

CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Esther Chapter 8 — The Enemy's House, the King's Ring, and a Nation's Deliverance

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Esther Chapter 8 begins immediately after the dramatic fall of Haman.

Haman is dead, but the danger facing the Jewish people has **not yet disappeared**.

The original decree ordering the destruction of the Jews is still in effect. Haman has been removed, but the law he created cannot simply be erased.

This creates another crisis.

Esther must once again approach the king.

Mordecai, who was once sitting at the king's gate in mourning, is now elevated to a position of authority. Haman's property is given to Esther, and Haman's signet ring is transferred to Mordecai.

Then a new decree is written.

The Jews are given the legal right to assemble and defend themselves.

The chapter moves from **mourning to joy, danger to hope, and apparent defeat to deliverance**.

I. ESTHER AND MORDECAI ARE REWARDED

Esther 8:1 — Haman's Estate Given to Esther

Verse 1

“That same day, King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai was brought before the king, for Esther had told the king how Mordecai was related to her.”

Haman had once possessed tremendous wealth and influence.

Now his estate belongs to Esther.

The king also learns that Mordecai is Esther's relative.

The man Haman wanted destroyed is now being brought before the king.

Cross References

Proverbs 13:22

“A good person leaves an inheritance for his grandchildren, but the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.”

Job 27:17

“They may pile up silver like dust and store up clothing like clay, but the innocent will eventually receive it.”

Psalms 37:16

“The little that a righteous person has is better than the wealth of many wicked people.”

Crawford Commentary

Haman's wealth could not save him.

His property could not protect him.

His position could not preserve him.

What he accumulated was eventually placed into the hands of Esther.

Spiritual Principle

Earthly wealth is temporary, but God's purposes endure.

II. MORDECAI RECEIVES HAMAN'S AUTHORITY

Esther 8:2 — The Signet Ring Is Given to Mordecai

Verse 2

“The king took off the signet ring he had taken from Haman and gave it to Mordecai. Esther appointed Mordecai over Haman’s estate.”

The signet ring represented royal authority.

Earlier, the king had given this ring to Haman.

Haman used that authority to create a decree against the Jews.

Now the same authority is placed into Mordecai's hands.

This is another dramatic reversal.

Cross References

Esther 3:10

“So the king removed his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.”

Genesis 41:42

“Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in fine linen and placed a gold chain around his neck.”

Daniel 6:3

“Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.”

Crawford Commentary

The same symbol of authority that had been used to advance evil is now placed in the hands of someone who will work for the protection of God's people.

Spiritual Principle

God can take what was used against His people and turn it toward their protection.

III. ESTHER RETURNS TO THE KING

Esther 8:3 — Esther Continues to Intercede

Verse 3

“Once again, Esther went before the king. Falling at his feet, she wept and pleaded with him to cancel the evil plot that Haman the Agagite had devised against the Jews.”

Esther could have stopped after Haman's death.

But she did not.

She understood that Haman's death did not automatically cancel the decree.

She continued to intercede.

Cross References

Esther 4:16

“Go and gather all the Jews who are in Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My attendants and I will do the same. Then, even though it is against the law, I will go to the king. And if I perish, I perish.”

Ezra 9:5

“At the evening sacrifice, I got up from my humiliation, with my clothes and robe torn, and I fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the Lord my God.”

Luke 7:38

“She stood behind Jesus at His feet, crying, and began to wet His feet with her tears. Then she wiped His feet with her hair, kissed them, and poured perfume on them.”

Crawford Commentary

Esther demonstrates **persistent intercession**.

One victory does not mean every battle is finished.

Haman is gone, but the decree remains.

Therefore Esther goes back to the king.

Spiritual Principle

Do not stop praying simply because one part of the problem has been solved.

IV. THE KING EXTENDS THE SCEPTER

Esther 8:4 — Esther Finds Favor Again

Verse 4

“The king held out the golden scepter to Esther, and she rose and stood before him.”

Once again Esther approaches the king.

Once again the golden scepter is extended.

She is being granted access and favor.

Cross References

Esther 4:11

“All the king’s officials and the people of the provinces know that any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned is to be put to death— unless the king extends the golden scepter to them. I haven’t been called to go to the king for thirty days.”

Esther 5:2

“When the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she found favor in his sight. He extended the golden scepter toward her, and Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.”

Hebrews 4:16

“Therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us when we need it.”

Crawford Commentary

Esther had once approached a throne that could have meant death.

Now she approaches and receives favor.

For the Christian, Hebrews 4:16 gives us an even greater privilege: we are invited to approach God's throne with confidence through Christ.

V. ESTHER PLEADS FOR A NEW DECREE

Esther 8:5 — “Write Another Order”

Verse 5

“She said, ‘If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in your eyes, and if what I say seems right to you, let an order be written to revoke the letters Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite wrote—letters that commanded the destruction of the Jews in all the king’s provinces.’”

Esther asks the king to reverse Haman's decree.

The problem is that the previous decree cannot simply be erased.

Therefore another legal decree must be created.

Cross References

Daniel 6:8

“Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

Esther 1:19

“If it pleases the king, issue a royal decree, and let it be written into the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be revoked: Queen Vashti is never again to appear before King Ahasuerus. Let the king give her royal position to someone more worthy than she.”

Esther 3:13

“Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king’s provinces, instructing them to destroy, kill, and annihilate all Jews—young and old, women and children—on a single day: the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar. Their property was to be taken as plunder.”

Crawford Commentary

The original decree had created a legal problem.

Haman was dead, but the law remained.

Therefore Esther needed another decree to provide protection.

This demonstrates an important truth:

Removing the person behind an evil plan does not necessarily remove all the consequences of that plan.

VI. ESTHER CANNOT BEAR TO SEE HER PEOPLE DESTROYED

Esther 8:6 — A Heart of Compassion

Verse 6

“For how could I bear to see the disaster that will come upon my people? How could I watch the destruction of my relatives?”

Esther's concern is deeply personal.

She cannot sit safely in the palace while her people face destruction.

Cross References

Nehemiah 2:3

“But I said to the king, ‘May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins and its gates have been destroyed by fire?’”

Lamentations 3:48

“Streams of tears flow from my eyes because my people have been destroyed.”

Romans 9:3

“I could wish that I myself were cursed and separated from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race.”

Crawford Commentary

Esther's heart is connected to the suffering of her people.

She is not motivated by personal comfort.

She is motivated by compassion.

Spiritual Principle

Godly leadership sees the suffering of others and refuses to remain indifferent.

VII. THE KING REMINDS ESTHER OF HAMAN'S JUDGMENT

Esther 8:7 — Haman Has Been Judged

Verse 7

“Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, ‘I have already given Esther Haman’s estate, and he has been hanged for attacking the Jews.’”

The king reminds Esther that Haman has already been judged.

But Esther understands that judgment against Haman is not enough.

The people still need protection.

Cross References

Esther 8:1

“That same day, King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai was brought before the king, for Esther had told the king how Mordecai was related to her.”

Esther 7:10

“So they hanged Haman on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. And the king’s anger subsided.”

Psalms 52:5

“Surely God will bring you to everlasting ruin; He will snatch you up and tear you from your tent; He will uproot you from the land of the living.”

Crawford Commentary

Haman has fallen, but Esther is still concerned about the people.

This shows that true intercession continues until the danger has been addressed.

VIII. A NEW DECREE IS AUTHORIZED

Esther 8:8 — A New Law

Verse 8

“Now, you may write another decree concerning the Jews as you see fit, in the king’s name and sealed with the king’s ring—for anything written in the king’s name and sealed with his ring cannot be revoked.”

The king gives Mordecai authority to write a new decree.

The signet ring once belonged to Haman.

Now it belongs to Mordecai.

Cross References

Daniel 6:8

“Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”

Daniel 6:12

“Then they went to the king and reminded him about the royal decree: ‘Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions’ den?’ The king answered, ‘The decree stands, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.’”

Esther 1:19

“If it pleases the king, issue a royal decree, and let it be written into the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be revoked: Queen Vashti is never again to appear before King Ahasuerus.”

Crawford Commentary

The first decree cannot simply be canceled.

But another decree can be issued that changes the situation.

This becomes the legal mechanism through which deliverance comes.

IX. MORDECAI WRITES TO THE EMPIRE

Esther 8:9 — The New Decree Is Written

Verse 9

“So the king’s secretaries were summoned on the twenty-third day of the third month (the month of Sivan). They wrote out Mordecai’s orders to the Jews, to the satraps, governors, and officials of the 127 provinces stretching from India to Ethiopia. It was written in every script and language of the peoples, including the Jews in their own language and script.”

The message is sent throughout the entire empire.

No province is excluded.

No language is overlooked.

The Jewish people are informed of the new decree.

Cross References

Esther 3:12

“On the thirteenth day of the first month, the royal scribes were summoned. They wrote out Haman’s orders to the king’s governors, administrators, and officials of each province, in every script and every language of the empire. It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king’s signet ring.”

Ezra 1:1

“In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of King Cyrus to make a proclamation throughout his kingdom and to put it in writing.”

Daniel 6:25

“Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language throughout the whole world: ‘May you prosper greatly!’”

Crawford Commentary

The first decree had carried a message of death.

Now a new decree carries a message of protection.

The same empire that had been used to spread Haman's evil plan is now being used to spread Mordecai's counter-decree.

X. THE DECREE IS SENT WITH URGENCY

Esther 8:10 — Swift Messengers

Verse 10

“Mordecai wrote in King Ahasuerus’s name, sealed the dispatches with the king’s signet ring, and sent them by couriers on horseback—riding fast horses, mules, camels, and young dromedaries.”

The message must travel quickly.

The Jews must have time to prepare.

Cross References

Esther 3:13

“Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king’s provinces, instructing them to destroy, kill, and annihilate all Jews—young and old, women and children, on a single day: the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar. Their property was to be taken as plunder.”

2 Chronicles 30:6

“At the king’s command, the couriers went throughout Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his officials, saying: ‘People of Israel, return to the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, so that He may return to you who are left and have escaped from the kings of Assyria.’”

Job 9:25

“My days pass more quickly than a runner; they fly away without seeing any good.”

Crawford Commentary

The speed of the messengers demonstrates the urgency of the situation.

When lives are at stake, the message cannot be delayed.

XI. THE JEWS ARE GIVEN THE RIGHT TO DEFEND THEMSELVES

Esther 8:11 — Permission to Defend Their Lives

Verse 11

“The new decree gave the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves—to destroy, kill, and annihilate any armed group of people or province that attacked them, including women and children—and to take their enemies’ goods as plunder.”

The new decree changes the legal situation.

The Jews are no longer helpless.

They are authorized to assemble and defend themselves.

Cross References

Exodus 17:9

“Moses said to Joshua, ‘Choose some men and go out and fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.’”

Genesis 14:14

“When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan.”

Nehemiah 4:14

“Then I looked things over and stood up and said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, ‘Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and daughters, your wives and your homes.’”

Crawford Commentary

The Jews are given the ability to protect themselves from the attack that had been legally authorized against them.

The new decree does not erase the original threat.

It provides a means of overcoming it.

XII. THE DAY OF BATTLE IS SET

Esther 8:12 — The Same Date

Verse 12

“This was to happen on a single day throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus—on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar.”

The date is significant.

It is the same day Haman had chosen for the destruction of the Jews.

But now the Jews have been given an opportunity to defend themselves.

Cross References

Esther 3:13

“Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king’s provinces, instructing them to destroy, kill, and annihilate all Jews—young and old, women and children, on a single day: the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar.”

Esther 3:7

“In the first month, the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, Haman had the Pur—that is, the lot—cast to determine the best day and month for the attack. The lot fell on the twelfth month, the month of Adar.”

Ecclesiastes 3:3

“There is a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build.”

Crawford Commentary

The date that once represented fear now becomes the date on which the Jews will stand against their enemies.

The enemy's timetable becomes part of God's larger providential plan.

XIII. THE DECREE IS PUBLICIZED

Esther 8:13 — The Jews Are Prepared

Verse 13

“A copy of the decree was issued as a law in every province and made known to all the peoples, so the Jews would be ready to take vengeance on their enemies.”

The decree must be publicly known.

The Jews must have time to prepare.

Cross References

Esther 3:14

“A copy of the decree was issued and made public in every province, giving instructions for the people to be ready for that day.”

Deuteronomy 25:19

“When the Lord your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land He is giving you as an inheritance, you must erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget.”

Deuteronomy 32:35

“It is Mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near, and their doom is coming quickly.”

Crawford Commentary

The Jews now know what is coming.

They are no longer surprised or defenseless.

Preparation becomes an important part of their deliverance.

XIV. THE MESSENGERS RUSH OUT

Esther 8:14 — The Message Goes Forward

Verse 14

“The couriers, riding the swift royal horses, hurried out, pressed by the king’s command. The new decree was also proclaimed in the fortress of Susa.”

The messengers move quickly.

The new decree must reach every province.

Cross References

Esther 3:15

“The couriers set out, hurried by the king’s command, and the decree was proclaimed in the citadel of Susa. Then the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was in confusion.”

2 Chronicles 30:6

“At the king’s command, the couriers went throughout Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his officials, saying: ‘People of Israel, return to the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, so that He may return to you who are left and have escaped from the kings of Assyria.’”

Jeremiah 51:31

“One courier will meet another and one messenger will meet another, to announce to the king of Babylon that his entire city has been captured.”

Crawford Commentary

Compare Esther 3:15 and Esther 8:14.

In Chapter 3, the messengers carried a message of death.

In Chapter 8, the messengers carry a message of deliverance.

The situation has been dramatically reversed.

XV. MORDECAI IS HONORED

Esther 8:15 — From Mourning to Royal Honor

Verse 15

“Mordecai left the king’s presence wearing royal garments of blue and white, a large gold crown, and a robe of fine linen and purple. And the city of Susa celebrated with joy.”

Mordecai's appearance now reflects his new position.

Earlier he wore sackcloth and ashes.

Now he wears royal clothing.

Cross References

Genesis 41:42

“Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in fine linen and placed a gold chain around his neck.”

Daniel 5:29

“Then at Belshazzar’s command, Daniel was clothed in purple, a gold chain was placed around his neck, and a proclamation was made that he was now the third-highest ruler in the kingdom.”

Luke 15:22

“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.’”

Crawford Commentary

The change in Mordecai's clothing illustrates the dramatic reversal taking place.

He went from:

Sackcloth → Royal garments

Mourning → Celebration

Threatened → Honored

Powerless → Authority

XVI. THE JEWS RECEIVE JOY

Esther 8:16 — Light, Happiness, Joy, and Honor

Verse 16

“The Jews were filled with light, happiness, joy, and honor.”

This is one of the great emotional reversals of Esther.

Earlier:

- They mourned.
- They fasted.
- They wept.
- They wore sackcloth.
- They feared destruction.

Now:

- They have light.
- They have happiness.
- They have joy.
- They have honor.

Cross References

Psalm 97:11

“Light shines on the righteous, and joy fills those who do what is right.”

Isaiah 60:1

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.”

Psalm 30:11

“You turned my mourning into dancing; You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.”

Crawford Commentary

God can transform the emotional landscape of His people.

Their mourning is not the end of their story.

Spiritual Principle

A season of sorrow does not mean that joy will never come.

XVII. JOY SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE

Esther 8:17 — Celebration and Fear

Verse 17

“In every province and every city where the king’s edict reached, there was joy and gladness among the Jews—a time of feasting and celebration. And many of the people of the land became Jews, because fear of the Jews had come upon them.”

The decree produces widespread celebration among the Jews.

People who had once feared the Jews now recognize their changed circumstances.

Cross References

Ruth 1:16

“But Ruth replied, ‘Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God.’”

Isaiah 56:6

“And foreigners who commit themselves to the Lord, who serve Him, who love the name of the Lord, and who worship Him—all who keep the Sabbath and do not profane it, and who hold firmly to My covenant—”

Zechariah 8:19

“The fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.”

Crawford Commentary

The chapter closes with celebration.

The Jews were once facing annihilation.

Now they are experiencing joy and honor.

The hand of Providence has turned the situation around.

XVIII. PERSONAL STUDY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question 1 — What happened to Haman's estate?

Answer:

King Ahasuerus gave Haman's estate to Queen Esther.

The wealth of the man who plotted against God's people was transferred to Esther.

Question 2 — What happened to Haman's signet ring?

Answer:

The king took the signet ring from Haman and gave it to Mordecai.

This represented a major transfer of authority.

Question 3 — Why did Esther go before the king again?

Answer:

Esther understood that Haman's death had not automatically removed the decree against the Jews. She continued pleading with the king for the protection and deliverance of her people.

Question 4 — What did Esther ask the king to do?

Answer:

She asked that an order be written to address the letters Haman had issued ordering the destruction of the Jews.

Question 5 — Why was Esther so concerned?

Answer:

She could not bear to watch her people and relatives be destroyed. Her position as queen did not make her indifferent to their suffering.

Question 6 — Could the original decree simply be revoked?

Answer:

According to the chapter, the laws of the Medes and Persians could not be revoked. Therefore, the king authorized a **new decree** concerning the Jews.

Question 7 — What authority did the new decree give the Jews?

Answer:

It gave the Jews the right to assemble and defend themselves against anyone who attacked them.

Question 8 — What happened to Mordecai?

Answer:

Mordecai was elevated to a position of great honor.

He received:

- The king's signet ring.
- Authority over Haman's estate.
- Royal clothing.
- A large gold crown.
- A robe of fine linen and purple.

Question 9 — How did the Jews respond to the new decree?

Answer:

They were filled with:

- Light.
- Happiness.
- Joy.
- Honor.

They celebrated throughout the provinces.

Question 10 — What is the major reversal in Esther Chapter 8?

Answer:

The major reversal is that the people who were marked for destruction are now given legal authority to defend themselves.

Mordecai, who had been threatened by Haman, now receives Haman's authority.

Esther, who once approached the king in fear, now has influence before the king.

The Jews, who had been mourning, are now celebrating.

XIX. KEY LESSONS FROM ESTHER CHAPTER 8

1. GOD CAN RAISE THE HUMBLE

Mordecai went from sitting at the king's gate in mourning to wearing royal clothing and carrying the king's authority.

God is able to change circumstances in ways that people cannot predict.

2. PERSISTENT INTERCESSION MATTERS

Esther did not stop after Haman was defeated.

She continued pleading for her people.

One answered prayer should not cause us to stop praying about the remaining need.

3. GOD CAN WRITE A NEW STORY

The original decree could not simply be erased.

But another decree could be issued that changed the situation.

The Jews went from facing destruction to having the right to defend themselves.

A hopeless situation can change when God opens a way that was not previously visible.

4. GOD CAN TURN MOURNING INTO JOY

The Jews had been fasting and mourning.

Now they were celebrating.

Psalm 30:11 summarizes the principle:

“You turned my mourning into dancing.”

5. GOD CAN REVERSE THE ENEMY'S ADVANTAGE

Haman had used the king's authority against the Jews.

Now Mordecai uses the king's authority to protect them.

The enemy's advantage becomes the means through which God's people receive protection.

XX. CRAWFORD COMMENTARY PRINCIPLE

“God Can Turn the Authority Used Against His People Into an Instrument for Their Deliverance.”

Haman had possessed the signet ring.

Mordecai receives it.

Haman had possessed influence.

Mordecai receives authority.

Haman's decree had brought fear.

Mordecai's decree brings hope.

Haman's name represented destruction.

Mordecai's leadership represents protection.

This is the hidden hand of Providence throughout Esther.

XXI. CENTRAL TRUTH OF ESTHER CHAPTER 8

When God's people face circumstances that appear impossible, God can provide a way of deliverance that they could not have created for themselves.

Esther continued to intercede.

Mordecai received authority.

A new decree was written.

The Jews were given a means of defense.

Mourning became joy.

Fear became celebration.

And the people who appeared destined for destruction discovered that **their story was not over.**

The great lesson is this:

The enemy may write a decree against you, but the enemy does not have the final word. God is still able to turn the situation around.