

Victorious in a Foreign Land (Part 1)

Esther 9: 1-19

The emotional roller coaster for Esther, Mordecai, and the Jews within the kingdom of Persian continues. They have experienced a series of highs and lows. It seems as if they really didn't have time to enjoy a victory before being confronted with another struggle. Things are clearly improving for the Jews, but their fight isn't over. Haman has been executed, removing the greatest source of resistance for the Jews, but there are others who share his sentiment. The counter decree had been signed, but the Jews are well aware of the adversity they will soon face. Although the stormy winds have softened somewhat, there is still a battle to come. As the Jews face this final battle, the Lord will provide complete victory.

While most of us cannot identify with the extreme conditions Esther and the other Jews faced, this book reveals the ebb and flow of life for all people. Regardless of who we are, or where we live, we all face seasons of comfort and ease countered by seasons of trials and difficulty. Often these struggles come without warning or provocation. We cannot get complacent while enjoying our victories, because soon enough we will be faced with another struggle. There is one constant in life regardless of the season we must face – the presence and help of the Lord.

I want to examine the [aspects](#) of this defining moment in Esther's life as we begin to consider: [Victorious in a Foreign Land](#).

I. The Timing of the Victory (1) – Here we discover the timing involved in the great victory of the Jews in Persia. Consider:

A. The Date (1a) – [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.](#) Having moved through the book of Esther, verse by verse, this date is significant. Just less than a year prior, Haman had influenced the king to sign the decree that called for the eradication of every Jew within Persia. The date had been set, and it had finally arrived. The Jews would now face the greatest challenge of their entire experience in Persia. At this early moment, they could not have been absolutely certain of victory, but this would prove to be a date long remembered and celebrated.

- As I considered the significance of this date for the Jews, I was reminded of the day I experienced complete victory in Christ. The battle was strong and fierce. The Holy Spirit was dealing with my heart regarding salvation and the enemy did everything he could to hinder me

from responding in repentance and faith. That is a day that has been long remembered and celebrated in my life!

B. The Decree (1a) – 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. Bear in mind that Haman's original decree had not been dissolved; it still stood as law within the land. The decree called for every Jew within the kingdom to be killed. A counter decree had been signed by the king, allowing the Jews to defend themselves against attack, but they knew they must fight in order to survive.

- Jesus completely and eternally secured victory on the cross, providing atonement and redemption for the sin of mankind. We are not called to fight in order to obtain or keep our salvation. Jesus secured that for us. However, we all face intense spiritual battles in the Christian life. Although Satan was defeated at Calvary, he still continues to attack and seek the defeat of believers. We must stand as the Jews did in order to maintain victory in this life.

C. The Dominance (1b) – 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;**) We will discuss this in greater detail later, but the Lord had worked sovereignly behind the scenes. At this moment in time, two decrees stood legal and permissible. The Persians had legal authority to destroy the Jews, but the Jews also had legal authority to defend themselves. The battle lines were drawn, and only one could be victorious, but the Jews had a decided advantage. The Lord had given the Jews rule over those that hated them.

- We may lose a battle here and there along the way, but we will never face utter defeat. Christ secured victory on the cross over sin and condemnation. He rose triumphant over death in resurrection life. He is seated at the right hand of God, ruling and reigning as the Sovereign!

II. The Thrust in the Victory (2-4) – These verses reveal the great advance of the Jews as they moved forward in victory. Notice:

A. The Assembly (2a) – The Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt. The Jews had received authority to defend themselves, and they used their numbers to their advantage. They knew their chances of survival were greatly diminished independently, but much better assembled together.

- We would do well to remember that truth. I am aware that having God on our side always constitutes a majority, but there is strength in numbers. We have a much better chance overcoming temptation and trials with the help and support of fellow believers!

B. The Assertion (2b) – *and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people.* As the Jews assembled together, their numbers created fear in the hearts of many of their enemies. Had they not stood together, many of them would likely have perished, but God was at work on their behalf. As they came together, united in their stand, God honored their courage and faith.

- I will never promise you that life will always be easy or that we won't face defeat at times, but I am certain that the Lord will work on behalf of the church. Culture and society is changing, and there will be some setbacks along the way, but the church will never suffer defeat. *Matt.16:18 – And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

C. The Alliance (3) – *And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.* God continued to provide assistance that would aid the Jews in their pursuit of victory. The ranking officials within the provinces helped the Jews because of the standing Mordecai had received. The Jews were not citizens of Persia, and yet the government and military officials worked on behalf of them, even against their own countrymen.

- As I said a moment ago, having God on our side always constitutes a majority, but the Lord can also influence the hearts of men to work on behalf of His people. He is sovereign over all creation, nations, and people! There is no reason for the Christian to fear. Christ is working for our good and His glory!

D. The Authority (4) – *For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.* It is evident that Haman hadn't counted on the hand of God in all of this. His hatred for the Jews was rooted in his disdain for Mordecai. God had a work for Mordecai to accomplish that no man could hinder or stop. In His time, and in His way, God elevated Mordecai to a position of rank and authority that would provide deliverance for His people.

- This reminds me of the need to place our faith and trust in God and not man. Mordecai had not campaigned for his position. He had simply been obedient to the Lord, and God opened the doors and placed him where he needed to be. We worry and fret over the condition of our society,

but God is not worried. He has an eternal plan that is being orchestrated at this very moment. We may be unhappy and uncertain, but God will work in our lives and this nation as it pleases Him!

III. The Triumph in the Victory (5-10) – Here we discover the great victory God gave the Jews in their battle with the Persians. Consider:

A. The Ability (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. No doubt, much to the surprise of their enemies, the conflict was totally one-sided in favor of the Jews. When the opposition came against them, they possessed the ability to obtain victory in every excursion. Can you imagine the joy and surprise as the reports began to come in throughout the kingdom? Everywhere the Jews had assembled in battle, they had been victorious.

- We do not possess such ability physically, but we are more than conquerors through Christ our Lord. The church is, and always will be victorious. I also thought about the time yet future when the Lord comes in great power and glory. With the word of His mouth, He will defeat every enemy who opposes Him. We are assured victory in Christ!

B. The Abundance (6-10a) – These verses record the abundant victory of the Jews throughout the kingdom. Everywhere the Jews faced conflict, they had been completely victorious. God had delivered them with a complete and resounding victory.

- That brings comfort and assurance to us as well. We are promised eternal security in Christ our Lord. We are victorious in Him, never to face eternal death and separation. **John 10:28-29 – And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.** ^[29] **My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.**

C. The Abstinence (10b) – but on the spoil laid they not their hand. According to the accepted rules of engagement in that day, the Jews had every right to plunder their adversaries and take their possessions as the spoils of war. However, the Jews refrained from taking anything that belonged to the Persians. They were not seeking to accumulate wealth; they simply wanted to defend themselves and prevent an indiscriminate slaughter.

- This is a significant detail in this account. It is mentioned three times, here and also in Vv.15-16. Life was their priority, not material wealth and gain. They ensured a positive witness

through their restraint. As believers in a difficult society, we too must guard our actions. Many things are permissible according to the adopted laws of the land, but our participation would reflect negatively on the church and our Lord. We should always seek to honor the Lord and live pleasing to Him, instead of seeking material gain and the things that please the flesh.

Conclusion: I hope to conclude our study on the gracious victory of the Jews the next time we meet. As we consider what we've discussed thus far, we are reminded of the sovereign hand of God at work among His people. We all face situations that are beyond our control, but the Lord possesses all power. He is more than able to intervene and bring victory when it seems defeat is certain. We must continue to abide faithful, trusting Him to guard and guide our lives.

If you are in the midst of a battle, I encourage you to look to Jesus. Seek His help and guidance in your life. He alone has the power and ability to bring deliverance. If you are unsaved, you do not have the benefit of the Lord's help and guidance. In fact, you stand in danger of His judgment. Respond to His call for salvation while there is time and opportunity!