

# A Time to Stand

...for such a time as this. Esther 4:14



The Counter-Decree  
Esther 8  
Lesson 8

## Background Information

On the same day as Haman's execution, the king gave his queen the house of Haman. This was keeping with the Persian law, which put the estate of a traitor into the custody of the crown. Mordecai was given Haman's position as prime minister. He received the full authority of the king. Esther then put him in charge of Haman's estate, which gave him great wealth.

Knowing that her people were still in great danger, because of the King's edict, Esther passionately pleaded for the lives of her people. Because the first decree was unable to be revoked, because of Persian Law, Ahasuerus, gave Esther and Mordecai the power to write a second decree which would invalidate the first decree. The second decree would carry all the weight of the former one-but would reverse the expected results.

When Mordecai, dressed in royal attire, into the city of Shushan, he received a joyful welcome from the whole city Jew and Gentile alike. The residents of the city rejoiced that Mordecai had been appointed as prime minister.

When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice;  
But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.  
Proverbs 29:2

## *Treasures of the Heart*

*If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor 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...*

*Esther 8:5*

## What are the facts? - Observation

The first step is **Observation**. Carefully **read the text** in several translations, paying close attention to the **facts**. **Mark your text**: look for repeated words, contrasts or comparisons. Look for answers to: Who? What? When? Where? Why or How? Studying a narrative requires following the key characters and paying special attention to what God says and does. Note a key verse in each section, to help you understand the main emphasis of the section?

### Esther 8:1-6

1 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 scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, 5 and said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor 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?"

## Dig Deeper - Interpretation

The second step is **Interpretation**. This is the time to dig out your study tools, such as a bible dictionary, concordance, maps, or word study tools. Keys to correct interpretation are **context**, **repeated words**, **word definitions**, **patterns (similarities/differences)**, **culture and cross-references**. **Notate** where you found it to share with the group. Interpretation answers the question, "What was the original author trying to convey?"

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## Esther 8:7-14

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."

9 So the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces in all, to every province in its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. 10 And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed it with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses bred from swift steeds.

11 By these letters the king permitted the Jews who were in every city to gather together and protect their lives — to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, both little children and women, and to plunder their possessions, 12 on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. 13 A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province and published for all people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. 14 The couriers who rode on royal horses went out, hastened and pressed on by the king's command. And the decree was issued in Shushan the citadel.



## Lesson

What lesson can I draw from my observations? A lesson is a general principle or basic truth drawn from the passage. **Note** the verse you took the lesson from. (aim for 10 words or less)

Esther 8:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_  
verse \_\_\_\_\_

Esther 8:7-14 \_\_\_\_\_  
verse \_\_\_\_\_

Esther 8:15-17 \_\_\_\_\_  
verse \_\_\_\_\_

## Application

**Pray!** – Simply state how you will apply each lesson. Is there a challenge, a command, a warning or an example? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What is God saying (to me) through this truth? What am I going to do practically in response to God's Word? (aim for 10 words or less)

Esther 8:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Esther 8:7-14 \_\_\_\_\_

Esther 8:15-17 \_\_\_\_\_

## Words or repeated phrases

Repeated words help us discover the **main point**.

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## Getting the point!

State the "Main Point" of each section. See if you can boil down the meaning of each section into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try)

Esther 8:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Esther 8:7-14 \_\_\_\_\_

Esther 8:15-17 \_\_\_\_\_

## Main idea

Simply state the main idea of the whole passage in one or two sentences.

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### Title

State the main point of the entire passage in the form of a title.

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## Flex Your Muscles

Find a New Testament example of this Old Testament truth.

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## Time to stand

**Time to think:** How will we know how to respond to life's ups and downs? God's Word is always the basis of our choices. Knowing who He is helps us face whatever circumstances we find ourselves in. **What did you learn about God, that will help you stand firm...in such a time as this?**

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### *Radiating His Truth*

*You were under the law of sin and death. God did not revoke that law-He obeyed it!  
He sent His Son to die for our sins and to bring in "the law of the Spirit of life."*



