

Chapter Twenty-three

A Good Day

Esther 9:1 to 32

As spinning pleasantries began tiptoeing their way back down to the day's harsh reality, Hadassah's eyes reluctantly opened, but not before deciphering whether she was still sleeping, or awake. To fully open those sleepy eyes, was a different issue entirely.

With her head still swirling, she excused her bad behavior of not fully opening her eyes, for thinking it was earlier than her normal custom to rise. Was the chamberlain late? Was it even time to rise? At this point, all she could estimate in her sleepy state was that it was a beautiful morning, and she was in it!

Making her way to the bedroom window, she couldn't remember a more gorgeous day, nor the last time she enjoyed her sleep so well.

Since lovely dreams continued to impregnate her sensibilities, Hadassah continued to resist the urge to fully awake, almost falling asleep again on the soft and padded recliner beneath her window. The warm lingering feeling left by her husband's tender embrace the night before that was aiding and abetting her lull back to sleep was now being interrupted by an outside force that was even more powerful. Something much stronger was vying for that attention, and before long, had easily won the battle. Those sweet memories that had so strongly held on were now beginning to slip, being replaced with bits of cognitive ruminations of Mordecai. "It happened again," she thought, "*and this time,*

it woke me up!” She couldn’t remember thinking about him this much, since she was a little girl. Why was he on her mind so much lately? All she could figure was, maybe because she’s spent so much time with him this past year. Could that be it?

Still yawning and trying to make sense of all these feelings that she’s taking in and sorting out all at the same time, a new thought began to drift nearby. Thinking it was suspiciously important, she consciously grabbed it out of twilight and delivered it to break of day. “Hmmm,” she thought, “I gotta do sumptin’ today, but I can’t think of what it is...” Suddenly her chamberlain entered the room; fastidiously fixing things up, and apologizing as she went.

“...O My Lady, I’m so sorry...can you ever forgive me?”

Startled by all the commotion, and even *more* startled that she was in the midst of an unwanted conversation before she had resolved to open her eyes, Esther responds, “For what?”

“I’m *so* late...can you forgive me?”

“Yes, but why are you so nervous?”

“...The *BLOOD*.... The *KILLING*.... O-I don’t think I can take any more!...”

“Whatdaya mean?...”

“My lady, don’t *you* know what day this is?...”

Still in a sleepy daze, she asks again, “What do you mean?...”

Taken back by her lapse of memory, she answers, “This is the thirteenth day of the month.”

“So-?”

“Today...is the thirteenth day of *Adar*!”

Still half asleep, and now even more nervous *herself*, Esther says, “O..., how could I have *forgotten!*...my sleep, my nice dreams...Oh...where’s Mordecai?...where’s the King?...where’s...”

“My Queen...they’re all okay, I just saw them *both* moments ago.” Esther’s chamberlain pauses. Then with

wisdom that can only come from Above, asks her, “Didn’t you tell me a few months ago, that ‘*this* was going to be a day of victory’?...And *this*, ‘a day of triumph’?”

As Esther calms down, she declares, “I never thought this day would come.” Without missing a beat, she bows her head, and prays, “O Lord-though it’s early, *and I forgot!*,...forgive me for forgetting the most important day of my life...forgive me for *forgetting*, the TRIUMPH OVER MINE ENEMIES.”

No sooner does Esther finish her prayer; when the King walks in and starts speaking right away. “Esther, I came to comfort you.... I was thinking about you all morning,...and thought you might not be able to sleep, and....”

As if to silence him from speaking, Esther gently takes the tip of her forefinger and puts it over his lips to finish his sentence, “...and you wanted to see,...if I was okay, right?”

He flies back, “Hey, how’d you know what I was going to say to you?”

Relieved to see him, she answers, “A little birdy tol’ me. A little birdy...!”

(The curtain falls, the music starts playing, and in anticipation of the story’s final scene, everyone is rushing out to use the restrooms and get last minute snacks before settling back in their seats. But what they don’t know though, is; all their rushing around is in vain. The curtain call will be delayed once *AGAIN!*-you guessed it-by the nuisance preacher who keeps on interrupting this story with his continuous boring series of Bible studies. In disdain-watching him climb the steps to the stage one more time-the audience starts throwing tomatoes and buckets of popcorn at this guy and-look at his face!-the dumb thump just keeps on smiling at them. Hey, after this story finds its end, let’s you and I agree together not to renew his contract again. That’ll fix ‘im, that’ll fix that NUISANCE preacher!)

A Day of Triumph, A Day of Victory!

Victory indeed! A VICTORY over Haman (Esther 7:10), and TRIUMPH over his house and position. (Esther 8:2) A VICTORY over death (Esther 9:1), and TRIUMPH over all their enemies. (Esther 9:5 to 16) And last, a VICTORY and TRIUMPH that extended over all the land. (Esther 10:1 to 3)

Esther had victory in Mordecai, just like we, Christian friend, have “victory in Jesus”! Isn’t *that* one of our most treasured hymns¹?! Listen, that’s the whole idea of Esther chapter nine. On the EXACT day their enemies had planned to destroy them, they destroyed their enemies instead! The *final* victory had been achieved, and they rested and celebrated with fanfare and jubilation!!! I must say, with all the victory we Christians *claim* in Christ, dear friend, we’re much too silent when it comes to expressing it openly, especially in the public arena. Let me ask you, if your day was “...turned...from sorrow [in]to joy, and from mourning into a good day...”; wouldn’t you do some singing too? Of course you would! The truth is we Christians get to sing the songs of PURIM *too*!!! Listen to this one, it’s one of my favorites, “*Life’s day will soon be o’er, all storms forever past, We’ll cross the great divide to Glory, safe at last; We’ll share the joys of Heav’n- a harp, a Home, a crown, ...THE TEMPTER WILL BE BANISHED, WE’LL LAY OUR BURDEN DOWN. It will be worth it all...when we see Jesus, Life’s trials will seem so small...when we see Christ; One glimpse of His dear face...all sorrow will erase,...so bravely run the race...till we see Christ.*”²[See who wrote this!!!]

¹ *Victory in Jesus.* By, E. M. Bartlet

² By “ESTHER” Kerr Rusthoi, 1941

Mordecai's Day

The Book of Esther is the *only* place “Pur” and “Purim” are mentioned in The Bible. [3:7; 9:24, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32] And the *only* time “...the *thirteenth* day...” (Esther 9:17 and 18) was included in Purim’s holiday celebration, was the first one. Every one after, has been (and continues to be) celebrated on the fourteenth and fifteenth of Adar. (Esther 9:21) I point this out, to remind you, that *this* THIRTEEN was an *EXCEPTION!* When God took the devil’s LOT [*PUR*] and “...TURNED...” (Esther 9:1) it to go *HIS* (God’s) way, this *UN*lucky number was *turned* into something GOOD: *PURIM!* No wonder these Jews all had “a *good* day”!!!

Considering that the fourteenth and fifteenth day of Adar is “...a day of *gladness* and *feasting*, and a *good* day...” (Esther 9:19), some Jewish *traditions* [*Some* traditions are good; ask Saint Paul: II Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6.] call Purim, *Mordecai’s Day*. That seems to fit this story just fine-wouldn’t you say? Since it’s a day “...of feasting and joy and ...sending portions [*Hallmark cards?!]* one to another, and gifts to the *poor* [the *Jewish* equivalent of the Salvation Army’s *Christmas* give aways]...” (Esther 9:22), no one could blame us for calling this *Jewish* holiday, *Mordecaimas*-would they? Could they? Since this verse *DOES SAY* to send cards and gifts *TO EACH OTHER*; wouldn’t you say, our *made up* holiday was *MORE Scriptural* than their *made up* holiday of *Christmas?!* [Since I’ve offended you *already* anyway; why not go *all the way?....* You can’t “keep Christ *in* *Christmas*”; since He can’t be kept in something He was never *in*, in the first place! Let me be the first to tell you (and it’s a privilege to do so), Jesus Christ was never *in* “the *mass*”, to begin with, and He *NEVER will be!* John 6:57.]

If God and God’s people are having a *good* day, then clearly, it’s a *bad* day for the Devil and his Crew. “*In the wake of 9/11*” [Hackneyed expression from 2001], I realize that my next statement will seem *radical*, *extremist*, and to many of you, *unchristian*. That *may* all be true-*personally*,

I'm going to wait to hear what I have to say, before I make any judgments on what I said, before I hear myself out, but here goes-BUT what's MORE true, is, what does the Bible say on this, or for that matter, any other subject?! Here's my statement: The only way to GUARANTEE the safety of ALL the Jews in the kingdom was to literally kill ALL their enemies! Is that statement a little too strong? Does it shake you up?? I didn't mean to upset you-you know. What I did want to do, though, is show you something very important...

...A Little Role Reversal Here

In I Samuel 15:2 to 3, The Lord tells King Saul, the son of KISH, to "...UTTERLY destroy..." Amalek. (Exodus 17:16) Saul disobeyed; by keeping "...Agag the king of the Amalekites ALIVE..." (I Samuel 15:8) As I pointed out in chapter twelve, Haman's father was "...Hammedatha the AGAGITE..."! (Esther 3:1) If not for Saul's disobedience; ALL the Amalekites and their seed might have been destroyed, including Haman the Jews' enemy, who set the groundwork to destroy EVERY Jew in the Kingdom in a single DAY! Thankfully, God had other plans. This time, the roles were *reversed*. Instead of King Saul, God used *another* "...son of Kish, a Benjamite..." named Mordecai (Esther 2:5) to destroy Haman, the son, generations back, of an Amalekite king named Agag! [This King that Samuel wound up killing (I Samuel 15:32-33), wasn't the *only* Agagite Amalekite that Saul didn't kill. Like the "...best of the sheep..."-*PLURAL*- that Saul saved back (I Samuel 15:9), there must have been more Agagites, other than only King Agag³, that were *spared, missed, or hiding*; since Haman, approximately 565 years later, is (also) called an AGAGITE.]

³ Agag was the traditional name for the king of Amalek, like Ahasuerus was for the king of Persia, or Caesar, for Rome.

What's the lesson here, to be learned? Unless, and until *every* enemy is *totally* destroyed; there will always be a chance for reprisals!

Do you realize, if there weren't any laws on the books, and everyone was allowed to do *whatever* they wanted, *anytime* they wanted to do it [i.e. unbridled liberty], there would be blood shed and mass murder everywhere?! Do you know *why*? I'll tell you why, and the answer is very simple. Because, people just don't get along. They don't see eye to eye. And, some people *think* they are better than others. [I know some of these people myself. They are Born Again, Bible Believing Baptists; *just like ME!* Imagine that! *They* think *they're* BETTER than *me!!* Some of them are *God* called PREACHERS! But that's okay, *OUR* Father has *their* "...number..." (II Corinthians 10:12-Look that one up, *Honey!*), just like He has *mine!*] Wasn't that Haman's problem? Didn't he *think* he was BETTER than Mordecai and his *extended* family; turning *pride*, into down right HATRED?! And last, didn't Haman take his hatred for the Jews a step further; when he convinced hundreds and thousands of others to do likewise? [Some examples: Esther 9:6-"five hundred men"; 9:12-"the ten sons of Haman"; 9:15-"three hundred men"; 9:16-"slew of their foes seventy and five thousand".] If no one stopped Haman from his self-appointed task of hating these Jews to the point of extinction, you can bet your bottom dollar, even with Haman dead, there would've been no stopping his coconspirators; until EVERY Jew in the Kingdom was killed! *THEREFORE...*

"...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." Esther 9:5

(Lights are flashing. Two minutes to curtain call. Since I have so *much* time left on the clock before the final scene begins; a few last thoughts on this chapter may still be in order.)

A Good Day
Hangin' Around
or
Like Father, Like Sons

Did you notice that AFTER Haman's ten sons are killed ("wiped out", "cashed in their chips", "croaked", "bit the dust", "dead as a doornail", "gave up the ghost", etc..., you get the idea!), that Esther requests an unusual thing of the KING to do with their "dead bodies"? (Expression; Revelation 11:9)

"Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to morrow also unto this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons...", like him, **"...be hanged upon the gallows."** Esther 9:13

Let me ask you, wouldn't you have a lot more confidence in your team, if you saw your defeated opponents all lined up (and *strung up-hanging HIGH, mind you*) one by one, like a scoreboard, to see who was winning and who was losing? Though I admit that the example is crude and "...not a little..." (Expression; Acts 20:12) morbid, the principle remains the same. Seeing all the sons of your worst enemy hanging on gallows that might have been used on you and your family the day before [This was the thirteenth day of Adar, "to morrow" would be the fourteenth day looking back to the thirteenth-see the text again. Esther 9:13] would give you a lot of confidence too-wouldn't you say?

Remember; before these Jews could rightfully celebrate their holiday; they FIRST had to have *COMPLETE* victory! [Could these ten sons of Haman, stand for holiday decorations; on Mordecaimas????!!!]

While we are talking about the destruction of God's enemies, we heard what happened to Haman and his sons, but what ever happened to Zeresh? For some reason, Scripture is silent on this subject. Given verses twelve to fourteen of Esther nine; if you were Esther, along with seeking

out Haman's sons, wouldn't you also seek out his wife-to-destroy her too? Sure you would!-especially since, like I pointed out earlier, it sure *looked like* Zeresh [like Herodias] wanted to become Queen of the Kingdom, and was willing to do anything to achieve that goal. Since nothing *more* is said about Zeresh after Esther 6:13; we can only see what happens to her, *in type*.

“...For he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.” Revelation 19:2 and 3

Even though I believe that Zeresh does finally get killed, I also believe, she doesn't get killed *RIGHT AWAY!* Do you remember when she said, “I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow...”? (Revelation 18:7) I believe God let her stay alive *just long enough*, to see that she didn't become the Queen she had planned to become (that was Esther's job); to grieve over Haman long after his death; and to have compounded sorrow over the death of her ten sons-*all at the same time*.

“Reward her...double unto her...give her...sorrow...”!
Revelation 18:6 and 7

Doubled!-all this punishment would have “*finished off*” this JEW HATING CONSPIRATOR forever!

(What great timing! ALL the lights in the theater just went dark!!! The musical finale is sweetly playing, Dvorak's “Largo”, from *The New World Symphony*. The curtain slowly opens. And Esther is seated center stage in the Palace Garden. Mordecai walks in from stage left, and is the first to speak.)

With a robust command to his voice, Mordecai says,
“Good day!”

Queen Esther replies, “And ‘A Good Day’ to you too!”

Mordecai continues, “The men of war have slain ‘and destroyed five hundred men’ inside the palace *alone!* That makes the total thus far...”

Esther interrupts him, “Mordecai, do you remember when I was a little girl, and...”

Adding the death toll, and trying to hear Esther-all at the same time, he replies, “Five hundred and three, five hundred and four,...five hundred and...”

“Mordecai, do you hear me?...”

“Five hundred and seven, five...yeah, you were my ‘Li’l Dassah’ -I remember...”

The Queen again, tries to get his full attention. “Mordecai, I’m trying to ask you something...”

“Esther, this is important...five hundred twenty-four, five hundred twenty-five,...five hundred twenty...”

Interrupting him again, this time by gently but firmly placing her hands over his writing hand, “Can you just stop for a minute? This is important too!” Seeing that she has gotten his attention-at least much more of it, she commences to finish her thought. “Do you remember when we were both little-*real* little?”

Thinking that Esther is just trying to take her mind off all the bloodshed in the palace; Mordecai goes along with it, and nods his head in the affirmative.

Without missing a beat, Esther continues, “Do ya remember what we played?”

“Whatdaya mean...’played’?”

“Remember, we usta play the little game we called,... ‘*Kings and Queens*’ ...remember?”

“Oh yeah, we *were* real small then-weren’t we.”

(Long pause-with no one speaking.)

Esther almost upset because Mordecai didn’t say *more* about it...and now Mordecai looks at her nonplussed, and finally says, “So?!!!”

Unable to contain herself anymore, Esther seizes Mordecai’s word, and blurts out, “*SO!*...we ARE Kings and Queens!!! Don’t you get it, Mordi?... God let it all come *true*.... You’re a *King*, and I’m *the Queen*-just like we usta *play*...” And with tears welling up in her eyes, she continued, “...and today,...*YOU* saved the kingdom, just like we usta *pretend*.”

(The curtain falls, but no one starts clapping, because voices are still heard coming from behind the stage curtain. Keeping extra silent, the audience seems to go along with it.)

Esther is heard first. “Mordecai,...let’s pray together, like we did when we were little; to thank Jehovah for all He has done for us and our people.... Oh yeah, and...don’t forget to pray for the King.” As the volume begins to fade, Mordecai and Esther can barely be heard, taking turns, praying back and forth to Jehovah-who they associated, as children, as their GREAT King (Mordecai being the saviour). Even more faintly now, the final words of the play were uttered. “But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.”⁴ Realizing at the same time that the prayer ended in the *singular*, instead of the *plural*, they simultaneously chuckled at the end of the Psalm, finishing it

⁴ Psalms 66:19 and 20

the second time, as if they *were* little children again, saying, “and *YOU!*... And *YOU!*
And *You,*...Amen!”

(The play ends, but the lights don't come on right away. In fact all the ushers have been instructed to use their flashlights to point men and women *back* to their seats to hear an important announcement before they decide to leave the theater. You won't believe it! It's that Preacher again. Oh, I see. He's reminding people that; though the play *has* ended, there is still one more chapter to go. He's requesting that everyone who can possibly stay; please do so. Thank God, this time, there were no tomatoes.)