

Deciding to Remember

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[0 : 0 0] I know you're expecting Christmas, but we have one last message from Esther.! We're going to look at the end of this book of Esther.

Beginning at verse 27, chapter 9, 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 that they would keep those two days according to their writing, and according to their appointed time every year.

And that those days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, every city. And that these days of Parim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed.

Then Esther the queen, the daughter of Abahel, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority to confirm this second letter of Parim. And they sent the letters unto all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, with the words of peace and truth, to confirm these days of Parim 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 matters of the fastings and their pride. And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Parim, and it was written in the book.

[1 : 5 8] And the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land and upon the isles of the sea, and all the acts of his power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?

For Mordecai the Jew was next unto King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace unto all his seed.

Let's have a word of prayer. Father, I pray this morning you would help us as we look at this passage of Scripture. As we finish this book of Esther, we thank you for the things we've been learning from it. Lord, how you worked in the people's lives, how you answered prayer, how you met the needs.

Lord, I just thank you that you do that for us as well. And Lord, may we remember that you do that. We may not celebrate Parim, but Lord, we have other ways of celebrating, other ways of remembering all the things that you have done for us.

And so Lord, I pray that we would never forget how you've taken care of us. Lord, I pray that you would speak the hearts this morning through this. We'd be reminded what a great God we have.

[3 : 1 5] Lord, minister, I pray now in Jesus' name. Amen. You know, the things we celebrate are usually the things we value. Last week we celebrated Thanksgiving.

Christmas is coming up. Hopefully you value those things. The thing, the matter of Thanksgiving, did you stop and remember what you're thankful for as we celebrate Thanksgiving?

Christmas is coming up. Do you stop and you remember what Christmas is all about? Despite what the stores and things may put up, do you remember what the real reason for Christmas is? You know, today you have to be so careful.

You know, people are offended by everything. You know, I'm actually hearing a few more Merry Christmases this year than I am Happy Holidays, and I enjoy that, the fact that we're hearing those things.

But sometimes you have to be careful. Sort of reminds me, I heard a story about a four-year-old boy. He was, not a four-year-old boy, fourth grader. And he was giving a report on the origins of Thanksgiving.

[4 : 18] And as he's giving his report, he talks, he says this, the pilgrims came here seeking freedom of you know what. He said, when they landed, they gave thanks to you know who.

And because of them, we can worship each Sunday. You know where. You know, didn't want to offend anybody, so you fill in the blank. You know, we do that a lot of times.

People, you know, they don't want to offend people, so they kind of stand fast for the things of Jesus Christ, stand fast for what he has done for us. See, when we celebrate these holidays, things, we're remembering what God has done for us.

We're remembering how he has taken care of us. And it's important that we teach the next generation. It's important that we teach our children and our grandchildren what is happening.

And over these past few weeks, we've talked about the story of Esther. We talked about how God had delivered them and taken care of them and met their every need. We talked about Esther's courage and the fact that God took care of her and he intervened in her behalf, blessing her for the courage that she had to stand up.

[5 : 30] Last time I said, we were talking about Parham and they were remembering God's deliverance. They remember how God took care of them. Remembering how God met the need that they have.

And here, Mordecai, he's going to write a decree now. And that decree is going to say, look, remember this holiday. Haman's been defeated. You have been delivered. Remember what God has done for you and how he has taken care of you.

See, our human nature is to forget. I think, in our most recent history, 9-11, we will never forget. 20 years later, we tend to forget, don't we?

It was a day that happened, something in the past, and you know, okay. Don't ever forget, he says. And Mordecai and Esther were saying, look, don't forget.

See, Christian, we should not forget the blessings. We should not forget the benefits. We should not forget how God has delivered us from our sin and given us everlasting life.

[6 : 36] Don't forget what he has done. And so, Mordecai and Esther established this day of Purim. And the Jews celebrate it.

We talked about how they celebrate it. And one of the things is, they read this book of Esther every year to remind them why they celebrate this day because of God's deliverance.

So this morning, I want to look at three important truths about the decisions that were made concerning this day. It was a decision made by Mordecai and by Esther that said, we're going to remember this day and what God has done.

First of all, it was an ordained decision. An ordained decision. Look at verse 27. The Jews ordained and took upon them.

What does that word ordained mean? You know, we hear it every once in a while. Well, first of all, it's a comprehensive term. Comprehensive.

[7 : 41] It includes a whole lot of things. But the thing I want you to catch about this is the word ordained itself means confirm, ratify, or establish.

They confirmed, they ratified, they established a holiday. A day of remembrance for what God had done for them.

So, two days every year in the month of March, for the Jews, it's the month Adair, they remember that it took upon them and upon their seed and upon all such as joined themselves unto them so as it should not fail.

They set this day aside, these two days aside, to remember. You know, one of the Jewish traditions of Parim, see those cookies up there?

Those triangular cookies? They're called Hamantashin. I think that's how you pronounce it. I asked our resident Jewish background person and they didn't know. So, okay, Hamantashin.

[8 : 51] So, there are three-cornered, jelly-filled cookies that are supposed to represent Hamant's hat. That's what the deal is. That's why they, Hamant's hat.

So, as they eat on these things and use these things as part of their celebration, they're reminded of who Hamant was and what he had done. And they're eating those cookies and Hamant is gone.

He's gone away. So, Mordecai recognized that future Jewish children needed to hear about this story.

They needed to hear how God had taken care of his people and God had met the needs. We, as parents, it is our job to make sure that our kids hear what God has done and how God has taken care of us and how God has met our needs.

Why do we celebrate Christmas? Why do we celebrate Easter? Why do we do those things? To remind us of a God who loves us. A God whose son came and died for us.

[9 : 57] Who took away our sins and gave us the ability to spend now through all eternity with God. God met the needs that we have.

Second of all, it's a written thing that they did. A written thing. Mordecai is having this made to a declaration. A declaration that goes out to all the 127 promises.

A declaration that goes out and tells them that we're going to remember these two days for the rest of time. He says, keep these two days set aside. Do you remember the things that God has done for you?

A lot of times when there's people come for counseling, ladies come for counseling with Bonnie and they're complaining about this and that and that and she will tell them you need to start a book and every day you need to write in that book a blessing that God has done for you that day.

Be looking for the blessings how God is meeting needs, how God is taking care of you. Have that blessing written down so that when you come to these days when you're just oh everything's terrible, everything's awful, nothing going right, I don't know where God is, I don't know what, you can go back to that book and say God met this need and God met this need and God met this need you need to write it down and Haman and not Haman Mordecai wrote it down and said remember this day these two days remember them and then he memorialized it he made it a holiday he made it a feast he made it a time that they're going to remember notice the end of that verse it says according to their appointed time every year there was an appointed time every year for them to remember what happened it was an annual celebration they met the needs of the needy they fellowshiped with family and friends it's sort of like us we have anniversaries and birthdays and things we remember the people that are involved we have Christmas and Easter and we remember what God has done they remembered how God had taken care of them 2nd Timothy 112

[12 : 09] Paul writes to Timothy and he says this for the witch cause also I suffer these things nevertheless I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day Paul says I'm facing different things I'm facing different trials I'm facing different persecutions I'm facing other things but I'm persuaded that he is able to keep that why?

because Paul reversed it in his mind he went over and over he knew how God had taken care of him see forgetfulness is easy none of us have any trouble forgetting anything do we and the older you get the more you forget that's just because we have so much in there we have to push some stuff out because we got all this other stuff coming in right that's the pie okay so God wants us to remember what he has done and again he wants us to carry it on for our children and our grandchildren remind them that God is faithful God is always there for you Warren Wiersbe said that it's sad when a nation or a church forgets its heroes and the providential events that have kept it alive how easy it is for a new generation to come along and take for granted the blessings that previous generations struggled and sacrificed to attain the Jews didn't make that mistake but established the feast of Parim to remind their children year after year that God had saved

Israel from destruction remind your children how God has saved you from destruction remind your children how God brings salvation to all of us how he gave his life so that we could just reach out and we can accept the gift that he has given to us of salvation and we can have it for all eternity Psalm 34 11 come ye children hearken unto me I will teach you the fear of the Lord are you teaching your children the fear of the Lord are you teaching them that God takes care of you it's important for us to pass down these things it's important for us to let them know and to share with them how God is taking care of us so Mordecai made an ordained decision he established it so that people would remember second it was a rehearsed decision a rehearsed decision what do I mean by that you don't just tell them once you tell them over and over and over you keep bringing it up to them so he said look

Parham's going to be celebrated these two days every year we're going to do it every year and when he said in verse 28 he says and that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation every family every province every city he said why Parham should not fail from among the Jews and the memorial of them perish from their seed I want you to remember it all the time I want you to keep telling them all the time it should be first of all a perpetual thing a perpetual thing we're going to give it to them and we're going to let them know what these traditions are all about why do we celebrate Christmas why do we celebrate Easter why do we celebrate these things do we tell our kids why we do these things and it's not because of what the stores are selling it's not because of what they're going to get it's because of what Jesus Christ has done for us 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 15 says this therefore brethren stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught whether by word or our epistle stand fast and hold the traditions whereby you've been taught what's a tradition a tradition is preserving the truths the victories and the history passed down over generations for a Christian is passing down what we know from the

New Testament and the Old Testament passing it on to future generations now take that as opposed to traditionalism traditionalism is just empty ritual we do things over and over and over again just because we've always done it that way we do it because well everybody I know has always done it that way I'm not completely sure why but that's how we do it that's traditionalism kind of reminds you of the story I think I've used this one before but two newlyweds were in their new apartment and they're fixing one of their first meals there and they decide to have ham and so they're going to have a ham and the wife's getting it ready and the first thing she does is the ham is set there and she lops off both ends of the ham and throws them in the trash and her husband's like whoa whoa whoa why did you cut off the ends and throw them away his wife said well I'm not sure but my mother always did it that way

[17 : 46] I think it has something to do with the flavor well he wasn't satisfied with that so he calls up mother-in-law your daughter just cut off the ends of the ham and threw them away why did you do that she said well you know what I'm not sure but it always tasted delicious he says hmm not satisfied her mom had always done it that way so she did it too so he's not satisfied with that and so he calls up grandma grandma why did you always cut the ends off the ham she said oh yes dear that was I had to cut the ends off so it fit in my pan see sometimes we do things just because everybody else has done it that way that's not the reason for us to do things bible traditions are for us to keep things according to the word of god there's a guy up here show that next one

I can't pronounce that guy's name he's a bible scholar and everything but he said this tradition is a living faith of the dead traditionalism is the dead faith of the living see sometimes we just keep doing things for no reason and don't understand why but we just keep doing it without ever thinking about what's the purpose what's it for but he says tradition is a living faith of the dead we carry on those things from the new testament the old testament that god says these are important i put them in my word i want you to do them they're!

for you! in a few minutes we're going to have communion why do we do that because god said it was important god says do this to remember which is what we're going to do i had another story but i'm going to skip that one um bible traditions that we have include things that are in the bible that are regular practices for us why do we come to church every sunday because hebrews 10 25 says for sake not the assembly of yourselves together why do we have preaching because acts 15 35 talks about that why do we tithe and give first corinthians 16 talks about that why do we observe the lord's supper!

do these things because i've instructed you to do that why do we continue doing christmas and easter because god has instructed us to remember those things he's done not only that but he does this is a particular it's not a perpetual but it's also a particular thing that he wants done mordecai said look i want you to do this and i want every!

family! every! province every city to do this because i want your kids and your grandkids and those that come after to remember parents you ever stop and think the influence you have on your children deuteronomy 6!

[21 : 09] 6! and these words which i command these this day shall be in thine heart and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shall talk of them when thou sit in thine house when thou walk in the way when thou lie down and when thou rise up i want you to do this constantly i want this to always be in the forefront of your mind i want you to take take every opportunity you have to teach your children there was a pastor who was a bivocational pastor that means he was pastor of the church but he also had another job to help make in speak in this particular pastor he had a he had a job working at a feed processing plant in

Ohio and he was trying to provide for his family! and! one day he was actually home working and he was outside working doing things and working in the dirt and stuff and his little boy is out there with him and he is picking up dirt and throwing it on himself and he is picking up rocks and rubbing them on himself and finally dad says what are you doing he said I I am trying to make myself dusty like you dad and what am I teaching them what am I showing them because they watch everything I do what a responsibility we have to raise our children the feast of Purim was perpetuated by these things that

Mordecai and Esther had set up individual families were to prioritize it as part of their family home and it became a holiday to the Jews it became an official holiday third thing it's official they put it in a decree look at verse 29 then Esther the queen the daughter of Abihel and Mordecai the Jew wrote with all authority to confirm this second letter of Purim and he sent letters to all the Jews 127 promises of the kingdom of Ahasuerus with words of peace and truth to confirm these days of Purim in their times appointed he made it a decree verse 32 and the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim and it was written in the book so the decree goes out 127 provinces it goes out to all the Jews throughout all of those all that kingdom of Persia it goes out to all of them to have fasting and to prayer and the decree is written in a book we'll talk more about that book in a second you know we have a book you've got it sitting on your lap there probably or sitting in the seat beside you you have a book that gives you things to keep it gives you things to watch it gives you things to concentrate on to teach to your children

God has given them to you so that you can do that Deuteronomy 29 29 the secret things belong unto the Lord our God but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever that we may do all the words of this law and to our children forever children grandchildren great grandchildren great great grandchildren and just keep on going he's given it to us so that we can share it with them all of you especially those in Sunday school with me 2 Timothy 3 16 and 17 all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine for reproof for correction for instruction and righteousness that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works he says I've given it to you so that you can know it I've given it to you so you can make decisions and things that are in line with what

God's where it has for you I've given them to you so you can pass them on to others third thing it was a sustained decision sustained decision again they say it's going to happen all the time every year we go into chapter 10 and how is it going to be sustained first of all by the leadership leadership is essential things do not keep going if you don't!

[26 : 06] leadership! in Esther 10 it talks about Ahasuerus and what he has done it talks about Mordecai look at verse 2 in all the acts of his power and of his might and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai where unto the king advanced him are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia for Mordecai the Jew was nixed unto King Ahasuerus and great among the Jews and accepted the multitude of his brethren seeking the welfare of his people and speaking peace to all his seed Mordecai was a great leader Mordecai accomplished so much and under his guidance one of the things King Ahasuerus did is he set up tribute throughout his 127 promises he taxed the people taxes we hate taxes don't we but he taxed the people which was a good thing why was that a good thing because remember how this story started

Haman had convinced the king let's just kill off all the Jews you kill off all the Jews and I'm going to give you all this money taxing is a whole lot better way than killing off a whole group of people much better way so Mordecai is leading him Mordecai is helping him so that he can keep his treasuries full and you remember Mordecai another way he led quietly Mordecai saved the king's life twice remember the first time there were people planning to assassinate him and he let them know what was going on and the king's life was saved the second time if the king had carried through with his killing of all the Jews what would God have done to him so he saved his life twice now and so the king writes in his book about what a great man Mordecai is he first saved the king from assassination and then from destruction by

God but the thing about Mordecai unlike Haman Mordecai was humble Mordecai wasn't pushing for all of this he wasn't trying to get his name out there he wasn't trying to get to be second in the leadership after the king sort of reminds you of Joseph doesn't it same thing Proverbs 15 33 the fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom and before honor is humility catch that before honor is humility he's doing all these things not expecting reward not expecting anything in return he's just doing them because of the right thing to do and he's humble about it Proverbs 25 6 and 7 Proverbs 25 6 and 7 says put not forth thyself in the presence of the king and stand not in the place of great men for better it is that it be said unto thee come up hither then it is thou should be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen what does all that mean hey king here

I am look at what I'm doing I'm helping you out I saved your life twice I took care of this and I took care of that no! he stood back here and just did his thing and the king says Mordecai come up here as opposed to Haman who had been up here going hey look at all the things that I'm doing Haman go to the gallows and be hung he says it's a whole lot better to be back here and have somebody say hey you're doing a great job come on up here let's have a talk that's part of what effective leadership is which is the second thing leadership that is effective Mordecai had effective leadership did you know what motivated Mordecai look at chapter 10 verse 3 it says Mordecai the Jew was nixed unto king Ahasuerus and great among the Jews and accepted the multitude!

of his brethren seeking the wealth of his people he was more concerned about the people and what was going on he was more concerned about what was happening with them and when did he learn that in the scriptures remember we talked about this before go back to Genesis chapter 12 you don't have to turn there verse 3 I will bless them that bless thee I will curse them that curse thee I'm going to take care see our leaders today usually are more concerned about facing what they want than what the people need we need to do the things that people need and Mordecai did that you know we don't celebrate Parham the Jews still do but we don't but we do celebrate God's deliverance of us we celebrate how God has taken care of us how did God take care of us Jesus

[31 : 25] Christ came from heaven above down to this earth gave his life that we might have eternal life gave his life that we might have walking beside us day by day as we go through life now he came so that we might have salvation this morning because of the nature of this message we're going to remember that we're going to take time to remember what Jesus Christ has done for us in first Corinthians chapter 11 beginning at verse 23 it says this for I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks he break it and said take eat this is my body which is broken for you this do in remembrance of me after the same manner also he took the cup when he had stopped saying this cup is the new testament in my blood this do ye as often as ye drink it in remembrance of me what was param all about remembering how

God had taken care of them what is this communion all about it's remembering how God has taken care of us so in first Corinthians 11 it says that before they took communion he says examine yourselves so we're going to take a moment to examine ourselves send some time in prayer if there's anything in your life that shouldn't be there confess it get it before God let him cleanse you so that you come before this table clean and pure before God so that he can work in your life and show you who he is so take a few moments to pray!

now we're to go to to do!