

Safe Harbor Baptist Church

12-7-2022 Wednesday night

Esther Sermon 6 “The God who works behind the scenes”

Pastor Josh Montgomery

“The Conquest of the Jew”

Text: Esther 7-8

Esther 1- The Character of Vashti.

Esther 2- The Choosing of Esther.

Esther 3- The Commitment of Mordecai

Esther 4- The Choice of Esther.

Esther 5 -The Courage of Esther.

Esther 6- The Confounding of Haman.

Esther 7-8 The Conquest of the Jew.

Review:

In our last message we saw through the exposition of Esther 5-6 that Queen Esther had invited both the King and Haman for a feast.

The feast went well, so well in fact that Esther invited both the King and Haman back the following night to have another feast and it would be then when Esther would reveal her request to the King.

On the night of the first feast many things occurred.

- Haman went home to brag to his friends, but was disturbed by the fact that Mordecai still would not bow in reverence to him.
- In sharing this displeasure with his wife and friends they encourage him to build the gallows 75ft high, and on the next day request the King to have Mordecai executed.
- Haman loves the idea so much that he immediately goes to the King to make this request.
- During this time the king is not able to sleep and request that the records be brought to him and to be read to him. During this reading

he is reminded that nothing was done to show appreciation to Mordecai for revealing the assassination attempt on the king's life some 5 years before.

- The King wants to do something for Mordecai, and of all people he asked Haman what should be done for a man to whom the King delighted?
- Haman being full of pride, thinking that the King was referring to him, gave a long list of things that should be done.
- The King liked this and instructed Haman to go and do all these things to Mordecai.
- Haman obeys, but it utterly defeated to the point that his wife and family knew that this entire situation would not end well for Haman.

End of Review:

Vs 1-2 *So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.*

2 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom.

The King and Haman have returned to the banquet that Esther has provided for them for the 2nd evening in a row.

At the conclusion of the banquet, the King asked Esther what her request was, and he once again hands her a “blank check” up to half of his kingdom.

He guaranteed that he would do whatever she requested.

This is the 3rd time that he has made this statement to Esther. (5:3, 5:6)

Vs 3-4 *Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request:*

4 For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

Esther informs the King that her request and petition has nothing to do with wealth or riches but rather it was for life! Not just her life but also the lives of the Jews.

We learn here that there are things in life that are more important than money, and that is life!

It is at this point that Esther reveals her nationality, that her being a Jew.

She did as Moses did in the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 11:25-26 *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Esther is illustrating what she had declared in Esther 4, "If I perish, I perish"

She chose the people of God!

But also we note that now she has done all that she can do. She has informed the king of Haman's plot!

Proverbs 16:3-4 *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

4 The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

Vs 5-6 *Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?*

6 And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

Once again we see the hand of God working behind the scenes.

Here is a King who exiled his previous wife, and wrote a law against her, now coming to the defense of Queen Esther.

Esther in a sign of bravery and courage points her finger at Haman and identifies him as the constructor of this evil plot.

Notice she called him:

- Adversary.
- Enemy.
- Wicked!

She had no issue telling the King what Haman truly was!

Vs 7-8 And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

8 Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

The King is obviously shocked, upset and angry upon hearing this accusation made by Queen Esther.

I do not believe that he walked out because he did not want to deal with the issue, to me it seems as though he stepped out to clear his head before speaking to this problem.

Upon the King going out, Haman stands up in attempt to request that his life be spared by Queen Esther.

He knew that he was doomed!!

“When the authority of the king had been behind him, Haman could courageously strut about, demand respect and give orders. But now the anger of the kind was against him, Haman’s true character was revealed. He was not a giant; he was only a midget full of pride and hot air”- Warren Werisbe

Haman is pleading his case, begging for his life, so much that he is leaning upon Esther on the bed/couch that she was seated on.

This is the same man who became enraged when the Mordecai, the Jew would not bow before him. Now he is bowing himself before Esther, the Jew!

About this time the King walks in only to see Haman on Esther's bed, to which the King immediately assumes that he was trying to harm and molest the Queen. This was a crime worthy of death!

Here is this wicked King becomes a good husband, and commands that Haman be taken into custody and he was to be executed.

They covered Haman's face, and then began to discuss how his sentence should be carried out.

There were many ways that Persians tormented people.

- Gouge out their eyes.
- Cut their tongues out, or pierce the tongue or nose with rings, then pull them behind a chariot.
- Skin the person alive.
- Impale them on a stake.

The king had plenty of options!

Vs 9-10 And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

All of a sudden this man Harbonah speaks up and says to the effect that they had these gallows that Haman had built for the execution of Mordecai. The same Mordecai who had been good to the king.

The King loved this suggestion and commanded that Haman be hung on the gallows that he had built for the destruction of the Jew!

Proverbs 11:8 The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

How does this happen?

God is working behind the scenes!!

Esther 8

Vs 1-2 On that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman the Jews' enemy unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was unto her.

2 And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

We find God rewarding Mordecai and Esther in the opening verses of Esther 8.

Notice all this took place on the same day!

The day that Mordecai was to be killed, Haman was killed and Mordecai was his replacement!

When the text tells us that the king gave the house of Haman to Esther, that means that all his property, possessions and wealth now belonged to Esther the Queen.

In Vs 2- He gives Mordecai and promotion, in fact he replaces Haman, becoming the Prime minister of Persia!

This ring that was given to him would bear the signet of the King. Meaning that Mordecai could conduct business on the king's behalf.

Vs 3-4 And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.

4 Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king,

Even though Haman has been executed there is still a great issue at hand. The decree for the destruction of the Jew was still signed, and Esther once goes before the King to intercede on behalf of her people the Jews.

Vs 5-6 And said, If it please the king, and if I have favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces:

6 For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

Even though Esther and Mordecai were enjoying personal victories, they knew that the decree had to be reversed. Otherwise Haman would still win even in death!

Esther could not do everything, but she could do something!

Jacob Stam prayed one night and said: *“Lord, the only thing most of us know about sacrifice, is how to spell the word”*

Vs 7-8 Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.

8 Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.

It is so evident to see the hand of God moving in these verses!

The King commands that the law be reversed and that a new law was to be written by Esther and Mordecai and sealed with the ring of the King declaring that the Jews were to be spared and that no one could reverse this new law!

Vs 9 Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language. (longest verse in the Bible)

The Scribes were called in, and Esther and Mordecai dictated the details of the new law and decree.

This decree was to be sent everywhere that the previous decree had been sent to, in every language, so that everyone could hear the good news!!

Vs 10 And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries:

Once the decree was written the King deployed all sorts of men on horseback, mules, camels and young horses (dromedaries) to publish the message that Haman's law had been reversed and a new law had been decreed!

But the word needed to get out!

Vs 11- Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey,

There were still people that hated the Jews, that wanted them to be destroyed. Thus this new law also allowed the Jews to defend themselves from those who still had wicked intentions of bringing harm to the Jew.

They could not be the aggressors, but they could defend themselves!

Vs 12-13 Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar.

13 The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

The details of his decree also demanded haste!

This message had to get out to all, and it was done in one day!

In total the decree of Haman was in effect for 70 days, which pictures the 70 year captivity of the Jews.

Vs 14- So the posts that rode upon mules and camels went out, being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at Shushan the palace.

The King made this message of great importance! He wanted the message to go forth!!

Vs 15 And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

Here is a man who was condemned to death by his enemy, but he had an intercessor who went before the king on his behalf because of Esther. Mordecai was not only spared, but he was promoted and clothed in the garments of the king!

How could this happen?

God is working behind the scenes!!

Vs 16-17 *The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.*

17 And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

Because the message went forth, that life had won there was Joy all the way from the Palace (Mordecai) to the common people!

The word “light” gives the idea of joy and gladness!

Things were looking dark for the Jews, but they had a God who was working behind the scenes on their behalf!

The closing verse of Esther 8 contains an interesting phrase:

“And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.”

Most Bible commentators agree that this little phrase means that many of the Persians forsook their false gods and became believers in the true God of Israel.

We would refer to them as Jewish proselytes, just as Ruth, Rahab, Caleb etc.

How in the world can this book begin with the Jews being in danger, not now Persians desiring to know the God of the Jews?

God is working behind the scenes!

Practical lessons from Esther 7-8

1. Be humble and honest in making your request.

Esther 7:1-6

Esther was not being bold or brash in making her request. But rather she approached the king in humility and with honesty!

Philippians 4:6 *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

2. What you spend your life building, may be what destroys you.

Esther 7:7-10

All of Haman's efforts, desires, attention and allegiance was placed upon building these gallows, only for these gallows to be exactly what destroyed his life.

Proverbs 22:8 *He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.*

3. Rewards are better than Revenge.

Esther 8:1-2

Esther and Mordecai were rewarded, but they were not vengeful.

They allowed the higher authority to handle those that had caused them harm.

4. Share the Victory and the joy with others!

Esther 8:3-17

Not only did Esther and Mordecai enjoy the victory, but they wanted others to know the good news that salvation had been delivered!

5. Even though there is victory, we still have to fight.

Esther 8:11

Victory was won for the believer at Calvary, but we are still commanded to fight the good fight of faith!

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.