

Ezra, Haggai, Esther and Nehemiah

LESSON ELEVEN

Esther 3, 4 and 5

Day 1	Esther 3:1-15
Day 2	Esther 4:1-8
Day 3	Esther 4:9-17
Day 4	Esther 5:1-8
Day 5	Esther 5:9-14

LESSON ELEVEN

1 Look in His Word

Feel free to underline, circle or otherwise mark text if it will aid your study.

Esther 3:1-15

¹ After these events, King Xerxes honored Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles.

² All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor.

³ Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?"

⁴ Day after day they spoke to him but he refused to comply. Therefore they told Haman about it to see whether Mordecai's behavior would be tolerated, for he had told them he was a Jew.

⁵ When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was enraged.

⁶ Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.

⁷ In the twelfth year of King Xerxes, in the first month, the month of Nisan, they cast the pur (that is, the lot) in the presence of Haman to select a day and month. And the lot fell on the twelfth month, the month of Adar.

⁸ Then Haman said to King Xerxes, "There is a certain people dispersed and scattered among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom whose customs are different from those of all other people and who do not obey the king's laws; it is not in the king's best interest to tolerate them.

2 List the Facts

What does the passage say? Make a verse-by-verse list of the most obvious, outstanding facts. Be literal as you answer.

Example:

(3:1) After these events, King Xerxes honored Haman, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than all other nobles.

(continued on next page)

LESSON ELEVEN

3 Learn from the Lessons

What does the passage mean? What lessons can be learned from these facts? Be spiritual as you answer.

Example:

(3:1) God may allow evil people to prosper for a time.

4 Listen to His Voice

What does this passage mean to you? Rewrite the lessons from step 3 in the form of a question. Be personal as you answer.

Example:

(3:1) When I see evil people being honored by the world, do I become cynical or continue in faithful obedience?

LESSON

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Esther 3:1-15 (continued)

⁹ If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and I will put ten thousand talents of silver into the royal treasury for the men who carry out this business.”

¹⁰ So the king took his signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.

¹¹ “Keep the money,” the king said to Haman, “and do with the people as you please.”

¹² Then on the thirteenth day of the first month the royal secretaries were summoned. They wrote out in the script of each province and in the language of each people all Haman’s orders to the king’s satraps, the governors of the various provinces and the nobles of the various peoples. These were written in the name of King Xerxes himself and sealed with his own ring.

¹³ Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king’s provinces with the order to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews-young and old, women and little children-on a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods.

¹⁴ A copy of the text of the edict was to be issued as law in every province and made known to the people of every nationality so they would be ready for that day.

¹⁵ Spurred on by the king’s command, the couriers went out, and the edict was issued in the citadel of Susa. The king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was bewildered.

LESSON

3 Learn from the Lessons

4 Listen to His Voice

LESSON ELEVEN

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Esther 4:1-8

¹ When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly.

² But he went only as far as the king's gate, because no one clothed in sackcloth was allowed to enter it.

³ In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

⁴ When Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her about Mordecai, she was in great distress. She sent clothes for him to put on instead of his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.

⁵ Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why.

⁶ So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate.

⁷ Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews.

⁸ He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to urge her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.

LESSON ELEVEN

3 Learn from the Lessons

4 Listen to His Voice

LESSON ELEVEN

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Esther 4:9-17

⁹ Hathach went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said.

¹⁰ Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai,

¹¹ “All the king’s officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king.”

¹² When Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai,

¹³ he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape.

¹⁴ For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”

¹⁵ Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai:

¹⁶ “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

¹⁷ So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther’s instructions.

LESSON EEVEN

3

Learn from the Lessons

4

Listen to His Voice

LESSON ELEVEN

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Esther 5:1-8

¹ On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance.

² When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold scepter that was in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

³ Then the king asked, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you."

⁴ "If it pleases the king," replied Esther, "let the king, together with Haman, come today to a banquet I have prepared for him."

⁵ "Bring Haman at once," the king said, "so that we may do what Esther asks." So the king and Haman went to the banquet Esther had prepared.

⁶ As they were drinking wine, the king again asked Esther, "Now what is your petition? It will be given you. And what is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted."

⁷ Esther replied, "My petition and my request is this:

⁸ If the king regards me with favor and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for them. Then I will answer the king's question."

LESSON ELEVEN

3 Learn from the Lessons

4 Listen to His Voice

LESSON ELEVEN

1 Look in His Word

2 List the Facts

Esther 5:9-14

⁹ Haman went out that day happy and in high spirits. But when he saw Mordecai at the king's gate and observed that he neither rose nor showed fear in his presence, he was filled with rage against Mordecai.

¹⁰ Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself and went home.

Calling together his friends and Zeresh, his wife,

¹¹ Haman boasted to them about his vast wealth, his many sons, and all the ways the king had honored him and how he had elevated him above the other nobles and officials.

¹² "And that's not all," Haman added. "I'm the only person Queen Esther invited to accompany the king to the banquet she gave. And she has invited me along with the king tomorrow.

¹³ But all this gives me no satisfaction as long as I see that Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate."

¹⁴ His wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Have a gallows built, seventy-five feet high, and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai hanged on it. Then go with the king to the dinner and be happy." This suggestion delighted Haman, and he had the gallows built.

LESSON ELEVEN

3

Learn from the Lessons

4

Listen to His Voice

5

Live in Response

How will you respond? Pinpoint what God is saying to you from this passage. Write down today's date and what you will do now about what He has said.

NOTES