

**"The Tables are Turned"**

**Esther 9**

**Introduction:** Tonight as we return to our study of Esther, we have come to chapter 9, and it is in this chapter we shall see what happened on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the 12<sup>th</sup> month. Let us remember that this is the day in which the Jews were to be exterminated.

**Esther 3:13-14**

<sup>13</sup> *And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.*

<sup>14</sup> *The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.*

The counter decree that we looked at had been sent out about nine months earlier.

**Esther 8:9**

<sup>9</sup> *Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.*

The Jews therefore had nine months to prepare for the execution day.

**I. The Fear of the People**

**Notice Esther 9:1-2**

Here in verse 2 we see that the Jews gathered themselves together to defend themselves against their attackers. Some would question why the Gentiles would even attack the Jews after the counter decree which gave the Jews permission to defend themselves. I believe there are two reasons.

- 1. The Gentiles hated the Jews.**

**Notice Esther 9:5**

Hatred has led many people down a path that has brought much pain to them and to others in their lives.

**Genesis 37:4-5**

<sup>4</sup> *And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.*

<sup>5</sup> *And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.*

Joseph's brothers hated him, and we know the results of their hatred. It brought pain to their father Jacob, and it brought great conviction into their own lives later. Hatred can be so great that it blinds the person controlled by it so that they cannot see the dangers on the path they are walking.

When Jesus walked the earth, He too was hated by the religious leaders and their followers.<sup>23-25</sup>

**John 15:23-25**

<sup>23</sup> *He that hateth me hateth my Father also.*

<sup>24</sup> *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.*

<sup>25</sup> *But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.*

Their hatred of Jesus caused them to ignore the miracles of Jesus which showed He was who He claimed to be.

This is one of the reasons the Gentiles were still set on killing the Jews. They hated them long before the death decree and once the death decree was set in the law it was as if they were blind to the counter decree that gave the Jews the right to defend themselves even to the point of killing the Gentiles.

There was yet reason why the Gentiles were set on killing the Jews.

**2. The wealth.**

**Esther 3:13**

<sup>13</sup> *And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.*

According to Haman's decree those who killed the Jews could lay claim to all their possessions. I can assure you that the Gentiles had their eyes on the wealth of the Jews. Their desire for earthly riches blinded them to what it might cost them.

**Application:**

We see this very sin at work in our day today. People strive to gather more and more of this world's goods all the while they give very little thought to eternity.

**1 Timothy 6:6-12**

<sup>6</sup> *But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

<sup>7</sup> *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

<sup>8</sup> *And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

<sup>9</sup> *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

<sup>10</sup> *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

<sup>11</sup> *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

<sup>12</sup> *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

**Luke 12:16-21**

<sup>16</sup> *And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:*

<sup>17</sup> *And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?*

*18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.*

*19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.*

*20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?*

*21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

**Notice Esther 9:2 again.**

I want you notice that fear of the Jews fell upon all people on this day. Someone once said that there is nothing more dangerous than a prisoner with a gun. That is equivalent to what was happening here. The Jews had been oppressed by the Gentiles for months and now they had the ability to defend themselves and this caused the Gentiles to be afraid. But many Gentiles because of their desire to gain wealth still attacked despite their fear. We can also see the mighty hand of God as He is protecting His people.

**Notice Esther 9:3-5**

Here we see that even the king's rulers joined forces with the Jews. This is certainly the hand of God in this situation.

**Application:**

I need to stop here for a moment and point out a very important Truth for us who are believers. When we are outnumbered God can send us help from the most unlikely places.

**Proverbs 16:7**

*7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

Let us notice what God did in the days of Jehosaphat.

**2 Chronicles 20:1-3, 22-25**

*It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.*

*2 Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazontamar, which is Engedi.*

<sup>3</sup> And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

<sup>22</sup> And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

<sup>23</sup> For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

<sup>24</sup> And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.

<sup>25</sup> And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

Here in this battle the enemy defeated themselves.

## II. The Self Control of the Jews

After living in fear and living under the hatred of the Gentiles it would be a natural reaction to seek revenge when the tables were turned. But that is not what the Jews did.

### Notice Esther 9:5-15

After killing Haman's ten sons Esther ask permission to hang their dead bodies on the gallows. This would serve as a deterrent to anyone else who was considering an attack against the Jews. What we need to see is at the end of verse 15. The Jews never placed their hands on the spoils. In other words the Gentiles which they killed they did not take their possessions. They were permitted to do so.

### Esther 8:11

<sup>11</sup> Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

### Notice Esther 9:16

The Jews killed 75,000 Gentiles and never took any of their possessions. This tells me they were not concerned about any wealth, but they were only concerned about their lives. This was all self-defense. This took a great amount of self-control on the part of the Jews.

**Application:**

This self-control that we see in the Jews is also to be practiced in our lives. But it can be difficult especially if you find yourself under the heavy hand of someone who for no reason is set against you and then one day the tables turn. Something happens and you find yourself in a situation where you can inflict the same pain and worry upon them. The flesh will tell you to pile it on. But we are not to be controlled by the flesh but by the Spirit and the Spirit is all about self-control.

**Galatians 5:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

<sup>23</sup> *Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Temperance is self-control.

Vengeance is what the world seeks but we are not of the world. We are members of the family of God, and we are to handle such situations as our Lord would.

**Matthew 5:43-48**

<sup>43</sup> *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.*

<sup>44</sup> *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

<sup>45</sup> *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

<sup>46</sup> *For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?*

<sup>47</sup> *And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*

<sup>48</sup> *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

**Conclusion:**

There is only one thing that will put a stop to retaliation and that is for the believer to be controlled by the Spirit. We must be very careful about listening to and being carried away by the ways of the world.

**Mark 8:15**

*<sup>15</sup> And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.*

Let us beware of the leaven of the world!