**Lesson 9**

**Esther 9 & 10**

**God keeps His promises**

**Memory verse: “**Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.” (Psalms 145:13 NIV)

“Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive.” That was God’s counsel to the Jews through the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 29:7 NKJV), and for the most part, they obeyed it. It wasn’t the Jews who had declared war on the Gentiles, but the Gentiles who had declared war on the Jews!

“D Day” arrived for the Jews, the day appointed by Haman’s decree for the slaughter of God’s chosen people in the empire. But Mordecai’s decree had changed

that “D” from “destruction” to “deliverance.” The Jews had permission to resist their enemies and had been given nine months to prepare for the encounter. The people in the empire who hated the Jews were hoping for victory, but “the tables were turned and the Jews got the upper hand over those who hated them” (Est. 9:1 NIV).

The Jewish men were organized and armed, ready to meet any enemy who would attack them and their families and try to take their possessions. But the Lord had given them a greater weapon than their swords, because “the fear of the Jews fell upon them” (8:17; 9:2). This was a fear that God had sent into the hearts of the Gentiles to keep them from fighting His people.

This reminds us of the experience of Jacob as he travelled from Shechem to Bethel. “And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob” (Gen. 35:5). It was this same fear that went before Israel as they entered the Promised Land. “This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you” (Deut. 2:25 NKJV, and see 11:25). Rahab told the two Jewish spies that the fear of Israel had paralysed the nations in Canaan (Josh. 2:8–11; 5:1; 9:24), and that fear helped give Israel the victory.

One of the problems with our world today is that “there is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:18). Like Pharaoh, people are saying, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?” (Ex. 5:2). *But have they seen anything in the people of God that would make them want to fear the Lord?* Is there such devotion to God among God’s people that an outsider attending one of our meetings would fall down on his face, worship God, and “report that God is truly among you,” (1 Cor. 14:25 NKJV)?

The fear of God protects those who fear God and believe His promises. Because the Jews believed Mordecai’s decree, they had new courage and were not afraid of the enemy, and their courage put fear into the hearts of the enemy. (See Phil. 1:28.) Before King Jehoshaphat went out to battle, God’s message to him was: “Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper” (2 Chron. 20:20). That is still wise counsel.

 Do you believe in the promises of God who provides you a Saviour and deliver you from the bondage of sin and eternal damnation?

Summary: 1) Vindication: the fear of Jews. 2) Celebration: the feast of the Jews.

 3) Exaltation: the fame of Mordecai.

**Discussion questions:**

Q1. How would you justify the killings by the Jews in this chapter and could Christians adopt the experience of the Jews in the society they live in today?

Q2 Explain why the Jews kept the “feast of Purim” to this day and should Christians observe this feast too?

Q3 What lessons can we learn from chapter 10 when Mordecai was exalted for his promotion and fame?