



## "A Reason To Fight, A Reason To Celebrate" (Esther 9-10)

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### I. A HOLY WAR

#### A. The Tables Are Turned

\* How many times in history have we seen God do this for the Jewish people?

\* Egypt, Pharaoh, The Red Sea

- Exodus 2: 23 During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God.

\* Judges 3:7-9, 12-15; 6:1, 7-10, 14; 10:6-8, 10-16

#### B. God's Favor In The Battle

\* Haman's sons hanged on gallows

- Deut.21: 23 you must not leave his body on the tree overnight. Be sure to bury him that same day, because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not desecrate the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

- These bodies would be an additional deterrent for people seeking to harm the Jewish people.

\* II Chron.20:15ff

\* I like the kind of battle that I don't have to anything except watch the Lord, but this is not always the way it is...

\* I Samuel 17: 47 All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

#### C. The Jews Unity In The Battle

\* Sometimes it takes a serious threat to unite a people.

#### D. The Jews Motive In The Battle

\* Three times we read that they did not lay their hands on the plunder. Their motive was not to gain anything earthly...refer to Esther 8:11.

\* I Timothy 6:5...who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

## II. A HOLY CELEBRATION

\* Prov.16: 33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

\* Purim was to be celebrated every year as a reminder of all God had done on behalf of His people. This celebration would in future years serve as a reminder to those who also found themselves facing what in some cases would be certain destruction, so that they would not lose faith in God, but rather follow the example of Mordecai, Esther, and their fellow Jews...Deut.26: 6 But the Egyptians mistreated us and made us suffer, putting us to hard labor. 7 Then we cried out to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. 8 So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders. 9 He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

\* Sunday, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> is Purim

- begins with High Holiday or other festival tunes, sometimes tunes off jingles from television.
- Next is the reading of the book of Esther, and when Haman's name comes up, you make noise with a traditional grager (rattle), or with an invention of your own imagination. The louder the better. Non-traditional items are trumpets, a shofar, drums, a piano, organ, a cookie tin filled with nails, wooden blocks, balloons with Haman's name that are popped...Some write Haman's name on the soles of their feet and stamp them on the ground or floor until the name is erased. Booing and hissing are also good tools for the unprepared. When Mordecai's name is mentioned, all cheer.
- a festive meal in the afternoon, sending gifts of food to friends, and giving money to the poor.
- celebrated with costumes, masquerades, plays, parodies, and a heavy consumption of liquor. A Mardi Gras spirit runs wild even in the most straight laced sectors of the Jewish community. A time to "feel good and let loose."
- Today, outside traditional circles, the fast is not observed.
- The verses listing the ten sons of Haman are recited in one breath (if possible), because they were hanged together (try this?).
- Purim ends with a meal together with family and friends. This ending meal is in Jewish tradition second only to the Passover Seder.
- "When all other festivals are abolished, Purim will remain."

\* Purim sparked many "purim observances" - seep.192, The Jewish Holidays

- "a custom arose that whenever a Jewish community was saved from its enemies, it would celebrate the event annually with a special local Purim. These days were known as Purim Katan - Little Purim."

\* Iran pressed ahead Monday with plans that will increase its ability to make nuclear weapons as it formally informed the U.N. nuclear agency of its intention to enrich uranium to higher levels.... Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad...announced Sunday that his country would significantly enrich at least some of the country's stockpile of uranium to 20 percent....

Although material for the fissile core of a nuclear warhead must be enriched to a level of 90 percent or more, just getting its stockpile to the 20 percent mark would be a major step for Iran's nuclear program. While enriching to 20 percent would take about one year, using up to 2,000 centrifuges at Tehran's underground Natanz facility, any next step – moving from 20 to 90 percent – would take only half a year and between 500-1,000 centrifuges. Achieving the 20-percent level "would be going most of the rest of the way to weapon-grade uranium," said David Albright, whose Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security tracks suspected proliferators.

\* Zech.8: 23 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "In those days ten men from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, 'Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.'"

### III. A HOLY MAN HIGHLY EXALTED

\* We are reminded here of how powerful Xerxes was. But his power & vast influence was granted to him by God...Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Cyrus, Pilate (John 19:11), etc.  
Sinderella

\* Mordecai is exalted beyond his wildest dreams. The path to this exaltation was one of humility, consecration, and faith...

\* Mordecai was not living for himself, but for His people...

### CONCLUSION

\* II Thess.1:6-7

\* So what do I do when my back is against the wall & the enemy has the upper hand?

1. Pray (Perhaps fast & pray)
2. Lay your life on the altar and go before the king
3. Do not bow to evil, but rather stand against it (Mordecai)
4. Link with brothers & sisters in the battle
  - God never intended us to have to fight alone
  - Luke 22: 31 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.
5. Be a leader
  - Mordecai & Esther were leaders
  - David stepped out, and after defeating Goliath, encouraged others to join in the battle.
  - Jonathan and his armor-bearer ((I Samuel 13:7; 14:1-23).