

The Feast of Purim

Esther 9: 20-32

Our text today deals with the Feast of Purim, a festival that was instituted following the Jews deliverance from Haman, and those who supported his wicked agenda. Purim became a feast of celebration and praise for their deliverance and prosperity. Christians do not celebrate the Feast of Purim, but the Jews continue to commemorate this special time in their history, with a time of feasting and celebration annually.

We have quite a bit of text to cover, so I want to look at the [responses](#) of the Jews as we consider: [The Feast of Purim](#). Although this is a celebration regarding physical deliverance, there is application for our spiritual deliverance through Christ. Consider:

I. The Celebration of Purim (20-23) – These verses deal with the initial celebration of Purim and the Jews commitment to the feast. Notice:

A. The Decree (20) – We find that Mordecai sent letters throughout each of the provinces within the Persian Empire, both near and far, ordaining the observance of Purim. The Jews were expected to celebrate and keep the Feast annually in remembrance of the great deliverance they had received.

B. The Dates (21) – Mordecai set the annual dates for the Feast. Every year, on the fourteenth and fifteenth day of the month Adar, the Jews were to celebrate the Feast of Purim. They continue to celebrate these two days annually, usually sometime within our month of March.

- As I pondered the Jews commitment to Purim, I thought of our celebration of the resurrection at Easter. It is then that we celebrate deliverance from sin and death, as we praise the Lord for His gracious sacrifice on the cross and His triumphant resurrection. In reality we celebrate the resurrection each Sunday morning, as we gather together in worship.

C. The Deliverance (22a) – [As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day.](#) Purim was set aside to celebrate their deliverance from those who sought their death, and the rest they enjoyed following their victory. It served to remind them of their sorrow and mourning being turned into joy and celebration of a good day. While it seemed hopeless, God had provided deliverance!

- Easter serves as a reminder of the great deliverance we have in Christ, but really we should be mindful of His grace and mercy every day. I seek to praise Him continually for delivering me from the penalty of sin and providing life eternal.

D. The Devotion (22b-23) – that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. ^[23] And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them. Mordecai decreed Purim to be days of feasting and joy, a time of sending gifts to one another, and to those who were less fortunate. It was a celebration for every Jew, and he wanted to ensure all had the ability to celebrate. Upon hearing the decree, the Jews devoted themselves to obeying the decree and celebrating the Feast.

- This reminded me of the sacrificial devotion of the early church in the book of Acts. They shared their goods and possessions with those of the church, ensuring all had their needs met. As followers of Christ, we are expected to care for one another and bear one another's burdens.

II. The Reflection during Purim (24-25) – As the Jews celebrated, they also remembered the reason for their celebration. They were mindful of:

A. Their Opposition (24) – Every Jew who initially celebrated the Feast was aware of wicked Haman and his desire to rid the kingdom of every Jew. His prejudice and hatred had driven him to extreme measures, desiring the death of every Jew, because of their association with Mordecai.

- The Jews did not celebrate Haman, but they did remember him. We too must be aware of the enemy we continue to face. If you are a Christian, he is committed to defeating you at all cost. He targets every believer because of their association with Christ. Never underestimate the power and tactics of the adversary.

B. The Intercession (25a) – Purim served as a reminder of the courage and commitment of Esther as she came before the king to intercede for the Jews. She risked her life in order to save theirs. No doubt, they were all thankful and appreciative of Esther.

- Every believer has benefited greatly from intercession. We have a great High Priest, Jesus Christ our Lord, who intercedes for us continually at the throne of grace. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us in prayer. We also enjoy the benefit of the prayers of fellow believers, lifting our needs before the Lord. We are truly blessed by the intercession of others on our behalf.

C. The Intervention (25) – Esther’s intercession prompted Ahasuerus to intervene on behalf of the Jews. Haman devised an evil plot, even building gallows to hang Mordecai, but the king ordered Haman to be hung there instead. The king’s intervention offered a chance at life.

- We too stood condemned in sin, having a death sentence hanging over our heads. We needed one to intervene on our behalf, if we had any chance at life. Christ came as the sacrificial atonement for sin, offering Himself in our place, and appeasing the righteous demands of God. His intervention on the cross, provided redemption for fallen man!

III. The Dedication to Purim (26-28) – The Jews were fully committed to celebrating the Feast and maintaining its remembrance. Consider:

A. The Identification (26a) – *Wherefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur.* The name Purim is ironic, in that it is taken from the word Pur, which speaks of the lot Haman cast in order to discern the date to exterminate the Jews. While he was certain his plan would not be hindered, the Lord had another plan. Rather than their annihilation, the Jews were celebrating their deliverance.

B. The Submission (26b-27) – Every Jew submitted to the decree and gladly celebrated the Feast. They committed to celebrating Purim every year, on the fourteenth and fifteenth of Adar. As I have mentioned, the Jews continue to celebrate Purim as a reminder of the Lord’s faithfulness to His people. They stand opposed today, but just as it was in Persia, God will preserve them.

C. The Preservation (28) – *And that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed.* The Jews committed to ensuring the Feast would never fail to be celebrated on the designated days, and that it would endure throughout the coming generations. Those who were alive at this time would teach their children the great lessons of the Feast and encourage them to celebrate it as well. One generation would pass it down to the next.

- I do not support tradition solely for tradition’s sake, but I am reminded of our obligation to pass on what the Lord has taught us to the coming generation. I have received much from the saints who came before me, and I understand my obligation to pass on what I have received to those who follow me. If we fail to share the truth and blessings we have received, coming generations will miss much, and their faith will suffer from a lack of investment.

IV. The Confirmation for Purim (29-32) – In the closing verses we discover the confirmation for the Feast. Three times in these verses we find reference to it being confirmed. Consider:

A. The Authority (29) – Esther the queen, and Mordecai, second in command to the king, sent out the decree to celebrate Purim on the given days. The Jews had no reason to fear reprisal or opposition for their celebration. They had the authority of the throne backing them and encouraging their participation.

- Things are changing rapidly in America. As of right now we have freedom to worship, but that could change. Regardless of what governments and those in authority say about our faith and worship, we have the authority of the Throne behind us. If God be for us, who can be against us!

B. The Administration (30-31) – The Feast was not confined to Shushan and the immediate area around the palace. The decree, confirmed by Esther and Mordecai, was sent to each of the 127 provinces throughout the kingdom. Every province enjoyed royal authority and expectation to celebrate Purim. God's people throughout Persia were encouraged to celebrate and rejoice in the goodness of the Lord.

C. The Affirmation (32) – [And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.](#) The decree to observe the Feast was recorded in the book of the chronicles of the king. If at any time in the future, someone questioned their authority to observe the Feast, their confirmation would be found in the book. Esther sought to ensure the right of coming generations to celebrate Purim.

- I am thankful for the Book we have been given. Regardless of what men think, or what they approve or deny, God's Word will stand. It is the basis and premise for all of life and practice in faith. If God has recorded something in His Word, it is settled forever! We may not enjoy the affirmation of society, but we have the Word to guide our lives.

Conclusion: Purim served as a reminder of God's faithfulness and His abundant grace. They had received much and had reason to rejoice. If anyone has reason to rejoice today, it is the church. We have been pardoned of sin, saved by grace, and granted eternal life in Christ. We don't have to wait for an annual holiday to celebrate the goodness and grace of our Lord. We ought to celebrate Him each day we live! If there are needs, especially if you are unsaved, I urge you to come to Christ. He alone can provide.