

Esther 9 – Thursday, January 4th, 2018

Esther 9 -- 1 Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, the time came for the king's command and his decree to be executed. On the day that the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, the opposite occurred, in that the Jews themselves overpowered those who hated them.

- The chapter begins with the enemies of God's people who hoped to overpower them having the exact opposite happen instead.
- This because God gave the Jews the power and strength they needed to prevail over their enemies who we're told hated them.
- This speaks to an important truth that applies to us, such that, God has provided us with this same promise of being victorious.

1 John 4:4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

Romans 8:31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Romans 8:37–39 - 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 The Jews gathered together in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm. And no one could withstand them, because fear of them fell upon all people. 3 And all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and all those doing the king's work, helped the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them. 4 For Mordecai was great in the king's palace, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for this man Mordecai became increasingly prominent.

- Here we're told that fear fell upon all the people because of Mordecai's prominence and fame, which spread through the land.
- I would suggest that the same can be true for us in the sense that the fear of God can come upon people who watch our lives.
- When they see the power of God moving in and through our lives, there's a reverent fear of God that can come as a result.

5 Thus the Jews defeated all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, with slaughter and destruction, and did what they pleased with those who hated them.

- There's an interesting detail here and for good reason as it relates to the Jews defeating their enemies by way of the sword.
- Here again, this has application to our lives in our spiritual battle, in that, the victory comes by way of the sword of the Spirit.
- What's interesting is of all the spiritual armor, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is the only offensive weapon.

Ephesians 6:10–17 (NIV) — 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

6 And in Shushan the citadel the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men. 7 Also Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, 8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, 9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha—10 the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews—they killed; but they did not lay a hand on the plunder.

- We have another interesting detail here in verse ten having to do with the Jews killing them, but not taking any of the plunder.
- The reason this is interesting is because the Jews didn't kill them for the plunder rather, they killed them to defend themselves.
- In other words, it was in self-defense, and as such, it was not a premeditated murder, which is different than killing someone.

11 On that day the number of those who were killed in Shushan the citadel was brought to the king. 12 And the king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the citadel, and the ten sons of Haman. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now what is your petition? It shall be granted to you. Or what is your further request? It shall be done." 13 Then Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let it be granted to the Jews who are in Shushan to do again tomorrow according to today's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows." 14 So the king commanded this to be done; the decree was issued in Shushan, and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

- At first read, one could get the impression that Esther is being disproportionately harsh in her petition concerning Haman's sons.
- However, upon a closer examination, one realizes that she is actually acting in obedience to the command in the Word of God.
- Specifically, that of 1 Samuel 15:8-33, which is the account of Saul disobeying God's command to kill every single Amalekite.

15 And the Jews who were in Shushan gathered together again on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and killed three hundred men at Shushan; but they did not lay a hand on the plunder. 16 The remainder of the Jews in the king's provinces gathered together and protected their lives, had rest from their enemies, and killed seventy-five thousand of their enemies; but they did not lay a hand on the plunder. 17 This was on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. And on the fourteenth of the month they rested and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

- Here again, we're told that the Jews wouldn't take any plunder from their enemies because they only wanted to save their lives.
- Not only were their lives saved, but their enemies were completely destroyed and they could rest and celebrate with feasting.
- This after Queen Esther was granted an additional day in order for them to soundly defeat their enemies and have total victory.

18 But the Jews who were at Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth day, as well as on the fourteenth; and on the fifteenth of the month they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. 19 Therefore the Jews of the villages who dwelt in the unwall'd towns celebrated the fourteenth day of the month of Adar with gladness and feasting, as a holiday, and for sending presents to one another. 20 And Mordecai wrote these things and sent letters to all the Jews, near and far, who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, 21 to establish among them that they should celebrate yearly the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar, 22 as the days on which the Jews had rest from their enemies, as the month which was turned from sorrow to joy for them, and from mourning to a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, of sending presents to one another and gifts to the poor. 23 So the Jews accepted the custom which they had begun, as Mordecai had written to them, 24 because Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to annihilate them, and had cast Pur (that is, the lot), to consume them and destroy them; 25 but when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letter that this wicked plot which Haman had devised against the Jews should return on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. 26 So they called these days Purim, after the name Pur. Therefore, because of all the words of this letter, what they had seen concerning this matter, and what had happened to them, 27 the Jews established and imposed it upon themselves and their descendants and all who would join them, that without fail they should celebrate these two days every year, according to the written instructions and according to the prescribed time, 28 that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city, that these days of Purim should not fail to be observed among the Jews, and that the memory of them should not perish among their descendants. 29 Then Queen Esther, the daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim. 30 And Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews, to the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, with words of peace and truth, 31 to confirm these days of Purim at their appointed time, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had prescribed for them, and as they had decreed for themselves and their descendants concerning matters of their fasting and lamenting. 32 So the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim, and it was written in the book.

- The chapter ends with the institution of the Feast of Purim, which the Jews celebrate today on March the thirteenth to fifteenth.
- On the thirteenth, the Jews fast to commemorate the battle that would take place then they feast on the fourteenth and fifteenth.
- The children dress up in costumes, some as Esther, Mordecai and even Haman, and give cookies and gifts and read Esther.