

The festival of Purim has practical application in our day



1The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. 2I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. 3I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you." Genesis 12:1-3

A Present Purim Story

The feast of Esther (also known as Purim) starts tomorrow evening at sundown. Many of us are familiar with the basic story. Persia, the world's super-power of that day was influenced by the evil Haman to perpetrate a planned genocide of the Jewish people. The book of Esther chronicles the story and is the only book of the Bible where God's name is not mentioned

though He quite obviously is moving actively behind the scenes.

In the divine reversal expressed in this story, Queen Esther was given favor, Mordechai was brought into the king's inner circle and the Jewish people were allowed to mobilize to defend themselves. The result was the death of 75,800 Persian citizens who were killed actively fighting against the Jewish people. And the Jewish people rejoiced in their victory...and survived to face another threat on subsequent days. The Persian empire is long gone (along with Babylon, Greece, and Rome) but Israel is still here....because God has promised it. Israel will endure and ultimately prosper while those nations and individuals who are bent on her destruction will ultimately be destroyed themselves if they don't repent and turn.

Today there are some interesting parallels. Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iran (along with many other sympathetic nations ringing Israel) have as their goal to once more exterminate the Jewish people, and Israel again has a fight for her right to simply exist. This fight has been consistent over the centuries and will not be complete until Yeshua returns to comprehensively rescue and elevate His covenant people.

Once more God's ringing encouragement and warning from Genesis 12:3 is shouting to a world gone mad. He still states emphatically that He will bless those who bless Israel, as well as promising cursing for those who disdain her. There is a lag time to these promises, but the God of heaven still resolutely stands behind them. Will we stand with Him and the Jewish people or will we choose to ignore His warnings and admonitions and passively (or even actively) stand against her?

Tomorrow I will share more of my thoughts about this festival and what lessons we can learn from this story in our present day. I believe there are a number of practical concepts that we can learn from and make immediate application in our lives.