

Ordinary Faith > Esther 8:1-17

8:1-2 Esther and Mordecai are made safe by the king's condemnation of Haman, but what about the rest of the Jewish people? We read of one ray of hope: Mordecai is given the position and authority that Haman wielded.

8:3-8 Esther pleads with the king for her people, but the problem remains: the law which was passed cannot be revoked. Yet Ahasuerus has a subtle plan: he reminds Esther and Mordecai that another law could be passed...

8:9-17 Therefore, Mordecai writes the new law, calling upon (and permitting) the Jews to defend themselves. This law is then sent out to all the provinces. By the end of the chapter, we read of rejoicing and fear. Rejoicing at what the Lord has done; fear by those who see that to oppose the Jews is to invite disaster upon themselves.

Context: Though the previous chapter resolved the personal and immediate danger to Esther and Mordecai, the long-term question still remains, which is addressed here. The plans made in this chapter will then play out in chapter 9.

Aim: We are to see how the fall of the wicked can be used by God to bring about the safety of His people.

Gospel: Under Christ's rule, the wicked shall fall. There is no doubt or question about it. Praise God that righteousness shall someday prevail, and that Christ's death has made all who trust in Him righteous.

Applications: Act in faith, even when you can't see the outcome. Trust in the Lord's wisdom more than your own.

Here is how I will apply these truths: _____

Announcements

Our Women's Compassionate Ministry group has resumed meeting on the 1st and 3rd Thursday mornings of each month. If you are interested in being a part of this group or have questions, give Bev Schreur a call and she'll fill you in with the details.

The Ladies Bible Study continues to meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday evenings in Grace Hall. Contact Sue Dz if you have any questions.

Our ushering list has changed over the past few months and we are looking for interested folks to take part in this vital ministry. There is a need for somebody to sit out in the hall during the service to keep an eye on things and direct any visitors, as well as for an extra set of hands during the time when the offering is counted. Contact Lee Hinders if you are interested or would like more information.

I mentioned last week that we were looking to see how our church could help other E-Free churches in eastern Iowa following the derecho. We have been in contact with Stonebridge Church in Cedar Rapids. While the office portion of their building is still functional, the rest of the facility was hit hard and has been closed off, with the children's area and stage areas being the hardest hit. At the moment, they are working with other area churches to have a space to hold worship services. We'll be sending a \$500 check from the church to help financially, but even more importantly, let's keep them in prayer.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your goodness and care for us during these turbulent times. These are difficult days where folks are quick to become angry and slow to listen. Where we face health and economic struggles. Yet, Lord, you have seen us through week by week. You have continued to bless your church, just as you continue to spread your Gospel. (Take a few moments and praise the Lord in prayer for His goodness and mercy...)

Lord, as we focus on you and your perfection, we can't help but to see all the areas where we don't match up. For some of us, these are long-standing struggles. For others, perhaps we are struggling with anger, resentment, or distrust due to the events in the world around us. But, again, your grace shines brightly: you give forgiveness through Jesus to all who call upon you, and so we do that now. (Take a few moments to confess your sins to the Lord, trusting that he is faithful and just to forgive you...)

God, we are so thankful that your plans are better than ours. You care for us in ways large and small – daily needs all the way up to our very salvation. For this, we thank you. (Take these next moments to thank the Lord for how he has cared for you and for how he has answered your prayers...)

And now Lord, we bring our requests to you. We do pray for Stonebridge Church and others in the area who were devastated by disaster. Would you provide them not only the resources they need physically, but also give them joy during this time. Enable them to be a light to their community even as they, themselves, have been deeply affected. And for ourselves, you are the one who has all power and you have promised good to those who trust you. (Bring your requests to the Lord now...)

Thank you Lord. Now, please move in your Spirit through this service to bring us deeper into fellowship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen!