

# Mordecai Versus Haman

Esther 2:19-3:6

## Previously in *Esther*...

In the first message titled **The Providence of God**, we discovered that the Persians have been the world power for 56-years, when the Medes and Persians defeated Babylon, and released Judah from its 70-years of captivity. *Ahasuerus*, aka *Xerxes*, is the present Persian king. The book of Esther covers a decade, from 483 B.C. to 473 B.C. In Susa, Ahasuerus' summer capital, there's no Jewish synagogue or outward worship of their God, Yahweh. Anti-Jewish sentiment was very present throughout the kingdom, so the spiritual Jews in the city were driven underground. However, clearly seen throughout Esther is **the book's purpose: to highlight the providential care of God**, as He *provides for* and *protects* His people according to His promises. But it doesn't keep Satan from trying to destroy Israel. Esther's a classic example of *good versus evil*.

The second message from Esther 1, titled **A National Crisis**, in the third year of Ahasuerus' reign, he gave a long, drawn-out feast to gather together all his political and military leaders from all 127 provinces, presumably to make plans for next year's military campaign against Greece. After this feast, feeling good about himself and his plan, he gave another feast, a seven-day affair for the men in Susa. And, on the seventh day, when he was happily drunk, he ordered his wife, Queen Vashti, to show off her exquisite beauty before him and all the other drunks. When she refused to be displayed in such a vulgar manner, the king became enraged, and agreed with his counselors to forever banish Vashti from the king's presence, with the further counsel, "And let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she."

The third message from chapter 2 is titled **Esther the Queen**. God providentially elevated Esther from anonymity to the First Lady of the vast Persian Empire as Vashti's replacement. But, how did He do it? (Esther 2:2-4). After 12-months of preparation, each young virgin went in to King Ahasuerus, in this long discovery process as to who will become his new queen in Vashti's place. Finally, it was Esther's turn *and* time to meet her God-ordained destiny (17).

Beginning with today's text and throughout the rest of the story, we clearly see **good versus evil**—we see **godly good** and **satanic evil** pitted against one another. And, Mordecai, God's man, represents **God's good in the world**. But then enters the super-villain, Haman, who represents **Satan's evil in the world**. It's **Mordecai Versus Haman**, which is a living picture of **God Versus Satan** in the world.

## Good versus evil:

### 1. Mordecai, the \_\_\_\_\_ guy (19-23).

The king's gate was the place where appointed officials sat to hold court in the king's name and to settle disputes, and Mordecai was one of these officials. Being an official at the king's gate explains how he uncovered the plot to assassinate the king.

Because Queen Esther credited Mordecai for uncovering the conspiracy, his name, along with all the details of the drama, was written in the official chronicles in the presence of the king. What's odd is that Mordecai wasn't rewarded for saving the king's life. It's reminiscent of Joseph who was "forgotten" in prison by Pharaoh's cupbearer, until the ordained time of God. The same thing's happening here. Oversights in God's plan for His people, including His plan for us, are simply His providential \_\_\_\_\_ to accomplish His good purposes. So, God is *the God of this oversight* by the king. But God made sure the facts were permanently recorded in the king's chronicles, for our God sees to it that at just the right time no good work is ever wasted or unrewarded.

### 2. Haman, the \_\_\_\_\_ guy (1-6).

King Ahasuerus' promotion of Haman demonstrates once again that this king isn't a principled man. Either character didn't matter to him, or he simply lacked the ability to measure the true worth of a man. Consequently, he lifted up to this highest position possible in his kingdom Haman *instead of* Mordecai.

Why would Mordecai, in this instance, disobey the king by not bowing down before the king's chosen ruler? Notice in verse 1 that Haman is called "the Agagite." Under King Saul's kingship in 1 Samuel 15, God through Samuel, commanded Saul to wipe out the Amalekites from the face of the earth. God had not \_\_\_\_\_ how the Amalekites

had opposed Israel when they had come out of Egypt on their way to the Promised Land. And, now Saul was to be God's holy instrument, and was commanded by God to spare none, including their livestock. "But Saul...*spared* Agag [the king] and the best of the sheep and of the oxen... and all that was good, and *would not* utterly destroy them." Consequently, the kingdom of was taken from Saul.

According to Esther 2:5, Mordecai is a Benjamite. King Saul was a Benjamite! And, Jewish tradition considers Haman to be the descendant of King Agag—that's why he's called "the Agagite." And, Mordecai, being more noble than his descendant Saul, is not going to make Saul's \_\_\_\_\_. Mordecai, a believer in Yahweh, is willing to pay a great price for disobeying the king and reigniting an age-old feud.

And after days of not listening to the other officials, they wanted to know if Mordecai's word would stand. "Let's see if he will maintain his principled \_\_\_\_\_ once Haman knows."

It wasn't enough for Haman to "lay hands on Mordecai alone." That level of revenge would not satisfy this most wicked man! "So," **verse 6b**... The only thing that would satisfy his wounded, wicked pride, was the extermination of every Jew on earth, including those faithful Jews who were back in the land of Judah living for God according to the Law. And, if he's successful, the Messiah—the Word of God and the Son of God, the Light of the world—would not \_\_\_\_\_. Now, in our day and age, Satan has two groups he's targeting: Israel *and* Christianity. **So...**

## **As long as we live in a dark world...**

As long as we live in a dark world with desperately dark people surrounding us, and the great, dark enemy of light prodding them on, our spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ is in jeopardy. Satan would love nothing more than to snuff out our personal, family, or church family light.

**1 Peter 5:6-9: Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, <sup>7</sup>casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. <sup>8</sup>Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. <sup>9</sup>Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.**