to think first before we speak – then face the consequence of our words!
 - The King pointed out - he had executed Haman because he tried to harm the Jews...
 - If he was willing to do that to his chief prince – how much more anyone else...
 - So he gave Mordecai permission to write a new law for the protection of the Jews!
 - So on the 23rd of Sivan (*May/June*) Mordecai wrote a new edict...
 - It was sent to all 127 provinces of the Kingdom – translated into every language...
 - Sent on the swiftest steeds / camels – to deliver the message to far corners of the Empire...
 - Written in the name of King Ahasuerus – sealed with his signet ring...
 - That on the same day the Jews were to be killed – the 13th day of Adar (*March*)...
 - The Jews were allowed to gather in every city – to destroy / kill / annihilate their enemies!
 - Mordecai used the same language / day as Haman – but this time in favor of the Jews!
 - Only God can take a horrible situation – and turn it around for our good - **Isaiah 63:1**
 - God is the one who can turn our sorrow into joy / our mourning into a holiday...
 - But like Esther – it takes willingness on our part to come humble before the King...
 - It is there we find Grace and Mercy to help us in our times of need!
 - **Hebrews 4:16**–"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."
- o 3rd – Good to be a Jew... vs. 15-17
 - Mordecai left the King dressed in royal robes and a royal crown...
 - And the whole city of Shushan celebrated – apparently they did not miss Haman...
 - Here was a man who thought he had everything – forgotten almost immediately!

- In **Luke 12:16-22** Jesus gives the Parable of the rich man...
 - A man who had so much he did not even have enough room to store all he had harvested...
 - But God called him a Fool – he would die tonight - then who will get the things he stored...
 - Most people dedicate their life to find - the BIG PAYDAY - the path to 'easy street'...
 - Thinking if only I had a LOT of money - then all of my problems would go away!
 - When we are young we tend to have nothing - no money / no possessions...
 - So we work hard all our life to try and get all the things we 'want' - only then to die...
 - **Ecclesiastes 2:18-20** - "I am disgusted that I must leave the fruits of my hard work to others. And who can tell whether my successors will be wise or foolish? And yet they will control everything I have gained by my skill and hard work. How meaningless!"
 - That does not mean we are not to work hard - it means we work hard for God...
 - Do not strive after the riches of this world - they do not last...
 - Instead strive after the royal robes and crown that come through living your life for God!
- From one of the darkest moments in Jewish history – came one of their greatest victories!
 - And in every city where the decree of the King came there was great celebration...
 - The Jews had light (*prosperity*) / gladness (*happiness*) / joy / and honor (*value*)...
 - Then many of the people of the land became Jews – for fear fell upon them!
 - It is often in the darkest times – when we have the great victories...
 - That is why we are called to rejoice in in trials – **Romans 5:3**
 - Because if there were never any challenges – we would never learn to depend upon God!
 - The Lord uses those trials to show us He will take care of all our needs – prosper us...
 - Giving us confidence we are important / valuable to him – that He will never fail us!
 - That confidence in the His faithfulness – gives us a godly character...
 - As a result we become known as those who trust in God – full of the joy of the Lord...
 - And that joy in any circumstance – allows the world to see Jesus in us!
- **2ND – THE VICTORY OF THE JEWS... 9:1-32**
 - 1st – The 13th of Adar... vs. 1-10
 - The day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them...
 - From the very beginning it has been the aim of Satan to destroy the people of God...
 - He inspired Cain to kill Abel – it was through the seed he would be defeated – **Genesis 3:15**
 - He attempted to corrupt the line of men – *nephilim* – resulting in the flood – **Genesis 6:4**
 - He inspired Pharaoh to kill every male son of Israel – **Exodus 2:16**
 - He was the inspiration behind Haman – to wipe the Jews from the face of the earth...
 - Satan would try again and again to destroy the Jews – Herod / Inquisition / Holocaust...
 - The reason satan has gone after the Jews – is because they are Gods chosen people!
 - One of my favorite movies is 'Fiddler on a roof' – the story of poor Russian Jews...
 - In a prayer Tevye says – 'O dear Lord I know we are your chosen people...
 - But could you choose someone else for a little while!'
 - We need to understand – because we are the children of God – we are a target...
 - Jesus even told Peter in **Luke 22:31** - Satan has asked for you by name...
 - I imagine those were VERY unsettling words to hear - 'satan knows my name'...
 - But make no mistake – if we stand up for Jesus – satan knows who we are...
 - And he will come test us - try us - to see what we are made of - try and discourage us...
 - He wants to try and get us to back down – walk away from the ministry!
 - The day that was supposed to be the defeat of the Jews – was their greatest victory!
 - According to the King's command - the Jews in every city banded together in every city...
 - And all the officials of the Land came to the aid of the Jews – for the fear of Mordecai...

- Because he had become very powerful in the court of King Ahasuerus...
- So the Jews killed all their enemies – 500 in the palace of Shushan alone!
- **I Corinthians 2:8** tell us if satan had known - he would never have crucified Christ...
- When Jesus was put on the cross – satan rejoiced - he thought he had won...
- What he did not understand - but would learn 3 short days later - it was his defeat!
- It was there on the cross Jesus crushed satan / sin / and death!
- Our enemy is a defeated foe – we have nothing to fear from him – we win!
- **I Corinthians 15:55-57** - “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?
... Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

o 2nd – The 14th of Adar... vs. 11-19

- The King reported to Esther - 500 killed / including the 10 sons of Haman...
 - Esther asked for 1 more day to purge 300 remaining enemies of the Jews in Shushan...
 - And that the bodies of the 10 sons of Haman would be impaled on poles...
 - It would seem logical the original decree of Haman exposed many enemies of the Jews...
 - So that one day was not enough to be able to dispose of them all...
 - The public display of the bodies of the sons of Haman would serve as a future warning!
 - The assumption being that the sons of Haman – were just like their father!
 - Now God does not punish the children for the sins of their fathers...
 - It is true our parents have a HUGE influence on us - either good or bad...
 - But God does not punish us for the mistakes of our parents...
 - But we can learn from their mistakes - not follow in their footsteps...
 - **Ezekiel 18:20** - “The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son.”
- The remainder of the Jews in the Empire killed 75,000 of their enemies on the 13th of Adar...
 - But they did not take any of their possessions – they were not in it for the money...
 - The Jews did not want anyone thinking they had ulterior motives...
 - They were only seeking to defend their families – keep them safe from harm...
 - Is there ever a good time when a Christian can use force to defend their family...
 - If a mugger tried to steal from your wife / or a robber breaks into your home...
 - Do you rebuke them in the name of Jesus – or can you add in Smith and Wesson...
 - We certainly see examples in the Bible of men being armed – **II Samuel 23**
 - Even the Disciples were told to arm themselves before the crucifixion – **Luke 22:36**
 - But we are not to trust in our abilities / or our weapons - **Psalms 44:6-7**
 - Ultimately we are to trust in the Lord as our protector – He is our defense – **Psalms 28:7**

o 3rd – The celebration of Purim... vs. 20-32

- Mordecai sent a letter out to all the Jews – a command to celebrate...
 - On the 14-15th of Adar – they were to have a holiday commemorating their victory...
 - Celebrating how God turned their sorrow to joy / their mourning into a holiday!
 - It was a celebration to be remembered for every generation / in every place...
 - A tradition so ‘Purim’ would not be forgotten by subsequent generations!
- Traditions can be good – when they teach us about God...
 - I think children should see Baptisms / Communion – partake if they want to...
 - Not for the sake of the ‘tradition’ but so they can ask why – why do we do it...
 - It give the opportunity for us to teach our kids about God ...
 - Communion - teaching how we were saved from sin/death – by the sacrifice of Jesus...
 - Baptism – teaching how we are no longer sinners – but new creations in Christ!

● 3RD – **HE THAT HUMBLING HIMSELF... 10:1-3**

o 1st – King Ahasuerus imposed a tax on his kingdom...

- Presumably to compensate for the loss that came from his decrees – 75,000 killed...
 - But Mordecai became great in the Kingdom – advancing to the role of 2nd in the Land...
 - The account of him even being recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Persia!
 - Haman went from royalty to infamy / Mordecai went from obscurity to royalty...
 - One of the most powerful pictures in in the Bible of a great truth...
 - God resists the proud - and only pours out His grace on the humble - **James 4:6**...
- If we are honest - we tend to put ourselves before others - we are not humble...
 - When we get to church - we do not prefer others – we grab the best donut...
 - We will fight and grab to get the best - we saw it first - we deserve it!
 - Yet if we exalt ourselves - we will be humbled / humble ourselves - God will exalt us...
 - If we are prideful - if we think we deserve the best - God is opposed to us...
 - It puts up a wall between God and us - it breaks our fellowship with the Lord...
 - No matter what we do - or how hard we try - we will fail because God is not with us...
 - It is only when we are willing to humble ourselves - God stands on our side...
 - Then no matter what we put our hands to in life - we will find success!