

# A Practical Study of ESTHER

## Study Number Six – Esther 9:1-10:3

I'm excited about this study. You know you come to a time of wrap-up after you've had a lot of Jewish history.

We've come to the time of civil war. The dates converge. We're at March 7th, 473 B.C.

The first edict Haman put together after casting lots for this particular date. In the last study we saw the counter edict being written and it converges on this very same date, giving the Jews the right to protect themselves.

Tommy Franks in his book *American Soldier* says:

(American Soldier by General Tommy Franks with Malcolm McConnell)

I recall the eighteenth-century British philosopher Edmund Burke, who reminded us that “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

p. 548

In the book *Fearless* Max Lucado tells this story:

(Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear by Max Lucado)

Every year tens of thousands of women attend the Women of Faith conferences. One reason they do is to hear words of comfort. After hearing one speaker after another describe God's compassion for each of his children, an attendee sent this e-mail.

In the movie *Hook*, Peter Pan had grown up, become old and overweight, and looked nothing like the Peter the lost boys knew. In the midst of the boys shouting that this was NOT Peter, one of the smallest boys took him by the hand and pulled him down to his level. He then placed his hands on Peter's face and proceeded to move the skin around, reshaping his face. The boy looked into Peter's eyes and said, "There you are, Peter!"

I brought a lot with me to Women of Faith, things that only God could see. But throughout the weekend I could feel God's hands on my face, pushing away all of the "stuff" I had brought. And then I could hear Him say, "There you are. There you are!"<sup>3</sup>

3. E-mail message to Women of Faith, September 6, 2008. Used by permission.  
pp. 26-27

We can say that. We have watched Mordecai and Esther rise to a serious occasion of crisis and watched their lives change. They are very different than the journey we began in our first study.

Let's turn to chapters 9 and 10 and ask the Lord to open our

hearts.

It's 473 B.C.—this is D-Day. The non-Jewish people thought it was going to be the “D” of DESTRUCTION. We know that God in His sovereign purpose is going to make it a day of DELIVERANCE.

Carolyn Custis James, when she is finishing her exposition on Esther, says:

(Lost Women of the Bible: Finding Strength & Significance Through Their Stories by Carolyn Custis James)

Contrary to fears voiced often today—that a man is diminished if a woman takes the lead—Mordecai only stood to benefit. Esther pointed him to God, saved his life, and fostered his rise to power. That was only the start of the good she brought him. After five years of living and observing palace life, she understood palace politics as an insider. Her skillful handling of the king in the crisis was only the first time her knowledge and experience proved indispensable. Mordecai valued and needed her partnership long after the initial crisis [had] died down.

p. 158

Proverbs 10:25

When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous stand firm forever.

Lucado prays this prayer before he looks into the verses:

Father, it is frustrating when life is not fair, when the unjust seem to be prospering. We struggle when it seems your justice is slow in coming. But you are a just God, and you promise to ultimately deal with all unfairness and injustice in your own time. Help us to trust you with the big picture and to have patience in your timing.  
(source unknown)

It has been God's providential circumstances in the midst of all of this that we've seen. He's operating in your life if you've surrendered to Him and in obedience you want His direction.

March 7, 473 B.C.—Let's be reminded of four salient features and a verse before we dig into the text.

1. Xerxes' dates for his administration is 486 B.C. to 465 B.C. That's 21 years. So at 473 he has 8 years left before his assassination.
2. Esther's dates are 483 to 473 B.C. She passes off the stage even before we get to chapter 10. She leaves it all in Mordecai's hands. Just ten years—we have witnessed her life.

If you highlight the word "Jew" in these two chapters you will find that it occurs seventy-eight times.

That tells you that at the end of the book it's not about Mordecai and Esther. It's about a sovereign God protecting

His promises to His people.

We have a tendency to elevate people and rightfully so. To respect and honor them when they're doing what God wants them to do and they're cooperating with His plan and purpose is good. Let's not lose focus and get on people rather than on what God's plan and purpose is for the whole thing.

When the Corinthians were living by the wisdom of the world, they started thinking about people—about Apollos and Paul and Peter and Christ—rather than upon God's plan and purpose for their life.

These last two chapters are the wrap-up of God's faithfulness to the Jewish people.

In Deuteronomy chapter 20 Moses is saying farewell to everybody and is going to climb the mountain as soon as his message is over. He's about half way through and he:

Deuteronomy 20:3, 4 (NLT)

He will say, [that is the Lord] “Listen to me, all you men of Israel! Do not be afraid as you go out to fight today! Do not lose heart or panic. For the Lord your God is going with you! He will fight for you against your enemies, and He will give you victory.”

**9:v. 1 On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, the edict commanded by the king**

**was to be carried out. On this day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, but now the tables were turned and the Jews got the upper hand over those who hated them.**

“On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, the edict commanded by the king was to be carried out.”

This is the first edict. This is Haman’s. Haman fooled him into doing this thing and used his signet ring to sign it. That’s what he’s talking about.

“On this day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them,”—literally wipe them out, destroy them—“but now?”

“but now the tables were turned”—This is God’s providence right on schedule. Perfect timing coming on this March 7th, 473 B.C.

“and the Jews got the upper hand over those who hated them.”

There are a lot of things that have to be explained as we’re going through this. This is not a typical war. It is a HOLY WAR. God’s people are available as instruments. They are not going to take the initiative in this civil war but they’re not going to stand around and get their lives taken by doing nothing.

They had 9 months left when that edict—counter edict—was signed. Those 9 months have passed and we’re at the time of

conflict.

We're going to be saying goodbye to one great lady and we've all been inspired by the witness and the way she's handled all of this.

### Psalm 37:13

the Lord laughs at the wicked,  
for he knows their day is coming.

D-Day has arrived. Mordecai's decree has changed that "D" from DESTRUCTION to DELIVERANCE.

The two edicts converge. What a glorious providential act of God that this counter edict that has been drafted during the time of waiting for this D-Day to arrive is what we're rejoicing in.

Gary Thomas has written a book called *The Beautiful Fight*. It has to do with the Christian life. He says:

(The Beautiful Fight: Surrendering to the Transforming Presence of God Every Day of Your Life by Gary Thomas)

Pain in this world is a foregone conclusion. The only question is whether we choose to live a life of redemptive pain or of self-destructive pain. I pray you'll choose redemptive pain.

p. 200

Max Lucado underscores it in *Fearless*:

(Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear by Max Lucado)

God has hung his diplomas in the universe. Rainbows, sunsets, horizons, and star-sequined skies. He has recorded his accomplishments in Scripture. We're not talking six thousand hours of flight time. His résumé includes Red Sea openings. Lions' mouths closings. Goliath topplings. Lazarus raisings. Storm stillings and strollings.

His lesson is clear. He's the commander of every storm. Are you scared in yours? Then stare at him. This may be your first flight. But it's certainly not his.

Your pilot has a call sign too: I Am Here.

p. 76

Sometimes it seems so confusing doesn't it? So much of the things we're hearing today is in conflict that we're trying to sort out truth from lies. We're totally frustrated at times to get to the bottom of some major issues that concern our future and our lives.

**v. 2 The Jews assembled in their cities in all the provinces of King Xerxes to attack those seeking their destruction. No one could stand against them, because the people of all the other nationalities were afraid of them.**

“The Jews assembled in their cities in all the provinces of King Xerxes to attack those seeking their destruction.”

They have to make the first move. There are no women and children fatalities. Only men are dealt in this situation.

“No one could stand against them, because the people of all the other nationalities were afraid of them.”

There could be two reasons for that fear.

1. The big shake-up in the administration that we saw in the last study. Haman has been hanged and there's a new Prime Minister by the name of Mordecai. There have been some wonderful things that have happened with that counter edict so they're fearful of this day now more than ever before.

There is another way. You heard Moses telling the people that God has a wonderful way of putting His fear in the hearts of individuals that lead them ultimately to defeat and total disarray.

In the book Ramesh Richard writes in *Soul Passion* we read:

(Soul Passion: Embracing Your Life's Ultimate Purpose by Ramesh Richard)

In short, passion answers the question, “What do you love enough to die for?” Passion addresses the biblical issue of where you have placed your heart, your love, your trust, and your sufficiency. You can tell a person's passion by what he or she is willing to die for. What a person is willing to die for is

what he or she is living for—the passion of his or her life.<sup>2</sup>

2. The obverse is stated powerfully by Martin Luther King, Jr., who died for a cause: “If a man doesn’t have anything to die for, it wasn’t worth living for anyway.”

p. 72

With Mordecai and Esther leading the charge, the 15 million Jews’ passion is to a living God who is made unconditional promises to them with regard to a land, a seed and a kingdom. That’s what’s taking them to battle.

In the life of Jacob, when he was hung up at Shechem, God told him to go to Bethel. He was so scared to leave Shechem because Simeon and Levi had wiped out the citizens in Shechem. He was thinking reprisal was coming at any moment.

We read in Genesis:

Genesis 35:5

Then they set out, and the terror of God fell upon the towns all around them so that no one pursued them.

It is God providing the terror in the midst of all of it to vindicate His own and protect His own people. It’s the big shake-up at the top and it’s also the fear of God striking the hearts of these who would mess with the apple of His eye—His special treasure—the Jewish people.

**v. 3 And all the nobles of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and the king's administrators helped the Jews, because fear of Mordecai had seized them.**

“And all the nobles of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and the king's administrators helped the Jews, because fear of Mordecai had seized them.”

We now know where some of it lies. Anyone involved in political activity knows that the Prime Minister is a Jew and he has authored this counter edict. They know if you're going to make anything in your future, as far as politics are concerned in the empire, you better be pro-Prime Minister. They're not dumb. They have organized themselves to be involved.

All of a sudden Xerxes is pro-Israel. He married a Jew and she's the Queen. He appointed a Prime Minister who's a Jew. When you have that much stuff at the top, you don't mess with it. You're going to lose before you start. They all recognize that. The deck has been stacked beautifully for the Jewish people with this tremendous circumstance that you saw that came after the second banquet.

None of this would have happened if she would have blown in there and said, “Haman's the guy and this is the reason my life is in jeopardy.” Quietly and with sensitivity she restrains herself for that extra day and all those other things happened. God knows what He's doing.

**v. 4 Mordecai was prominent in the palace; his reputation spread throughout the provinces, and he became more and more powerful.**

“Mordecai was prominent in the palace; his reputation spread throughout the provinces, and he became more and more powerful.”

That’s God’s blessing on leadership. When you don’t have God’s blessing on leadership you’re going to have disarray, confusion, power plays, and all the ugly things that we’re witnessing in our culture and administration. It’s the very thing that’s the opposite of Mordecai.

You’re going to love Mordecai because when he makes his curtain call at the end, you’re going to understand why he’s being so blessed. He is exactly on track where God wants him to be. Because of that, he becomes more and more powerful.

Joseph is an illustration. Daniel’s an illustration. For 66 years he serves the Babylonian empire and when Darius becomes king he’s made the Prime Minister. He’s in the same place Mordecai is for the last 9 months—75 years in political administration in both Babylon and Persia. That’s a God-thing!

You send Joseph down into Egypt and that’s awful because he’s been sold into Egypt. He turns around and becomes Prime Minister to Pharaoh.

God has a way of blessing his people when they honor Him. People respect that honor and put them in places of leadership. Mordecai has climbed the ladder very quickly these last 9 months since he has been elevated.

Tom Paterson put it this way:

(S.H.A.P.E.: Finding & Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose For Life by Erik Rees)

Show me a person who doesn't know his talents or hasn't developed them for service to others, and I will show you a person who has little sense of purpose, meaning, motivation and value.

**Tom Paterson**

p. 67

(The Essential Wooden: A Lifetime of Lessons on Leaders and Leadership by John Wooden & Steve Jamison)

Leaders who reap the bounty of success share most of all a hearty appetite for work, an eagerness to roll up their sleeves and do the job. In all my years I've never seen an exception to this. There will be no harvest without hard work:

*Industriousness.*

pp. 36-37

Tony Dungy in *Uncommon* quotes Dr. Seuss:

(Uncommon: Finding Your Path to Significance by Tony

Dungy with Nathan Whitaker)

Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.

DR. SEUSS

p. 37

Eugene Peterson says:

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)

*When the storms of opposition come, dear Christ, keep me "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Root me in righteousness so that my growth is impervious to popular dissent, and always faithful to you.*

*Amen*

p. 41

Oswald Chambers says:

(My Utmost For His Highest by Oswald Chambers)

The secret of the servant's life is that he stays in tune with God all the time.

(April 22)

Two verses on INTEGRITY and it explains Mordecai's blessing.

## Psalm 25:21

May integrity and godliness protect me,  
for I rely on you!

That explains Mordecai to a “T.”

## Psalm 26:1

Vindicate me, O Lord,  
for I have integrity,  
and I trust in the Lord without wavering.

Here comes the war. Here comes the death and the  
destruction.

**v. 5 The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.**

“The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.”

Nothing was done for them to initiate, but in the conflict there were so many people who were foolish enough to think that they could wipe out 15 million Jews and follow the edict of Haman. They’re still pro-Haman and they’re the ones that are creating all of this.

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Now you'll notice the victims are described:

1. they are “enemies,”
2. they are “those who hated them,”
3. they are not women and children.

Every one of the fatality lists is going to make it very clear that it's men and men only.

### **v. 6 In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.**

“In the citadel of Susa,”—where Xerxes, Mordecai and Esther live—“the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.”

Can you believe that 500 people living right in the capital city would be foolish enough to raise the sword against a pro-Jewish administration and try to kill the Jews in that city?

This is Haman's citadel. These are probably 500 people that were on the bread train. A part of the financial benefits was theirs because Haman was the Prime Minister. Now they've lost all their bounty and they are angry. In his death they're going to take his place and they are going to prove a point that it's time to kill the Jews.

With that kind of mentality 500 of them lost their lives. I'm sure this probably explains the reason why there is this

pocket, this concentration, of Jewish opposition.

When I get to glory I'm going to ask the Lord why He wasted four verses on Haman's offspring.

Every one of these names is a tongue-twister. They must have run out of names. His wife probably ran out of names and came up with this.

**v. 7 They also killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,**

“They also killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,”

**v. 8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,**

“Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,”

**v. 9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha,**

“Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai”—they must be twins—“and Vaizatha,”

**v. 10 the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they did not lay their hands on the plunder.**

“the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they did not lay their hands on the plunder.”

The edict said they could. They could go ahead and take

plunder from the enemies they destroyed. This is a Holy War. You don't do that.

It's mentioned three times:

1. verse 10,
2. verse 15, and
3. verse 16.

It's clear they are not in this for what they're going to get out of it.

On the other hand Haman said they could have all the plunder they wanted. He was planning on getting back some of the millions and millions of dollars that he put into this whole operation by selling the property of the Jewish fatalities.

They weren't in this to enrich themselves. They were in this to honor God and to protect what the Lord had done.

I love the story in *Fearless* when Max Lucado tells about Booker T. Washington:

(Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear by Max Lucado)

But you may need to silence some roosters. Booker T. Washington relates a helpful story of the day his mother did

so. Every morning of his young life, he, along with all the plantation slaves, was awakened by the crow of a rooster. Long before daybreak the unwelcome noise would fill the sod shanties, reminding Washington and his fellow workers to crawl out of bed and leave for the cotton fields. The rooster's crow came to symbolize their dictated life of long days and backbreaking labor.

But then came the Emancipation Proclamation. Abraham Lincoln pronounced freedom for slaves. The first morning afterward, young Booker was awakened by the rooster again. Only this time his mother was chasing it around the barnyard with an ax. The Washington family fried and ate their alarm clock for lunch. Their first act of freedom was to silence the reminder of slavery.

pp. 38-39

You're seeing all of that in this conflict. It is a conflict with integrity. It is evil against good.

**v. 11 The number of those slain in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king that same day.**

“The number of those slain in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king that same day.”

If you knew that 500 of your citizens just lost their lives because of a civil war, do you think it would dampen your enthusiasm and your spirit? We have to think that way about Xerxes. He might call a halt to this thing right now and say, “That’s enough! Uncle. It’s been too big a price to pay for this.”

Xerxes is in that situation here. The question that's being asked is very important and he's on center stage and we see it.

**v. 12 The king said to Queen Esther, “The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman in the citadel of Susa. What have they done in the rest of the king’s provinces? Now what is your petition? It will be given you. What is your request? It will also be granted.”**

“The king said to Queen Esther, “The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman in the citadel of Susa.”

Question following:

“What have they done in the rest of the king’s provinces?”

Oh I see. I want to understand what this operation involved and what's taken place. Don't you love those next statements? Those are the very words from last week and her words to him over and over again.

“What is your petition?”—there's your hot word—“It will be given you. What is your request?”—hot word—“It will also be granted.”

He is not moved at all in his devotion to her and into the conflict and his favoritism toward Israel.

“Five hundred and ten bite the dust here. I wonder what happened in the rest of the 126 provinces. But I want to tell you, I’m still unmoved in my devotion. What is your request? What is your petition? I’m here to meet your needs.”

Dr. J. Vernon McGee says:

“The Jews have attended the funeral of every one of the nations that tried to exterminate them.”  
(source unknown)

Xerxes recognized all of this.

There are **THREE “WHAT?” QUESTIONS** here:

1. “What have they done in the rest of the provinces?”
2. “What is your petition?”
3. “What is your request?”

It will be granted.

Now she returns with deep respect. She’s running the war room and she’s aware of all that’s going on.

**v. 13 “If it pleases the king,” Esther answered, “give the Jews in Susa permission to carry out this day’s**

**edict tomorrow also, and let Haman’s ten sons be hanged on gallows.”**

“If it pleases the king,’ Esther answered, ‘give the Jews in Susa”—not all the other provinces. Just here in the capital city—“permission to carry out this day’s edict tomorrow also, and let Haman’s ten sons be hanged on the gallows.””

You say, “Wow, boy that woman is getting tough.” That’s a shot over the bow. It’s the best thing in the world to help people understand that Haman has no future by putting on public display his ten sons. That dynasty is dead. It’s gone. It’s finished.

The second thing that is a shot over the bow has to do with security. It’s the whole area of Homeland Security. We still have several pockets of resistance in the capital city. It’s not going to be safe living there.

Esther’s thinking of Xerxes and thinking of Mordecai—thinking of the Jewish families that live there. She is asking for another day. That’s the same thing as when she asked for a second banquet so it’s no big deal. Now she’s asking for another day. Only for Susa in order to carry out what needs to be done to bring this conflict to a conclusion.

Haman’s cause has no future and if you want to continue in that vein of thought, you can be on public display, hanging with his ten sons.

(199 Treasures of Wisdom on Talking with God compiled from the writings of Andrew Murray)

Self-denial is indispensable if God's redeeming love is to display power and blessing in my life.  
(Quote 110)

In *Chasing Daylight* McManus says:

(Chasing Daylight: Seize the Power of Every Moment by Erwin Raphael McManus)

Like those who miss the party, we are full of excuses. One said, "I just bought a field. I must go see it. Please excuse me." Another said, "I have just bought five yoke of oxen. I am on my way to try them out. Please excuse me." Another said, "I just got married, so I can't come." Same old excuses. I have places to go, things to do, and people to see. I am just too busy to accept God's invitation to live. I do think it is funny that the first two said, "I choose not to come," but the one who just got married said, "I'm not allowed to come."

It is amazing how often the very ones who are supposed to encourage us to move forward are the ones who hold us back. I've personally known so many women whose hearts are filled with God's passion and yet find themselves unable to seize divine moments because of the passivity of their husbands.  
p. 170

What a sad deal.

**v. 14 So the king commanded that this be done. An edict was issued in Susa, and they hanged the ten sons of Haman.**

“So the king commanded that this be done. An edict was issued in Susa, and they hanged the ten sons of Haman.”

She’s given one more day. March the 7th was the first day. March the 8th is the second day. Let’s see what happened on the second day to vindicate Esther’s request.

**v. 15 The Jews in Susa came together on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and they put to death in Susa three hundred men, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.**

“The Jews in Susa came together on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and they put to death in Susa three hundred men, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.”

There were 810 fatalities in the district of Susa, the capital city—all men gave their lives “but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.”

The other statistics that Xerxes was asking for is in verse 16.

**v. 16 Meanwhile, the remainder of the Jews who were in the king’s provinces also assembled to protect themselves and get relief from their enemies. They**

**killed seventy-five thousand of them but did not lay their hands on the plunder.**

“Meanwhile, the remainder of the Jews who were in the king’s provinces also assembled to protect themselves and get relief from their enemies. They killed seventy-five thousand of them but did not lay their hands on the plunder.”

Total civil war fatalities—75,810 died.

**v. 17 This happened on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.**

“This happened on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.”

The 75,000 died on March the 7th and then everybody else in all the other provinces had their big party on March the 8th except for Susa. They were in that second day operation there in Susa.

**v. 18 The Jews in Susa, however, had assembled on the thirteenth and fourteenth, and then on the fifteenth they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.**

“The Jews in Susa, however, had assembled on the thirteenth and fourteenth day, and then on the fifteenth day they rested

and made it a day of feasting and joy.”

Is this a Persia happenstance or what? We’ve seen eight or nine banquets through this book. If we have a possibility for a two-day holiday are we going to turn that down? They’re not going to be divided over that. We’re going to celebrate both days.

**v. 19 That is why rural Jews—those living in villages—observe the fourteenth of the month of Adar as a day of joy and feasting, a day for giving presents to each other.**

“That is why rural Jews—those living in villages—observe the fourteenth of the month of Adar as a day of joy and feasting, a day for giving presents to each other.”

Almost sounds like Christmas doesn’t it? A great celebration.

This seems like it could have been written on the day of Purim, the day when the victory was won:

(In God We Still Trust by Dr. Richard G. Lee)

To celebrate the victorious conclusion of the Revolutionary War, Governor John Hancock of Massachusetts issued a Proclamation for a Day of Thanksgiving on December 11, 1783:

*Whereas . . . these United States are not only happily*

*rescued from the danger and calamities to which they have been so long exposed, but their freedom, sovereignty, and independence ultimately acknowledged.*

*And whereas . . . the interposition of Divine Providence in our favor hath been most abundantly and most graciously manifested, and the citizens of these United States every reason for praise and gratitude to the God of their salvation.*

*Impressed therefore with an exalted sense of the blessings by which we are surrounded, and of our entire dependence on that Almighty Being from whose goodness and bounty they are derived; I do by and with the Advice of the Council appoint Thursday the eleventh day of December next (the day recommended by the Congress to all the States) to be religiously observed as a day of Thanksgiving and Prayer, that all the people may then assemble to celebrate . . . that He hath been pleased to continue to us the Light of the blessed Gospel; . . . That we also offer up fervent supplications . . . to cause pure religion and virtue to flourish . . . and to fill the world with His glory.*

p. 60

There we were after 1776. Seven years later the governor of Massachusetts puts his name on the Declaration of Independence but then comes with a Declaration of Celebration. It sounds just exactly like Esther and Mordecai in these remaining verses.

The last of chapter 9 is the setting up of these celebrations.

**v. 20 Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far,**

“Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far,”

The very fact that he’s the recorder could also be the reason why he’s the author of the book. This verse is the one that everybody uses to say he must be the person of inspiration by the Spirit of God who recorded these events. This is what he said:

**v. 21 to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar**

“to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar”

That’s March 8th and the 9th.

**v. 22 as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor.**

“as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their

mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor.”

When you outline all of that, it sounds a whole lot like Christmas and the celebration of Christ.

**v. 23 So the Jews agreed to continue the celebration they had begun, doing what Mordecai had written to them.**

“So the Jews agreed to continue the celebration they had begun, doing what Mordecai had written to them.”

Immediately everybody nationally is ready for it.

The reason for it:

**v. 24 For Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them and had cast the pur (that is, the lot) for their ruin and destruction.**

“Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them and had cast the pur (that is, the lot) for their ruin and destruction.”

This is the reason why they’re celebrating and why they’re going to call it the Feast of Purim.

**v. 25 But when the plot came to the king's attention, he issued written orders that the evil scheme Haman had devised against the Jews should come back onto his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.**

“But when the plot came to the king's attention, he issued written orders that the evil scheme Haman had devised against the Jews should come back onto his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.”

They make definite reference to that.

**v. 26 (Therefore these days were called Purim, from the word pur.) Because of everything written in this letter and because of what they had seen and what had happened to them,**

“(Therefore these days were called Purim, from the word pur.) Because of everything written in this letter and because of what they had seen and what had happened to them,”

**v. 27 the Jews took it upon themselves to establish the custom that they and their descendants and all who join them should without fail observe these two days every year, in the way prescribed and at the time appointed.**

“the Jews took it upon themselves to establish the custom that

they and their descendants and all who join them should without fail observe these two days every year, in the way prescribed and at the time appointed.”

Here Esther and Mordecai are doing exactly what Jesus did. “This do in remembrance of Me, as often as you eat this bread and you drink this cup.” (ref. Luke 22:19)

Keep your memories fresh my friends and keep them resilient and keep them hitched up to reality.

**v. 28 These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family, and in every province and in every city. And these days of Purim should never cease to be celebrated by the Jews, nor should the memory of them die out among their descendants.**

“These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family, and in every province and in every city. And these days of Purim should never cease to be celebrated by the Jews, nor should the memory of them die out among their descendants.”

Now you understand why they read the book of Esther while they celebrate the Feast of Purim every year. They are still just as faithful as they were back at 473 B.C.

**v. 29 So Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter concerning Purim.**

“So Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter concerning Purim.”

Adding the two things together, they did what was right.

**v. 30 And Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Xerxes—words of goodwill and assurance—**

“Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Xerxes—words of goodwill and assurance—”

**v. 31 to establish these days of Purim at their designated times, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had decreed for them, and as they had established for themselves and their descendants in regard to their times of fasting and lamentation.**

“to establish these days of Purim at their designated times, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had decreed for them, and as they had established for themselves and their descendants in regard to their times of fasting and lamentation.”

Bill Hybels has written an interesting book for leaders called *Axiom* on leadership. It's 79 axioms of leadership and one of them seemed very relevant when it came to Esther and Mordecai:

(Axiom: Powerful Leadership Proverbs by Bill Hybels)

*“Lean into the empowering presence of God and realize that you’re not alone. Reach out to God, and he will reach out to you. He will restore your soul. He will encourage you and inspire you. He will heal you up and set your feet back on course. He will rally other leaders to your side who will pray for you and who will walk with you.”*

p. 204

**v. 32 Esther’s decree confirmed these regulations about Purim, and it was written down in the records.**

“Esther’s decree confirmed these regulations about Purim, and it was written down in the records.”

Goodbye Esther. God pulled it off through you. What a wonderful testimony. There has to be some real comfort in all of those verses.

What a comfort for all the Jews that these two special days will never, ever be forgotten. They can count their security and their lives upon that.

We said goodbye to Esther. Everything’s about Mordecai right

now.

**10:v. 1 King Xerxes imposed tribute throughout the empire, to its distant shores.**

“King Xerxes imposed tribute throughout the empire, to its distant shores.”

This wasn't taxation—what you'd call typical taxation. Mordecai probably had a meeting with Xerxes and said, “You know we owe our lives to you today because you did sign this counter edict and you supported us through this whole thing. I think the Jewish population of 15 million people, but nobody else, wants to pay a little tribute to you to help you because of the failure in the Grecian war. I'm sure you have some great needs in the administration and I'm just thinking it would be a real good time for us to let you know how much we appreciate you.”

It involved the whole empire but it was a blessing to everybody and especially to the Jews.

Swindoll says:

Not even her name appears in the closing chapter of Esther. Mordecai is prominent, her husband, the king, as well, but not Esther...She existed before the final scene and will not be back, even for a closing curtain call.  
(source unknown)

I want you to focus on leadership, godly successful leadership. I want you to see why Mordecai was so blessed and why he went through the stairs to this great position of elevation, discounting the providence of God. We know that and that God is capable of doing anything.

**v. 2 And all his acts of power and might, together with a full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king had raised him, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia?**

“And all his acts of power and might, together with a full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king had raised him, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia?”

Mordecai is being honored in a wonderful way.

Max Lucado tells a funny story in *Fearless*:

Tommy Franks at the end of his book tells about the fulfillment of his dreams when he was back at school. He said:

(American Soldier by General Tommy Franks with Malcolm McConnell)

One evening as I sat at my desk thinking, organizing files, and looking through old papers, I came across a poem I'd written as a young, ambitious captain in 1971:

## GRANT ME:

- One opportunity to influence the course of history.
- The foresight to anticipate that opportunity.
- The conviction to plan for it.
- The fortitude to implement the plan.
- The intensity of action to make it work.
- The flexibility to change it when it won't.
- The loyalty to self to admit defeat.
- The humility owed to victory.
- The tenacity to continue.

I smiled as I read the words, written almost thirty years before, and remembered the adage “Be careful what you wish for.” Time would tell.

p. 198

Eugene Peterson puts it this way:

(A Year With Jesus: Daily Readings and Meditations by Eugene H. Peterson)

*Lord Jesus Christ, keep me from wandering, from turning back, from quitting. By your grace “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” Amen.*

p. 270

**v. 3 Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes, preeminent among the Jews, and held in**

**high esteem by his many fellow Jews, because he worked for the good of his people and spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews.**

“Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes, preeminent among the Jews, and”—and what else about him? He’s—“held in high esteem by his many fellow Jews,”

Notice the two reasons why he is so great and why he’s held in high esteem. That’s the way the book ends:

1. “because he worked for the good of his people and”
2. “he spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews.”

Being available to work for the good of the 15 millions Jews in the empire took courage in an anti-Jewish empire.

May God raise up leaders today that will accept that.

(The Leadership Lessons of Jesus: A Timeless Model for Today's Leaders by Bob Briner & Ray Pritchard)

Leaders who can’t handle rejection, defeat, or delay don’t last. Leaders who have to win everything *every time* are short-lived with limited [resources].

p. 93

(Winning with People by John C. Maxwell)

Novelist George Eliot advised, “Try to care about something in the vast world besides the gratification of small selfish desires.”

p. 92

There’s seriousness in this and I want to end with these words. This came from David Jeremiah. Listen to this:

(Turning Points: Moments of Decision in the Presence of God  
by David Jeremiah)

On December 28, 1908, a devastating earthquake struck Messina, Italy, killing eighty-four thousand people. Just hours before the earthquake, local authorities passed a number of ordinances reflecting their ungodly character. In fact, the Christmas Day issue of the local paper had contained a parody actually daring God to make Himself known by sending an earthquake! And He obliged.

It is not wise to refuse the grace of God. Jesus gave such an opinion in a parable about some evil tenants...They refused to give their landowner his rightful share of their harvest, even after he made numerous requests. They killed the landowner’s messengers, even his own son, in their arrogant rejection of the landowner. So the landowner rejected them and gave the vineyard to [somebody else].

Many people have the mistaken notion that God is infinitely patient, that the rejection of His offers of salvation do not offend Him. But parables such as this warn us not to reject the grace of God when it is being offered. If you have heard the offer of God’s salvation but have not responded,

receive it while it is still being made.

Of all the days suitable for salvation, none is better than today.

p. 262

Father, thank You for the joy of studying Your Word. Pray You'll bless these individuals for taking time to study your Word and we ask that You'll encourage them. We ask that You have Your own celebrations for them of Your faithfulness in the past and in the present. We anticipate that glorious day of victory in the future. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## A Practical Study of ESTHER

### STUDY NUMBER SIX – ESTHER 9:1-10:3

### NOTES

9:v. 1 On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, the edict commanded by the king was to be carried out. On this day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, but now the tables were turned and the Jews got the upper hand over those who hated them.

v. 2 The Jews assembled in their cities in all the provinces of King Xerxes to attack those seeking their destruction. No one could stand against them, because the people of all the other nationalities were afraid of them.

v. 3 And all the nobles of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and the king's administrators helped the Jews, because fear of Mordecai had seized them.

v. 4 Mordecai was prominent in the palace; his reputation spread throughout the provinces, and he became more and more powerful.

v. 5 The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.

v. 6 In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.

v. 7 They also killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

v. 8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,

v. 9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha,

v. 10 the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

v. 11 The number of those slain in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king that same day.

v. 12 The king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman in the citadel of Susa. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now what is your petition? It will be given you. What is your request? It will also be granted."

v. 13 "If it pleases the king," Esther answered, "give the Jews in Susa permission to carry out this day's edict tomorrow also, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on gallows."

v. 14 So the king commanded that this be done. An edict was issued in Susa, and they hanged the ten sons of Haman.

v. 15 The Jews in Susa came together on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and they put to death in Susa three hundred men, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

## NOTES

v. 16 Meanwhile, the remainder of the Jews who were in the king's provinces also assembled to protect themselves and get relief from their enemies. They killed seventy-five thousand of them but did not lay their hands on the plunder.

v. 17 This happened on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.

v. 18 The Jews in Susa, however, had assembled on the thirteenth and fourteenth, and then on the fifteenth they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.

v. 19 That is why rural Jews—those living in villages—observe the fourteenth of the month of Adar as a day of joy and feasting, a day for giving presents to each other.

v. 20 Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far,

v. 21 to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar

v. 22 as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

v. 23 So the Jews agreed to continue the celebration they had begun, doing what Mordecai had written to them.

v. 24 For Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them and had cast the pur (that is, the lot) for their ruin and destruction.

v. 25 But when the plot came to the king's attention, he issued written orders that the evil scheme Haman had devised against the Jews should come back onto his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

v. 26 (Therefore these days were called Purim, from the word pur.) Because of everything written in this letter and because of what they had seen and what had happened to them,

v. 27 the Jews took it upon themselves to establish the custom that they and their descendants and all who join them should without fail observe these two days every year, in the way prescribed and at the time appointed.

v. 28 These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family, and in every province and in every city. And these days of Purim should never cease to be celebrated by the Jews, nor should the memory of them die out among their descendants.

v. 29 So Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter concerning Purim.

v. 30 And Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Xerxes—words of goodwill and assurance—

## NOTES

v. 31 to establish these days of Purim at their designated times, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had decreed for them, and as they had established for themselves and their descendants in regard to their times of fasting and lamentation.

v. 32 Esther's decree confirmed these regulations about Purim, and it was written down in the records.

10:v. 1 King Xerxes imposed tribute throughout the empire, to its distant shores.

v. 2 And all his acts of power and might, together with a full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king had raised him, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia?

v. 3 Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes, preeminent among the Jews, and held in high esteem by his many fellow Jews, because he worked for the good of his people and spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews.

### QUESTIONS:

1. Read Esther 9:1-10:3 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. Describe what is taking place in Esther 9:1.

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3. Outline the three things that are said about Mordecai in verse 4.

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4. Describe the Jewish victory in verse 5.

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5. According to verses 17 & 18, what two things did the Jews do after the victory was theirs?

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6. What four things did Mordecai tell the Jews to do, according to verse 22?

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7. How did the Jews choose to memorialize these days of victory, according to verses 26-28?

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8. Outline the rest of the story for Mordecai, recorded in Esther 10:3.

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9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: God certainly knows how to lead and liberate His people in times of crisis.

LESSON #2: “When the storm passes through, the wicked are swept away, but the righteous are an everlasting foundation” (Proverbs 10:25 NET).

LESSON #3: Because has made an unconditional promise to the Jews, He will always do what is necessary to protect them in times of great threat or danger.

LESSON #4: “The Lord abhors every arrogant person; one can be sure that they will not go unpunished” (Proverbs 16:5 NET).

LESSON #5: “The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous” (Proverbs 15:29 NET).

LESSON #6: “The one who deals wisely in a matter will find success, and blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord” (Proverbs 16:20 NET).

LESSON #7: “One who has isolated himself seeks his own desires; he rejects all sound judgment” (Proverbs 18:1 NET).

LESSON #8: “A faithful person will have an abundance of blessings . . .” (Proverbs 28:20 NET).

LESSON #9: “In the transgression of an evil person there is a snare, but a righteous person can sing and rejoice” (Proverbs 29:6 NET).

LESSON #10: “The fear of people becomes a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord will be set on high” (Proverbs 29:25 NET).