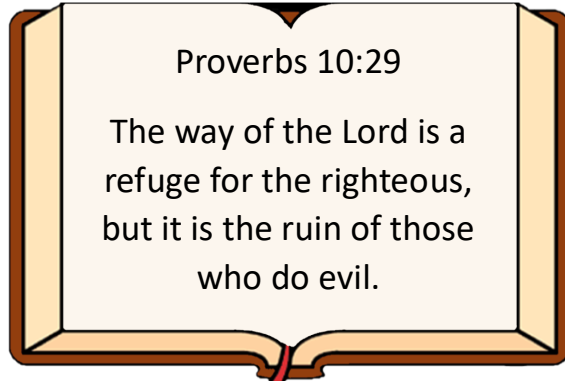


Weekly Memory Verse



God Saves Esther and Her People



A refuge is a safe place or a place of protection.

According to the verse, what is a refuge for the righteous?



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Lesson Link

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Esther and the other Jews spent three days fasting (or going without food) and asking God to give Esther courage to go to the king. They also played that the king would hold out his scepter to Esther and listen to her request for mercy for the Jews.

On the third day Esther went and stood in the inner courtyard of the palace, which faced the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne facing the doorway.

Finally, King Ahasuerus looked up and saw her standing there. The king was very pleased when he saw Esther and held out his scepter to her and she went up and touched the end of the scepter. This showed that the king wanted to see her.

Then the king asked, "What is it, Queen Esther? What do you want to ask me? I will give you as much as half of my kingdom."

Esther replied, "O King, if it pleases you, come today with Haman to a banquet I have prepared for him." She never mentioned the order against her people.

King Ahasuerus called his servants, "Bring Haman quickly so we may do what Queen Esther asks." At the banquet the king again asked Esther to make her request. But Esther still did not tell the king what she wanted; she was waiting for the right moment to make her request. So, she invited both of them to return the next day for another banquet.

Haman left the palace full of excitement. The people bowed when he passed by. But Mordecai still refused to bow to him. This made Haman angry.

When Haman arrived home, he boasted to his family and friends. He said, "I'm the only person the queen invited with the king to her banquet today and tomorrow. But all this does not really make me happy when I see Mordecai still refusing to honor me."

His wife and friends said to him, "Mordecai has disobeyed the king's order. Why don't you have someone build some gallows? In the morning ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on it. Haman was pleased and had the gallows built.

That very night King Ahasuerus could not sleep. So, he called for the official record book to be read to him. These records gave the history of the kingdom, and the actions of people who had served the king well. The record was read about Mordecai and how he had saved the king's life from a plot to kill him. The king asked, "What reward and honor was given to Mordecai for this?"

His servants answered, "Nothing has been done for him."

Early in the morning Haman arrived at the palace. When he was brought before King Ahasuerus, the king asked, "What should be done for a man the king wants to honor?"

Haman thought to himself, "Whom would the king want to honor more than me?" Haman was so full of pride; he could only think of himself.

Haman answered, "Let him appear as royalty before everyone, wearing the royal robe and riding a royal horse that the king has ridden. Have one of your most important men lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming to all, 'This is what is done for the man the king wants to honor!'"

Then the king ordered Haman, "Go and do everything you have said for Mordecai the Jew. Do not leave out anything you have suggested." Haman had to do this for the man he hated.

But Haman obeyed and put the royal robe on Mordecai and led him through the city before all the people.

Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate, and Haman hurried home, feeling very embarrassed. He told his wife and friends what had happened. They said to him, "Since Mordecai is a Jew, you cannot win against him. You will surely be ruined." They knew that no one could defeat the powerful God of the Jews.

Later that day King Ahasuerus and Haman went to Queen Esther's banquet. Once again, the king asked Esther, "What is your request? I will give it to you. I will give you as much as half of my kingdom."

This time Esther answered, "O King, if you are pleased with me, let me and my people live. We are going to be killed and completely wiped out.

Immediately the king demanded, "Who has dared to do such a thing?"

"Our enemy is this wicked man, Haman," Esther cried out.

The king angrily got up and went out into the garden. Haman stayed inside and begged Esther to show him mercy. When the king returned, his servant told him, "There are gallows near Haman's house. He was going to hang Mordecai on them."

The king ordered, "Hang Haman on it!" God's power won over the evil plans of man in order to save His people.

Esther told the king all about being a Jew and that Mordecai was her cousin. Then King Ahasuerus gave Haman's position to Mordecai, and Esther put him in charge of Haman's property.

But there was still a huge problem. It was the law that Haman had signed could not be changed or reversed. The Jews were still going to be killed.

So Esther spoke to the king again, "O King, let another order be written that will cancel the order against my people who are still in danger of being killed. I cannot stand to see this terrible thing happen to them."

The king gave Mordecai the job of writing another order. The new law gave all the Jews the right to protect and defend themselves, killing anyone who attacked them. They could also take anything that belonged to their enemies.

When the day of the battle finally arrived, the Jews were prepared to fight their enemies. None of their enemies were able to stand against them. Once again God showed that He was more powerful than any king or people or nation. God had used these evil circumstances to work out His plan for His people.

Circle the correct answer.

The king held out his (*scepter, hand, ring*) to show Esther she could speak to him.

Esther asked the King to save her L ____ _ .