

Esther 8:1-8

Esther 8:1-8 On that day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told how he was related to her. (2) So the king took off his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther appointed Mordecai over the house of Haman. (3) Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme which he had devised against the Jews. (4) And the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, (5) and said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have found favour in his sight and the thing seems right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to annihilate the Jews who are in all the king's provinces. (6) For how can I endure to see the evil that will come to my people? Or how can I endure to see the destruction of my countrymen?" (7) Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Indeed, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he tried to lay his hand on the Jews. (8) You yourselves write a decree concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring no one can revoke."

Questions On The Text

What did Ahasuerus give Esther?

Verses 1-2: On the same day that he was executed, Ahasuerus gave Haman's estate to Esther. Mordecai was invited into the king's presence as Esther had revealed his relationship to her. Mordecai was then advanced in two significant ways. First, having retrieved his signet ring from Haman, Ahasuerus then gave it to Mordecai, effectively making him first minister. No doubt the king realised that Mordecai was a man he could trust.

Second, since Esther was confined to the palace, she was in need of an estate manager for her newly acquired property. Mordecai was thus appointed.

What did Esther do next?

Verses 3-6: In the turmoil of all that had happened – the exposure of Haman's plot, his apparent assault upon the queen, his hanging, as well as the transfer of his estate to Esther – the small matter of the extermination of the entire Jewish race had been overlooked by the king.

It was thus necessary for Esther to broach the subject once more. Having fallen at the king's feet to plead, Esther was permitted to rise and she now took up the cause of her people. Her difficulty was that the law of the king could not be revoked (see 1:19; 8:8 and Daniel 6:8,12). Instead of referring to the fateful decree as the king's law, she emphasised Haman's role in the affair.

How did the king deal with the problem?

Verse 7-8: As ever, Ahasuerus didn't really deal with the problem, but passed the responsibility on to Esther and Mordecai. He reminded them that he had hanged Haman and given his estate to Esther and that seems to imply that that was to be the full extent of his involvement. The rest was up to Esther and Mordecai. Mordecai was further reminded that he had the king's signet ring. He and Esther were to draft their own decree in the name of the king.

Further Questions For Discussion:

Was Ahasuerus wise in the way he shared his authority with others?

How trustworthy were Mordecai and Esther in handling authority?

Why was there still a problem now that Haman was dead?

Ahasuerus told Esther and Mordecai to sort out the problem of the decree themselves by writing another decree. What do you think of his style of leadership?