

HONOURING GOD, NO MATTER THE COST

BACKGROUND STORIES:

1 Samuel 15:19 and 2 Samuel 16:5-12

1. Because Saul was not willing to honour God first, a man was born by the name of Haman who desired to kill all of the Jews.
2. Because David was willing to honour God first, a man was born by the name of Mordecai who would save the Jews.

HAMAN'S POSITION (ESTHER 3:1-6)

- Haman was an Agagite.

“After these events, King Xerxes honoured Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honour higher than that of all the other nobles.”

- Esther 3:1

- He was given a high position (that of vizier or second in command) and people were ordered to bow to him.
- When Mordecai would not bow, Haman was enraged and decided to kill all of the Jews. *(Some things never change.)*

MORDECAI'S REFUSAL TO BOW

- Mordecai stood alone and would not bow to Haman.

- Possibly because a man of God bows only to God.

“Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if He does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

- Daniel 3:16-18

- Possibly because of Haman's people and God's words.

“Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and cut off all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God. When the LORD your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land He is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget!”

- Deuteronomy 25:17-19

HAMAN'S PLAN (ESTHER 3:7-15)

- A “pur” or lot was cast to choose a day to destroy all of the Jews.
- This happened in the first month of the year, but the lot fell on the 12th month and the 13th day – nearly a year away.

“The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.” - Proverbs 16:33

- Haman hated the Jews immensely, willing to put up ten thousand talents of silver of his own money. (\$100 million dollars today.)
- Haman received the king's permission to destroy a “certain people” and was also given the king's signet ring.
- The edicts were written in every language and dispatched to every province. *(Remember, an edict in Persia could not be changed.)*
- This edict meant nothing to the king or to Haman.

“Spurred on by the king's command, the couriers went out, and the edict was issued in the citadel of Susa. The king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was bewildered.”

- Esther 3:15

MORDECAI'S HOPE (ESTHER 4:1-8)

- Mordecai and his people first turned to their God (fasting). *Why is prayer not mentioned?*
- Mordecai's second source of hope was Esther.
 - He told Esther the story of the edict. (Ivory tower?)
 - He told her the amount of money offered by Haman.
 - He urged Esther to beg for mercy for her people.

ESTHER'S FEAR (ESTHER 4:9-11)

- She reminded Mordecai that no one *(not even the queen)* can enter the king's presence without his call. *(Penalty is death!)*
- She explained that she had not seen the king in 30 days.

MORDECAI'S FAITH (ESTHER 4:12-14)

- He reminded Esther that she was a Jew as well.
- He explained that the Jews would be saved one way or another. (He was expressing tremendous faith.)
- He reminded her of her position, which had been granted her by God's hand, and therefore came with responsibility.

ESTHER'S COURAGE (ESTHER 4:15-17)

- Esther asked that her people fast (pray). *(Three days?)*
- She committed to speaking to the king on behalf of the Jews.

OUR LESSONS?

Haman

Esther

Mordecai

OUR KEY THOUGHT

- Only you can honour God, no matter the cost.

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