


Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

*The Jews Destroy Their Enemies*

<sup>1</sup> 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.

**Psalm 81:13-14** [NIV-1984]

<sup>13</sup> "If my people would but listen to me, if Israel would follow my ways, <sup>14</sup> how quickly would I subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes!"

Q1. How did the Jews beseech (or ask) the Lord for His intercession (implied in the text)?

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**Esther 3:10, 15<sup>a</sup> & 4:3, 15-17** [NIV-1984] [We previously studied Esther, chapter 4:]

<sup>3:10</sup> So, the king took his signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. . . .

<sup>15a</sup> Spurred on by the king's command, the couriers went out, and [Haman's] edict [to annihilate] was issued [throughout the land and] in the citadel of Susa. . . .

<sup>4:3</sup> In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes. . . .

<sup>15</sup> Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: <sup>16</sup> "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

<sup>17</sup> So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther's instructions.

Q2. How did the Lord respond?

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## Lesson 9: Esther 9:1-32 & 10:1-3

### Deuteronomy 5:28-29 [NIV-1984]

<sup>28</sup> The Lord heard you when you spoke to me and the Lord said to me, "I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good. <sup>29</sup> Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!

### Deuteronomy 26:7 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

Then we cried to the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression.

<sup>2</sup> The Jews assembled in their cities in all the provinces of King Xerxes to attack those seeking their destruction. No one could stand against them, because the people of all the other nationalities were afraid of them.

Q3. From what you know of Jewish history (the Old Testament), can you think of any examples in which the Lord helped his people – the Jews?

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### Joshua 2:8-13 [NIV-1984]

<sup>8</sup> Before the [two Jewish] spies lay down for the night, she [Rahab] went up on the roof [of her home where the two spies were hiding under stalks of flax drying on the roof] <sup>9</sup> and said to them, "I know that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. <sup>10</sup> We have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. <sup>11</sup> When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. <sup>12</sup> Now then, please swear to me by the Lord that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign <sup>13</sup> that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save us from death."

### Judges 7:1-8, 12, 17-18, 20-22 [NIV-1984]

<sup>1</sup> Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. The camp of [the Midianites] was north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many men for me to deliver Midian into their hands. In order that Israel may not boast against me that her own strength has saved her, <sup>3</sup> announce now to the people, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.' " So, twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.

<sup>4</sup> But the LORD said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will sift them for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go."

<sup>5</sup> So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD told him, "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues like a dog from those who kneel down to drink." <sup>6</sup> Three hundred men lapped with their hands to their mouths. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the

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Midianites into your hands. Let all the other men go, each to his own place." <sup>8</sup> So, Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites to their tents but kept the three hundred, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others. Now the camp of Midian lay below him in the valley. . . .

<sup>12</sup> The Midianites, the Amalekites and all the other eastern peoples had settled in the valley, thick as locusts. Their camels could no more be counted than the sand on the seashore. . . .

<sup>17</sup> "Watch me," he told them. "Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. <sup>18</sup> When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.' " . . . .

<sup>20</sup> The three companies [of one hundred men, each] blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"

<sup>21</sup> While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. <sup>22</sup> When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the LORD caused the men throughout the [Midianite] camp to turn on each other with their swords. The [Midianite] army fled . . .

 The Six-Day War of 1967: The following excerpt was POSTED ON JUNE 9, 2022 BY CBN ISRAEL IN A BLOG; source: <https://cbnIsrael.org/2022/06/09/fulfilling-gods-promises-the-miracles-of-israels-six-day-war/>

"Fifty-five years ago — June 5, 1967 — marked the beginning of the Six-Day War (June 5-10). During that time, God fulfilled His ancient promises as recorded in 1 Kings 11:36, where He proclaimed Jerusalem as "the city where I have chosen for Myself to put My name."

"When the war began, however, Jerusalem was a divided city. Under the control of Jordan following the 1948 War of Independence, Israel's holiest sites — the Western Wall and Temple Mount — were off limits to Jews. Israel had won its War of Independence but lost the eastern half of Jerusalem to the Arab League. . . .

"Then in May 1967, Egypt declared war on Israel. Radio Cairo broadcast an ominous message: "The existence of Israel has continued too long. . . . The battle has come in which we shall destroy Israel." Such menacing talk from Egypt — joined by Syria, Jordan, and Iraq and supported by Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Sudan — put the small Jewish nation's military on high alert.

"The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) had also witnessed a formidable buildup of troops and weaponry in the Sinai Desert, representing a huge threat. So sure were the Israelis of defeat, they prepared 40,000 coffins. Realizing they would be vastly outmanned in battle, the Israelis put into effect a gutsy pre-emptive strategy that relied on speed and secrecy. It was named Operation Focus (Moked).

"Israel's military leaders determined that the only way to defeat Egypt's vastly superior air force — the largest in the Middle East — was to make a pre-emptive strike and neutralize all the planes while they were still sitting on the ground. Their pilots had trained long and well for just such a mission. And on June 5, they set it in motion.

"Operation Focus remains one of the most successful air campaigns in military history. During the Six-Day War, the Israeli Air Force destroyed 452 enemy planes, while losing just 46 of their own. After their stunning performance in Egypt, the Israeli Air Force finished the day in Jerusalem bombing the Jordanian tanks that raced toward the city and providing air cover for Israeli ground forces.

"It was an epic example of cunning, daring and stealth — a brilliant strategy that was flawlessly executed. During the brief war, Israel won the Golan Heights from Syria, the Sinai from Egypt, and Judea and Samaria (West Bank) and Jerusalem's Old City and holy sites from Jordan's occupation. Israel quadrupled its size.

"But those who fought in that war agree that it was more than military genius and bravery that led to victory. There were numerous miracles, as well.

"Although outmanned and outnumbered, the Israeli fighter pilots realized that God's supernatural intervention secured their victory. Pilot and IDF Major General Ezer Weizmann was asked to explain how for three hours, Israel Air Force planes destroyed aircraft at one Egyptian airstrip after another — yet the Egyptians did not radio ahead to let their forces know about the imminent air attacks. Weizmann, who later served as President of Israel, said simply: "The finger of God."

"Many eyewitness accounts, which have been well documented, emerged in the following months. Older airplanes that had been plagued with problems behaved surprisingly well that day. Squadron members who flew the aging Vautour bombers said that on June 5th, the aging aircraft operated without a single malfunction. An enemy shell that made a direct hit on a munitions pile miraculously failed to explode.


"One Israeli infantry recruit, on patrol with one other soldier, reported an encounter with a truck loaded with 18 well-armed Egyptian soldiers. The two Israelis, equipped with inadequate weapons, believed they faced certain

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death. However, the Arabs, looking panic-stricken, did not fire on them, and complied immediately when the Israeli soldier then shouted, “Hands up!” Later, he asked an Egyptian sergeant why they hadn’t shot at the Israeli soldiers. The reply: “My arms froze — they became paralyzed. My whole body was paralyzed, and I don’t know why.”

“Arabs not only gave in to their fears and waved white flags of surrender; one tank commander later explained that he gave up to a far smaller number of Jewish tanks because he saw a desert mirage that made him “see hundreds of Israeli tanks.”

“Thus, it should be no surprise that the secular newspaper Haaretz carried this comment by one of its military correspondents: ‘Even a non-religious person must admit this war was fought with help from heaven.’ ”

 In the later chapters of Genesis, chapters 39-47, we read of Joseph, a man wronged by his brothers but blessed by God. And in Exodus we read how God used Moses to rescue His people – Israel – from their Egyptian slave-masters.

### Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>3</sup> And all the nobles of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and the king's administrators helped the Jews, because fear of Mordecai had seized them. <sup>4</sup> Mordecai was prominent in the palace; his reputation spread throughout the provinces, and he became more and more powerful.

Q4. Why were the nobles, satraps, governors, and administrators fearful of Mordecai?

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Q5. From the text did Mordecai have any power in the empire?

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## Lesson 9: Esther 9:1-32 & 10:1-3

<sup>5</sup> The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.

<sup>6</sup> In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.

<sup>7</sup> They also killed Parshandatha [Par-shan-dath-a], Dalphon [Dal-fön], Aspatha [Äs-path-a],

<sup>8</sup> Poratha [Pö-räth-ä], Adalia [A-däl-ä], Aridatha [Äri-däth-ä], <sup>9</sup> Parmashta [Pär-mäsh-tä], Arisai [Äri-

sigh], Aridai [Äri-dye], and Vaizatha [Vi-zäth-ä], <sup>10</sup> the ten sons of Haman son of

Hammedatha [Häm-mëd-thä], the enemy of the Jews. But they did not lay their hands on the plunder.


Q6. In verse 1 (↑) the appointed date has arrived. Haman's plan and edict was to annihilate the Jews; however, Mordecai turned the tables on those who hated the Jews. (1) What was the result of Haman's edict? And (2) Mordecai's edict?

(1)

(2)

Q7. In our present age, we honor life. Do people generally judge God as bad, due to the loss of life depicted in the Old Testament?

Q8. To our contemporaries, our friends, how would you explain this loss of life that is described in this chapter 9?


 *'But they did not lay their hands on the plunder':* "though they were allowed by the edict to do it (Esther 8:11 ↓) . . . but this they did not, that it might appear that they did not take away their lives from a covetous desire of their estates, but purely in self-defence; and they might do this, the more to ingratiate themselves to the king, to whom the goods and estates of those men would be confiscated." [©about 1760, *Exposition of the Entire Bible* by John Gill. Text Courtesy of Internet Sacred Texts Archive. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/esther/9-7.htm>]

### Esther 8:11 [NIV-1984]

The king's edict granted the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves; to destroy, kill, and annihilate any armed force of any nationality or province that might attack them and their women and children; and to plunder the property of their enemies.

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### Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>11</sup> The number of those slain in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king that same day.

<sup>12</sup> The king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman in the citadel of Susa. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now what is your petition? It will be given you. What is your request? It will also be granted."

<sup>13</sup> "If it pleases the king," Esther answered, "give the Jews in Susa permission to carry out this day's edict tomorrow also, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on gallows."

Q9. Why do you think Queen Esther requested that the killing be extended for one additional day?


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Q10. Does the request of Queen Esther (verse 13) affect your opinion of her? Why?

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 This is a hard passage to study because of the killing – many of us would judge it to be needless killing. And it stands to reason that commentators have much to say about it. The following commentators provide a general theme on the rationale: in Old Testament times, this was a customary consequence of a victor against a failed military action – revenge on one's enemies. Afterall, if the plans of Mordecai and Queen Esther had failed, the Jews would have been annihilated, exterminated through Haman's original edict. The Jews wanted to ensure that the masterminds and those likeminded individuals would not be able to mount a similar attack against the Jews at some time in the future. The Jewish victory also served as a warning to those who survived [and] may have been secretly encouraging the anti-Jewish sentiment and actions of Haman and his co-conspirators.

 "Before the slaughter of the 13th of Adar was actually over, it is obvious that the Jews were no longer in any danger. It was known that the sympathies of the Court were entirely with the Jews, and the officers of the king consequently took their part. After one day's slaughter, in which in the capital alone 500 men were killed, we may be quite certain that the Jews were masters of the situation, and therefore we do not hesitate to call Esther's fresh action needless butchery. Were anything needed to bring out the matter in its true light, it might be seen in the request that the sons of Haman might be hanged. They had already been killed (Esther 9:10 ↑), doubtless among

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the first, and Esther, therefore, asks for the dead bodies to be crucified, a gratuitous outrage on the dead. Because Esther was a person whom God made use of as an agent for a great purpose, we are not called upon to tone down and explain away the black spots in her history. To suggest that Esther had reason to fear “a renewal of the attacks of the enemies of the Jews” is out of the question, when the Jews had their feet on their necks. We must not, on the other hand, judge Esther according to the high Christian standard. It is true that the Old Testament taught “vengeance is Mine” but it needed the teaching of the New Testament to bring that truth home to men.” [©about 1880, *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/esther/9-13.htm>]

✎ “There may have been special reasons why the extension of time was needed in Susa in order to ensure the Jews’ complete success in exterminating their foes there. The attitude of Esther and Mordecai towards the whole question of the permissibility of revenge was naturally that of their contemporaries, and so it is not to be judged by us on Christian principles.

‘*Let Haman's ten sons be hanged on gallows*’: “[Queen Esther] asks that the bodies may be impaled or hung on a [gallows], so as to crown their disgrace, and serve as a terrible example.” [©1882 and later, *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* by Cambridge University Press. Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/esther/9-13.htm>]

✎ ‘*Carry out this day's edict tomorrow also*’: “i.e., to kill their implacable enemies. For it is not improbable that the greatest and worst of them had politically withdrawn or hidden themselves for that day; after which, the commission granted to the Jews being expired, they confidently returned to their homes, where they were taken and slain by virtue of this private and unexpected decree.

‘*Let Haman's ten sons be hanged on gallows*’: “now let their bodies be hanged upon their father’s gallows, for their greater infamy, and the terror of all others who shall presume to abuse the king in like manner, or to persuade him to execute such cruelties upon his own subjects. This custom of hanging up the bodies of malefactors after their death was frequent among the Jews, and Persians also, as is well known.” [© about 1667, *Commentary on the Holy Bible* by Matthew Poole; Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/esther/9-13.htm>]

<sup>14</sup> So the king commanded that this be done. An edict was issued in Susa, and they hanged the ten sons of Haman. <sup>15</sup> The Jews in Susa came together on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and they put to death in Susa three hundred men, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.


Q11. The king’s edict allowed the Jews to confiscate the plunder, yet they did not. Who, then, received the plunder?

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✎ ‘*They did not lay their hands on the plunder*’: See the comment following verse 10 (↑).

## Lesson 9: Esther 9:1-32 & 10:1-3

### Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, the remainder of the Jews who were in the king's provinces also assembled to protect themselves and get relief from their enemies. They killed seventy-five thousand of them but did not lay their hands on the plunder.

Q12. The number 75,000 is large. How expansive was the Persian Empire and did the Empire include regions that were traditionally enemies of the Jews? (See map on page 2 of lesson 1: Esther 1:1-22)

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<sup>17</sup> This happened on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth, they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.

<sup>18</sup> The Jews in Susa, however, had assembled on the thirteenth and fourteenth, and then on the fifteenth they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.

<sup>19</sup> That is why rural Jews -- those living in Villages -- observe the fourteenth of the month of Adar as a day of joy and feasting, a day for giving presents to each other.

Q13. Why did the Jews celebrate?

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Continued (↓)



## *Lesson 9: Esther 9:1-32 & 10:1-3*

### *The Feast of Purim Established*

<sup>20</sup> Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far, <sup>21</sup> to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar <sup>22</sup> as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor. <sup>23</sup> So the Jews agreed to continue the celebration they had begun, doing what Mordecai had written to them.

Q14. What were the reasons given for celebration (vs 22)?

(1)

(2)

(3)

## *Lesson 9: Esther 9:1-32 & 10:1-3*

### *Summary*

<sup>24</sup> For Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them and had cast the pur (that is, the lot) for their ruin and destruction. <sup>25</sup> But when the plot came to the king's attention, he issued written orders that the evil scheme Haman had devised against the Jews should come back onto his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. <sup>26a</sup> (Therefore these days were called Purim, from the word pur.)

Q15. What is the missing word: Because of one man's \_\_\_\_\_, the Jews were victorious and Mordecai became the second most powerful person in the Empire.

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Q16. What did Mordecai refuse to do?

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## *Lesson 9: Esther 9:1-32 & 10:1-3*

### *Day 5*


 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>26b</sup> Because of everything written in this letter and because of what they had seen and what had happened to them, <sup>27</sup> the Jews took it upon themselves to establish the custom that they and their descendants and all who join them should without fail observe these two days every year, in the way prescribed and at the time appointed. <sup>28</sup> These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family, and in every province and in every city. And these days of Purim should never cease to be celebrated by the Jews, nor should the memory of them die out among their descendants.

<sup>29</sup> So Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter concerning Purim. <sup>30</sup> And Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Xerxes -- words of goodwill and assurance -- <sup>31</sup> to establish these days of Purim at their designated times, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had decreed for them, and as they had established for themselves and their descendants in regard to their times of fasting and lamentation. <sup>32</sup> Esther's decree confirmed these regulations about Purim, and it was written down in the records.

## Lesson 9: Esther 9:1-32 & 10:1-3

### Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

### 10:1-3

#### *Mordecai's Greatness*

<sup>1</sup> King Xerxes imposed tribute throughout the empire, to its distant shores.

<sup>2</sup> And all his acts of power and might, together with a full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king had raised him, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia?

<sup>3a</sup> Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes, preeminent among the Jews, and held in high esteem by his many fellow Jews, <sup>3b</sup> because he worked for the good of his people and spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews.

Q17. For what two reasons was Mordecai “held in high esteem” (vs 3<sup>b</sup>)?

(1)

.....  
(2)

Q18. Even though He is never mentioned by Name, is the hand of God apparent in this book?

Yes? } Why?  
No? }

Q19. In our society today, (1) do we sometimes convict a person to death for performing a particularly heinous crime? (2) Does our criminal justice system attempt to be just, impartial?

(1)

.....  
(2)

## Lesson 9: Esther 9:1-32 & 10:1-3

Q20. (1) What did Haman attempt to do? And (2) did he have accomplices throughout the Empire?

(1)

(2)

Q21. Is God's judgment and consequence just?

Yes? } Why?  
No? }

### Exodus 6:6-7 [NIV-1984]

<sup>6</sup> "Therefore, say to the Israelites: 'I am the Lord , and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. <sup>7</sup> I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.

### Leviticus 26:12 [NIV-1984]

I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.

Q22. What stands-out to you from your study of the Old Testament Book of Esther?

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