

"The Tables are Turned"

Part 2

Esther 9-10

Introduction: Tonight in our study of Esther we are going to start in verse 1 of chapter 9 again. In our study tonight we are going to see the picture that is found in the victory of the Jews in Esther 9. In our last study we looked at how the new decree was written to give the Jews the authority to defend themselves on the 13th day of the 12th month when they would be attacked by the Gentiles. When the 13th day came around, the Jews gathered together and killed over 75,000 Gentiles in self-defense. They were permitted to gather the spoil from those who were killed but the Jews never laid a hand on the spoil. This was not about getting rich and collecting wealth, it was about survival.

This entire letter can be seen as a picture of the life of the believer and as we get into chapter 9 there is a detail picture that we need to look closely at.

I. The Background

A. The Death Sentence

The death sentence that the Jews were placed under is a picture of the death sentence that all mankind has been placed under because of sin.

Deuteronomy 24:16

¹⁶ *The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.*

Ezekiel 18:20

²⁰ *The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.*

Romans 6:23a

²³ *For the wages of sin is death; ...*

B. The Grace of God

When we first started our study of this letter, we discussed how the Jews that were still living in the Persian Empire had been given commands to flee when the captivity was over.

Jeremiah 29:10

¹⁰ For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

Jeremiah 50:8

⁸ Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.

Jeremiah 51:6

⁶ Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence.

We cannot be sure why these Jews remained. Some believe they had become comfortable in the land of Babylon. Considering this however we can know that they deserved the chastening or the judgment of God. But that is not what they received. They received grace. Long before the death sentence came God moved to provide a way of salvation for them. He had Vashti removed and Esther placed in the position of queen.

This is a picture of what God did for us also. God knew that man would sin and would be His enemies, but long before the foundation of the world He had planned to provide a way of salvation.

Revelation 13:8

⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

C. Salvation

God placed Esther in the position to sacrifice even her life, if necessary, for her people.

Esther 4:16

¹⁶ Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

She then intervened and the enemy of the Jews was hanged on the gallows.

All of this can be seen as a picture of what our Lord did for us. He died on the cross to defeat our greatest enemy which was DEATH.

1 Corinthians 15:54, 57

⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Getting back to the book of Esther, this all happened in chapters 1-8. As we then come to chapter 9 there is still a battle to be fought. The Gentiles still have the authority to destroy the Jews and take their possessions.

In this chapter we see a picture of the battle which we face in our lives after salvation.

Ephesians 6:10-12

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Esther 9 the battle between the Jews and the Gentiles is a picture of the spiritual battle we face every day in our lives. Let us keep in mind that on the 13th day of the 12th month the battle the Jews fought was also a spiritual battle. Satan was using the Gentiles in Babylon to attempt to end the promise of the Messiah. As we look again at this chapter, I want us to examine the means of victory for the Jews and consider the application for our lives.

II. Keys to Victory

A. Surrender

Notice Esther 9:1-3

The last time we were in this chapter we looked at the fear which came upon the Gentiles in the Persian kingdom. I want to go a little further with this here. The fear which the writer speaks of here most likely came as the Gentiles watched the hand of God in the lives of Mordecai and Esther. They have been aware since Vashti was removed, and Esther was made the queen. They watched as Mordecai refused to bow and Haman became furious and issued the death decree. They watched as Haman exalted Mordecai when he paraded

him through the streets. They watched as Haman built the gallows to hang Mordecai and then he was impaled on the very gallows he built. They watched as the king replaced Haman with Mordecai and now, they know that Esther and Mordecai are both Jews. They watched as the new decree was issued as the Jews were now permitted to defend themselves.

I believe the Gentiles now realize that to fight against the Jews is to fight against their God who has brought all the previous events to pass.

Now none of this would have happened in the lives of Mordecai and Esther if they were not surrendered. The fear is the result of God's power, and it is seen in the life of Mordecai and Esther because they were surrendered.

Application:

Romans 12:1-2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

If we are going to see the mighty power of God in our lives, we too must be surrendered over to God's will for us. We cannot live with one foot in the world and one in the church and expect to be used in a mighty way by God.

Ephesians 3:16-20

¹⁶ That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

¹⁸ May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

¹⁹ And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

²⁰ Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

When we are given over to the Lord, He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. This possible for every believer but we must be surrendered.

The surrender of Mordecai and Esther was used by God to testify to the Gentiles. Our enemy also fears us when we are surrendered because it is then that we are a threat to him and his plans.

B. Unity and Fellowship

Notice Esther 9:2

I want you to notice here that the Jews **GATHERED TOGETHER**. They knew very well there would be safety in numbers. They knew that in the face of danger they needed each another. They needed each other for help, they needed each other for protection, and they needed each other for encouragement. We also see this same thought in Nehemiah as the Jews built the wall under threats from the enemy.

Nehemiah 4:13-17

¹³ Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

¹⁴ And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the LORD, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

¹⁵ And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

¹⁶ And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.

¹⁷ They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

I show you these verses to help you to see how all the people under Nehemiah worked together to accomplish the same purpose. They gained strength from one another. This is exactly how the body of Jesus Christ is to function. We are to gather together on a

regular basis to be strengthened and encouraged. We are a "BODY" and therefore we are to function together.

1 Corinthians 12:14, 25

¹⁴ *For the body is not one member, but many.*

²⁵ *That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.*

Hebrews 10:23-25

²³ *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*

²⁴ *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*

²⁵ **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

Illustration:

I was listening to a speaker this week and he talked of being busy IN THE MINISTRY, but he was hardly ever in church. His concern was that if he died, he did not have enough friends to carry his casket. So, he determined he would be in church a certain number of Sundays each month and he did so. It cost him financially, but he said the blessings which came through relationships with God's people far exceeded the financial loss.

Many believers just do not understand the importance of gathering together. I hear statements all the time that people are doing "virtual church." That is not church as God defines it! For many that is an excuse to satisfy the desires of the flesh. The flesh wants to live for the world, the flesh wants to sleep in, and the flesh, like Haman, despises anything threatens to remove him from the throne in your heart.

Conclusion:

The battle which we are in is heating up every day. Satan and his demons despise us, and he will do all he can to destroy our lives and reputations. We therefore need to be surrendered so that He can work His power through us, and we need to gather together in church to receive the blessings of strength, help, encouragement, and fellowship from other believers.