

Esther 8, 9, & 10 – Mixed Messages

I. Pure Justice – Esther 7:9-8:2

The king took off his signet ring, which he had reclaimed from Haman, and presented it to Mordecai. And Esther appointed him over Haman's estate. – Esther 8:2

We would love for life to be like this. Good totally defeats evil. God sets everything right in clear and obvious ways.

II. Mixed Messages – Esther 8:3-8

- A. Persians can kill Jews, but Jews can kill Persians
- B. Death from Sin, Life in Christ

Now write another decree in the king's name in behalf of the Jews as seems best to you, and seal it with the king's signet ring—for no document written in the king's name and sealed with his ring can be revoked." – Esther 8:8

But in reality, there is a mixed message. There is still death and suffering. God has not revoked this curse. But there is also life in Christ, and God gives us authority to use this life and Christ to make a difference in the world.

III. Mission to Victimized Humanity – Esther 8:9-14

- A. Arming the Innocent – *But they did not plunder*
- B. Freedom in Christ
- C. Social Justice

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 that might attack them... and to plunder the property of their enemies. – Esther 8:11

This is where it gets complicated. How do we help suffering people? How do we stand against thugs making people into victims? Matthew 25 talks about when you help those in the greatest need, you help Jesus Christ personally.

IV. Purification of Humanity – Esther 9:1-17

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. – Esther 9:5

When you see so much death, it can become bothersome. There is a raw sense that God is purifying the world of evil, though the issue of who is good and who is evil is cloudy.

God will separate good from evil. There will be a judgment. With the death and resurrection of Jesus, there will even be a separation of good and evil within the individual person.

But we are not the agents of human purification. God does not want us to judge who lives and dies. We are not able.

V. Celebration of Relief – Esther 9:18-32

On the fifteenth [the Jews] rested and made it a day of feasting and joy. – Esther 9:18b

It is important to celebrate relief. We celebrate relief from sin every Sunday. We should celebrate other ways in which we provide relief from suffering as well.

Conclusion

Grasp on to life with Christ as it bumps up against Sickness & Death.

Find Your Mission to Victimized Humanity. What does that look like for you? Can we do it without taking sides? Christ did.

Celebration of Relief. We need to celebrate more. What should we celebrate?