

*1 Esther 5-10 “When It All Comes Together...Right Now”

We have been learning in Esther that God is involved in all the circumstances of life, even the “little” ones each day. “God is in the details and is working His plan and purposes” is the truth presented in Esther.

Some of you may have come today and through your experience in life you have come to believe that there is no ultimate plan and purpose for your life – no rhyme or reason. But history and the Bible tell us that there is Higher Power at work in the world, bringing all things to a specific end!

*2 Even the news media acknowledged this week that God had His hand in saving the people on SW flight 1380 over Pennsylvania! Former Navy pilot Tammie Shults is a committed Christian, and the Lord allowed her to be in the right place this week to be His instrument to save the day – she gave the glory to God! **Proverbs 10:7** The memory of the righteous is blessed!

*3 Southwest Airline accident: Tammie Jo Shults is a Christian, who is married to a fellow pilot and has two children. Shults said that sitting in the captain's chair gave her "the opportunity to witness for Christ on almost every flight." "**God sent his angels to watch over us,**" she said.

*4 Of course there was a sad part of this amazing story. It was the death of Jennifer Riordan of Albuquerque – the mother of this precious family. She was active in the Catholic community and the philanthropy wing of Wells Fargo Bank. Her husband Michael is the chief operations manager for the City of Albuquerque. Our hearts and our prayers go out to them, and we ask for God’s comfort for their family and friends.

When we left Esther last week she was fasting and praying for God’s direction in her quest to stop the evil Haman! (Oh the importance of prayer!!!)

*5 **Esther 4** ¹⁵ Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶ “Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. **Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same.** And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. **If I must die, I must die.**”

*6 **Read Chapter 5 – Note:** Each year on the Feast of Purim, the Book of Esther is read publicly in the synagogue; and whenever the reader mentions Haman’s name, the people stamp their feet and exclaim, “**May his name be blotted out!**” (*Ps 9:5; 109:13 i.e. no offspring, no descendants*)

*7 **Esther 5** ¹ **On the third day of the fast, Esther put on her royal robes** and entered the inner court of the palace, just across from the king’s hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne, facing the entrance. ² When he

saw Queen Esther standing there in the inner court, he welcomed her and held out the gold scepter to her. So Esther approached and touched the end of the scepter.³ Then the king asked her, “What do you want, Queen Esther? What is your request? **I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!**”

Here we have another remarkable example of how God controls the hearts of kings (v. 2; Prov. 21:1; cf. Gen. 39–41; Ezra 1:1–4; Neh. 2; Dan. 2; 3; 4; 5; Acts 2:23). “To half of the kingdom” (v. 3) is hyperbole and means, “**I will grant even a large request**” (cf. 5:6; 7:2; Mark 6:22–23). Tom Constable¹

***7a Proverbs 21:1 (NASB95)**¹ The king’s heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Esther 5⁴ And Esther replied, “**If it please the king**, let the king and Haman (**Pr 10:7 – But “The name of the wicked should rot.” – Boos, banging, foot stamping & shouts!**) come today to a banquet I have prepared for the king.”⁵ The king turned to his attendants and said, “Tell Haman to come quickly to a banquet, as Esther has requested.” So the king and Haman went to Esther’s banquet.⁶ And while they were drinking wine, the king said to Esther, “Now tell me what you really want. What is your request? I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!”⁷ Esther replied, “This is my request and deepest wish.⁸ **If I have found favor with the king**, and if it pleases the king to grant my request and do what I ask, please come with Haman **tomorrow** to the banquet I will prepare for you. Then I will explain what this is all about.”

So did Esther “choke”? She may have because she was terrified! Was it the Holy Spirit tell her to wait one more day, because a lot has to happen that night? Yes; it is a fact that God wanted her to wait til the next day. God definitely had a plan in place for the next day – timing was important!!

Timing is VERY important with God! **It is wisdom to consider carefully the timing on the things we say. Because the right word spoken at the wrong time is NOT a beautiful thing. (Starting a touchy conversation five minutes before the other person has to leave for work is NOT a good idea!)**

***8 Proverbs 25:11 NCV** The right word spoken *at the right time* is as beautiful as gold apples in a silver bowl.

Now we move from the subtly of Esther to the stupidity of Haman!

¹ Tom Constable, [Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible](#) (Galaxie Software, 2003), Es 5:1.

***9 Esther 5** ⁹ Haman was a happy man as he left the banquet! **But** when he saw Mordecai sitting at the palace gate, not standing up or trembling nervously before him, **Haman became furious**. (“filled with wrath”) ¹⁰ However, he restrained himself and went on home. **Then Haman gathered together** (sent for) **his friends and Zeresh, his wife,** ¹¹ **and boasted to them about his great wealth and his many children. He bragged about the honors the king had given him and how he had been promoted over all the other nobles and officials.** ¹² Then Haman added, “And that’s not all! Queen Esther invited only me and the king himself to the banquet she prepared for us. And she has invited me to dine with her and the king again tomorrow!”

Pride clouds our thinking and destroys our logic – “blind” with rage! Do you realize how great I am – why doesn’t Mordechai know it?! Look how great I am! Look at my sons – doesn’t his wife know that? What a bragging session! Pastor Alastair Begg says *“This is Facebook page gone “bad” – a Christmas letter in July!”*

***9a** British Bible scholar William Barclay wrote, **“Pride is the ground in which all the other sins grow, and the parent from which all the other sins come.”** Warren Wiersbe ²

***10 Proverbs 11:2 (NLT)** ² Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

***10a Proverbs 16:18 (NLT)** ¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall.

***10b Proverbs 29:23 (NLT)** ²³ Pride ends in humiliation, while humility brings honor.

***10c Proverbs 6:16–19 (NLT)** ¹⁶ There are six things YaHWeH hates— no, seven things he detests: ¹⁷ haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, ¹⁸ a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, ¹⁹ a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord in a family.

Pride is the very essence of sin. **(Perhaps that’s why pride is number one on God’s “hate list.” See Prov. 6:16–19.)** It was pride that turned Lucifer into Satan: “I will be like the Most High” (Isa. 14:14, NKJV). Satan used pride to tempt Eve: “You will be like God” (Gen. 3:5, NIV).

***11 Esther 5** ¹³ Then he added, **“But this is all worth nothing as long as I see Mordecai the Jew just sitting there at the palace gate.”** ¹⁴ So Haman’s wife, Zeresh, and all his friends suggested, **“Set up a sharpened**

² Warren W. Wiersbe, [*Be Committed*](#), “Be” Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), 116.

pole that stands seventy-five feet tall, and in the morning ask the king to impale Mordecai on it. When this is done, you can go on your merry way to the banquet with the king." This pleased Haman, and he ordered the pole set up.

This type of punishment was actually continued in the medieval world and if you watch any of the BBC Hollow Crown series you will see brutal punishments as these. Foxes Book of Martyrs is very graphic in regard to Bloody Mary's punishment of Christians and even King James perpetrated similar punishments on Catholics during his reign.

***11a Proverbs 5:22 (NLT)** ²² An evil man is held captive by his own sins; they are ropes that catch and hold him.

***12 Read Chapter 6**

Esther 6 ¹ That night the king had trouble sleeping, so he ordered an attendant to bring the book of the history of his reign so it could be read to him. ² In those records he discovered an account of how Mordecai had exposed the plot of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the eunuchs who guarded the door to the king's private quarters. They had plotted to assassinate King Xerxes. (5 years before!) ³ "What reward or recognition did we ever give Mordecai for this?" the king asked. His attendants replied, "Nothing has been done for him."

***13 Esther 6** ⁴ **"Who is that in the outer court?" the king inquired. As it happened, Haman had just arrived in the outer court of the palace to ask the king to impale Mordecai on the pole he had prepared.** ⁵ So the attendants replied to the king, "Haman is out in the court." "Bring him in," the king ordered.

"Let's see, who just happens to be in the outer court?" "Oh, look, it's Haman – fancy that!"

This was a remarkable example of God's Providence in action. God alone caused the king to not be able to sleep! He could have chosen 20 different diversions to fill his sleepless night – but he commands that the court proceedings book be brought to him and read – one particular book – one particular section!

If this Book of Esther shows us anything, it shows us that God manages the affairs of men, **even without their knowledge**. God knows what He is doing and in the courts of heaven there are no coincidences or surprises.

***13a** The sometimes unseen God is always at work in our lives! Remember: **Romans 8:28 (NIV84)** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

***14 Esther 6** ⁶ So Haman came in, and the king said, "What should I do to honor a man who truly pleases me?" **Haman thought to** ("said to") **himself, "Whom would the king wish to honor more than me?"**

***14a Proverbs 27:1–2 (NASB95)** ¹ Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth. ² Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.

Haman was a tragic man who can only believe he has done well when he heard applause. It is a good and sometimes appropriate thing to have applause here on earth, but it is tragic to live your life seeking for it. **We should instead seek and be satisfied with the applause from heaven.**

David Guzik

"Here the early bird is gotten by the worm." Moore

Esther 6 ⁷ So he replied, "If the king wishes to honor someone, ⁸ he should bring out one of the king's own royal robes, as well as a horse that the king himself has ridden—one with a royal emblem on its head. ⁹ Let the robes and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble officials. And let him see that the man whom the king wishes to honor is dressed in the king's robes and led through the city square on the king's horse. Have the official shout as they go, 'This is what the king does for someone he wishes to honor!'"

***15 Esther 6** ¹⁰ "Excellent!" the king said to Haman. **"Quick! Take the robes and my horse, and do just as you have said for Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the gate of the palace. Leave out nothing you have suggested!"** ¹¹ So Haman took the robes and put them on Mordecai, placed him on the king's own horse, and led him through the city square, shouting, "This is what the king does for someone he wishes to honor!" ¹² Afterward Mordecai returned to the palace gate, but **Haman hurried home dejected and completely humiliated** ("His head covered" – like an arrested person covering his face from the cameras).

So in comes Haman – like a lamb led to the slaughter. Satan moves his bishop to knight 3 for check. God moves His pawn and Satan's bishop must retreat! Haman thinks this will be a victory, but now he is retreating!

***15b Esther 6** **Esther 6** ¹³ When Haman told his wife, Zeresh, and all his friends what had happened, his wise advisers and his wife said, **"Since Mordecai—this man who has humiliated you—is of Jewish birth, you will never succeed in your plans against him. It will be fatal to continue opposing him."** ¹⁴ While they were still talking, the king's eunuchs arrived and quickly took Haman to the banquet Esther had prepared.

Now instead of encouraging Haman to persecute and kill Mordecai, his fickle wife and friends are backing away quickly from anything to do with him!

***16 Proverbs 21:30 (NLT)** ³⁰ No human wisdom or understanding or plan can stand against YaHWeH.

Proverbs 11:8 (NLT) ⁸ The godly are rescued from trouble, and it falls on the wicked instead.

***16a** What irony! For almost a whole day Haman was the servant of Mordecai, commanding the people to bow down and honor him! The thing Mordecai wouldn't do for Haman—bow down—Haman had to tell others to do for Mordecai! Warren Wiersbe

***17 Read Chapter 7**

“Bad Day At Black Rock” for the Prime Minister!

Esther 7 ¹ So the king and Haman went to Queen Esther's banquet. ² On this second occasion, while they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, “Tell me what you want, Queen Esther. What is your request? I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!”

This lady is no dummy! She is an intelligent, shrewd, patient, wise woman! She has brought the king to acknowledge 3 times publicly that he will grant her request, no matter what! (5:3, 5:6, 7:2)

***18 Esther 7** ³ Queen Esther replied, “If I have found favor with the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my request (notice the humility and respect with which she speaks), I ask that my life and the lives of my people will be spared. ⁴ **For my people and I have been sold to those who would kill, slaughter, and annihilate us. If we had merely been sold as slaves, I could remain quiet, for that would be too trivial a matter to warrant disturbing the king.**” ⁵ “Who would do such a thing?” King Xerxes demanded. “Who would be so presumptuous as to touch you?”

***18a** **Pastor Skip has a great line in his book “The Bible From 30,000 Feet” – “God had moved His queen into place on the board and said: “Checkmate”!

PS This is the first time the king has learned that his queen is a Jew!

***19 Esther 7** ⁶ Esther replied, **“This wicked Haman is our adversary and our enemy.”** Haman grew pale with fright (“terrified”) before the king and queen. ⁷ Then the king jumped to his feet in a rage and went out into the palace garden.

The king is in a dilemma – he had signed his own wife’s death sentence! Is he going to kill his own prime minister who was acting on his authority? Everyone knows he approved it.

***19a Proverbs 16:14 (ESV)** ¹⁴ A king’s wrath is a messenger of death, and a wise man will appease it.

***20 Esther 7** Haman, however, stayed behind to plead for his life with Queen Esther, for he knew that the king intended to kill him. ⁸ In despair he fell on the couch where Queen Esther was reclining, just as the king was returning from the palace garden.

***20a** A Jewish writing says that the angel Gabriel pushed Haman so he fell on Esther’s couch just as king Ahasuerus was coming back into the room. David Guzik

“The irony here is that Haman, who had demanded that Mordecai bow before him, was bowing at the feet of the Jew Esther.” Breneman

***20b Psalm 9:16 (NIV84)** ¹⁶ YaHWeH is known by His justice; **the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.** *Selah*

***21 Esther 7** The king exclaimed, “Will he even assault the queen right here in the palace, before my very eyes?” And as soon as the king spoke, his attendants covered Haman’s face, signaling his doom.

As the king returns from pondering his dilemma – “Do I chose my prime minister or my wife?” This is going to look bad for me – axing my prime minister because of MY own edict! But as he enters he finds the reason to take Haman out! He can accuse Haman of assaulting Esther – a fabrication to get out of the sticky situation.

Of course as usual the Persian special counsel, appointed by Darius, to look into tax evasion, having leaked documents to PNBC will report that He had evidence that Haman was having an affair with a chamber maid some 40 years before and deleted his texts from 2 of the other women in the kings haram; implying he had designs on Queen Esther, **BUT in fact Haman has fallen before Esther begging for his life, he wasn’t attempting anything!**

***21a Job 5:13–14 (NIV84)** ¹³ He catches the wise in their craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are swept away. ¹⁴ **Darkness comes upon them in the daytime (“hoodie”); at noon they grope as in the night.**

***22 Esther 7** ⁹ Then Harbona, one of the king’s eunuchs (apparently not a huge fan of Haman), said, **“Haman has set up a sharpened pole that stands seventy-five feet tall in his own courtyard. He intended to use it to impale Mordecai, the man who saved the king from assassination.”**

“Then impale Haman on it!” the king ordered. ¹⁰ So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai, and the king’s anger subsided.

***22a Psalm 7:14–16 (NLT)** ¹⁴ The wicked conceive evil; they are pregnant with trouble and give birth to lies. ¹⁵ They dig a deep pit to trap others, then fall into it themselves. ¹⁶ The trouble they make for others backfires on them. The violence they plan falls on their own heads.

***23 Job 4:8–9 (NLT)** ⁸ My experience shows that those who plant trouble and cultivate evil will harvest the same. ⁹ A breath from God destroys them. They vanish in a blast of His anger.

***23a “The godly are rescued from trouble, and it falls on the wicked instead.” Proverbs 11:8 NLT**

Not only is there a personal lesson here, but there is also a lesson about the nation of Israel: **Every enemy that has ever tried to destroy Israel has been destroyed.** “I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you” is God’s promise to Israel (Gen. 12:3, NKJV), and He has always kept it. God takes His promises seriously even if the nations of the world ignore them or challenge them. Warren Wiersbe

***24 Read Chapter 8**

Esther 8 ¹ On that same day King Xerxes gave the property of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther. Then Mordecai was brought before the king, for **Esther had told the king how they were related.**

Note: Now he learns that she is related to the man who saved him!

Esther 8 ² The king took off his signet ring—which he had taken back from Haman—and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther appointed Mordecai to be in charge of Haman’s property. ³ **Then Esther went again before the king, falling down at his feet and begging him with tears to stop the evil plot devised by Haman the Agagite against the Jews.** ⁴ Again the king held out the gold scepter to Esther. So she rose and stood before him.

Haman is dead, but his dangerous edict lives on and therefore the main problem isn’t solved! Esther and Mordecai were safe, but their people were not!

When Haman was deposed, the king took back his royal ring (3:10), the insignia of the authority of the throne (8:8, 10; 3:12), and he gave the ring to Mordecai, making him prime minister. **With a Jewish queen and a Jewish prime minister in the palace, the Jews in the empire were in a better political position than ever before.** Warren Wiersbe

Esther 8 ⁵ Esther said, “If it please the king, and if I have found favor with him, and if he thinks it is right, and if I am pleasing to him, let there be a decree that reverses the orders of Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, who ordered that Jews throughout all the king’s provinces should be

destroyed. ⁶ **For how can I endure to see my people and my family slaughtered and destroyed?”**

Esther 8 ⁷ Then King Xerxes said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, **“I have given Esther the property of Haman, and he has been impaled on a pole because he tried to destroy the Jews.**

Psalms 37:34–36 (NLT) ³⁴ Put your hope in YaHWeH. Travel steadily along his path. He will honor you by giving you the land. You will see the wicked destroyed. ³⁵ I have seen wicked and ruthless people flourishing like a tree in its native soil. ³⁶ But when I looked again, they were gone! Though I searched for them, I could not find them!

***25 Esther 8** ⁸ Now go ahead and send a message to the Jews in the king’s name, telling them whatever you want, and seal it with the king’s signet ring. **But remember that whatever has already been written in the king’s name and sealed with his signet ring can never be revoked.”** ⁹ So on June 25 the king’s secretaries were summoned, and a decree was written exactly as Mordecai dictated. It was sent to the Jews and to the highest officers, the governors, and the nobles of all the 127 provinces stretching from India to Ethiopia.

***25a** The first decree to destroy the Jews had gone out on April 17, 474 B.C. (3:12). Ahasuerus published this one allowing the Jews to defend themselves on June 25, 474 B.C. The Jews had over eight months to prepare for the day their enemies might attack them, which was March 7, 473 B.C. Tom Constable

Esther 8 The decree was written in the scripts and languages of all the peoples of the empire, including that of the Jews. ¹⁰ The decree was written in the name of King Xerxes and sealed with the king’s signet ring. Mordecai sent the dispatches by swift messengers, who rode fast horses especially bred for the king’s service. ***26** ¹¹ **The king’s decree gave the Jews in every city authority to unite to defend their lives. They were allowed to kill, slaughter, and annihilate anyone of any nationality or province who might attack them** or their children and wives, and **to take the property of their enemies.**

Self-defense isn’t a crime, but genocide definitely is. They were allowed to do exactly what was to be done to them.

***26a** The Torah limited “pay-back” to exactly what was inflicted on the innocent person. “An eye for an eye” – that is, you don’t go over the top – but the crime should fit the punishment. **Leviticus 24:19–20 (NLT)** ¹⁹ “Anyone who injures another person must be dealt with according to the injury inflicted—²⁰ a fracture for a fracture, an eye for

an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Whatever anyone does to injure another person must be paid back in kind.

Esther 8 ¹² **The day chosen for this event throughout all the provinces of King Xerxes was March 7 of the next year.** ¹³ A copy of this decree

was to be issued as law in every province and proclaimed to all peoples, so that the Jews would be ready to take revenge on their enemies on the appointed day. ¹⁴ So urged on by the king's command, the messengers rode out swiftly on fast horses bred for the king's service. The same decree was also proclaimed in the fortress of Susa.

***27 Esther 8** ¹⁵ Then Mordecai left the king's presence, wearing the royal robe of blue and white, the great crown ("Turbin") of gold, and an outer cloak of fine linen and purple. **And the people of Susa celebrated the new decree.** (not "confusion" as Chapter 3) ¹⁶ **The Jews were filled with joy and gladness and were honored everywhere.** ¹⁷ In every province and city, wherever the king's decree arrived, the Jews rejoiced and had a great celebration and declared a public festival and holiday.

Note: Mordecai did a good job as prime minister because Xerxes' son was very favorable to the Jews in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah!

***27a** God doesn't always give this kind of a "happy ending" to everybody's story. Today, not all faithful Christians are promoted and given special honors. Some of them get fired because of their stand for Christ! God hasn't promised that we'll be promoted and made rich, but He has assured us that He's in control of all circumstances and that He will write the last chapter of the story. If God doesn't promote us here on earth, He certainly will when we get to glory. Warren Wiersbe

Esther 8 And many of the people of the land became Jews themselves, for they feared what the Jews might do to them.

[This is the only mention in the Old Testament that Gentiles "became Jews." They became religious Jews, not racial Jews. Tom Constable] "I think the phrase means that many of the Gentiles in the empire sided with the Jews and acted as though they were Jews. They weren't ashamed to be identified with the Jews even though the Jews had enemies. Warren Wiersbe

***28 Esther 9** ¹ So on March 7 the two decrees of the king were put into effect. On that day, the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, but quite the opposite happened. It was the Jews who overpowered their enemies. ² The Jews gathered in their cities throughout all the king's provinces to attack anyone who tried to harm them. **But no one could make a stand against them, for everyone was afraid of them.** ³ And all the nobles of the provinces, the highest officers, the governors, and the royal officials helped the Jews for fear of Mordecai. ⁴ For Mordecai had been

promoted in the king's palace, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces as he became more and more powerful. **5 So the Jews went ahead on the appointed day and struck down their enemies with the sword. They killed and annihilated their enemies and did as they pleased with those who hated them. 6 In the fortress of Susa itself, the Jews killed 500 men.**

**God put a holy fear on many of the inhabitants of the Persian Empire in regard to the Jews. Everybody wanted to be friendly to the Jews! Especially when you see them at Walmart buying 12 gauge shotguns to defend themselves! ☺

Genesis 35:5 (NLT) ⁵ As they set out, a terror from God spread over the people in all the towns of that area, so no one attacked Jacob's family.

Deuteronomy 2:25 (NLT) ²⁵ Beginning today I will make people throughout the earth terrified because of you. When they hear reports about you, they will tremble with dread and fear.' "

The appointed day came from the casting of dice by Haman in chapter 3. God has appointed the day through His control of the "lot." Haman submitted himself to "chance" and drew the lots – but in actuality God was guiding everything. The truth is that seemingly impossible things can happen when God is working!

The word "capital" (fortress) in verse 6 really refers to the acropolis, the royal section of the capital city of Susa. Tom Constable

***28a Esther 9** ⁷ They also killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸ Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, ⁹ Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha—¹⁰ the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. **But they did not take any plunder.**

Remember how prideful Haman was in chapter 5? One of things he boasted about was his sons! **Esther 5:11 (NASB95)** ¹¹ Then Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches, **and the number of his (10) sons**, and every *instance* where the king had magnified him and how he had promoted him above the princes and servants of the king.

"Now it was God's intent that a last conflict should take place between Israel and Amalek: the conflict which began with Joshua in the desert was to be finished by Mordecai in the king's palace." Charles Spurgeon

***29 Esther 9** ¹¹ That very day, when the king was informed of the number of people killed in the fortress of Susa, ¹² **he called for Queen Esther.** He said, **"The Jews have killed 500 men in the fortress of Susa alone, as well as Haman's ten sons. If they have done that here, what has happened in the rest of the provinces?** But now, what more do you want? It will be granted to you; tell me and I will do it." ¹³ Esther responded, "If it please the

king, give the Jews in Susa permission to do again tomorrow as they have done today, and **let the bodies of Haman's ten sons be impaled on a pole.**" ¹⁴ So the king agreed, and the decree was announced in Susa. And they impaled the bodies of Haman's ten sons. ¹⁵ Then the Jews at Susa gathered together on March 8 and killed 300 more men, and again **they took no plunder.**

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;

Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all. Friedrich von Logau

Esther 9 ¹⁶ Meanwhile, the other Jews throughout the king's provinces had gathered together to defend their lives. They gained relief from all their enemies, killing 75,000 of those who hated them. **But they did not take any plunder.** ¹⁷ This was done throughout the provinces on March 7, and on March 8 they rested, **celebrating their victory with a day of feasting and gladness.** ¹⁸ (The Jews at Susa killed their enemies on March 7 and again on March 8, then rested on March 9, making that their day of feasting and gladness.) ¹⁹ So to this day, rural Jews living in remote villages celebrate an annual festival and holiday on the appointed day in late winter, when they rejoice and send gifts of food to each other.

***30** **The Jews killed only those who attacked them; they killed only the men** (9:6, 12, 15); and they didn't lay hands on the loot, although they had the right to do so (vv. 10, 15–16)...But the fact that more than 75,000 people were prepared to slaughter *defenseless* Jews shows how many of the king's people hated God's people. And the fact that these people were even willing to attack *when they knew the Jews would protect themselves* is proof that anti-Semitism was very strong throughout the empire. Warren Wiersbe

This is a pure case of self-defense! Even after the holy "fear" fell upon the people some people still attacked the Jews – these were hardened, wicked people.

The Jews refused to take the plunder, because Saul was told not to take any plunder from the Amalekites – this was a righteous war – not a war to gain riches!

***31 Esther 9** ²⁰ Mordecai recorded these events and sent letters to the Jews near and far, throughout all the provinces of King Xerxes, ²¹ calling on them to celebrate an annual festival on these two days. ²² He told them to celebrate these days with feasting and gladness and by giving gifts of food to each other and presents to the poor. **This would commemorate a time when the Jews gained relief from their enemies, when their sorrow was turned into gladness and their mourning into joy.** ²³ So the Jews accepted Mordecai's proposal and adopted this annual custom.

***31a Psalm 30:11–12 (NASB95)** ¹¹ You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness, ¹² That *my* soul may sing praise to You and not be silent. O YAHWEH my God, I will give thanks to You forever.

His proclamation united the two days on which the Jews had defended themselves (Adar 13 and 14) into one holiday. During the inter-testamental period the Jews called Adar 14 “**Mordecai Day**” (2 Maccabees 15:36, RSV), but they discarded this special designation later. Modern Jews celebrate Purim on the evening of Adar 14 (March 8). It is their most festive and popular holiday.
Tom Constable

The Jews were to never forget their deliverance from Haman’s plot. They were to teach their children about it and they have done so to this day!!

What were they to remember? Their deliverance and the holiday is a commemoration of that event. **A summary is given in verse 24-26:**

***32 Esther 9** ²⁴ Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews, had plotted to crush and destroy them on the date determined by casting lots (the lots were called *purim*). ²⁵ **But when Esther came before the king, he issued a decree causing Haman’s evil plot to backfire, and Haman and his sons were impaled on a sharpened pole.** ²⁶ **That is why this celebration is called Purim, because it is the ancient word for casting lots.** So because of Mordecai’s letter and because of what they had experienced, ²⁷ the Jews throughout the realm agreed to inaugurate this tradition and to pass it on to their descendants and to all who became Jews. They declared they would never fail to celebrate these two prescribed days at the appointed time each year. ²⁸ These days would be remembered and kept from generation to generation and celebrated by every family throughout the provinces and cities of the empire.

***33** Each year on the Feast of Purim, the Book of Esther is read publicly in the synagogue; and whenever the reader mentions Haman’s name, the people stamp their feet and exclaim, “**May his name be blotted out!**” To Jews everywhere, Haman personifies everybody who has tried to exterminate the people of Israel. Everything about Haman is hateful; you can’t find one thing about this man worth praising. In fact, everything about Haman, *God hated!* Warren Wiersbe

Esther 9 This Festival of Purim would never cease to be celebrated among the Jews, nor would the memory of what happened ever die out among their descendants. ²⁹ **Then Queen Esther, the daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Jew, wrote another letter putting the queen’s full authority behind Mordecai’s letter to establish the Festival of Purim.**

³⁰ Letters wishing peace and security were sent to the Jews throughout the 127 provinces of the empire of Xerxes. ³¹ These letters established the

Festival of Purim—an annual celebration of these days at the appointed time, decreed by both Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther. (The people decided to observe this festival, just as they had decided for themselves and their descendants to establish the times of fasting and mourning.)³² **So the command of Esther confirmed the practices of Purim, and it was all written down in the records.**

Esther is the only Old Testament book not found among the texts used by the Essene community at Qumran, probably because this community did not observe Purim. Bush

***34 Esther 10¹ King Xerxes imposed a tribute throughout his empire, even to the distant coastlands.**² His great achievements and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai, whom the king had promoted, are recorded in *The Book of the History of the Kings of Media and Persia*.³ Mordecai the Jew became the prime minister, with authority next to that of King Xerxes himself. He was very great among the Jews, who held him in high esteem, **because he continued to work for the good of his people and to speak up for the welfare of all their descendants.** [Lit. “He was one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.”]

***35** The king was in the counting-house, counting out his money,

The queen was in the parlor, Eating bread and honey, (Sing A Song of Sixpence)

(Esther is not mentioned – she’s back in the palace being a humble queen!)

The king is now back to business – raising taxes for the nation to replace his army and navy! **“Hum, taxes are the thing that the governments do best!”**

***35a** It is interesting to note that one of the effects of the events of Esther was to put Mordecai in place as prime minister and earn the Jews a favorable place in the empire. He spent the rest of his life blessing his people and overseeing the Persian Empire. This was recorded in the secular records!

The effects of Mordecai’s life is evident in Xerxes son Artaxerxes who protected and helped Ezra and Nehemiah and others who returned to build up Jerusalem!

That surely has something to say to us about the role Christians can play in public and political life. In his letter to the Romans, Paul clearly teaches that the civil authority is ordained by God, and everyone is subject to it. ‘Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore

whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves' (Rom. 13:1–2). Peter Williams³

It has always been God's will for believers to be a part of human government to influence it for good! Joseph, Daniel, Mordecai and others!

God's providential hand, His children's obedience in the face of death, and a happy ending Hollywood mystery ... what more could we ask for?!

Jesus, help us to obey Your Spirit and help us to see Your loving hand in the details of our lives. Forgive us Lord for not giving You glory for all the little things you do for us each day – truly Your wisdom and power are beyond our comprehension!

³ Peter Williams, [*Opening up Ezra*](#), Opening Up Commentary (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2006), 83.