

NEW PROTECTION

Esther 2.21-23: With Esther comes new protection for Ahasuerus

Theme: Your new life comes with new enemies, so you need to know where victory can be found!

Esther chapter 2 ends with a prophetic picture and a very practical lesson...

I. The Prophetic Picture of “Those Days” in the Book of Esther

A. This is the second time we see the phrase “those days” in the Book of Esther.

1. (Est 1.2) The first time “those days” appears, it helps to establish the doctrinal context of the Book.
2. Esther shows us a doctrinal picture of “those days” of transition *from* the Church Age (focused on the Gentiles) *to* the Second Coming (where God’s focus is back on the Jews).
3. (Mat 24.15-30) We call this period of “those days” the “Tribulation” because Jesus did.
4. The Book of Esther show us, in prophetic picture and type, this coming time of “those days.”

B. Esther 1: “Those days” begin with the rapture of the Church.

- The Gentile queen Vashti, rebellious to her King (who is also her husband) is “raptured” off the throne in judgment for her failure to submit to the word of the King.

C. Esther 2: “Those days” continue with a time of “peace and safety.”

1. The great majority of chapter is a time of relative “peace and safety” in Ahasuerus's kingdom.
2. (Est 2.2) During this time of peace and safety, a group of “virgins” is called out by and for the king.
 - a) (Rev 7.4; 14.4) During the first half of the Tribulation (a time of peace and safety), there will be a group of “virgins” called out for and by the King.
 - b) We see a doctrinal and prophetic picture of the 144,000 in the virgins of Esther chapter 2.
3. (Est 2.17) We also see the King marry a Jewish lady during this time of “those days.”
 - a) (Rom 11.25-26) After the rapture of the primarily Gentile Church (in judgment for her failure to submit to and obey the King, her Husband), God will reconcile with His “wife,” Israel.
 - b) The marriage of King Ahasuerus and Esther is a doctrinal and prophetic picture of the reconciliation of Israel with the Lord.
4. (Est 2.19) Toward the very *end* of this chapter of “peace and safety,” we see a second gathering together of the virgins.
 - a) (Rev 7.4) The 144,000 are gathered together the first time when they are “sealed” to the king.
 - b) (Rev 14.1-5) The same “virgins” are gathered together as second time at the *end* of the first half of the Tribulation (at the end of the “peace and safety”) when they are raptured from off this earth and taken to the third heaven.
 - This is the “mid-Trib Rapture” many see in Scripture (and wrongly apply to the Church).

D. Esther 3: The beginning of the Great Tribulation—Haman’s plot against the Jews.

1. (v1, 6 cf. Rev 12.17) What follows in the rest of the Book of Esther is a doctrinal and prophetic picture of the *persecution of the Jews* by the Antichrist during the last half of the Tribulation.
 - We generally distinguish the last half of the Tribulation from the first by calling it the “Great” Tribulation, since the first half is “peace and safety” and the second is “sudden destruction.”

E. So, what's the point in all this...?

1. There are 61 specific prophecies of the first coming of Christ (where He would be born, His death by crucifixion, etc.).
 - a) If you just took just eight of those fulfilled prophecies (historically proven to be fulfilled), the probability of their fulfillment "by accident" would be 1:10¹⁷ (that's 10, followed by 16 zeros).
 - (1) That's hard to picture if you're not a numbers-person. Mark Cahill illustrates the probability with a red silver dollar.
 - (2) Fill Texas two-feet deep with silver dollars.
 - (3) Take one of those silver dollars and paint it red; mix them all up.
 - (4) Then, start from the border and walk blindfolded into the State of Texas (now filled two-feet deep with silver dollars).
 - (5) Go as far as you want, stop, bend over, pick up a silver dollar.
 - (6) The odds that you would pick the red silver dollar are the same odds as eight of the prophecies of Christ's first coming being fulfilled "randomly" in "some guy."
 - (7) And that's only eight of the 61 specific prophecies of the first coming (1:10¹⁷).
 - b) If you took 48 of those 61 prophecies, the probability of their fulfillment would be 1:10¹⁵⁷ (that's 10, followed by 156 zeros). How about all 61...?
2. So, again, what's the point? Well, I have three...
 - a) (Rev 19.10) Prophecy testifies to Jesus being who He claims to be: **God**.
 - b) (Isa 46.9-10) Prophecy testifies to the the Bible being what it claims to be: **The Word of God**.
 - c) But prophecy, even though it mathematically proves the **divine origin** of the Bible and the **divine nature** of Jesus Christ, will never convince lost man to turn from his sin and turn to Christ by faith for salvation. Why...?
 - (1) Because lost man loves his sin and hates his Creator.
 - (a) (Rom 1.28-32) Lost man's love for his sin shows his hatred for his Creator.
 - (b) Salvation is not an intellectual issue; it's a moral issue.
 - (c) It's not about being convinced in your mind; it's about being convicted over your sin and your need for Someone to save you from the consequences of your sin.
 - (2) Lost people may love a god they imagine in their mind (all "fluffy and nice"), but they do not love the God of the Bible (the one true God who is good, and holy, and just).
 - (John 3.19-21) Their love of sin (darkness) is hatred for God (light).
 - (3) For lost man to turn from his sin requires...
 - (a) ...an act of God (seeking him out, convincing him of sin, righteousness, judgment),
 - (b) ...the preaching of the Gospel (Rom 10.13-17; to know what God has done for them and what God requires of them), and
 - (c) ...and the choice lost man to die to self (turn from sin; repent) and turn to Christ only for his salvation (faith; believe on Him: John 3.16-18).
 - (4) All men everywhere have one thing in common: We are going to die (that's the "ultimate statistic": 10 out of 10 people die).
 - (a) Wouldn't it be nice and comforting to know what you need to do now in order to prepare for the day you move from this world into eternity?
 - (b) You can, and you can know with certainty because the Bible is God's Word.

- (c) Here's Cahill's conclusion: "Truth has been found. The Bible tells us all we need to know in order to choose where we will spend eternity."
- (d) For the lost, this is a call to obey the Bible and repent of sin and turn to Christ.
- (e) For the saved, this is a call to obey the Bible and preach the gospel to every creature.
- (f) If it doesn't matter on the day you die... it doesn't matter.
 - i) If you're lost: Don't trade your eternal salvation for the sick pleasure of sin.
 - ii) If you're saved: Don't miss out on the greatest investment in all the world! Go, and preach the gospel to every creature. Love God (obey His Word) and love your neighbor (by meeting his greatest need: salvation).

F. The Book of Esther is a prophetic picture "those days" of coming Tribulation.

- But there is also a personal and practical message for us in this last passage of Chapter 2...

II. The Personal Picture of the Spirit's Protection in Esther 2.21-23

A. (v21) There are enemies in Shushan!

1. Immediately after Ahasuerus receives the provision of God (Esther) into his life, we see that there are enemies who want to destroy him.
 - Those enemies are right there in Shushan, the palace (the capitol city), close to the king.
2. We need to realize that becoming a Christian is not all "rainbows and sunshine."
 - a) When a sinner converts to Christ, he begins to "swim upstream" in this world. He gets some enemies, and those enemies live really close...
 - b) The Bible speaks of three principal enemies of the believer: The world, the flesh, and the devil.
 - c) (1Pet 2.11) And, more often than not, the flesh is the worst because it's right here in "Shushan the palace" where we live.
3. And just like Ahasuerus has no idea he has enemies in his house that want to kill him, many Christians (especially new converts) have no idea they have enemies in their lives who also are seeking to destroy them (world, flesh, devil).
 - a) But, where do we see protection come from in Ahasuerus's life? From Mordecai.
 - b) And where does our protection come from? From the God (esp. the Holy Spirit).

B. (v22-23) There is a way to victory over the enemies in Shushan!

1. (v22a) Mordecai discovers the problem first.
 - a) Mordecai, working for the king in Shushan the palace, discovers the enemies' plot first. The king himself is ignorant of what Bigthan and Teresh are planning (he has not clue!).
 - b) Mordecai (as we have seen) is a picture of the Spirit of God in our lives: He is aware of things we have no clue about! He will discover problems and enemies in our lives first... then...
2. (v22b) Mordecai informs Esther of the problem.
 - a) Mordecai doesn't go directly to the King; he goes instead to his "close relative," Esther.
 - b) (Rom 8.16a) The Holy Spirit bears witness with *our spirit*, not with our soul. The Holy Spirit (Mordecai) will inform our new, regenerated spirit (Esther) of problems and enemies that we (soul; Ahasuerus) have in in our bodies (Shushan, the palace) and lives (entire kingdom).
 - c) How does all that information, then, get to the king...? Through Esther...!

3. (v22c) Esther informs Ahasuerus of the problem.

- a) Esther receives the information from Mordecai, and she relays that information to Ahasuerus.
- b) Ahasuerus is a picture of the soul; Esther is a picture of the regenerated spirit of man (not joined to—a “close relative” of—the Holy Spirit, pictured in Mordecai).
- c) (Rom 8.6) The way to victory over all your enemies is to be “spiritually minded” (listen to Esther!).
 - (1) (John 6.63) And you will never be “spiritually minded” (you will never listen to your spirit/Esther) if you are not “mindful of the Word” (the Scripture).
 - (a) (Eph 5.18) That's what being “filled with the Spirit” means: letting Him lead you (as a hand in a glove “leads” that glove in doing what the heads wants).
 - (b) (Col 3.16) And being “filled with the Spirit” is being led by the Word (because that is how the Spirit leads us today: through Scripture).
 - (2) You must be “spiritually minded” if you want “Esther” to inform you of what “Mordecai” has discovered, and that means you must be “Scripturally minded” (because that is how God communicates with us today: through Scripture!).

4. (v22d & 23a) Ahasuerus exercises discernment with regard to the problem.

a) (v22d) Make sure it's from the Spirit.

- (1) Ahasuerus gets a message from Mordecai through Esther, and Esther “certified” that the message came in Mordecai's name (confirmed it was for Mordecai).
- (2) We need to do the same! We need to “certify” that our “messages from God” are truly from God (and not from pizza and beer that resulted in “visions in the night”).
 - (a) God has not left us in this world with now way to discern what is from Him and what is not. We don't have to fumble around with uncertainty about “What's God want?”
 - (b) (1Thes 5.21) Frankly, He expects us to prove all things and hold fast to only the good stuff. How do we do that? (Acts 17.11) Judge everything by Scripture!
 - i) Again: The Spirit of God will never lead you apart from the Word of God.
 - ii) (John 16.13) God's Spirit was given to guide us into all truth.
 - iii) (John 17.17) God's Spirit was given to guide us into all the Word of God.

b) (v23a) Make sure it's really true in “real life.”

- (1) Ahasuerus gets his “certified from Mordecai” message from Esther, but he doesn't act immediately. He makes an inquisition to see if the matter was true in “real life.”
- (2) There are a lot of biblical truths that might not be what's really going on in your life.
 - (a) You need to exercise discernment and use some common sense (just open your eyes!) when it comes to applying biblical truth to things going on in your “kingdom.”
 - (b) Example: Tongues, healings, signs gifts...
 - i) Are those things biblical? Sure they are!
 - ii) Are they things you see in “real life” today? Absolutely not!
 - Just use your common sense; open your eyes and “make inquisition.”
 - Biblical tongues were known languages. Pentecostal tongues today are not.
 - Biblical healing was 100% effective on the lost or the saved. The Pentecostal “healing” of today is a farce!
 - Biblical sign gifts were done before God's enemies “on the streets” and convinced them to the point where they could not deny it was from God. Today, the “signs and wonders” in churches are a sham!

- (c) Example: There's a demon behind every bush!
 - i) Is that true, biblically? You bet it is!
 - ii) Is that really your problem (“the devil made me do it”)? Probably not. You probably just like the taste of sin; it's probably more a problem of your flesh than it is a “demon of laziness” or a “demon of disobedience.”
- (3) Ahasuerus knew his message was from Mordecai through Esther (and we can know what God's Spirit says to us—the soul—through our spirit by judging everything by Scripture).
 - (a) But, before Ahasuerus took action, he made inquiry to see if that message from Mordecai was true in “real life.”
 - (b) And we would do well to exercise a little common sense, open our eyes, and discern in “real life” what we “hear from Mordecai” through the Scripture.
 - (c) But, once we know what Mordecai has said... once we know it's true in our lives...
- 5. (v23b) Ahasuerus decides to deal with the problem: Kill the enemies!
 - a) Ahasuerus doesn't waste any time with his enemies; he kills 'em quick!
 - b) Christians aren't like that. Most Christians today like to toy with sin... keep it around like pet.
 - c) Once we know of an “enemy” in our kingdom, what should we do with it?
 - (1) In theological terms: (Gal 5.24) Crucify it. (Rom 8.13) Mortify/Kill the deeds of the flesh.
 - (2) In layman's terms: (Eph 4.22-24) STOP IT! Stop doing what is wrong and start doing what is right (your *behavior* is the *one thing* you have control over).
- 6. (v23c) Ahasuerus writes it down.
 - a) (Est 6.1-3) Obviously we see God's Providence at work here because God will use this writing later to guide the king into saving the Jews
 - b) But there's a practical lesson here, too: We should write things down so we can go back to them later on and see God's hand and work in our lives (so He can use that to guide us today).
 - (1) Call it a “journal” or a “diary” or a “notebook” or whatever... But, get into the habit of writing things down, especially those things you *know* God did or “said” in your life.
 - (2) That way, you can come back to them later on and God can use that to guide/lead you.

Ahasuerus married Esther—he received God's provision in his life, and that provision came with some new protection, thanks to Mordecai!

- We can see some very interesting and convincing prophecy in “those days” of Esther 2.
- But, we can also see some very important practical lessons of how we can follow the Spirit and avoid the consequences of the many enemies we have in our kingdoms...

(Rom 8.5-8) We need to be “spiritually minded”—we to listen to the counsel and warnings of “Mordecai” (a picture of the Holy Spirit in our lives when we receive God's provision in “Esther”—salvation).

- We need to be “filled with the Spirit” (Eph 5.18) and that means we need to be “filled with Scripture” (Col 3.16). The Spirit of God will *never* lead us apart from Scripture.
- And this last passage of Esther 2 shows us a how we can do that:
 1. Mordecai (*Holy Spirit*) discovers the problem first.
 2. Mordecai informs Esther (*our spirit*) of the problem.
 3. Esther informs Ahasuerus of the problem (*be spiritually/Scripturally minded!*).
 4. Ahasuerus exercises discernment with regard to the problem (*prove all things by the Bible*).
 5. Ahasuerus decides to deal with the problem: Kill the enemies (*stop it!*)!
 6. Ahasuerus writes it down (*as we should also*).

Now, if the Christian life was only about salvation, the story of Esther would stop right here.

- But this is only chapter 2. We still have eight chapters to go.
- Conversion to Christ is only the beginning. There are still “eight chapters to go” before the ultimate victory we see at the end of the story.
- And in these next eight chapters, we are going to see the rise of the greatest enemy Ahasuerus ever has: Haman, a picture of our flesh.
- We will never arrive at that ultimate victory of the “Spirit-filled life” (Mordecai leading our kingdom) until we deal with Haman, our flesh.
- That's what we'll see starting in Esther chapter 3.