

### Note from Kathy

*Winston Churchill said, "The price of greatness is responsibility." We read of this type of greatness throughout the book of Esther. Mordecai took responsibility for little Esther and raised a queen. Esther might have been safe living in the palace as queen of Persia, but she took responsibility and spoke up for her people. Both Mordecai and Esther began in humble obscurity, and yet, God used their obedience to move them to do great things for him. God was glorified as they saw a need and took responsibility. We too can accomplish great things for God. We must simply open our eyes and see the need as our responsibility."*

### Observation

1. The dreaded day had finally arrived for the Jews in Persia. According to Esther 9:1, what day was it?
2. What had their enemies planned to do to the Jewish people living in Persia at that time?
3. The Lord thwarted the enemy's plan to harm his people. The plans of evil Haman had cost him his life. The second decree had gone out and the people were prepared to defend themselves. Scripture says the tables had been turned. According to verse 1, what was the outcome?
4. Mordecai's new position carried great influence all over the empire. What was his position at that time?
5. According to Esther 9:3-4, how did the other men in government offices respond to Mordecai's new position? Why did they feel this way?
6. The fighting began on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Adar. The text tells us that the Jews struck down all those who raised their sword against them. In the palace city of Susa, how many men stood up in opposition to the Jews? What was the outcome?
7. What became of Haman's sons?

## Esther 9:6, 10, 15 and 16

"In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men... <sup>10</sup>the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they did not lay their hands on the plunder. <sup>15</sup>The Jews in Susa came together on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and they put to death in Susa three hundred men, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder. <sup>16</sup>Meanwhile, the remainder of the Jews who were in the king's provinces also assembled to protect themselves and get relief from their enemies. They killed seventy-five thousand of them but did not lay their hands on the plunder."

## Esther 10:1-3

"King Xerxes imposed tribute throughout the empire, to its distant shores. <sup>2</sup>And all his acts of power and might, together with a full account of the greatness of Mordecai, whom the king had promoted, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia? <sup>3</sup>Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes, preeminent among the Jews, and held in high esteem by his many fellow Jews, because he worked for the good of his people and spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews."

8. Highlight the repeated phrase in Esther 9:10, 15, and 16. Why was this very unusual?
9. As the king and Esther discussed the events of the day, King Xerxes once again asked his precious queen if there was anything he could do. What assurance was she given?
10. What was Esther's request? What do you believe was accomplished by this public display?
11. The capital city of Susa fought again on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Adar. How many additional men died? How many in all have died in Susa?
12. How many were killed in the other provinces of Persia? \_\_\_\_\_
13. The fighting in Susa began on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of Adar and continued through the \_\_\_\_\_ and then the Jews rested. In the rural areas, the fighting began on the day \_\_\_\_\_ and they rested on the \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Mordecai sent a written decree to all the provinces that declared a celebration. This would be known as the Feast of Purim. What did you learn from the text concerning these days of celebration?
  - a. *Observed annually*
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
15. Let's take a moment to look at Esther 10:1-3. After all that has gone on in Persia for the last year, we saw King Xerxes impose a tax or tribute on the entire nation.

Other than the obvious gathering of funds for the king, what would this tribute do?

Who does one serve at their will, and to whom do they pay tribute?

What does this tribute establish?

16. In the table below list a few of the differences between King Xerxes and Mordecai that could be gleaned from the three verses of Esther 10.

	King Xerxes	Mordecai
Ruled the people by		
Treated others		
Rank		

### Genesis 12:1-3

*"The LORD had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'"*

### Malachi 3:6

*"I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed."*

### Psalms 33:11

*"But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations."*

### Psalms 119:160

*"All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal."*

## Application

1. The enemies of the Jews living in Persia were identified when they tried to overpower and kill them. God turned the table, and they were unable to carry out their dreadful plans. Underline the promise given to Abraham by God many years before in Genesis 12:1-3. This promise of God was passed down to all his descendants.
2. In Malachi 3:6, Psalms 33:11, and Psalms 119:160, underline the amazing truth about God that is dramatically proven true in the book of Esther. Is it still true today?
3. After answering the two previous questions, consider for a moment, as a nation, what should our relationship be with Israel?
4. Go back and read Esther 8:11. What did this new decree grant the Jews permission to do?

According to Esther 9:10, 15, and 16, the Jews did not take the plunder from their enemies. Why do you suppose they did not take their belongings? Just because we can do something legally, does that make it the right thing to do?

5. What was the purpose of the annual feast of Purim?  
Describe a time in your life when God delivered you?

Did you make note of this day in your calendar and celebrate the goodness of God in later years?

I used to read a Daily Walk Bible every morning for several years. One reason I enjoy picking it up even today are all the dated notes written in the margins. Each one is of great importance to me. They remind me of the goodness and care God has shown me through the years.

6. Esther 10:2 told us that a full account of greatness of Mordecai was written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia. What does this suggest concerning Mordecai's leadership during this time period?

We do not have access to those writings, but we do have the book of Esther. Mordecai has gone from a condemned man to \_\_\_\_\_ . How is God using you today?

Looking back, can you see the hand of God directing you to all he has called you to do today?

7. What other *Old Testament* saints can you think of who suffered much and yet were elevated to positions of great authority by God?

How do you handle your times of persecution and suffering?

Are you able to trust yourself to the Lord's care? Are you able to wait on his timing?

8. Are you living the courageous life God has planned for you? If not, what is hindering you?

Are there obstacles holding you back in your walk in faith and obedience?

Like Esther you do not want to miss being used by God at a very crucial time. If you are unwilling or too fearful, let me challenge you as Mordecai challenged Esther, "Who knows but that you have come to this position for such a time as this?"