



June 29, 2014

Prepare, Fight, Remember

Esther 9-10

Discuss: How do we think of the church: as a hotel, a hospital or an army?

The story so far:

The king gave Esther Haman's personal estate and gave Mordecai authority to undo the harm Haman had done. Mordecai's edict, sealed with the king's signet ring, brought joy to Jews throughout the empire which even attracted others to the Jewish faith.

Read Esther 9:1-17.

Esther 9:1 sums up this section:

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.

[Q] From verses 1-17, what happened to make this all possible?

Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

[Q] Paul is telling us about the fight that followers of Christ are to be engaged in. What does he say about:

- the battle?
- the enemy?
- the weapons? (See Ephesians 6:10ff.)
- the aim?

Read 1 Timothy 6:12:

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (NIV)

[Q] What do you think is involved in fighting the good fight of the faith?

Read 2 Timothy 2:1-6 and then [Q] complete the following:

A good soldier...

Read Esther 9:17-10:3.

[Q] How did the Jews respond to victory (9:17-19)?

[Q] Why do you think Mordecai (9:20-22) and Esther (9:29) acted as they did?

We also need to remind ourselves regularly of God's goodness to us and to ensure that we are passing on the truth of the gospel to future generations.

[Q] Share some practical ways we can help each other in this (individually, in families, and as a church).

The next time Purim rolls around, usually in March, you'll have more reason to celebrate! It's an event that Jews still look forward to and celebrate with great gusto and fun in their synagogues. As Christians, we have been adopted into the history of the Old Testament, and have our own reasons to celebrate — not just for the preservation of a remnant of God's people in Persia, but for the message it has for us in the way it points to Christ, our Deliverer. (*Bringing the Bible To Life: Esther, Jobes and Nygren*)

Pray

The Book of Esther has shown us God's providence and His faithfulness in the face of His people's unfaithfulness.

Spend a few minutes

- thanking God for being in control
- asking Him to enable you to stand faithfully
- praising Him for His ongoing faithfulness to you

Extra: Celebrate by making Hamentashen - traditional Purim cookies shaped like Haman's hat: toriavey.com/toris-kitchen/2012/03/dairy-free-hamantaschen/.