

Haman: The Book of Esther (Slide 1)
The False Security of Pride and Position

Reading: Proverbs 11:2-11

Last week we began a short study on the Book of Esther. We learned a great deal about Esther and Mordecai. Their allegiance was with God. Their faith is the express type of *purity* God is looking for in mankind.

Both were Jews and were in *gentile* captivity being ruled by the *King of Persia*. Though we will soon see their allegiance tested, particularly that of Mordecai, we will learn that they are unwilling to share their allegiance with anyone other than God and what is best for God's nation.

A true testament to the ***pure in heart*** that wishes to see God!!

We learned that Mordecai was Esther's caretaker after her parents died. We know that he was her cousin and that he loved her very much as we have witnessed in the pages of this book. He had tremendous concern for her while she made preparations to be presented to the King. He ***paced back and forth*** hoping for word on her wellbeing.

Esther was a very young and beautiful girl on the outside and the inside. Despite her youth and feelings toward those who held her in captivity, she was pleasant to all and obedient in faith to God.

Though the Book doesn't come out and say so, I believe the message is clear that Esther loved Mordecai, God (who we noted last week isn't mentioned by name), her countrymen and her country. With that in mind, the *Book of Esther* is above all a love story. God's love and providence is seen in the character of his people.

It is also a love story that very well could have cost Esther, though the Queen *of the Persian Empire*, her very own life.....nevertheless, Esther's character epitomized the concepts written by the Apostle Paul long after she had departed this life.

Romans 12:9-18 (Slide 2)

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; (Slide 3) 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those

who weep. (Slide 4) 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

Mordecai, without knowing at the time, by doing the right thing, would save his own life. By informing Queen Esther of the plot to kill the King by the hands of those who were close to him, Mordecai will be spared certain death. His life is in the hands of God who saves.

Esther 3

It's hard to imagine a hatred so intense for people based on their nationality, their religion, their differences or any other characteristic. But that is the defining character of ***Haman*** in Chapter 3 of the Book of Esther. He hated the Jews.

As He rises in power above all the princes in all the provinces, we see that he is in a position to act upon his hatred. Hate in his heart and true allegiance only to

himself helps us identify the opposite of purity. The impure narcissist with murderous intent.

1 John 3:13-15 (Slide 5)

13 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. (Slide 6) 15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

John never writes anything that would cause us to justify a murderous hatred for others who are our enemies or are different. As we just read a few moments ago, Apostle Paul says to ***“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.”*** We are not to repay ***evil for evil*** so our feelings toward those who hate us cannot be retaliatory in nature.

That does not mean that we don't protect ourselves from those who mean us harm. But we do so as humanely as possible.

Though John, just a few verses before what we just read, expressed the absence of love that Cain had for Abel, I believe he is also depicting the right relationship that those who identify as God's people should have for all men and especially for those whom they call brother.

To feel hate toward anyone is to express the same desire that causes many to commit murder. That is, jealousy, contempt, disdain, envy, hatred, self-seeking and much more of which drove Cain to commit the first recorded murder in man's history. Cain's evil is duplicated in the heart of **Haman** in the Book of Esther.

Haman, Esther 3:1, as I mentioned, was promoted above every prince in the land. It would seem that he was second in command with only the King above him.

The power of the position, sanctioned by the King, was so great within the Persian Empire that all others who served the King must bow down before **Haman**. Esther 3:2

Haman, coupled with pride, felt untouchable because of his position and the power and the prestige that came along with it. But we know from the writer of **Proverbs**; ***pride goeth before the fall.***

Matthew 23:12 (Slide 7)

And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

*Mordecai had a righteous reaction to **Haman's** position.*

Esther 3:2b (Slide 8)

But Mordecai would not bow or pay homage.

Mordecai held to the concept in God's very first command written in stone by the finger of God from his own Jewish heritage found in:

Exodus 20.3 (Slide 9)

"You shall have no other gods before Me." Haman had an ego so large that he wanted people to consider him as a god.

The purity that God demands is that of singular allegiance to Him. No other God, person, place or object can occupy this place of devotion reserved for God and Him alone.

The allegiance that God demands is one that could cost one their very life.

25 to 50 years before Esther, a similar incident took place found in the book of Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar had a 90 foot tall golden image, likely representing his likeness, fashioned and erected so that when people heard a combination of instruments played they were to immediately bow down and worship at the golden image. To refuse to bow down meant certain death.

Daniel's friends refused to do so and were cast into the fiery furnace. But before that happened, King **Nebuchadnezzar, enraged** at their refusal, asked them if it was true that they would not bow down before the image and said to them do you not also realize that you will be cast into the fiery furnace?

The 3 friends of Daniel responded with what could have been their last words:

Daniel 3:16b-18 (Slide 10)

16b "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17 If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. (Slide 11) 18 But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."

(Slide 12) The ***pure in heart*** who will see God have an unwavering allegiance to Him in simple faith!!

Offer your body as a living sacrifice. Romans 12:1

Submit yourselves to God. James 4:7

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him. Psalm 37:7a

Haman, burning with rage toward Mordecai, understood that if Mordecai had this kind of allegiance to God that to kill him and just him would leave all other Jews alive who may be just as bound by this allegiance. His solution was to kill them all. **Esther 3:6**

Haman had to turn the King against the Jews!!

Esther 3:8-9 (Slide 13)

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws.

Haman believed that the King would be angered because these people were dishonoring the name of the King and his authority.

(Slide 14) **Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain. 9 If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who do the work, to bring it into the king's treasuries."**

Haman paints a picture of a people who are a threat to not only the laws of the King, but one in which if they are given

time, they will change the cultural landscape that exists in the King's provinces.

Culture clash is something that has been on-going nearly from the beginning of man's time on earth. The way of life changes from generation to generation and from locality to locality.

Culture clash occurs when people display a different value system, belief, tradition, even behavior. I do believe that we are to be on the alert for this very thing nevertheless our response should be different.

Our American culture is quite different from middle-eastern culture. Some of the main differences are how we in the U.S. value personal independence, whereas middle-eastern culture has a high regard for *Communitarianism*.

We structure our society for the most part in a way that each individual can make his own decision, build his own life financially, and choose their own family. In the middle-east much of the structure is chosen for the individual as well as the family dynamic.

Communitarianism rejects both a conservative view and liberal view that we see expressed in our country. Moral

view is developed through a common view point that of extremism driven by religion and exclusion.

In reality, though not achieved, commonality is important even in our culture when it comes to religious bonding through Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:10 (Slide 15)

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

We have made division the norm in this country and to our spiritual detriment!

Apostle Paul again states the commonality we must have in:

Ephesians 4:3 (Slide 16)

endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Apostle Paul utilized the word ***endeavoring*** because by nature we hold differing views which challenges unity. He

scolded the church at *Corinth* for that very reason because they were failing to act in a common fashion and because of the absence of unity.

However, the point is that we should all have things in common when it comes to our faith. Even though we may have some differing view points, the foundation of our faith is rooted in the fundamental principles of the facts of the Gospel.

In mid-eastern culture, religion is a major aspect of every element of one's daily life. One is so entrenched in that common view that detractors are to be dealt with extreme prejudice; including execution or complete racial annihilation so that their perceived foreign or extreme views are crushed.

In addition, the way men treat women and children in the U.S. in comparison to mid-eastern culture is quite different. Education, conservative values (which are challenged here) and many other aspects are viewed much differently in other cultures.

Nevertheless, "*Hatred*" and arrogance are **Haman's** main motivation to exterminate the Jews. It isn't that he truly

feels a threat from them in any way, it is simply that his heart is evil.

Haman's argument, spoken with false posturing, was quite convincing because the King responded as he hoped:

Esther 3:10-15 (Slide 17)

10 So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. 11 And the king said to Haman, "The money and the people are given to you, to do with them as seems good to you."

(Slide 18) ***12 Then the king's scribes were called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and a decree was written according to all that Haman commanded—to the king's satraps, to the governors who were over each province, to the officials of all people, (Slide 19) to every province according to its script, and to every people in their language. In the name of King Ahasuerus it was written, and sealed with the king's signet ring. 13 And the letters were sent by couriers into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, (Slide 20) both young and old, little children and women, in one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their possessions. 14 A copy***

of the document was to be issued as law in every province, (Slide 21) being published for all people, that they should be ready for that day. 15 The couriers went out, hastened by the king's command; and the decree was proclaimed in Shushan the citadel. So the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Shushan was perplexed.

While the city of ***Shushan was perplexed*** that such violence was necessary, the King and ***Haman*** drank a toast to the King's decree.

To me it is unimaginable that such hatred exists. Perhaps from a viewpoint of religion and culture, people will always clash, but one would hope that unity could exist from the standpoint of commonality of *"just being human."*

Mordecai, Esther and perhaps most of the Jews were not willing to abandon their allegiance and relationship with God no matter the cost. How about us?

John 15:18 (Slide 22)

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you."

If we are to be pure in heart, expect the world to have pure hatred toward you!

*Lord willing, more of the story of **Haman** next week.*

Invitation

*Today, while there is still time we offer Christ's invitation.
If you have not been buried with Him in baptism, why
wait? Do it today.*

*If you are in Christ but need the prayers of your Brethren
for any reason, please let us know.....*

*Let us know how we may help you in your walk with
Jesus.....*

Reading

Proverbs 11:2-11

**2 When pride comes, then comes shame;
But with the humble is wisdom.**

**3 The integrity of the upright will guide them,
But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.**

**4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,
But righteousness delivers from death.**

**5 The righteousness of the blameless will [c]direct his
way aright,
But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.**

**6 The righteousness of the upright will deliver them,
But the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.**

**7 When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish,
And the hope of the unjust perishes.**

**8 The righteous is delivered from trouble,
And it comes to the wicked instead.**

**9 The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor,
But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.**

**10 When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices;
And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.**

**11 By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted,
But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.**

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