

Esther saves the Jews

Esther – Chapter 8

Ahasuerus

Xerxes I (519 -466 BC) King of Persia

The events happened in about 475 BC



The day of Haman's Execution

That same day King Xerxes gave Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of the Jews.

Haman lost everything because of his sin
The property of a convicted criminal was forfeited to the crown
Esther became the new administrator of his wealthy estate



A Royal Introduction

And Mordecai came into the presence of the king,
for Esther had told how he was related to her.



Had they never met before?

Meet your 'father-in-law'

The Appointment to High Office

The king took off his signet ring, which he had reclaimed from Haman, and presented it to Mordecai.



The ring allows the holder to sign documents 'in the name of the King'.

Mordechai is appointed administrator of the kingdom
cf. Joseph in Egypt

How to delegate

And Esther appointed him over Haman`s estate.

Mordechai is given the job –
This is a complete reversal of affairs as far as Haman is concerned.



There's one more thing.

Esther again pleaded with the king, falling at his feet and weeping. She begged him to put an end to the evil plan of Haman the Agagite, which he had devised against the Jews.

This is her 2nd request. Are the tears for effect or show genuine concern?



The former decree still stands. Notice that she described the plan as Haman's plan and not his.

Of course Haman had come up with the idea, but it wouldn't do to blame the king.

In favour

Then the king extended the gold sceptre to Esther and she arose and stood before him.



This is not like her first entrance

This is the king showing his favour as a kind of “Acceptance protocol”

She arose because her request to speak had been received

If it pleases the king

"If it pleases the king," she said, "and if he regards me with favour and thinks it the right thing to do, **and if he is pleased with me**, let an order be written overruling the dispatches that Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, devised and wrote to destroy the Jews in all the king's provinces.

It's going to be his idea

And there is an emotional incentive too

She suggests – who gave her the idea?

Overruling technically isn't cancelling.

They can find ways around these rules!



God's personal and national purpose for his people

For how can I bear to see disaster fall on my people?
How can I bear to see the destruction of my family?"

She made another emotional appeal out of genuine concern for her near family and her nation

The decree stands as a real threat.



Consequences

King Xerxes replied to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew,
"Because Haman attacked the Jews, I have given his estate to Esther,
and they have hanged him on the gallows."

Both Esther and Mordechai
are present at this point

What I've done sends a message:-
"There are consequences to
attacking the Jews."



Change Haman's plan

Now write another decree in the king's name in behalf of the Jews as seems best to you, and seal it with the king's signet ring--for no document written in the king's name and sealed with his ring can be revoked."

You word it.

He trusts her to draw up
the details.

Then, I'll sign it
(via Mordechai)

It will then stand as law.



Call the civil servants!

At once the royal secretaries were summoned--on the twenty-third day of the third month, the month of Sivan.



This tells us that from the start it has taken 3 months to get to this stage.

It is reasonably quick – but things aren't always instantaneous answers.

Mordecai`s orders

They wrote out all Mordecai`s orders to the Jews, and to the satraps, governors and nobles of the 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush. These orders were written in the script of each province and the language of each people **and also to the Jews** in their own script and language.



It`s the same as before PLUS a special mention of the Jews.

Signed, Sealed

Mordecai wrote in the name of King Xerxes,
sealed the dispatches with the king's signet ring



The plan is now law.

Signed, sealed and sent

Mordecai wrote in the name of King Xerxes, sealed the dispatches with the king's signet ring, and sent them by mounted couriers, who rode fast horses especially bred for the king.



Communication speeds have changed only in the last century!



Self defence

The king`s edict granted the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves; to destroy, kill and annihilate any **armed** force of any nationality or province that might attack them and(*including*) their women and children; and to plunder the property of their enemies.

Self defence against armed attackers of both them and their vulnerable members (NIV) or against armed women and children intending to murder.

As in the previous decree – permission was given to plunder (a mark of the times?) but they didn't do it.

It wasn't about greed it was survival.



Poetic justice - 9 months to wait

The day appointed for the Jews to do this in all the provinces of King Xerxes was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar.

This gives an opportunity to prepare AND an opportunity for repentance too.

Cf. Genesis 12:3 blessing to the nations as evil removed
cf. Psalms 109, and 113:3

13th Adar – It's wasn't his LUCKY Day !



Things have changed

A copy of the text of the edict was to be issued as law in every province and made known to the people of every nationality so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

And everybody needs to know.

This would bring :-

Confidence to the Jews
and
Fear to their Enemies.



Spread the news far and near

The couriers, riding the royal horses, raced out, spurred on by the king's command. And the edict was also issued in the citadel of Susa.



The matter is urgent:
God's people need hope.

Clothes to suit the job.

Mordecai left the king's presence wearing royal garments of blue and white, a large crown of gold and a purple robe of fine linen.

The Prime minister's outfit.

Garments of Honour for the righteous.

Revelation 7:9-10 After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."



It's Party Time.

And the city of Susa held a joyous celebration.

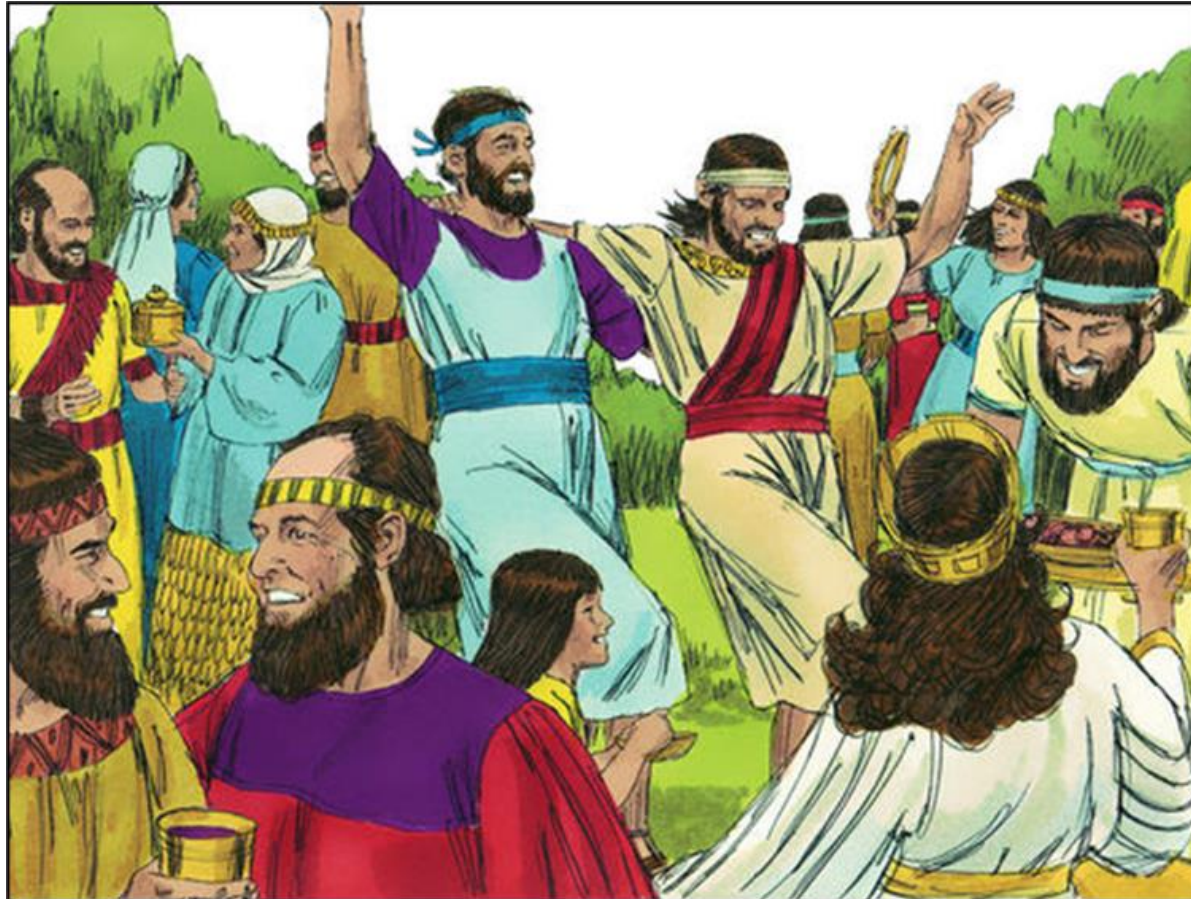
(almost) Everybody is happy. "Shouted for joy"



Good news is worth celebrating

For the Jews it was a time of happiness and joy, gladness and honour. In every province and in every city, wherever the edict of the king went, there was joy and gladness among the Jews, with feasting and celebrating.

Happiness is
the word 'light'



Join the winning side?

And many people of other nationalities became Jews because fear of the Jews had seized them.

Some may have been genuine –
They have seen that their God is REAL
Others – may be avoiding consequences

Cf. Those who claim to be followers of
Jesus in good times for Christians



Joshua 2:11 When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below.

The ultimate rescue of God's people

As God's people in Esther's day rejoiced at the good news BEFORE the time it actually took place, so may we rejoice in what God has prepared for those who love him. 1 Corinthians 2:9

Revelation 19:7-8

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;
it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen,
bright and pure
— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.