

Great Commission



Baptist Church

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**A Book About The Faithfulness Of God
To The Jewish Nation
Life Group Curriculum
July – September 2021**

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July - September 2021

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Summary /Overview of the Book of Esther

Lesson I

Date: July 4, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 1:1-9

The Kings Celebration

Lesson Aim: Students will learn in this story of Esther, a simple Jewish girl, how God can get in on a scene like this?[secular] And to illustrate “how He can use anyone for His plans and will by His providence that He stands in the shadows, keeping watch over His own.”

Open It

1. What are some of the benefits of power and prestige?

Explore It

1. What is the background of this story?

2. Who attended the king’s banquet?

3. What events preceded the banquet that the king gave?

4. How is the setting of the banquet described?

Get It

1. Why do you think Queen Vashti refused to obey the king’s command?

2. Why was it so important to the king that he punish the queen for her disobedience?

3. When have your actions had greater ramifications than you originally expected?
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4. When have you ever stood up for what you believed was right, despite the dire consequences?
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Apply It

1. What can you do today to set an example for someone else?
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Summary: First we should understand that *Ahasuerus* is not the name of the man, but the title. It means “high father” or “venerable king.” As the word *Caesar* is a title and does not identify the man, so *Ahasuerus* made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him sort of was like a diplomatic dinner. [Esth. 1:1-9]. This banquet revealed the wealth, the luxury, and the regal character of this oriental court. He had called in all of his princes and all of his rulers from every corner of his kingdom that he might win their wholehearted support of the military campaign to capture Greece and to make himself the supreme ruler of the world of that day. Yet this book of Esther shows the value of a strong-willed woman. Esther Chapter 1 deals with the end of the reign of Queen Vashti and the circumstances that surrounded it. Though God’s name is not mention in this book, what we will see is God working in the background introducing us to a pagan court where decisions are made that affect the world. It looks as if God is left out, but He wants us to know that He is overruling these circumstances, and He is going to accomplish His own purpose, and perhaps in reading Esther’s story you will gain insight into God’s purpose for your on life.

Lesson II

Date: September 11, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 1:10-22

The Queen's Refusal

Lesson Aim: The student will learn that as Xerxes made a rash, half-drunk decision, and by his self-restraint and practical wisdom were weakened by too much wine. Poor decisions are made when people do not think clearly. Base your decisions on careful thinking, not on the emotions of the moment. Impulsive decision making, leads to severe complications.

Open It

1. What do you think are some of the drawbacks of having status and power?

Explore It

1. What motivated the king to summon the queen on the seventh day of the banquet?

2. Why did the king want Queen Vashti to leave her own banquet to come to his?

3. How did Queen Vashti respond to the king's command?

4. What fear did the wise men have about the ramifications of Queen Vashti's behavior?

5. How did Vashti's actions affect all the women in the kingdom?

Get It

1. How has this passage influenced how you plan to make decisions in the future?

2. In what ways have you seen your own actions influence other Christians or nonbelievers?

3. What are some consequences you have experienced for standing up for what was right?

4. What kinds of things can Christians do to encourage others to seek the Lord?

Apply It

1. What sacrifices are you willing to make in the next few weeks to stand up for what is right?

Summary: Now to follow-up from Esther chapter 1:1-9 Episode 1 “The Kings Celebration”, here in this section Verses 10-22 shows Episode 2 of the story of which is called “**The Queen’s Refusal.**” Vashti refuses the king's command to appear before him. Now let me set the stage if you will about this book of Esther in this first chapter is you might say is the “prologue” there are five main elements of a story the **setting, plot, characters, conflict** and **theme**. The Book of Esther tells the story of a Jewish girl [Esther] who became Queen of Persia so that God could use her to destroy the plot of Satan through Haman to murder His Israelite people, and more specifically to destroy the line of the Messiah. Episode I--The Dethroning of the Queen Vashti (1:1-22) sets the stage for the Lord to begin to put into motion His plan to protect His people in the Persian Empire. Note the (1:10) The drunkenness, (1:11) The demand, (1:12) The defiance, (1:13-18) The dilemma, (1:19-20) The decision, and lastly (1:21-22) The decree. Again, **the People around You Matters** the importance of surrounding ourselves with wise, godly people makes a difference. King Xerxes is the prime example of what happens when you don’t do this. Esther 1:13 states that “it was customary for the king to consult experts in matter of law and justice.” The problem is that the advice that the king received from his “wise” men and his right-hand-man Haman led him to make very poor decisions – decisions deadly for the Jews.

Lesson III

Date: July 18, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 2:1-11

A Queen to be Chosen

Lesson Aim: The student will learn that even though we do not always understand, God will move and put things in place to serve a better purpose.

Open It

1. What do you sense society believes are the most important qualities in a person?

2. What would you say are your three best qualities?

Explore It

1. How did the king plan to find another queen for himself?

2. What does the passage reveal about Esther and her background?

3. For what reason did Esther not reveal her heritage?

4. How did Mordecai keep in contact with Esther?

Get It

1. How would you describe Esther?

2. What kind of relationship did Esther and Mordecai have?

3. In what ways is Esther a good role model for women and men today?

4. What impact did power and status have on Esther?

Apply It

1. What do you most want to remember from this story about money, status, and power?

Summary: After the king's anger subsided, he realized that he had been in foolish in his actions. He was led along by his officials and made a rash decision. Like most men of power, he had to rely on others to be his eyes and ears. This is not good, because we do not always receive the best information from those in our circle or in his case, his court. This is because some of our circle may be serving their own purpose thinking only for themselves and not our best interest.

In this case, God had a plan.... Even though we do not see God's direct interaction, we see His works when He exposes Esther's beauty to the king, and she is added to his court. This is a plan where God is moving pieces and getting things in an order to fit His greater plan. Joseph was betrayed by his brothers only to find himself in the court of a foreign monarchy where he rose to prominence to serve God's purpose and save His people from famine while building a nation (Gen 37:49). Esther likewise now finds herself in the court of a foreign monarchy where she rises to prominence. This time her purpose is to save His people from destruction and preserve the lineage that will one day bring our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We do not always know God's plan, but He moves pieces in our lives for a purpose. When this happens, we need to be obedient and let God work. God is always on time and always in control, things happen to us and always will, this is called life. When we learn to accept His will, when life happens we can get through the difficulties knowing He has a greater plan..... Remember, God's ways our not our ways, He is divine and we are earthly.

Lesson IV

Date: July 25, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 2:12-23

Mordecai Saves the Kings Life

Lesson Aim: The student will learn that as we work, God is working too. He is moving pieces around in our lives for His divine purpose to serve the bigger picture that we cannot see.

Open It

1. What are your top priorities in life?

Explore It

1. What was the only way a woman would get a second chance to see the king?

2. What did Esther do when it was her turn to go to the king?

3. How did Esther become queen?

4. How did Esther continue to show her respect for Mordecai even after she had become queen?

Get It

1. How can we guard against the temptation to allow money, status, or power to influence our motivations and actions?

2. What do you think is the proper attitude toward wealth and prestige?

3. How do your priorities influence the way you live every day?

4. What does this passage teach you about God's sovereignty?

Apply It

1. What steps can you take this week to guard against greed and materialism?

Summary: Esther went through a most unusual beauty contest where she became extremely popular. Originally, the women (virgins) were not there to win the king's affections, they were there for sexual purposes. In most cases, after the king was through with them, they would never see him again. This is apparent in verse 14 where it is described, these women came in the evening and returned in the morning to a different house after serving their purpose. Verse 19 lets us know also, in the fact that they had already gathered a second group of virgins. The word concubine is used for women who perform the acts of marriage, but does not have the privileges of marriage, sexually subservient and socially subservient. God saw fit to spare Esther from this role making her queen, which is the wife of the king. She captured his love and was put in a position of prominence, and a high one at that. Her uncle Mordecai, at that time was already in a judiciary position, allowing him access. This access made it possible for him to communicate with the new queen, his niece. When the assassination attempt was foiled, it was Mordecai telling his niece, the queen, who then warned the king and gave the credit to her uncle. This was documented in the annals of the Persian empire, which are still there to this day. This documentation would later be beneficial to Mordecai. Even though God is not mentioned, His work is seen in all the moving pieces that are working out to serve His greater purpose. God uses the Jews to work in the presence of the king, without them being revealed, and in turn they eventually save him from an assassination. In our lives we have people in our lives, that God put there to help us or see us through hard times. We never know who it is that God puts in our lives to help us, so we should be wary and not to forget. Hebrews 13:2: "Do not forget to entertain strangers: for thereby some have unwittingly entertained angels."

Lesson V

Date: August 1, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 3:1-15

The Plot to Destroy the Jews

Lesson Aim: To understand that God sometimes uses godly people who are willing to stand up to opposition, even in the face of grave danger to themselves in order to accomplish His divine plans.

Open It

1. When have you ever felt unfairly treated?

2. How do most people normally react to unfair treatment?

Explore It

1. In what way did Mordecai disobey the king's order?

2. For what reason did the officials tell Haman about Mordecai's behavior?

3. Why did Haman want to kill all of the Jews?

4. How did Haman add authority to his edict?

Get It

1. Why do you think Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman?

2. What similarities or differences do you see between Haman and yourself?

3. How can Christians guard against the temptations of pride and greed?

4. When has your pride ever interfered with your ability to discern the truth?

Apply It

1. What specific steps can you take this week to guard against the sin of pride?

Summary: In the lesson today, we see an old enemy with a New Name. To Jews everywhere the name Haman personifies everybody who has tried to exterminate the people of Israel. Haman was an Amalekite and was an enemy of the Jews. The Amalekites had attempted to destroy the Israelites on various occasions and Haman was determined to complete the destruction. Haman has been made chief officer in the empire, even after King Ahasuerus life had been saved by Mordecai. Haman wanted all the public recognition and honor that he could receive. And he wanted everyone to bow to him as a form of high respect for his office.

But Mordecai, who revealed eventually that he was a Jew, owed his allegiance to God alone and would not bow down to pay homage to any man, regardless of how powerful he might be. Prov 29:25 says that if we fear the Lord, we have no reason to fear any other person, problem or obstacle. Mordecai trusted in the Lord and stood his ground. He would not show homage to the enemy of the Jews and the enemy of the Lord. .

Haman's hatred for Mordecai soon developed into hatred for the whole Jewish race. He was subtle in planning his process and careful in communicating with partial information in the need to destroy a people. He obtained the king's signet ring which gave him authority to act in the king's name. He was ready to move forward with his plan.

Haman may have been convinced in his carnal mind that he would be successful, but we can see God's hand at work. We should remember that those who plot against the people of God become not only their enemies, but the adversaries of the Lord himself. God says to the obedient people, "I will be an enemy to your enemies" (Ex 23:22). God has two people prepared in place, Mordecai and Esther- and He was ready to act on behalf of the Jews.

Lesson VI

Date: August 8, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 4:1-17

Chosen for an Unexpected Calling

Lesson Aim: Students will realize that when you fight your battles on your knees, you will win every time.

Open It

1. When have you felt helpless to solve a problem that you faced?

2. What do you think makes some people brave and others cowardly?

Explore It

1. What did Esther do when she heard that Mordecai was in mourning?

2. How did Esther discover the reason behind Mordecai's grief?

3. In what specific way did Mordecai want Esther to help the Jews?

4. How does Mordecai's answer to Esther reveal his belief in God's sovereignty?

5. What risk did Esther take to save her people from annihilation?

Get It

1. What kind of relationship did Esther and Mordecai have?

2. What character traits of Esther would you like to have?

3. How can you depend on the Lord and on other mature Christians to help you through difficult times?
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4. Where did Esther get her courage?
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Apply It

1. What steps can you take to depend on God and Christian friends to help you?
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2. How could you acknowledge the Lord's sovereignty in your life?
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Summary: In Chapter 4, God's invisible hand of providence cares for, protects and delivers those who are his. Mordecai was not able to do anything about the situation that Haman had created, but he acted. He expressed his concerns through his appearance and actions. He was not ashamed to show his deep grief and emotions. He dressed in sackcloth and went as far as the gate. His actions and appearance were reported back to queen, Esther. He was able to get a message back to her when she sent one of her eunuchs, Hathach, to the gate to ask Mordecai what was wrong.

Hathach may not have realized the important role he was playing in God's plan to defeat Haman and save the Jews. So often in the work of the Lord, He uses obscure people to accomplish important tasks. Where might the Lord be using you to accomplish important tasks?

Once Esther received the news from Hathach of the danger she and her people faced, she took action. Mordecai reminded Esther of several things. First, being in the palace was no guarantee that she would be delivered from death. Secondly, he reminded her that her silence would not prevent deliverance from coming from some other source. Thirdly, her being in the palace was not an accident. She had "come to royal position for such a time as this". He made it clear to her that God accomplishes His purposes through people who are obedient to His call.

It was now a time of decision for Esther. Through her time in God's presence, Esther received the wisdom and courage to address the King at the proper time even though it was against the law to see the king without his invitation. Esther "counted the cost" (If I perish, I perish) and chose to serve God. What kind of "cost" is involved in serving Him today?

Lesson VII

Date: August 15, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 5:1-14

Pride Goeth Before the Fall

Lesson Aim: The student will learn that pride will keep you from surrendering to God.

Open It

1. What things are most valued and sought after by many people these days?

2. Why do you think people strive after money and power when those things do not bring true happiness?

Explore It

1. How did the king react to Queen Esther's presence in his court?

2. What did the king offer to Esther?

3. What do we learn about Haman at this point?

4. What kept Haman from enjoying all of his success and wealth?

5. Why did Haman build gallows?

Get It

1. How is Esther a good example to us today?

2. What do you admire about Esther?

3. What character traits of Haman should we be careful to avoid?
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4. How have you seen pride hurt your relationship with the Lord or others?
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Apply It

1. What can you do today to restore any relationship damaged by pride?
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2. What is one way you can place your focus on serving God and from getting money and influencing others?
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Summary: In life there are basically two attitudes toward the LORD. There is the attitude that God is our Provider and that our sufficiency is found in Him alone. Therefore, we must trust the LORD as we walk about day by day. Then there is the attitude that takes great pride in ourselves, that we can be self-sufficient and are perfectly capable of handling all circumstances of life through the power, wisdom, and technology of man. The first attitude is that of humility before God and the second attitude is that of pride before God.

Esther became convinced that she had been placed upon the throne as queen for this very purpose: to be the liberator, savior, and deliverer of her people. She sensed deeply that God had appointed her to rescue the Jews from extermination. Holding this conviction down deep within her soul, Esther was willingly ready to risk her life by unlawfully approaching the king. When the king saw her standing at the entrance of the royal court, instead of being offended, he was very pleased. Remember, he had not seen her for over a month. When she approached, she touched the tip of the scepter and expressed gratitude for the privilege of an audience. The royal court was not the place to make a charge of conspiracy being plotted against the Jews by the prime minister. She needed to confront the king and Haman alone, without anyone else present. Esther invited them to a meal. The meal had already been prepared, so he immediately ordered Haman to be summoned. When Haman arrived, the king and prime minister walked together to the banquet in Esther's quarters. After King Xerxes and the prime minister finished eating, they relaxed and drank wine. At some point during the conversation, the king again asked Esther what her request was, politely assuring her that it would be granted.

When we are facing difficult circumstances in life, we too must turn to the LORD and place our trust in Him. Often there is no help available other than the LORD. During those times, we are foolish if we do not call upon Him. The LORD is always available to help us, and no matter how bad our circumstances are, the LORD loves us and longs to help us.

Lesson VIII

Date: August 22, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 6:1-14

The King Honors Mordecai

Lesson Aim: The student will learn that God will lift those He needs to be lifted and bring down those that need to be brought down.

Open It

1. What were some of your favorite bedtime stories growing up?

2. What do people usually think of someone who "toots his (or her) own horn"?

Explore It

1. What did King Xerxes do to deal with insomnia?

2. What honor had Mordecai received for exposing the men who plotted to assassinate the king?

3. What advice did the king request of Haman?

4. What did Haman assume about the king's question?

5. What humiliating action was Haman forced to take because of his arrogance?

Get It

1. What is ironic about what happened to Haman and Mordecai?

2. How have you seen God's sovereignty at work in your own life?

3. In what way does this event encourage you to do what is right even though you do not always see immediate rewards in it?

4. What are some of the consequences of pride?

Apply It

1. How can you prepare yourself for the temptations to pride you expect to face this week?

Summary: God took away the king's sleep. In taking away the king's sleep, He already knew the king would not waste his insomnia. The king read the annals of the acts of previous kings trying to find something that would be of advantage to his kingdom. During his reading, he came across the records of his own accounts where he read the story of Mordecai. His delight in this story would eventually become Haman's demise, as warned in Verse 13. Haman was so focused on hate and the plotted demise of the Jews that he did not notice his own declining status. He ended up uplifting his enemy, as Esther turned the tables on him. Mordecai's honoring was no small deal either. Those honored in the fashion that he was honored were called "king's benefactors" and were rewarded with gifts such as governorship of a province. "A royal garment that the king had worn and a horse that the king had ridden" This is a special privilege, because this was the highest honor that anyone in the kingdom could receive. Haman knew this and was selecting it for himself. Haman now had the responsibility of uplifting and advancing his enemy. What is significant in this is that he still felt privileged because he was still attending the banquet with the king in the presence of Esther which seemed exclusive because of its limited audience.

Sometimes, we as people, mankind, with our sinful nature whether we are devoted followers or part timers, (we all possess that sinful nature) can be blinded by hatred or anger. When this happens, we become blind to the damage we do to others and ourselves without realizing it. Our desire to get even can cause a sinful response to sin and create a crisis. Instead of seeking revenge or getting even, we should trust God, pray, and allow Him to lead us and guide us. When He takes over the battle, it is no longer a fight, it is His victory.

Lesson IX

Date: August 29, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 7:1-10

Esther's Petition for Her Life

Lesson Aim: Students will learn to live by their convictions, live in such a way that it will make an impact on those around them.

Open It

1. When have you ever exposed an injustice, and what happened as a result?

2. In what settings is it difficult for you to stand up for what you believe?

Explore It

1. What did the king offer Queen Esther at the banquet she prepared for him?

2. What did Esther ask of the king?

3. What final twist in the story guaranteed Haman's demise?

4. How did the eunuch's revelation to the king further indict Haman?

5. How was the king's fury finally abated?

Get It

1. When have you felt you were in an impossible situation?

2. What does this story reveal about the consequences of sin?

3. What can you do to confront the injustice you see around you?

4. What have you learned from this passage about problem solving?

Apply It

1. What is one small step you could take this week to confront an injustice that concerns you?

Summary: Carry yourself with confidence, an assurance of your faith. Esther was confident, so much that the king sees her conviction, he feels her confidence, he is comfortable with what she has to say, what is on her heart. Confidence puts others at ease.

What is the rising action in this episode? Ecclesiastes tells us that there is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven. There is a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time for peace and a time for war. Up until now Esther had been silent and kept her peace. Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor with you, O king, and if it pleases your majesty, grant me my life--this is my petition. The wise person knows what to say and how and when to say it (**Prov. 15:28; 16:23**). In her brief reply to the king's question, Esther revealed her nationality (Esther 2:10, 20), her danger, and the presence of an enemy in the palace. She gave no names but waited to see the reaction of the king. God gives us the wisdom we need when we need it (**James 1:5**). Esther exposed the evil man Hamaan. He was right there in the room when Queen Esther mentioned his name and was filled with terror. When the king went out to the garden, Hamman was at the feet of the queen, pleading for his life. As the king returned, the king saw him at the foot of his wife's bed and thought, would he go to that extent to violate or sub due the queen so he immediately had Hamaan taken. They ended up hanging Hamman in the same gallows he had set for Mordecai.

What a lesson, that what the enemy meant for evil, God is able to turn it around for our good. All acts of sin, wickedness, and evil will be exposed, brought out into the light. The same evil that Haman had planned for Mordecai was turned against him. Haman reaped what he had sown. The principle of sowing and reaping is one of the great principles of life, a strong teaching of God's Holy Word. Whatever a person sows, he will reap, and whatever a person measures, it will be measured back to him. God's justice will be exact. We will bear exactly what we have sown, nothing more and nothing less. Whatever we dish out and measure in life, the same portion will be doled out and measured to us. Nothing more and nothing less.

Lesson X

Date: September 5, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 8:1-18

The Table is Turned

Lesson Aim: The student will learn that being faithful to God will pay off after a while.

Open It

1. Whom do you admire most, and why?

Explore It

1. What did Esther gain from risking her life to stand up for her people?

2. How did Esther suggest to solve the quandary the Jews were in?

3. How was Mordecai involved in saving the Jewish people?

4. In what way did the king's new edict provide a way out for the Jews?

Get It

1. How did Esther risk her life for the second time?

2. What value is there in taking a risk to do what is right?

3. How do the benefits of faith in Christ compare to the costs?

4. How is God's control and direction evident in this story even though He is never mentioned directly?

Apply It

1. How can you thank the Lord today for the blessings He has given you?

2. What specific risk would you be willing to take this next week to stand up for what is right?

Summary: We see that even though Esther and Mordecai were saved from the decree to exterminate the Jews, the other Jews were still in fear of being extinct as a nation and a people. Esther reminded the king of the decree and he made Mordecai prime minister and gave him his ring. We see here that the tables had been turned. By Mordecai being faithful, he now was in the position that Hamaan had. How *unlike* so many of us! While we live in comfort, plenty, and security, and have the freedom to enjoy recreation and other pleasurable events, so many in the world are living lives that are the very opposite. They are suffering from...poverty, hunger, disease, financial difficulties, abuse, hatred of discrimination and so much more.

Instead of serving the LORD, we are serving ourselves, ever seeking for newer and bigger and better possession, pleasures and recreation. Not that those possessions and recreations are wrong. They are not. God expects us to enjoy life to the fullest. But enjoying life is not the problem for most of us. Most of us live self-centered lives, serving ourselves and giving little time in service to the LORD. The king gave a positive answer to Esther's plea for mercy in behalf of the Jews. Granting exactly what she requested, he immediately ordered a new decree. He also gave Esther and Mordecai a freehand in wording the document. Assuring them of his full support, he instructed them to seal the new decree with his signet ring. No decree signed and sealed with the royal ring could ever be revoked. As soon as the decree was finished, Mordecai had it rushed out to the empire by couriers or messengers (v.14). Because of the time it would take to reach the farthest points of the empire, he no doubt ordered them to rush as quickly as they could. It would take a good deal of time to reach the outposts of the nation, and the Jews needed all the time they could get to prepare for their defense.

By the proclamation that reversed the decree to exterminate the Jews, you could just imagine the excitement when they heard the good news of their new freedom. We ought to be reminded by this same act toward us, we were in bondage headed for hell, but Jesus delivered us. Those who have accepted the truth of the good news, he has made us acceptable to God through His righteousness and perfection.

Lesson XI

Date: September 12, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 9:1-19

The Jews Take Revenge

Lesson Aim: The student will learn about the providential affairs of the Triune God.

Open It

1. What family traditions are most important to you?

Explore It

1. What did the Jews' enemies plan to do when they heard about the king's first edict?

2. How were the Jews protected from annihilation?

3. How did the king demonstrate his generosity to Esther above what he had already done?

4. What did Esther ask the king to do for her beyond the requests she had already made?

5. How did the Jews get relief from their enemies?

Get It

1. How would you characterize Mordecai?

2. In what specific ways is Mordecai a good role model for us today?

3. What responsibility do you have to speak up for the welfare of your Christian brothers and sisters?

Apply It

1. What good deed could you do this week to thank God for His goodness to you?
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Summary: Nehemiah writes in verse 1, “Now in the twelfth month, that *is*, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;) . . .” The KJV uses the Hebrew root word **Adar** (אָדָר) which is the twelfth month of the Jewish calendar. It occurs eight times in scripture – all in the book of Esther. The Almighty God permitted Israel to be victors over their enemies who sought to cause harm and to destroy them. The Sovereignty of the LORD is the first point of reflection. The LORD gave Mordecai favor with King Ahasuerus, and his adversaries feared him. We learned from the previous chapter how the LORD delivered his children from out of the hand of their enemies. What Haman and others meant for evil, the Creator God meant it for good (Genesis 50:20). The hearts of the kings are in the hands of the LORD (Proverb 21:1).

Nehemiah writes in verse 5, “Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did what they would unto those that hated them.” The Supernatural Strength given by the LORD is the second point of reflection. The Jews successfully defeated all their enemies who rose up against them. They slaughtered their foes and others who hated them but did not take their goods and possessions. The LORD helped them fight their battles. The LORD is the supreme ruler over all affairs and gives supernatural strength to those He chooses. He enabled the Jews to be victorious in crushing their enemies over three days. Thousands of enemies were killed throughout the king’s provinces. Jehovah had given the Jews supernatural ability to complete the assignment which He providentially gave them on that appointed day.

Nehemiah writes in verse 17, “On the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day of the same rested they, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.” The third point of reflection is the Special Feast unto the LORD. The Jews believed that the LORD had delivered them from their enemies by making their enemies their footstool. The Jews established a special feast to commemorate what all the LORD had done for them. This became an annual day of celebration for feasting and joy for all Jews and sending gifts of food to each other.

Lesson XII

Date: September 19, 2021

Lesson Scriptures: Esther 9:20-32;10:1-3

Purim Made Into a Festival

Lesson Aim: The student will learn about the importance of an obligation that has been established by the LORD.

Open It

1. Which traditions in your family have spiritual significance to you?

2. Why do people establish traditions?

Explore It

1. Why did the Jews in Susa celebrate on a different day from the Jews in rural areas?

2. Why did Mordecai tell the Jews to celebrate?

3. What did the celebration of Purim represent to the Jews?

Get It

1. What did the Jews do after God had delivered them from their enemies?

2. How have you experienced God's help or deliverance in your life?

3. What should motivate us to give gifts to the poor?

4. What celebration could you turn into an opportunity to do good for others?

Apply It

1. What is one new tradition you could start in your family that would benefit others?
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Summary: Today’s lesson is a continuation from last week’s lesson. We learned that the LORD made the Jews victorious over their enemies. A special feast was established so that Jews would remember how the LORD delivered them in their day of trouble. Nehemiah writes in verse 21, “To stablish *this* among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly” The Call to Celebrate is the first point of reflection. The KJV translated the English word **to stablish** from the Hebrew root word **qum** (קום) which in this context means to impose an obligation. Mordecai recorded the events and placed an obligation upon all Jews nearby and through the provinces of King Ahasuerus calling them to celebrate an annual feast on two appointed days. This designated time would bring to remembrance the relief they received from their enemies and how their sorrow and mourning was turned into joy. This was by the strong arm of the LORD. Even Haman’s son plotted to crush and destroy Jews and made use in casting lots to determine the date. The word **Purim** was coined from the casting of lots in this passage. The LORD allowed Esther to learn of the plot and to counter it with impaling Haman and his sons on a sharpened pole.

Nehemiah writes in verse 27, “The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail, that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their *appointed* time every year” The Commitment to Celebrate is the second point of reflection. The KJV translated the English word **ordained** from the Hebrew root word **qum**. This is the same Hebrew root word used in verse 21. The Jews imposed an obligation upon themselves, their seed, and upon all such to join them in celebrating these two days. Nehemiah writes in verse 29, “Then Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority, to confirm this second letter of Purim.” The KJV translated the English word **confirm** from the Hebrew root word **qum**. This is the third time that this is used in today’s lesson. The Command to Celebrate is the third point of reflection. Esther wrote with all authority to confirm this second letter. Queen Esther endorsed Mordecai’s decree to establish the Feast of Purim which was an annual celebration at an appointed time. This was recorded in their history and in scripture. In the closing chapter, King Ahasuerus imposed a tribute to Mordecai, to all of his empire, and to the distant coast. Mordecai became the prime minister and had authority next to the king. He was very great among the people because he served the people in a matter that was pleasing to the LORD.

Lesson XIII

Date: September 26, 2021

Lesson Scriptures:

Summary /Overview of the book of Esther

Lesson Aims, Summaries by Annette Brown, Dip. TH., Rev. Joseph Ellzey Jr. B.S., Earline Franklin, Rev. Terrence Howard TH.M., Victor Kirkpatrick, Dip. TH., and Bobby J. Williams Sr., Diploma (SBI) 2021

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