

July 05, 2020 - Esther 8:14-9:6 - "The Origin of Purim"

Introduction

Yesterday we celebrated the 244 anniversary of our Independence as a nation. President Trump traveled Friday to Mount Rushmore to mark the weekend with a speech and a fireworks display. However, we know that this happened at a time of robust national debate over America's history and while the South Dakota landmark is under scrutiny by activists.

Since the George Floyd murder over 27 statues have been removed and many more under consideration. The protests were initially aimed at Confederate generals and figures that had supported slavery, but they have quickly morphed into a movement that has sought to remove or tear down monuments to past presidents, even Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt all of whom are carved onto Mount Rushmore. Many landmarks like the Lincoln Memorial and Statues of great yet flawed Americas have been put in place by our forefathers. These memorials speak to future generations regarding the history of America both good and bad. Sadly, in our day and time many are being removed. Yes, it is appropriate to have a healthy debate especially in regards to confederate statues and monuments. We are the United States of America not the Confederate States. There are valid points to hear on both sides.

However, it is never right to do wrong to do right and for protestor to topple memorials and destroy property is not the America way. It is not lawful to destroy property because a group believes passionately about their demise. I do respect their point of view. However, I got to thinking what's next. Green Deal groups topple your car and burn it because it is not electric...where does it end? There is a democratic process to follow! That is what has made America great as well as the peaceful transition of power and an openness to correct the mistakes of our past. It is essential that we pay respect to these memorials and history that give credence to our country. I believe this passage under study will provide reference of their good. **"Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set". Proverbs 22:10**

Yes, many of these monuments belong in museums not erase from our history. In a 1948 speech to the House of Commons, Winston Churchill said "Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it". Studying history, remembering history, observing history is necessary to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. For us here today I'd like to prove this principle based upon the truths given to us in scripture and more fittingly this passage. It is a fearful thing for man to despise the Word of God. In the book of Joshua we witness the collections of memorial stones as a witness to a great event in the lives of the Hebrew people.

God had miraculously parted the waters of the Jordan River so the Israelites could pass over and continue their conquest. God knew that at times the Israelites would face intimidating enemies and would need a reminder that He was powerful enough to protect them. The Israelites might be tempted to think they made a mistake entering Canaan. For this reason God instructed them take 12 stones from the midst of the Jordan River to build a monument on the banks of the Jordan River. Whenever they returned to this spot, they would see the monument and be reminded of God's awesome power. The Jordan was the last river to be crossed before the Promised Land. When times were discouraging and even scary, the Israelites could see

these memorial stones and remember the power and faithfulness of God. But even more important it spoke to generations to come. In **Joshua 4:6-7** he tells them, “**In the future, when your children ask you, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord...**”

The Bible supports a healthy respect of the ancient landmarks and memorials. In Esther chapter 9 we witness the memorial festival of Purim. The Feast of Purim is recorded only in the book of Esther. The Feast of Purim is celebrated to this day in Orthodox Judaism and among many Messianic Jews. It is also known as the Feast of Lots or, in the more modern vernacular, the Feast of Esther. They celebrate by our calendar this important festival from March 7-9.

I. The New Law is Posted 8:13-17

1. At the conclusion of chapter eight we learned that the publish document of the new law aka counter measures is posted throughout King Xerxes 127 provinces. This caused great celebration among all the Jewish people and within the Place at Shushan. Chapter nine and verse 1 marks the day, the 13 of Adar. Haman’s law seal by the King was put into execution and they were to be killed on that day; but instead, the Jewish people had permission to destroy their enemy. Even with the counter law Satan does not quit; evil persisted. The Jewish people had been living in fear. They had no idea what would happen to them or when it would happen. This enemy hoped to triumph even those the Jews could defend themselves.

II. The Day of Reckoning 9:1-16

1. The day has finally come, the day which the unchangeable law of the Medes and the Persians had established, the day on which the conflict would actually occur. These two unchangeable laws are destined to collide in a head-on clash on the same day, one law which permitted the enemies of the Jews to rise up against them and destroy them and the other which permitted the Jews to rise up and destroy their enemy. Notice in verse three that "**all the rulers of the provinces and the lieutenants and the governors and the deputies and officers the king**" help the Jews. The very people who, if there had not been a second law, would have been opposed to them and would have been against them, are now fighting on their side, helping them by pointing out their enemies and showing them the ones they were to attack. This unexpected help is a result, of course, of the new law enacted by Esther and the King. **Read vv. #5!**

2. Verses 6 goes on to give us more details about the great victory for God’s people. Haman’s ten sons are killed in verse 7- 10. And three times, God’s Word stresses that they did not take their enemies’ plunder when they won the victory. 500 are killed in the palace alone so there was a battle...evil won’t quit. In verse 13, Esther asked for another day to ensure that the enemy was completely defeated. The hanging of Haman’s 10 dead sons was to outwardly show the people that the enemy was finished. The hour of their redemption had come!

3. The day of this affair was the 14th day of the Jewish month Adar. Amazingly, the very day that these events occurred was the day a year earlier Haman had cast lots to determine the day when he would destroy all of the Jews... The Jews won a great victory. But the bottom line is that the invisible Hand of God destroyed His enemies. Haman had cast lots to decide the fate of

Israel, but what Haman, meant for evil, the Lord meant for good for His people! Thus we have Purim to remember the hand of God. We will review this in more detail next time for now go to verse 28 and we note the origin of Purim. The lot fell to God in victory.

III. The Application of Purim today.

1. The God we serve is mighty and strong to save! We look around our nation today, and we see all kinds of evil on the rise... If we are paying attention, it grieves our souls and our spirits and wears us out. **What can a Christian do?** - **Romans 12:21.** *Edmund Burke* made the profound statement, “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle. It's as true today as it was 250 years ago.

2. The church needs to rise up as the Hebrews did in exile and beseech Almighty God. Folks, this is our July 4th weekend so I'd like to close this message with an applicable patriotic story. One that energizes the church to rise up and defend the faith just as the Jews of Esther's time defended against genocide...

Illustration:

On Oct. 20, 1944, General Douglas MacArthur returned to the Philippines. He uttered some very dramatic words to Filipinos just moments after he waded ashore at Red Beach, during the height of the fiercely contested Leyte invasion. With his feet finally back on Filipino soil, and his promise to return at last being fulfilled, MacArthur spoke with great emotion...the following excerpt I edited from his speech. “People of the Philippines, I have returned. By the grace of Almighty God our forces stand again on Philippine soil...**The hour of your redemption is here...** Let the indomitable spirit of Bataan and Corregidor lead on. As the lines of battle roll forward to bring you within the zone of operations, rise and strike. Strike at every favorable opportunity for your homes and hearths, strike! **For future generations of your sons and daughters, strike!** In the name of your sacred dead, strike! Let no heart be faint. Let every arm be steeled. The guidance of our divine God points the way. Follow in His Name to the Holy Grail of righteous victory!”

May I suggest that a very similar charge is necessary today for the church? The hour of redemption against the forces of evil must prevail. Christians we are fighting a spiritual battle an invisible war. Paul says in Ephesians, “**that we battle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**”

“There is no truce in this invisible war. Demonic activity is both real and relentless. He is raising his army. Satan is using covid-19, sanctions on churches to dominate and produce a global world order but the church of Jesus Christ and the United States stands in His wicked evil way. It's time we get behind Our Commander in Chief Jesus Christ and rise up and strike. It is time for the Church to strike at every favorable opportunity. For our homes, for our Faith, for our Churches, for our country! For the future generations of our sons and daughters we need to strike! In the name of the sacred dead who die for their faith. The Church needs to wake up out of its sleep and slumber and strike.

Dear saints please hear me when I say strike I am not talking about engaging in violence. When I say strike I am not talking about revenge. The church needs to turn from its apathy and strike with it all its spiritual powers. The church needs to move from its complacency and strike by praying the power and guidance of our divine God to point the way and follow in His Holy Name. We cannot sit idly by and observe the abrogation of our faith. The church needs to move from its complacency and strike using the God given spiritual weapons of warfare. That is what Esther and Mordecai resolve to do and we must too! ---II Corinthians 10:4 **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, (protest and violence) but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.**

Conclusion:

An awareness of our Christian heritage and National heritage helps us to understand our identity, where we came from, what mistakes we made and how to confront the future. The story of Esther has great implications for us today. In a world that seems out of control, we can rest assured that God can move the hearts of leaders. I remind you again as we close Solomon said in Proverbs 21:1 that “the heart of the king’s is in the hand of the Lord.” Also, Romans 13:1 says that “there is no authority except from God.”

Communion:

The purpose of the Communion is to safe- guard unity in the Church.

Just as we go to the doctor for a physical examination; we need to go to God for a spiritual examination. A good example is your PC, it has to be rebooted to get it re-calibrate back to its normal functions. That is what communion is supposed to do. Today is the time to hit the reset button of your heart. All offense should be dealt with before communion or you should not participate in communion.

Are you here this morning and going to take communion and you have a grudge against a brethren and even worst you all faking nice to that person but you have something against them. You need to great this right.