

Esther 7:1 – 9:17

- Review of the story so far.....
 - **Chapter 1 – Xerxes Feast**

Xerxes becomes angry with his queen, Vashti, and passes a decree that all women must honor and respect their men. In Haman's view, respect is decreed, not earned by the type of person one should be. Vashti is dethroned, despised and divorced.
 - **Chapter 2 – A new queen**
 - Hadassah is made queen, via a beauty contest. She was dipped in Oil of Olay and made very beautiful for the king.
 - Mordecai learns of a plot to assassinate the king. He gets word to Esther and the plot is foiled.
 - **Chapter 3 – Plot to annihilate the Jews**

Haman is promoted and empowered. The power goes to his head and he develops a plot to destroy the Jewish population because they will not bow to his position.
 - **Chapter 4 – Seeking a way of deliverance**

Mordecai mourns in a traditional way and convinces Esther to help find a way to prevent destruction of their people.
 - **Chapter 5 – Esther's Banquet #1, Haman builds gallows**
 - Esther requests the presence of Xerxes and Haman at a banquet and begins the process to soften the king's heart.
 - Haman is enraged with Mordecai's unwillingness to bow to him, so he enlists the help of wife and friends to determine he should build a gallows for execution.
 - **Chapter 6 – Honor for Mordecai**

We see God working behind the scenes as the king has a sleepless night. Xerxes reviews the chronicles. It was discovered that he had not given Mordecai any honor for identifying the plot to overthrow the king. He asks Haman what process should be followed to honor someone who would save the king. Haman finds himself paying homage to Mordecai and asking others to do the same.

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Outline

❖ 7:1 - 10 Reversal of Fate and Power

- Esther's 2nd Banquet – as promised in 5:7 – 8

Note: The feast that Esther prepared for Haman and the king was an elaborate meal, combined with the drinking of wine. Banquets were usually held in the evening and, especially in the case of a royal affair, served in rooms specially constructed for such occasions. Since wine was an important part of the feast, the Hebrew expression for the banquet hall is “house of the feast of wine”.

- ◆ Xerxes shows his commitment to Esther by immediately inquiring about her petition.
- ◆ Xerxes asks one or two questions of his queen? Look at Esther 5:3, what are the similarities to 7:2? What are the differences between the 2? The differences between a petition and a request. **Petition** is an earnest request and in many cases in writing. There seems to be more urgency in the asking. A **request** is to ask for something.
- ◆ Once a powerful Haman had the attention of king Xerxes while the Jews were powerless 3:15. Notice how the power is transferred in this chapter. How does king Xerxes continually address Esther? What does this tell you? He addresses Esther as “Queen” and he is asking her petition and request. It is now apparent that the power Esther possesses in this chapter is now becoming an advantage for her and her people.
- ◆ Is the king informed about the major events in his kingdom? Esther uses the words of the decree (Jews being sold for destruction and slaughter and annihilation) to show Xerxes that his beloved queen was about to be destroyed by Haman’s plot. Esther wanted the king to be fully aware of the decree Haman put in place. She needed to identify Haman as the adversary. It is pretty obvious that the king is not very well informed of the events that take place in his kingdom. After all, he has leaders like the vile Haman to take care of the details.
- ◆ What was the reaction to Esther’s revelation?

Character	Reaction
Xerxes	Stormed off (in rage) to the palace garden, assumed Haman was molesting the queen, has Haman bagged, had Haman hanged
Haman	Terrified, realized his doom, begged the queen for his life, he is seen falling on the couch of the queen

- ◆ Haman begged Esther for his life, but could Esther have saved him – even if she wanted to? It is very possible that at this point, Xerxes recognized how much he had shirked his own responsibility and how much power he had given Haman that he should have retained himself in such circumstances. But notice that he accuses Haman of voiding protocol with the king’s harem and found Haman in what appears to be a situation of impropriety. Xerxes shirks his own responsibility of

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issuing his own decrees. In all honesty, Xerxes himself was responsible for the potential fate of his own queen. He does not have Haman executed for authoring a decree to annihilate his Queen and the Jewish race. His charge for executing Haman was for trying to molest Esther – one of his harem and his queen. How do we shirk some of our own responsibilities? Do we vote?

❖ **8:1 - 17 Reversal of Judgment**

- The immediate response by Xerxes carries forward in Chapter 8:1-6.

Note: It was customary practice to seize the property of condemned criminals.

What were the next things Xerxes did?	Gave Esther the estate of Haman Gave his signet ring to Mordecai
What did Mordecai do?	Came into the presence of the King
What did Esther do? Did she fulfill the purpose she was called to (4:14)?	Told the king how Mordecai was related to her Esther appointed Mordecai over Haman's estate She pleaded again with the king and begged the king to put an end of the evil plot to kill the Jews.

- At this point the edict to annihilate the Jews was still in tact and no one could reverse the edict of a king. Mordecai was given orders to prepare a decree in behalf of the Jews “as seems best to you and seal it with the king’s signet ring.” How do you see God working in the background?
- What were the key elements of the decree prepared by Mordecai?
 - The right to assemble in every city to protect themselves
 - To destroy, kill and annihilate any armed force of any nationality or province that might attack them and their women and children
 - To plunder the property of their enemies
 - The day appointed for this was the 13th day of Adar (the 12th month)
 - Copy of the edict was to be issued to every province

The new edict was authorizing self-defense, not aggression.
- Can you identify with the Jews as they are reading this decree? Describe some of the emotions and actions they would have had. Mordecai left the king’s presence wearing royal garments, a crown. What did all the Jews do at this point? What did the other nationalities do? The Jews feasted and celebrated while other nationalities were afraid of them and “became Jews because of fear of the Jews had seized them.” How many of our friends and loved ones become Christians because of their fear of what lies ahead? Do we take the time to share the gospel? Do we not realize the fate that lies ahead if we do not? Where is that kind of fear today? What kinds of laws do we have today that bring harm to our society?
Abortion,
- Haman’s decree left the city/nation disturbed and bewildered, while Mordecai’s decree resulted in joyous celebration. Haman shows us how

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to use personal influence for self-centered and harmful purposes. Esther shows us how to use personal influence in a righteous way and for the good of others.

❖ **9:1 - 17 Reversal of Power**

- The Jews assembled to defend themselves and attack those seeking their destruction. Scripture says that “no one could stand against them, because all other nationalities were afraid of them. How did God use Mordecai at this point? The nobles and governors helped the Jews because of the fear of Mordecai had seized them. He was prominent – he became more and more powerful.
- How did the Jews fulfill the decree?

The right to assemble and protect themselves	Assembled in each city
To destroy, kill and annihilate any armed force of any nationality or province that might attack them and their women and children	Killed 500 men in Susa, killed the 10 sons of Haman, total killed was 75,000,
To plunder the property of their enemies	Did not lay hands on the plunder
The day appointed for this was the 13 th day of Adar (the 12 th month)	Carried out on the 13 th day, but Esther requested another day “tomorrow”

Note: Haman’s sons were hanged apparently after they were killed as a visible reminder to those who opposed.

- Survival of the Jewish people depended upon them doing something and taking action. They could not sit back, waiting for the first edict to happen. Mordecai and Esther had done their part as leaders, now it was up to the people to act in their own salvation. Much like us. We are given the gospel, but we must act on it personally. After we pray, we must take action.
- The 14th day, the Jews in the provinces feasted and celebrated their victory, even though fighting continued in Susa.

❖ **Final Thoughts**

- Neither Esther nor Mordecai could have made it alone through this situation. This points to the ministry links with friends and others whom God has led our way. He may have a sovereign purpose in bringing us together. Who has God brought your way to be a “ministry link?”
- Did the Jewish people take their edict too far? Verse 9:5 said they did what they pleased, which indicates they perhaps went beyond what God had orchestrated and gave in to the lust of destruction. We will only know the real truth when we see God face-to-face.
- Where was God in all of this? He is not mentioned at all in this book. What roles did he play? Provider of salvation. Proverbs 21:1 The king's Head is in the hand of the Lord; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases. God uses our actions and inactions to fulfill his plans.

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Look at Esther 5:3, what are the similarities to 7:2?
What are the differences between the 2? .
 - ◆ How does king Xerxes continually address Esther? What does this tell you?
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 - ◆ What was the reaction to Esther's revelation?

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- Mordecai left the king's presence wearing royal garments, a crown. What did all the Jews do at this point? What did the other nationalities do? Haman's decree left the city/nation _____ and _____, while Mordecai's decree resulted in _____.
- Haman shows us how to use personal influence for _____ and _____ purposes. Esther shows us how to use personal influence in a _____ and _____ of others.

❖ 9:1 - 17 Reversal of Power

- The Jews assembled to defend themselves and attack those seeking their destruction. Scripture says that "no one could stand against them, because all other nationalities were afraid of them. How did God use Mordecai at this point
- How did the Jews fulfill the decree?

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