

11698

ESTHER: QUEEN OF DESTINY

Speaker: Bro. John Martin

Study #7

Mordecai the supreme ruler

Reading: Esther 9 and 10

My beloved brethren and sisters and young people, that's exactly b&s, what's going to happen, the coming of the great Mordecai, as our bro. Colin has intimated. And as the book of Esther sweeps to it's grand and glorious climax, b&s, there are contained in these last few verses of the book, some magnificent principles, wonderful matter which finds echoes throughout the rest of scripture. And this particular session, b&s, will be punctuated by references to other parts of the bible, which speak so eloquently of those things of which Esther dramatized in this story before us. We'll find a thrilling climax to this book, we'll find words, b&s, taken up by prophets, we will see how the prophet used this story to expand the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, as He will reign over all the earth, as next unto the King. And there will be light and joy and gladness for those Jews, who have been delivered from the hand of all their enemies.

We pick it up then, b&s, in the 16th verse which our bro. John Armoniz read extremely well I might add, and we have in this 16th verse, of course, what happened in the provinces when the decree of Mordecai was put into effect. Now we know what happened in Shushan the palace, we've seen that; the Jews had a great victory there, but now this story turns our attention to the other Jews, he calls them in verse 16, 'the other Jews that were in the king's provinces' and as we mentioned before, b&s, while the types of the book of Esther may not follow in chronological order and the Architect of the book in heaven never designed it that it should, yet we know that they are so exact when we put them all together. And it will be true, that it will be the capital first of all, that will be cleansed of the Canaanites, and it will be the tents of Judah, that will be saved first. And then the message will go forth to the tribes of Ephraim and the other ten tribes, that they might return to the Land, the other Jews who were scattered throughout the provinces. And we know from reading verse 16, they slew all their foes, 75,000. In other words, they didn't entirely destroy the opposition in the provinces, b&s, nor will it be destroyed at the coming of Christ immediately. But as we mentioned before, that which will antagonize Israel will be destroyed, and the rest that are left will be converted, so that all Israel will be saved and the glory of God will flood the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

And all of this was done, we read in the 17th verse, 'on the thirteenth day of the month

Adar'. That, b&s, was Haman's lucky day, that's his lucky day! You know, b&s, bible numerics is an intensely, interesting study; I don't say that I always endorse all that's said about bible numerics, because sometimes it's difficult to determine, b&s, the meaning of such. But we are told that the Persian language like the Hebrew had an numerical value. And we're told that the numerical value of the name of Haman the Agagite is divisible by 13, 9×13 . The name of his wife, Zeresh, is divisible by 13, 39×13 . That the whole of the names of his ten sons put together is divisible by 13, 788×13 , and that his name, his wife's name and his sons' names all put together is divisible by 13, 836×13 . That was Haman's lucky day! You see, b&s, there is no enchantment against Israel, no enchantment whatever, and you know, it's rather wonderful that as far as the fourteenth day was concerned, though this was a day of fighting in Shushan the palace, yet in the provinces it became a day of rest, b&s, that was just one month before the Passover. So there was a very unlucky day for Haman on the 13th, a great victory for the Jews and the following day they celebrated on the fourteenth day of Adar, the last month of the Jewish year, the feast of Purim, the feast of the lot, just exactly one month before the Passover. And verse 17 says, 'they rested and they made it a day of feasting and of gladness'.

We don't want to turn all these references up, b&s, but you know, the 12th chapter of Deuteronomy, one of those fundamental chapters in the bible, which deal with the central sanctuary of Israel when they would come into the Land, that Yahweh told them that when you come into the Land, and I have given you rest from all your enemies, then ye shall come before Me and rejoice. And here we have it, b&s, in this particular story; ah, yes, just a few Jews rejoicing, but of course, typical of that great day, when they shall come to the central sanctuary when they shall be given rest from all their enemies, and there shall be a great day of rejoicing and of feasting.

Now we come to a most interesting verse, we read down in verse 19 concerning these other Jews, who had escaped from their enemies and it says there, 'Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns'. Now the word in the Hebrew, b&s, for 'villages' and the word for the 'unwalled towns' is almost identical; so for example Rotherham renders it 'country Jews who lived in the country'. Country Jews who lived in the country, but the interesting thing about it, b&s, is that both those words in conjunction are found in the 38th chapter of Ezekiel's prophecy. Now you have a look at this! In Ezekiel 38 and verse 10 concerning the evil intent, 'Thus saith the Lord God, It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought' (that, b&s, 'an evil thought' is exactly the same Hebrew word for the device that was used of Haman's plot, he had devised a device; exactly the same Hebrew word. So here is Gog, b&s, and he has devised a plot against Israel) 'And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages' and there's our words, and that's what they did. And he went to the Land of unwalled villages, and b&s, that's a term in the scriptures which denotes an agricultural community who are not building up their economy as aggressors, whose defence budget is truly a defence budget, and when the people come against them, b&s, they come against those who have to defend themselves as only these Jews could only defend themselves. They were not to go on the attack, they were not to carry the war to their enemies, they were to protect

themselves from those who came against them, and exactly the same situation existed and there's your two Hebrew words.

But you know, b&s, we won't turn these references up, but we know that in the 24th chapter of Numbers and at verse 7, when Balaam said concerning Israel, 'that his kingdom would be higher than Agag', that in the Septuagint version, the Septuagint says 'his kingdom would be higher than Gog'. And then over in verse 20 of Numbers 24, which we have already read before, when it says that 'Amalek was the first of the nations', the word 'first' in that verse is 'rosh' so the Amalekite was the 'rosh' of the nations, and he was the 'gog' of the nations and here he is headed up in a personal way by Haman the Agagite, who was now destroyed and the villages and unwalled towns of Israel delivered from the hands of the oppressor. What an incredible type that is! And we are witnessing, b&s, in atheistic, materialistic Russia today, the coming forth of all that Haman ever stood for; hatred of the Jewish people, ambition that Habukkuk the prophet says 'knows no bounds', laded himself with thick clay and out of town to town that knows no bounds, and all that Haman ever stood for, b&s, we are going to see mechanized in the Russian machine when it comes down to the Holy Land, and I believe, b&s, we are going to see, you and I, wonderful things. We are going to see fearful things before we're through; and when Russia begins to make its grand move, the world will shake and tremble, b&s, because I don't believe, with all the reports of the armaments and the might of Russia that gets quoted from our lecture platform, I believe, that when the Iron Curtain is rolled back, and the machinery of Russia is revealed, the world will stand in absolute terror of that enemy, and there will be nobody on the face of the earth, as Revelations says, 'who will be able to make war with the beast?' Nobody will! and it will roll inexorably over Europe, plunge down over Lebanon, and then, b&s, sweeping down from the ranges of Lebanon overrun the Holy Land, and on into Egypt. And the Jewish people will be in extremities, unwalled villages, 'until He comes whose right it is', and they will be delivered. It's a wonderful thing to contemplate, b&s.

And because of their deliverance, they of course, rejoiced, and we read in that 19th verse, 'they made the 14th day of the month Adar a day of gladness and feasting, and a good day; and of sending portions one to another'. You know, b&s, we have a season which is traditionally the season of sending portions one to another with very questionable motives, and a very questionable foundation for that sort of feast, which has its origin in paganism of which Haman, of course, formed part. That's not what we're going to send portions one to another for, b&s, but may I just show you in the scriptures, two major facets of the scripture which give us reason for sending portions one to another, and this backs up the motive and the power behind this verse. First of all, come back a few pages to Nehemiah chapter 8; here's a glorious notion for sending portions one to another. In Nehemiah 8 when Ezra the scribe stood before the people, a few years after the days of Esther, we read in verse 8, 'So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading'; now we're not dealing with the book of Nehemiah, but let's just reiterate some of the matters we've dealt with at this camp, the word 'distinctly' means to 'break it small', they broke up the Word of God into little bits, and they gave the sense, and there were 13 study group leaders in the audience who interpreted the words of Ezra, got little groups

together, broke it up small, and caused them to understand what he was saying. And they caused them to understand the reading, but in the Hebrew, b&s, the word for 'reading' doesn't mean that at all, it means 'the congregation' and it's a word in the Hebrew which has almost the exact equivalent to the Greek word 'ecclesia'. So if we read that verse literally from the Hebrew it reads like this, 'so they read in the book of the law of God and broke it up into little parts, so that everyone could understand it, and the whole ecclesia comprehended the message'.

And then we read in verse 10, 'Then he said unto them, go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared', there, I believe, is the highest motives, the highest, for sending portions one to another. Now here at Glenlock, we have had that word read very, very clearly, I would sincerely hope, b&s, with all our failings, that we have endeavoured in some small way to break it into small portions for you. And around this camp, brethren of various capabilities have spoken of that Word, and have gave the sense to their wives and children and their friends. My advice to you all, b&s, is to go away from this place and to send portions to them that have nothing. Now that's what they did, and you've got something to take away from this camp, and send those portions to those who have nothing. You know, b&s, I want to tell you something about Nehemiah because I believe this is important; because I believe it's important in the book of Esther, in this particular principle of sending portions one to another. I believe that Nehemiah today, is the principle and Esther is the principle that we should adopt in our ecclesial life; we know, b&s, the diversities of opinion, we know the troubles that exist in the brotherhood of Christ that should never exist in the brotherhood of Christ, but I can tell you now that we have a one track mind and a one eyed policy for the future until Jesus Christ comes, and according to the grace of God and the ability given unto us, and the determination that we can muster, we are determined to follow it! and that policy, b&s, will be that we will build a wall, and we're going to dedicate ourselves to building that wall, and we don't want to talk about problems, or what people consider is their opinions or anything else, we want to build a wall for you and your family to get behind and to shelter behind, as the world hammers away against it. And if you don't adopt that policy, you're foolish; let's listen, break its wall, spread it among our brethren and sisters, spread it among our family, and send portions to others, and let nothing distract us. Nothing would get Nehemiah off that wall, 'Tobiah wants to talk to you; too bad! He's a good fellow, that's what you say, but I've got a wall to build'. And it went up, brick by brick, and the answer of Nehemiah to the world, to the ecclesia, b&s, was his wall! And he didn't have to justify himself, he didn't have to argue the point about whether it was right or wrong, he demonstrated it there, b&s, that it was a work of God. And you go away and take my advice and build that wall, and let it be a single minded policy in your life; and there's a good reason to send portions one to another.

But you know, b&s, there is another reference of scripture which deals with sending portions, far greater even than that! And that's found in the 68th Psalm, you see they sent gifts to the poor, Esther said in another verse, perhaps if you still have your hand in Esther you might just pick that up at the end of verse 22, 'sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor'. Now look at this gift, Psalm 68 and verse 18, speaking of

the work of the Messiah, 'Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that Yahweh Elohim might dwell among them'. That reference, b&s, was taken and quoted by the apostle Paul in Ephesians chapter 4 with a slight difference; making no alterations of the absolute sense of the verse, but this is how Paul rendered it, and I'll read it with his alteration, 'Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men'. And He who went to heaven, b&s, on our behalf, and received gifts for men, gave them back; and to which class of people did He give them back? Well, verse 5 tells us, 'that He was a father to the fatherless, a judge to the widows', they were poor, b&s, they were you and I, and the Lord Jesus Christ has gone to the right hand of the Father, and He has shed abroad in our hearts the love of God, by His ministrations to our Heavenly Father, by the divine providence which has sheltered us in our lives and by the forgiveness of our sins to ourselves and our wives, and by the protection afforded our families because of our stand for the truth; all shed abroad because Jesus Christ has gone to the Father and accomplished these things for us. He has distributed gifts to the poor! That's how they distributed gifts, b&s, in Israel, for a very, very good reason. You know, it's a good practice, a very good practice in your family life, that if you want to offset the influence of the world, and feel you are denying your children something, which in the world they give, and therefore, your children may want to miss out, then I say, b&s, supplement that; by all means give your children gifts, but always let them see, that it is the most powerful reason that they get it. Do you want an example in our house? Vern and I have made a principle in our house, that on prizing giving night, Sunday School night we come home, we have a milkshake supper and the children get a relatively expensive gift at that time of the year, that they might understand that Sunday School is the be-all and end-all of their young lives, and impressing them with the fact that they can expect gladness on that day, whether they've done good or bad, according to if they've tried or not, they will enjoy that day. And we get them to remember that, and that's the time, b&s, to give gifts; and when these Jews had been delivered from their enemy, they gave gifts to the poor. A wonderful day, and the reception of those gifts or as it were, the sharing among the brethren and sisters of the Israel on that occasion, of the joy and gladness, which they all felt they had received from their Heavenly Father. Marvellous!

And who was it that organized all that? Verse 20 of Esther chapter 9 says, 'And Mordecai wrote these things'. Yes, of course he did, Mordecai wrote these things; he's the one, b&s, that seized the initiative to bring to the hearts of the Jews, the wonderful joy that had been theirs on that day. And it says, 'He sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of Ahasuerus, both nigh and far'. Nigh and far, here's another one we can't turn up, 'peace, peace to him, says Isaiah the prophet, 'to him that is nigh and to him that is afar off' Isaiah 57. Reason? The reason Isaiah said it was because he said, 'the enemy shall come in like a flood; but Yahweh shall lift up a standard against him, and the Redeemer shall come to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob'. There's the reason, peace, peace to him that is near and to him that is afar off, and the reason is because the enemy that is coming like a flood against Israel and Yahweh shall lift up a stand against him and the Redeemer shall come to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob, quoted in Romans 11, at a time when the enemy shall come in

like a flood, and in the context of that prophecy, peace to him that is near and him that is afar off, and that was the message of Mordecai. And b&s, the Jew was near and we were afar off, and Paul picking that principle up in Ephesians chapter 2, when he speaks about the commonwealth of Israel, and he says, 'you who were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ' and he joins Jew and Gentile together, as now all being associated with the Lord Jesus Christ through the blood of the everlasting covenant. That's what Mordecai wrote; see what you can do with the book of Esther? We can have another Easter camp and another one and another one. We'd never end in this book, b&s, with the ideas that come flowing from these words, glorious stories.

Verse 21, 'He wrote to establish this among the Jews', now the word 'establish' there, b&s, is a word which means that he didn't want the feast of Purim to be just that year; the idea of that was to get it going for all time. As a matter of fact, that word 'establish' means 'to make to stand up, to rise' and it's used when God gave the covenant to Abraham of circumcision when He said, 'I will establish my covenant with you'; it wasn't just a passing thing, b&s, it was to be a thing for all time! Now notice how certain words are used to impress that; 'they should keep on the 14th day, and the 15th day of the same, yearly, as the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month that was turned from sorrow to joy'. So the idea behind Mordecai's decree was, a total rejoicing; ah, yes, a yearly thing, kept, oh, yes, two days to rejoice about the month of deliverance. But years, days and months, b&s, used to impress the fact that the day was going to come when there would be total joy every day of the year, and the feast of Purim was but a sign pointing the way to the glorious day that it will be said, concerning the day of the vengeance of our God, 'that He came to proclaim the acceptable year of Yahweh'. And in the context of Isaiah 61, which speaks about a day of vengeance, set against a short day of vengeance, there will be the year, the year, the acceptable year of Yahweh. In other words, b&s, rough is but for a moment, but the mercy of Yahweh is for ever and ever; and Mordecai wanted them to understand that. Haman had his day, well, it was a day of vengeance for God, but now yearly, daily, monthly, they were to remember the joy that came out of the deliverance that God had given them.

Marvellous, b&s! and do you know, when Mordecai wrote that, (now here's a wonderful thing, I believe it's tremendous; the exhortation of this is powerful). See, Mordecai wrote this down, and he sent it out amongst the Jews, you see, this is a radical move. You bear in mind what he's doing, b&s, they were Jews; they had the Law, they had to keep the feast of Passover, the feast of Pentecost, the feast of Tabernacles; there were the other days, there was the feast of the trumpets, the day of Atonement and so forth, they had a lot of days of the year to keep. This man is adding to the Law; this is not a light matter and I want you to appreciate this, b&s, it is not a light matter that's being done, and you'll see by the wording of this chapter, how important it was that the Jews considered this, because, look, when we do it the way we do it, oh, we can see the principle behind it and the reason behind it, but should we? And we read in verse 23, that the 'Jews undertook to do', and we read in verse 27, 'that the Jews ordained that they should do it', in other words there was an decision taken amongst all Jewry, b&s, to keep that feast, and it was not a light decision that was taken. Now the reason we say that is because when they took that decision, they spelt out every single clause as to why they should keep that feast. Listen to them from verse 24, imagine the Jews sitting

down in verse 23. 'The Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them, because, (and here is the reason), 'Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur (that is the 'lot') to consume them and to destroy them. But when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he devised against them, should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.'

That, b&s, is an epitomy of the whole story, can you imagine the arranging brethren of the Jewish ecclesias (and I'm using those terms just to throw it into modern terminology, that you might understand the principle involved) receiving this decree and sitting down and saying, 'look, we've got to be very careful, we can't just be plunging into making dates in the year, because we've got the Law of Moses and this man, of course, is giving something extraneous to that, now what are the reasons brethren? Let's write them down, (I've got them written down in my bible); 1. Haman the son of Hammedatha, yea, that's reason enough. 2. the Agagite, that's another good reason. 3. the enemy of the Jews, 4. he devised against the Jews, 5. he practiced gambling against the Jews, cast pur 6. he was going to destroy and consume them 7. to scatter and disorganize them 8. it came before the king (providence) 9. it returned upon his own head, divine activity and they hung him and his sons upon the gallows (total victory). I vote, b&s, we put that day in our calendar! And they put it in their calendar and they've kept it ever since, and in the Jewish synagogue, b&s, during the feast of Purim, when they read from the book of Esther, the young children sit down in the front (and I meant to tell them this last night, but I was frighten to) they sit down at the front, and when the Jewish scribe reads from the book and they come to the name of Mordecai, the children clap and cheer. And when they come to Haman they all stand up and boo and hiss, and that's what they do! and that was incorporated and they still do that today amongst Orthodox Jews; they still practice that ritual and the children get the lesson, and it was a thrill to me, I had tears in my eyes last night; I had a couple of little girls on my lap and they were doing just that spontaneously without telling them. Everytime Mordecai would come on they'd whisper among themselves, 'he was a goodie'; and you know, when Haman was taken down by the king they clapped and thought that was wonderful! and they get the lesson, don't they, b&s? As the Jews decided to keep that day, but what's the lesson for us?

'I have received of the Lord that which I have delivered unto you, that the same night in which He was betrayed, He took bread and He brake it and He said', see what Paul's doing? We all know what He did, they all knew what had happened, but it's all spelled out in simple child-like form. 'I have received of the Lord that which I have delivered unto you' and we need to add nothing to that memorial feast than that which Paul delineates in 1 Corinthians 11, but the important part is we've got to grasp the meaning of why they were there, and as we walk through the portals of our ecclesial doors, we ought to sit down with that burning in our minds, that we're going to receive something which the apostle was given and tells us that the same night in which Jesus was betrayed, and we ought to listen to that reading of the chairman and go over in our minds the details of what happened; not because we're going to learn them, but because we want it to sink

deeply because that's why we're there!

Now b&s, not only so but look at this, in verse 26, added to the details of the reasons why they should have this feast on their calendar, in verse 26 it is said, 'wherefore they called these days Purim (that is the name Pur) Therefore for all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come upon them'. So let's go back to our arranging brethren's conversation; 'here brethren are the details of the story, good enough in my book to incorporate that into our calendar. And then all of them, understanding this, that the reason we're going to keep it is threefold. 1. because Mordecai said that it ought to be done (the words of this letter) 2. because we are eye witnesses of that tragedy and triumph, and what was more important 3. we were personally involved'. You sit down next Sunday morning and think about those three things; 'I have received of the Lord', should we keep the feast? Because of what was written (Mordecai's letter), well, Paul says, 'I've received of the Lord', there it is, b&s. What about our eyes? Haven't we seen, b&s, by the eye of faith the tragedy and the triumph? John the apostle who was an eye-witness said that 'that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we have handled even the Word of life', well, b&s, we may not have had that privilege, but we have seen by the eye of faith, the triumph and tragedy and have come to believe it; and what is far, far more important, is that we are all personally involved in the tragedy and in the triumph. Now I reckon that is majestic the way that's set out in the story of Esther, there b&s, is the basis for all that we do in the truth, and there was the basis for them accepting things which were over and above that which the Law of Moses had put upon them.

But look at this! Look there is point after point, honestly, look at these few verses, and I've only made a selection of these, look in verse 27. It says, 'The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail', now I'm going to show you what's in those sentences. First of all, they took upon their seed, it was to be a family tradition; now keep your hand in Esther and come to Psalm 78 verses 4 to 7, it was something to be memorialized from generation to generation. They were to enjoin those things, first of all, upon their own seed, now listen to this, in Psalm 78 verses 4 to 7, 'We will not hide them from their children, showing the generation to come the praises of Yahweh, and His strength, and His wonderful works that He hath done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of El (power), but to keep His commandments'. Now, b&s, without turning a host of references up, let me tell you something about that! Do you know how rigid that was to be kept? that families would sit down and the fathers were to recount to the children the story of the Passover, which they all knew backwards; it wasn't a matter that he was teaching them anything, he was just reminding them and they went on to remind their children and so the day came (and the Psalms are full of this, and Isaiah is full of it), that when the kingdom age is established and the children of God are gathered together, they are known as one generation. One generation because they had been so closely knit by memory of the

thing that made Israel born, that as far as God is concerned, they are one generation. And time and again you read about the generation to come, and that's how it was burnt into the memory of the children, they were to teach them to their seed.

It also said, 'they should also teach them to those who had joined themselves to them'. Joined themselves to them, b&s, here again a string of references which we'll have to quote, we can't turn all these up, but that's the word 'lavah' or 'Levi', and there were people among the Persians who had become Jews, they were to be incorporated into that feast. Now, b&s, here's what you read about Levi, in the 18th and 8th chapter of Numbers, we have the two chapters that set Levi apart for the service of the tabernacle. And among the things that Yahweh told them was this, 'separate unto Me the tribe of Levi, for they shall be joined unto Yahweh and it is theirs to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the stranger that shall come nigh shall be put to death' and therefore, under the Law of Moses, the title of Levi was a guarantee that strangers would never be joined to Yahweh. But here's a feast, b&s, beyond the Law! not against it, but in the spirit of it, in the fulfillment of it, that says that they that Levied themselves should keep that feast. And says the prophet Isaiah, to the strangers that come up from Jerusalem from year to year among whom was the eunuch who thought he was a dry tree; but took hold of God's covenant; God says 'they shall be joined with Me in My house of prayer for all nations' (Levi). And says Zechariah in his prophecy, 'in that day many nations shall be joined unto Yahweh'. Many nations shall be joined unto Yahweh, under the Law of Moses they would be put to death, because of the exclusive nature of that tribe, this b&s, points forward, far beyond the confines of the exclusive law of Israel.

And, says the record, 'that it should not fail, that they would keep these two days'; look at the margin for the word 'fail', pass, do you know what the word is in the Hebrew? it's the root word of the word 'Hebrew', that it should never cross-over; it should never cross back in their minds, in other words, the seed of the Jews who were Hebrews of the Hebrews, b&s, had now joined to them another set of Hebrews who had crossed from being Persians to Jews and says the book, 'they should never cross back over'. Do you want to see a reference in the scriptures when some people did just that? In 1 Samuel 13, and this will emphasize what Esther is saying, in 1 Samuel 13 we have the converse of that, you know the occasion when Saul was gathering together Israel to fight the Philistines, and in verse 6, 'and when the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were distressed) then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits. And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead', b&s, the word 'went over' is exactly the same as the word 'Hebrew'. Some of the crosses-over crossed back over because, b&s, of the stupidity and the failure of the king of Israel to bind that nation together; some of those who had crossed over, crossed back over. Now, says the book of Esther, 'those that have joined themselves to Yahweh and had crossed from being Persians, Australians, Americans, Englishmen, Yugoslavs, Dutch, whatever they might be, 'never let them cross back over'. Keep this in remembrance year to year, day to day, month to month, that it should never be anything else but be burnt into their memories. You know, b&s, when you bring people into the truth in your ecclesia, bring them into the truth.

You'll find that your members in your ecclesia won't cross back over if they know the reasons why they crossed over once, if you spell out to them, Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the Jews' enemy, and so on and so on...the promises made to the fathers, the Atonement, the doctrines of the Word, clearly define the foundations of the pioneers; get it in there! and cross them over, and cross them over sharply, and put a gulf between them and the world, not only morally but mentally, b&s, and seal their understanding with the good things of the book, like they did, and set it out clearly, and they won't cross back over! not likely they won't, and it's only when people are brought into the truth, on the sketchiest understandings, wouldn't even know the ancestry of Haman whether he was an Agagite or an Israelite, or they wouldn't know that they cast lots or if he flicked a coin or something; it's only when people, b&s, don't understand the foundation of what we're doing that they cross over. You burn it into the memory of your members and they go back lightly, but unfortunately that's not always done and consequently we witness again and again, the tragedy of people leaving the truth.

And then we come, breezing on, b&s, to the climax of this book. And in verse 29 of Esther 9, we read that Esther and Mordecai are now together in a very happy association. Now I want you to notice how this verse is written (I've been trying to impress upon you that the bible is written by God) look how this is written, 'Then Esther the queen the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority', you see, b&s, at the very end of the book, and it's going to sweep to its climax, Esther and Mordecai's Jewish origin are stated, and it's the Jewish origin that are in all authority as He is given her genealogy, the daughter of Abihail, so it's Esther the queen the daughter of the father of might and the little man the Jew, are now, b&s, in all authority. And won't it be wonderful when the message goes out from Zion, it's the ecclesia of God, Esther the bride of Christ, drawn to all quarters of the world, the daughter of the Father of might, 'come out and be ye separate' says the LORD Almighty, and 'I will see you as sons and daughters' 2 Corinthians 6, 'ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the LORD Almighty, and there we are, b&s, daughters of the Almighty. And who's our leader? One who once bore the title of a little man, the Jew who rode the streets of Jerusalem in mock glory, but now, b&s, all glorious!

But look at this! There we have Esther the queen and there we have Mordecai the Jew, and who do we have in verse 31? 'To confirm those days of Purim in their times appointed, according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined upon them'. The roles are reversed now, b&s, the historian is telling us very clearly, that Mordecai is the supreme ruler, not Esther. While verse 29 may have been giving the official titles, verse 31 gives the spiritual titles, and there he is, b&s, standing before Esther, because he was the prime mover, he was the man of faith, he was the inspirer, he was the man of courage, b&s, who lead the nation and hers by the inspiration of his own life, for the glory that was now going to become theirs, truly it's Mordecai and Esther, not Esther and Mordecai! And so the historian, as he comes to the climax of the book, inverts the order. 'And they wrote to confirm together', can you imagine Mordecai and Esther writing to confirm together this feast of Purim, and they did so in these terms in verse 31, 'to confirm these days of Purim in their times appointed, according as

Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for themselves and for their seed' (the RSV says 'as they had laid down for themselves') in other words, all the Jews understood, b&s, that if you ever got an invitation to visit the queen's house, in that house that tradition would be kept. If you went to Mordecai's home that tradition would be kept! and they're not asking you to do any more than what they intended to do themselves. People might say, 'ah, yes, but look, mom, they were decreeing a holiday! this isn't very difficult to accept; why even I accept the declaring of the queen's birthday, and she's not even my queen'. We all accept holidays, b&s, with open hands, yes, but wait a minute, let's read what it was that Mordecai and Esther enjoined upon themselves. It says, 'that they enjoined upon themselves as they had decreed for themselves and for their seed, the matters of the fastings and their cry'.

Isn't that wonderful? You know, b&s, ever think about that? All the way through that story, of the feast of Purim, you've got words of life, joy, honour, gladness, feasting, a good day; but what Esther and Mordecai had put upon themselves, was in the midst of the holiday atmosphere, they were going to remind their children and themselves of the anguish and the extremity of that situation. Can you imagine, b&s, what happened as the years rolled on in Israel, as the religious atmosphere is created by the feast of Purim, (let's apply these to ourselves). We appoint a day, not that we're going to, but assuming we did, appoint a day, we go away from this camp, appointing a day to remember what God has done for us, and all the tribulations and the anguish and the crying of the heart, and the tears of blood and sweat that rolled down in the service of our Master, that we might be delivered by the greatness of His goodness. And every year we have a holiday, and a holiday, b&s, is a time for rejoicing, of relaxation, and it wouldn't be very long in an atmosphere like this, if people lost the spirit of it, that matters of fasting and crying would dissipate and disappear, and all that would be left was fun and gaiety. Esther said and Mordecai said, 'come to our house on the feast of Purim, it will be a good day; life, joy, honour and gladness, but we will bow our heads and we will cry on that day, to remember the anguish of the occasion, that we might deeply appreciate, b&s, deeply appreciate what God has done for us'.

I want you to conjure up in your minds, the visions of Revelation chapter 14, 'when you see a Lamb on mount Zion with seven eyes and seven horns, all powerful and all seeing, and He's surrounded with 144,000 of the redeemed, b&s, the Israel of God, and they're singing 'Hallelujah, praise to Yahweh'; but there's one singular thing about that Lamb that's out of character with the situation. The Lamb looked as if at one time He had been slain. Why in a vision of glory would God leave the mark of the knife on that Lamb? Need I answer that question, b&s? that the hallelujahs may come from the heart and not, b&s, merely from the enjoyment of the situation. As if it had been slain, we will remember, b&s, the anguish and the crying, and I reckon that's absolutely glorious to think that those two (Mordecai and Esther) impose that upon themselves as an example to all those Jews who were settled down to have a holiday, and they wrote that in the book!

And then chapter 10, short as it is, b&s, lends gloriously to the climax of this book, and shows us in a vivid picture, Mordecai in supreme control in the world, and the king

Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land and upon the isles of the sea. Expressed to tell us that here is the kingdom of God in its totality; land is one thing but you know, when you read in the scriptures of the isles of the sea, it always, always, b&s, has the connotation of that which is beyond the confines of Israel, the whole world! And in those days king Ahasuerus didn't control the whole world, we're going to speak in type of what chapter 10 is talking about. And when the king Ahasuerus reigned, b&s, and God is the King of the world, as He will be, there will be a tribute made upon the land and upon the whole world; and what that tribute will be (we won't turn these references up, but in Psalm 68 again, we learn that when the day comes, when the Son of God on behalf of His Father, conquers the world, they will submit themselves with pieces of silver, and the tribute they will pay to the King of heaven, b&s, is the acknowledgement that He has redeemed them, tribute enough to the God of Heaven. To acknowledge that He has redeemed them, and then as far as the king is concerned, he has appointed his vice regent, Mordecai, who doesn't wear his crown but a special one for the occasion, because it doesn't represent, b&s, the king's own personal position, but it represents one who for him reigns and because of him, he himself is subordinated to him, and will at last, hand the kingdom back again.

And of that one we read of all the acts of his power. Or as we could understand it, all the exercise of his authority; you know, those words, you think about them; you imagine what that means, I sit down and think about that, not because I want to tell you about that, because I want to know myself. I want to glory in those pictures, and I see it like this; the acts of His authority, the exercise of His authority and I think, b&s, about government today. I think about prime ministers, and I think that he has a cabinet, and the cabinet appoints their sub-committee, and they are all answerable to the house of representatives or whatever country you live in, congress, the house of lords, or whatever it is, and the government, b&s, is spread among men, some more corrupt than others, none pure. And so that government bogs down, in all the protocol and all the red tape in all the corruption the government bogs down; opinions failing, debates rock backwards and forwards, people vote on party lines despite their convictions and the whole thing is rotten to the core! When I read that verse and I think of Isaiah chapter 9, 'and the government shall be upon HIS shoulder', ah, how glorious, b&s, what shall be done? Well, we won't ask the sub-committee, the senate, the house of assembly or the prime minister, we'll see what the King says, and that's what is going to be done; all the exercise of his authority, glorious! Glorious, glorious, b&s, to think of that, that all this is gone; 'exercise of his authority'.

And then we read 'and of his might', of his might, the word in the Hebrew, b&s, is 'gebuwrah', he's a warrior' we can forget taxing the people of the world for defence. Think of it, b&s, think of it! the revenue of the world, the expertise of men, the economies of the nations, all now relieved of the enormous burdens upon them because we've got a 'gebuwrah' which in Himself there is enormous power that makes the atomic bomb, b&s, look like a cracker and it can control the world with words, and has this enormous power to bring men and women to heel, and all that's been poured into armaments now goes pouring back into agriculture and 'they shall beat their swords into ploughshares', and the fertile earth, b&s, shall bring forth the glory, the glory of its

growth, and the earth, the fertile earth exposed to the heavens, a dynamic combination, b&s, that is capable of prolific growth, will feed the multitudes of the world, because they've been relieved of the enormous expense of defence, because in Jerusalem there's a war machine in itself. Oh, what a glorious day! and that war machine will be there, b&s, not to make war but to prevent it.

'And the declaration of his greatness'. The declaration of his greatness, as we saw before, the word 'declaration' the only other occurrence in the scripture, the same Hebrew word as for the sum of money paid by Haman to destroy the Jews, and the ten thousand pounds of silver, 2/3 rds of the revenue of the Persian ruler in one year, represented b&s, the expense that Haman would go to, to destroy the Jews, in other words, there was no end to Haman's hate; well, there's no end to Mordecai's greatness. And of what does that greatness consist, b&s? Of what does it consist? Well, of course, the 'greatness' here is a word that means 'to twist together' as one would make a rope adding strands to strands to strands, and the idea of that is greatness in one who has grown up through life adding strand to strand. And now he is before them, as one who is great in character interwoven all the divine principles locked together in one man. Beautifully bound, glorious character and there he is, b&s, Mordecai the supreme ruler, Jesus Christ the King of the world. The government is with him, the power is with him, and the character is in him; what more do we want, b&s, what more do we want than that? and it was writ in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia.

And because he was what he was, we read 'that Mordecai the Jew' in the last verse, 'was next unto the king'. He went no further than that, b&s, and when the Lord Jesus Christ sent the promise to His disciples, 'to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I have overcome and sat down with My Father in His throne'. That was the promise, b&s, He'd go no further, no further than that and no more could He ever go any further; one can go no further than to sit on the right hand of the Majesty on high, b&s, second place in the universe was sufficient for the ambition of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who took upon Him the form of a servant, and made Himself of no reputation, that He might become a king of the world, never for a moment thinking that He was greater than His Father, 'my Father is greater than I'. And when all things are put under His feet, then He Himself also shall be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God might be everything in everyone. Next unto the king, Haman would never had been satisfied with that!

'And he was accepted of the multitude of his brethren'. Ah, look at the words that are used here; accepted to be 'pleasing', it's the same word, b&s, used by Isaiah the prophet when he said, 'Behold, my servant in whom my soul delighteth'; God accepted Him, we're going to sing about Him in hymn 85 at the end of this meeting, 'behold my servant, in whom my soul delighteth', well, now he's accepted of his brethren; but not only are they his brethren, b&s, but the multitude of his brethren and the word 'multitude' there is that word 'rabab' which is used constantly in the promises made to the fathers, who are his brethren? the seed of Abraham, they're not merely the brethren, the Jews, they are the multitude of his brethren. And that multitude, of course, of all nations, sons of Abraham, born in Zion and of course, related to the Lord Jesus Christ. Ah, it's

absolutely glorious! you know there again, b&s, a picture of the kingdom.

What buoys you up through life? What draws you to the kingdom? What is it? Well, there are tons of reasons aren't there? that send you to sleep quickly every night and then carry you through the trials and tribulations of life; and there is one such picture portrayed in Esther, 'accepted of the multitude of his brethren', have you ever tried to conjure up the conversion of Israel? Have you ever seen Isaiah 40 in action in your mind? As the angel stands as a herald upon the hills of Judea, like they use to do when they proclaimed the new moon and blew the trumpet, and it echoed from one mountain to another to issue in the feasts; can you imagine the angel standing up on the hills of Judea and crying out with the trumpet voice of the angel? and he'd cry unto the cities of Judah, 'behold, your God!' And those words sinking into the minds of Judah, that Jesus of Nazareth, b&s, is the Messiah; that's only one thing! But learning the reality at last which they never ever could believe, that Messiah was the Son of God? and as the Son of God representing His Father saying to the cities of Judah, 'behold, your God', and what will happen, He'll come forth a restful city, the Russian hordes dead all around Him, the smoke of Armageddon being blown away, b&s, the enormity of it all, and He'll hold up His hands! Can you see that? and Jewry will stand there, absolutely stricken and we're going to see something, b&s, that the world has never seen, as Zechariah says, 'they shall go everyone of them, every family apart, and every man apart, and his wife apart, and one individual will go into a room and close the door, and another individual will go in and close the door; and where nobody can see them, when they're closed off from the eyes of everyone, when all the ostentatious display of Jewish mourning, at the wailing wall like this, with their black caps and their phylacteries around them, while the big crowd stands back behind them and they know they're there, weeping and wailing for the world to see; and they'll be ashamed of it. And in their private closet on bended knees they will mourn for Him, as if God had killed their own eldest son. And therefore Zechariah says, 'their mourning will be for God and they'll weep for God', that some many hundreds of years ago, God suffered the loss of His child, and they'll cry for God. B&S, I want to see that! I want to see that because I reckon it's going to be glorious to see that, and their Heavenly Father will enjoy that, because there will be their hearts bleeding with His, bleeding with His for the first time in His life, 'accepted by the multitude of His brethren'. Incredible!

That chapter, b&s, is beautiful, it is absolutely beautiful, and because he was accepted by the multitude of his brethren, 'he seeks, it says, the wealth of his people'. He will seek the wealth of his people, you know, the word 'wealth' there means, of course, the 'good' of his people; the RSV says 'he will seek the welfare of his people' and when Nehemiah came back the same word is used when Tobiah the Ammonite, Geshem the Arabian, and Sanballat the Horonite witnessed it, b&s, it grieved them that a man would come to seek the welfare of the children of Israel, but there would be no one there to weep, there'll be no Tobiahs, no Geshems, no Sanballats there will be no Arabian paradise, and He will come to seek the good of His people, the wealth of His people, remarkable isn't it?

And then we finish this book, b&s, on a grand note! on a grander note perhaps than

ever that we've been able to see in the book thus far, and I'm glad that it's so, for it brings us to a tremendous climax, because it says, 'he will be speaking peace to all his seed'. Speaking peace to all his seed; I want to make two points about that before I sit down and the Easter camp is over. I don't want you to ever forget them, the book finishes with Mordecai speaking peace to his seed. Ever heard an echo of those words somewhere else? 'Behold, say unto the daughter of Zion, thy King cometh unto thee, lowly and having salvation, and riding upon the colt the foal of an ass. And He shall speak peace to the heathen'. You see, Mordecai's record, b&s, for all his greatness, was typical and was limited, and he spoke peace to his seed, but the man coming could speak peace to the heathen, isn't that wonderful? isn't that absolutely wonderful, to go into that book, the types should be set forth in such a limited way that we might understand the greatness of the One that is coming. And you know, b&s, He did speak peace to the heathen because we are among the heathen, and when Zechariah's prophecy was fulfilled, and Jesus rode into Jerusalem, He came on two animals, the ass and its colt, and He said, 'get the two of them' and He said, 'men will ask you what do you want the colt for?' they could understand Him using the other animal because everyone used them, but this one hadn't been broken. 'But they said, the Master has need of him', He's got need of the unbroken colt' and when they brought the two animals, He sat astride the unbroken colt, and a multitude went before and a multitude went behind, there were two of them; and they came to a place where two ways met, and they came, b&s, to the house of Bethpage and Bethany, Bethany meaning 'the house of dates' and Bethpage meaning 'the house of figs, and the fig tree was the symbol of Israel, and the date palm was the symbol of the nation, and He stayed at Bethany. And He came back next morning to see the fig tree with leaves on it and no fruit, and He blasted it into the ground because Israel was fruitless; and He went into the temple and saw them set up their tables of money changing in the court of the Gentiles, He threw them over and said, 'you know nothing about the prophets which say, 'my house shall be called of all nations, a house of prayer'. B&S, He came upon that colt to speak peace to the heathen. What a remarkable philosophy that is, that's the first thing that we should remember about the grand ending of that book, which speaks about One who saved us, b&s, though we were heathens, He spoke peace to us, and we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But you know, I believe the last thought the book wants to leave with us is this, that Mordecai the Jew, who was accepted of his brethren, is at last seen to be their father. Can you see that? He was of the seed of the Jews, but you see, he speaks peace unto his seed, he is at last seen to be their father. You know, b&s, Isaiah the prophet spoke of the Lamb in the work of Mordecai, clothed in sackcloth and ashes, and we're going to see in Him, smitten of God and afflicted, and you know, for all that He suffered, being wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, Isaiah said of the Lamb, 'He shall see His seed and be satisfied', God will give Him a family and He'll love His children, that's just to use modern language, it just means that, b&s, God will give Him a family. 'Who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off from the land of the living; He died without a wife, without a family, who's going to declare His family? for He'll see them and be satisfied. He is, b&s, our father; He is our father and Isaiah says in the same context of the same prophecy, 'and all thy children will be taught of Yahweh, and

great shall be the peace of thy children'. Yes, He'll speak peace to His seed too, but His seed won't be restricted to Israel, b&s, it will be of all nations. And you know, when we contemplate Him in that regard, what a wonder it is! Just a little word, b&s, an opinion, you don't have to accept this, and I won't call you in question if you don't, but you know, when brethren stand on the platform and they pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we often addressed Him as our Redeemer, our great High Priest, our Saviour or our Elder Brother, where is the authority for that title, b&s? Oh, you say, Hebrews 2, 'for He is not ashamed to call them brethren' that's His prerogative, b&s, not ours. He's not ashamed to call them brethren, but I tell you something, I would be terribly ashamed to call Him my elder brother; and Paul went on to say in the next verse, 'I and the children whom God hath given Me' forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise, took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil'. He's our father, b&s, call no man father on earth, don't worry, b&s, ever to call Jesus Christ our father, because 'He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father'. 'I and the Father are One', there's no irreverence in that, b&s, marvellous!

And this book finishes with Mordecai, a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, speaking peace to all his children. What a wonderful scene, b&s, it will be, speaking peace to all his children. And we will all be gathered one day, all of us, brethren truly of Christ, because He's not ashamed to call us brethren, but children of the living God, and therefore, children of the Lord Jesus Christ and we will see Him, most assuredly as our father, and He will father us to all eternity, until He hands us over to the Father of eternity, b&s, and then we shall be with God and be all and in all. May the message of this camp go home with every one of us!

It's been a delightful experience for myself, b&s, to come to this camp(all the work was done before this and I've enjoyed giving it, to put this story together for the first time, for myself, and I'd never studied the book before I came here) it's been an absolute joy, and I hope it has been for you. There are lessons which I'll never forget and I hope there will be lessons that you'll never forget! We have a life to live in the truth, b&s, and so we've got to live it and so there are dark days and evil days; and there are days, b&s, and you know I speak truly, when I say there are dark days and evil days in the ecclesia itself; the world is having an impact, b&s, and though we don't want to make criticism of others, and that's not our point, facts are facts and we must face them, and our Lord Jesus Christ who will be our father of the age to come, told us that in the last days perilous times would come, using Paul's words, but He told us that 'as it was in the days of Noah, as it was in the days of Lot, b&s, and so it is. And we're driven hard at this camp, and when I say we, I don't really include myself in that, only as the speaker on several occasions, but I'm talking of the committee and the brethren and sisters involved here, have striven hard to keep the standards of morality very high. When the lights go out in this place, b&s, there is ample opportunity for young people and older people for that matter, to loose themselves in the darkness of this environment, and to perform those works of darkness that belong to Haman's type and not to Mordecai's type. However, over the years we've striven hard and tried our very best to bring a measure of discipline here, and I believe it has succeeded to a remarkable degree, and I say on

behalf of all those involved in this camp, that we have deeply, very deeply appreciated, not only the behaviour of all brethren and sisters and young people, to the best of our knowledge, b&s, but over and above that, your own enthusiastic approach to these studies which have given me a tremendous lift in the truth's service. And I do hope that God will take that with us, bind it in our heart and inspire us to speak in the service of our king. Fight in your ecclesias, b&s, for things that are good! and there's only one way to fight for the truth, and that is to defend yourself against your enemies, not ever being the aggressor, but not ever compromising either; so that we should stand for the things of Mordecai, not bowing to the things of this world, but standing still, and not trembling at anybody's word except Yahweh's. And only to defend ourselves when such people would attack us, but above all to try and create in our ecclesial atmospheres, the Purim atmosphere of feasting, and gladness and joy and light and honour, that we might enthuse each other, b&s, towards the kingdom of God. And you know, a man and a woman who are fired by the Word of God and inspired by it, and I've felt this, b&s, in measure in my own life with many failings, but in measure it's coming slowly, I have felt that one gets beyond criticism and you don't worry about it anymore, it doesn't really matter, and when people even applaud you in mock glory, that even in itself doesn't mean anything, all that means anything, b&s, is that we make the kingdom of God. And when we've got that in our hearts and in our breast, we shall carry that through the vicissitudes of life, and there's no other way you can get there; you've got to study the book, b&s. It's no good to neglect your studies, there's no way that we could make anything worthy in our lives, apart from that book! I know that and you know that, we sat down to do this study, b&s, with not a thought in our mind to give these talks or to make notes or to divide these studies up, just to mark it up in my bible; that to me is more important than anything in life, and it got done, (thanks be to God). I've got it there indelibly now for myself until Christ comes. That's what counts for me! and I hope it counts for you. Study the book, b&s, by all means study it and give portions to those who have none, and spread the joy of that book wherever you go, and there will be the strength and the mighty power of God in our lives, and do we need to worry about anything else? Don't we see over and above us through the story of Esther, the providence of God? what is man's devised plan for our downfall? so much so, let them throw the dice, there's no enchantment in Israel, b&s. What if people would hate us for reasons we know not why? does it need to concern us, b&s? should our measure of the love of the truth, be measured by their hate? Let the measure their hate be measured with themselves, but let the measure of our greatness be the measure of Jesus Christ's greatness, that we might be involved in His righteousness, that's all that matters, b&s. And if we put our lives in danger before the world, God will hold the golden sceptre out, all we need to do is hold the trouble out, that He's the seed of the world, and He will guide us through all the darkness of this world, b&s, it's a wonderful opportunity isn't it to come here, to learn such things? And our prayer is to our Heavenly Father, that all that we've done might give Him the most pleasure, that He would smile upon this place because of the hearts being such that they beat in rythmn with His own, that we might be men and women after God's own heart, and which I believe gives the Creator immense pleasure that He called us, and we give Him, b&s, our hearts and that's all one can do in life; and if we can do that through the study of the Word, we are going to achieve our objective, and in obtaining that objective, in conclusion let me say, b&s,

thanks be to our loving, glorious Heavenly Father who we love so dearly, for all He's done for us!