

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What factors increased Esther's confidence in going to the king?
2. Why was Haman deposed and Mordecai raised up?
3. Did Esther's revelation of Haman solve the problems facing the Jews? What was the result?
4. Though God is never mentioned in this book, what profound lesson does this story teach about His dealings with His people?
5. Have you ever had God's sovereignty bring you into a specific service for Him?

SUMMARY:

After exposing herself to possible death, Esther gained the favor of the king and was able to reveal to him the cause of her great concern. The king became very angry and Haman, in desperation fell on Esther's couch at her feet begging for mercy. The king, returning into the room thought Haman was forcing his attentions on the queen and ordered his execution.

Mordecai was rewarded for his faithfulness to the king by being placed in Haman's position.

Esther came with another plea. The order of the king to permit the Jews to be killed could not be reversed, but now Esther gained a new law that permitted the Jews to protect their own lives and destroy their enemies. This act of Esther is celebrated by Jews yet today in a two-day festival called Purim.

NOTES:

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bible Lesson #13

June 30, 2013

Second Quarter

ESTHER'S VICTORY

LESSON TEXT: *Esther 7:1-10; 8:1-14*

LESSON SETTING: In the palace of King Ahasuerus at Shushan.

TIME: Approximately 510 B.C.

I. ESTHER EXPOSES HAMAN'S PLOT *Esther 7:1-10*

- A. Esther's Plea (vs. 3, 4)
- B. Wickedness Exposed (vs. 5, 6) *Job 20:27; Proverbs 26:26; Hosea 7:2*
- C. Proud Humbled (vs. 7) *Job 40:12; Isaiah 2:12; Malachi 4:1*
- D. Retribution for Sin (vs. 10) *Proverbs 11:19; Romans 6:23a*

II. THE KING HONORS MORDECAI *Esther 8:1-2*

- A. Mordecai Replaces Haman (vs. 2) *Daniel 3:39; 6:2*

III. ESTHER SAVES HER PEOPLE *Esther 8:3-14*

- A. Intercession (vs. 3) *1 Samuel 19:4; 25:23-31*
- B. Concern (vs. 6) *Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34; Acts 20:31; Romans 9:2; Philippians 3:18*
- C. A Way of Escape (vs. 11-14) *Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2*

GOLDEN TEXT: . . . *WHO KNOWETH WHETHER THOU ART COME TO THE KINGDOM FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS?*

Esther 4:14

NEXT SUNDAY'S LESSON: Ezra 1:1-11; 3:1-13

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES: Leviticus 26:14-33;
Deuteronomy 30:1-10;
Isaiah 44:24-28; 45:1-4;
Psalm 126:1-6;
Philippians 1:12-30

QUARTERLY THEME: God's People in Captivity

TOPIC: RETURN AND REVIVAL

INTRODUCTION:

Our lesson begins with King Cyrus' proclamation that Jerusalem should be rebuilt. King Cyrus was named by Isaiah in one of his prophecies more than 100 years before this time as the one who would proclaim that Jerusalem and the temple should be rebuilt (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1). This was long before the captivity, long before God had even brought judgment upon Israel for her sins. No wonder people found it difficult to understand such prophecy. No one had ever heard of Cyrus because he had not even been born yet. This is a wonderful lesson concerning God's great providence.

This return could not have been accomplished if the hearts of the people had not mellowed and if there had not been a repentance for their sins. The first thing they did on their return was to build an altar on which they could offer sacrifices to God. Then started the work of rebuilding the temple. As the foundation was laid it caused a mixture of weeping and joy: weeping for those who still remembered the original temple, but joy in the fact that it was to be rebuilt. It must have been a wonderful sight to behold and to hear.

Likewise, when a person turns to God and begins to build his spiritual temple, many tears of rejoicing are shed and great rejoicing fills the congregation. Can we not say that our spiritual experiences parallel those of the Israelites? Have you begun building your spiritual house? Have you been a source of rejoicing to your congregation?

CENTRAL TRUTH: God will give victory and deliverance to those who give priority to His cause and kingdom.

GOLDEN TEXT: *EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE, THEY LABOR IN VAIN THAT BUILD IT.*

Psalm 127:1

The children of Israel had experienced the help of God through many generations. From the time that God had promised to bless Abraham because of his faith and obedience until they were led into captivity because of their unbelief and disobedience "*God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God.*" (Psalm 53:2) Indeed, as the Psalmist also writes, "*His mercy endureth forever.*" (Psalm 136) Now, after having been in captivity for 70 years, God in His mercy was returning a remnant to their land so that they might rebuild His temple and city. We find that this faithful remnant and their leaders were very careful that everything was done in accordance with the instructions that God was providing. They first built an altar to offer sacrifices as "*it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.*" (Ezra 3:2)

When we, as individuals endeavor to build our "house of faith" and collectively as a church, a "temple" to His honor, it is only when we also lay all sin and self upon the altar and allow God to use us to His glory, that we are able to reach the goal that is set before us.

If Thou art not builder, Saviour,
All our labor will be vain;
When Thy people trust Thee ever
They shall rich success obtain.

Z.H. 49:4

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF July 1 - 7

M. *Commission to Return. Ezra 1:1-11
T. The Returning Remnant. Ezra 2:64-70
W. *Altar and Worship Restored. Ezra 3:1-7
T. *Temple Reconstruction Begun. Ezra 3:8-13
F. Song of the Returned Captives. Psalm 126:1-6
S. God's Dwelling Place. Psalm 132:7-18
S. Christ, the True Foundation. 1 Corinthians 3:9-17

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