

Esther - Lesson Five

The events of this book took place over a long period of time. Again we are reminded God is not in a hurry when seeking to accomplish His plan. He patiently colors the pages of our lives to bring about His determined end.



The Pencil Sketch

Read Esther 8-10

1. Find a comfortable spot, and with a favorite drink in hand, open your Bible to Esther 8 and read to the end of the book.
 - a. Imagine having a law that permitted you and your family to be annihilated on a specific day, with no recourse whatsoever. How would you face that kind of hatred?
 - b. Do we see this kind of hatred in our world today?
2. Just as the Jews were helpless and condemned to death by an unchangeable law, without a savior, mankind is unable to reverse the eternal consequence of sin. Read Romans 6:23; what does it say is every sinner's plight?
 - a. How did God provide a way to be set free from the law of sin and death? (Romans 8:1-4)

A Plea for Life

Esther 8

Haman has fallen from power and is now dead. However, there was still one major problem—his evil edict remained in place.

3. Esther took another risk by approaching the king a SECOND time. Was this a greater risk or less of a risk? Why?
- a. Describe the demeanor of Esther as she spoke with the king this second time.



Personally Tailored

Esther's compassion and concern is an example to all of us. Is there a group of people you need to pray to have that same compassion and concern...a willingness to put your life on the line for their salvation? How can you begin cultivating this kind of compassion?

*"Prayer pulls the rope down below and
the great bell rings above the ears of God.
Some scarcely stir the bell, for they pray so languidly;
others give only an occasional jerk at the rope.
But she who communicates with heaven
is the same who grasps the rope boldly
and pulls continuously with all her might."*

C. H. Spurgeon

4. How did the edict of the king provide what Esther requests without reversing the King's command?
 - a. How far did this decree extend?
 - b. In what way was this God's protection of His people?
 - c. What was the people's response?
 - d. How does this compare with the reaction to the first decree in chapter 4:3?
 - e. How is this an example of how we are to respond when waiting for God to act in our lives?

A Plea for Me

Read Esther 9-10

What began as a mere hope in the eyes of the Jews has now become a glorious reality. The news travels far and wide and the day approaches with joy for some and fear for others.

5. How would you explain the 13th, 14th, and 15th day of Adar?

a. Why could no one withstand them (9:2)?

b. Who helped the Jews and why?

6. This was not the first time that God had sent fear into the hearts of the enemies of His people as a means of protecting them from harm. Look up the following passages and note how God protected His chosen ones:

Genesis 35:5

Deuteronomy 2:25

Joshua 2:8–11

7. As you read about the slaughter of these enemies, keep in mind that God's people did not initiate this hostility. They had been threatened with annihilation, and this reprisal was in self-defense.
- a. What is the difference between vengeance and vindication?
- b. In light of the above, how do you reason out the death of these people?

8. Why did the people refrain from taking their enemies possessions, despite the king's permission to do so?



Personally Tailored

Even though the Jews were given the freedom to retaliate, they resisted the temptation to go beyond what was necessary. How do you deal with the human desire to 'get even' when someone harms you or a loved one (in word or deed)? Use this passage to remind you of the need for self-restraint in threatening situations. Then review Isaiah 53 to see how all wounds were taken to the cross with our Savior!

9. What happened to the ten sons of Haman?
- a. Do you think Esther's request (verse 13) was vindictive? Why or why not?
10. In Esther 9:20–27, what celebration was established?
- a. What is the purpose of this celebration?

- a. Is there one way your faith has grown?
- b. In which chapter of the book did God's hand seem most apparent to you?
- c. What personal application meant the most to you?
- d. What have you learned about God in this story that will help you trust Him during those difficult and even life-threatening situations?
- e. What will stand out to you about:

Esther –

Mordecai –

King Ahasuerus & Vashti –

Haman & Zeresh –

13. The character traits we see in Esther herself are a standard for us as Christian women. Try to recall some of her outstanding traits. What makes them so unique and attractive in our day?

- a. Is there one you would like to concentrate on in your life this year?

14. Esther's legacy still lives today with full impact. A legacy is much more than financial stability for the next generation. As we come to this last study, write out what your legacy would leave by answering these questions:

- a. What was most valuable to you?
- b. How did your life affect other people?
- c. How important was your relationship with God?
- d. How did God use you for His purposes?
- e. What did you spend your time doing?
- f. What have you left behind spiritually for future generations?

Beloved, everyday we move toward our own legacy. The decisions you make today will affect your legacy tomorrow. Review your answers and make them a prayer that God would use you for His glory and others good!

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2

