
a *Grace Notes* Bible Study

Esther

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Grace Notes

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Esther

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Preview to the Study of Esther

The key to understanding the purpose of the book of Esther hinges upon two pre-consideration. First, the understanding the decisions of the characters in this account, while made in Babylon, had direct effect upon the Jews in Jerusalem.

1. When the edict went out that on a certain date all the Jews in the Babylonian empire would be destroyed, this genocide would have included the Jews who had returned to the Land.

The people were informed of the order nearly a year prior to the date the order was to be carried out. One year of sitting on edge wondering if they would be destroyed.

HENCE, the information in Esther tells how the genocide of the Jews, the first proposed pogrom of anti-Semitism in history, was averted.

2. Secondly, we have to bear in mind the recipients of the book. This book was written in Jerusalem about events in Babylon where a majority of Jews still resided (Throughout the whole empire by now).

As these Jews in Jerusalem of Judah read this story they were able to see how God was in control of even the Jews who refused to return to the Land of Promise. The Jews of Babylon were out of the geographical will of God and not terribly concerned about spiritual things.

This is illustrated by the writer not once referring to God by name or even pronoun.

Yet, God's sovereign power is magnificently displayed in this story.

The Jews in Jerusalem could read this and be greatly encouraged knowing that if God is in control in Babylon, how much more so with those in Jerusalem, in his geographical will, who are calling daily upon the name of the most height God.

APPLICATION: Today we can take great comfort and gain great encouragement from this story also. There are believers, Christians today out of the will of God but God is still in control just as He was in Esther's day. For those who know that they are in God's will, how much more is God in control of every facet of their lives.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER:

This book unfolds like a play. It has plot, intrigue, counter plot, irony, climax, and conclusion.

There are four acts to the play of Esther: **OUTLINE OF ESTHER:** The **SETTING**, the **CONSPIRACY**, the **SOLUTION**, the **RESULT**

A. THE SETTING: Esther becomes Queen, Esther 1-2

1. Ahasuerus (Xerxes) and Queen Vashti, Esther 1
2. Esther becomes Queen, Esther 2:1-20
3. Mordecai (Esther's cousin) saves the King, Esther 2:21-23

B. THE CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE JEWS, Esther 3-5

1. Mordecai offends Haman, Esther 3:1-6
2. Haman conspires to kill all the Jews, Esther 3:7-15
3. Mordecai and then Esther learn of the plot, Esther 4:1-9
4. Mordecai influences Esther to stop the plot, Esther 4:10-17

C. THE SOLUTION: Esther saves her people, Esther 5-7

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1. Esther risks her life approaching the King, Esther 5:1-5
 2. Haman's arrogant plan to kill Mordecai, Esther 5:6-14
 3. The King's insomnia and divine intervention, Esther 6:1-9
 4. Haman forced to honor Mordecai, Esther 6:10-13
 5. Esther pleads to the King for her people, Esther 7:1-6
 6. Haman hanged on his own gallows, Esther 7:7-10
 - D. THE RESULT: The Jews revenge their enemies, Esther 8-10
 1. A new decree from the King, Esther 8:1-14
 2. Mordecai appointed to Haman's position, Esther 8:15-17
 3. On the day the Jews were to die, their enemies die at their hand, Esther 9:1-19
 4. The Feast of Purim instituted, Esther 9:20-32
 5. Mordecai's further advancement, Esther 10
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Esther, Chapter 1

THE SETTING: Esther Chapters 1 and 2 This first act sets up the Character of Esther.

Esther 1:1-4 ¹

Now it took place in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces,

in those days as King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne which was in Susa the capital,

in the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all his princes and attendants, the army officers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of his provinces being in his presence.

And he displayed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor of his great majesty for many days, 180 days.

As with other post-exilic books, the date is carefully recorded as to the reign of the Persian king.

These events occur chronologically between the 6th and 7th chapters of Ezra.

Ahasuerus, commonly known as Xerxes I (486-465 B.C.). He was the son of Darius the Great

Artaxerxes (465-424). He was the son of Xerxes I, and was king of Persia when both Ezra and Nehemiah returned (Ezra 7:1, 8; Nehemiah 2:1).

Here he is called Ahasuerus which in Persian when combined with Hebrew is not that different than the more common name of Xerxes

This would be 483-482 BC and the meeting of nobles and military rulers of Persia which lasted 180 days was really a war conference.

Persia had been defeated by the Greeks. One famous battle under the leadership of Xerxes' father Darius, in 490 BC, the battle of Marathon.

¹ The New American Standard Bible (NASB) is used for the study verse quotations.

So this long war session is to plan a revenge on the Greeks for the destruction of the Persian fleet at Marathon.

Esther 1:5

And when these days were completed, the king gave a banquet lasting seven days for all the people who were present in Susa the capital, from the greatest to the least, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.

At the end of the planning session, Xerxes held a grand feast that last for seven days.

This was in Susa, the winter palace so the feast was not held in the famous hanging gardens of Babylon.

Esther 1:6-8

There were hangings of fine white and violet linen held by cords of fine purple linen on silver rings and marble columns, and couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and precious stones.

Drinks were served in golden vessels of various kinds, and the royal wine was plentiful according to the king's bounty.

And the drinking was done according to the law, there was no compulsion, for so the king had given orders to each official of his household that he should do according to the desires of each person.

The recording of the events in such great details would indicate that the writer had at least second hand knowledge of the feast.

Esther 1:9-12

His queen, Vashti, mother of Artaxerxes, held a banquet for the women: Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the palace which belonged to King Ahasuerus.

On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carkas, the seven

eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus,

to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown in order to display her beauty to the people and the princes, for she was beautiful.

But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. Then the king became very angry and his wrath burned within him.

On the final day of the feast, Xerxes wanted his Queen to come to the garden where the men were having their feast so he could show her off. She was apparently very beautiful.

She refused; which was her right to do. This was not disobedience to her husband because the protocol of the Babylonian people did not demand such a display.

Furthermore, many feel she may have at the time been pregnant with Artaxerxes and did not want to appear in public . . . especially before a bunch of men who had been drinking for seven days.

NOTE: SHE WAS RIGHT IN NOT APPEARING AT THE BANQUET

Esther 1:13

Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times-- for it was the custom of the king so to speak before all who knew law and justice,

Rather than let it drop, Ahasuerus the king pursues the matter.

Here is an illustration of when a person should let a matter drop.

He was wrong in ordering Vashti to appear before the nobles, princes, and military leaders.

She was not wrong in refusing, especially if she was pregnant with Artaxerxes who would be the next king.

But now Ahasuerus, rather than suffer a small embarrassment, tries to vindicate himself.

So he calls in his wise men, the counselors of Persia.

Esther 1:14, 15

and were close to him: Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media who had access to the king's presence and sat in the first place in the kingdom—

According to law, what is to be done with Queen Vashti, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus delivered by the eunuchs?

According to law, what is to be done with Queen Vashti, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus delivered by the eunuchs?

NOTE THE PHRASE: According to Law . . .

But there is no law to appeal to so his counselors answer with opinion and subjectivity.

Esther 1:16-18

And in the presence of the king and the princes, Memucan said, Queen Vashti has wronged not only the king but also all the princes, and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.

For the queen's conduct will become known to all the women causing them to look with contempt on their husbands by saying, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in to his presence, but she did not come.

And this day the ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's conduct will speak in the same way to all the king's princes, and there will be plenty of contempt and anger.

Here we have a switch from the objectivity of law to the subjectivity of personal affront and embarrassment based upon supposition of what could happen.

Mem-u-can, one of the seven princes, gives the king what the king wants to hear:

He is trying to ingrain himself into the king's confidence and trust . . . so tell him what he wants with no regard for the Law.

He has five things to say about Queen Vashti:

1. She wronged the king: That much is true. She refused an order of her husband and he was embarrassed. Now he could have recovered when she sent back word that she would not appear. She says she was indisposed or whatever or even laughed it off. But he did not.
 2. She wronged the princes: Really? Why the princes, they did not give any orders.
 3. She wronged the people of the provinces of Persia: This is really going too far. I bet most of the people of Persia could not have cared less.
 4. What the queen did will cause the women of Persia to look upon their husbands with contempt.
- The word for COMTEMPT is BA-ZA, a very strong word that means to despise, assign no value to whatsoever.
- This is absurd, but the king is buying it.
5. And this day (as of right now) the ladies of Persia and Media will speak in the same way to their husbands with plenty of contempt and anger.

Here he even puts words into the mouths of every wife in Persia. Telling the king exactly what these women will say, what they will do, and the attitude they will have.

There may be some projection here. Perhaps Memucan had a rebellious wife who does not give honor to him and he projects this attitude into every lady in Persia.

Esther 1:19, 20

Mem-u-can even has a plan already to go:

If it pleases the king, let a royal edict be issued by him and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media so that it cannot be repealed, that Vashti should come no more into the presence of King Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal position to another who is more worthy than she.

And when the king's edict which he shall make is heard throughout all his kingdom,

great as it is, then all women will give honor to their husbands, great and small.

BY WAY OF APPLICATION we can learn a great deal from this speech of Memucan that tells us what our own speech should be like:

1. Memucan, in the list given in verse 14, is mentioned last. This would indicate that he held the lowest position among the seven prince-counselors.

So this was a scheme to promote himself and we know that unless God promotes you, you are not promoted.

2. His desire to come up with an answer may have been motivated by wanting to better his position on the board.

So rather than say nothing or tell the king that there was no violation of law, he talks.

PRINCIPLE: Do not talk unless you have something of value to say.

3. He did not really answer the king's question, he gave opinion and supposition rather than the letter of the law.

PRINCIPLE: When asked a question, answer the question. Do not come up with what you think might happen.

Matthew 5:37 But let your statement be, Yes, yes or No, no; and anything beyond these is of evil.

James 5:12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but let your yes be yes, and your no, no; so that you may not fall under judgment.

4. While he started out with a true statement, the king was wronged (at least in the king's estimation), he quickly moved to that which was false. All the princes and even all the people of Persia were wronged.

You cannot link a true statement to a false statement and make the false statement true, although many try . . . politicians.

5. In his speech he used a number of psychological mechanisms that became the motive and influence for his conclusions:

- a. Projection: Projected perhaps the problems he would have with his wife into a problem all the men of Persia would have.
- b. Identification: He adapted the refusal of Vashti to a potential refusal of all the women in Persia to disobey their husbands.
- c. Generalization: He lumped all the thousands of wives in Persia as being ready to jump on anything that would give them a reason to be contemptuous of their husbands.
- d. Rationalization: He failed to recognize that the only reason he was talking was to improve his position in the sight of the king.
- e. Denial of Reality: Denied the fact that there was no violation of Law.

PRINCIPLE: We must measure our speech and count what we say. Our problem is too often that we say too much.

Proverbs 29:11 A fool lets his whole mind be made known ...

Esther, Chapter 2

Esther 2:1

After these things when the anger of King Ahasuerus had subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her.

During this lapse of time it is also supposed that the Persians went to war with the Greeks and lost again.

As the king return from defeat, there was no comforting wife there to meet him and console him.

HERE IS A PICTURE OF a powerful man who took the wrong advice in a time of emotional turbulence. He is now reaping what he has sown

and what he sowed was out of emotions. And now this powerful king is miserable.

Esther 2:2-4

When one bad decision is made the human tendency is to make other decisions which are usually just as bad.

Then the king's attendants, who served him, said, Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king.

And let the king appoint overseers in all the provinces of his kingdom that they may gather every beautiful young virgin to Susa the capital, to the harem, into the custody of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the women; and let their cosmetics be given them.

Then let the young lady who pleases the king be queen in place of Vashti. And the matter pleased the king, and he did accordingly.

The ones who are making this suggestion are the same advisors who got the king to throw Vashti out. The one thing they do not want is Vashti to be back in the presence of the king and they fear that the king might figure out some way around the edict.

Now if she got back into power, these price-counselors would be in deep trouble. So they come up with another plan.

NOW THIS IS A CLASSIC CASE of where the best decision would be to make no decision at all.

Ahasuerus made a bad call to begin with by issuing the edict, but now he tries to erase that by making another decision that is just as bad.

BUT GOD IS IN CONTROL . . . AND WE WILL SEE GOD taking the bad decisions that are made by the counselors, by the king, by even Esther and her uncle Mordecai and turning them into blessing for his people.

One of the great lessons of Esther and many other stories in the Bible is that God is in control. We are limited, even from a position of strength, to make right decisions all the time. But when we do make wrong decisions, God is

the greater, and His control over us is so often demonstrated in the weakness of our bad decisions.

The PROVIDENCE OF GOD

Philippians 2:13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Definition of Providence: Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer: The directing care of God over all things, both animate and inanimate. Providence is the divine outworking of decrees, the objective being the total manifestation of the glory of God. God directs all things perfectly, yet without compelling the human will. He works in man, especially those who conform to His will, to do his good pleasure.

The understanding of Providence provides a divine source of comfort for the Christian.

Providence is revealed in two categories:

At Salvation: Which involves the decrees of God and the freewill of man in foreknowledge, predestination, and election. Theological concepts.

Providence in the life of the believer which is operational rather than theological.

How does the providence of God work for, with you?

THEREFORE: The operational definition would be:

Since God's objective is His glorification in His creation, Providence is everything that directs you, nudges you on, provides for you the opportunities of choice, and at times stops you dead in your tracks that will bring you to the place where he can bless you.

NOTE: God blessing man and man in turn responding to that in love for Him is the ultimate way God is glorified in creation.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

A parent is honored and glorified when, through the training of a child, that child gives honor to the parent for a job well done. When the child gives praise to the parent it is the parent who is honored.

The athlete who is a loser, then gets under the right coach and becomes a winner, while the athlete may get the medal, the coach is honored.

Revelation 4:10-11 The twenty-four elders representing both Israel and the Church) will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.

APPLICATIONS OF PROVIDENCE:

Providence expresses the fact that the world and our lives are not ruled by luck or by chance but by the greatness of God.

Providence looks to the essence of God, specifically the attributes of sovereignty, omniscience, and omnipotence.

God is the ruler who knows all things and had the power to work all things for his glory.

God, in omniscience, knew all things at once as well as all the alternatives of all things.

Thus, at one moment in eternity past providential decisions were made by our sovereign God which provided for his ultimate glorification.

In the outworking of providence, God uses four systems:

Preventative

Psalm 19:13 Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sin.

God uses Divine Institutions and Laws of Divine establishment to preserve orderly function. Thus the providence of God determined in eternity past certain systems, parents, government, laws, society, provide a hindrance to evil in the world.

Permissive: Romans 1:24 and 28, God gave them over in the lust of their hearts, to a depraved mind.

God in his sovereignty permits the exercise of freewill on the part of man. God does not alter freewill nor restrains the action of man's will unless it (the action not the will) runs contrary to His ultimate purpose.

Determinative: God's decision to hinder or prevent the outworking of man's freewill in any situation in which His ultimate purpose could be frustrated by man's will.

Luke 4:28-30 **And all they in the synagogue (of Nazareth), when they heard these things were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill, that they might cast him down headlong, But he passed through the midst of them and went his way.**

ALSO MIRACLES: Which are part of God's eternal purpose and thus God's providence. Miracles are only viewed as such by man, whereas to God they are but extraordinary event in the Providence of God.

Directive: God guiding our way by opportunity and situation, allowing us the opportunity to exercise freewill, making either right or wrong decisions.

1 Corinthians 2:12 **For when I came to Troy to preach the gospel of Christ and a door was open for me in the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, not finding Titus my brother, taking my leave of them I went to Macedonia.**

Matthew 26:16 **Speaking of Judas Iscariot, And from then on he began to look for an opportunity to betray Him (Jesus)**

BUT, the opportunity would be directed by God.

Acts 10-11 **Peter was having a vision at the same time Cornelius was receptive to the Gospel.**

Man looks at all events sequentially and thus in of cause and effect, but God is the causer and the effecter of all things.

God knew all that they was to know at one time, which was divorced from time, and worked all things together for His will . . . while not infringing upon man's freewill.

God never changes man's will but will hinder through providence, including providential preventative suffering as well as providential circumstances the outworking of man's will.

ILLUSTRATION: 2 Corinthians 12:6-10, Paul's thorn in the flesh:

For if I do wish to boast I shall not be foolish, for I shall be speaking the truth; but I refrain from this, so that no one may credit me with more than he sees in me or hears from me. And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me-- to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Therefore, we as Christians can take pleasure and comfort in the Providence of God, for this understanding tells us that God is in control and will provide us with opportunity and direction in our goal of fulfilling His plan for us.

Esther 2:5-7

Our attention now is turned from Ahasuerus and the activities of the court of Persia to the family of Mordecai and Esther, Jews in exile in Susa, the capital of Persia.

Now there was a Jew in Susa the capital whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite,

who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem with the captives who had been exiled with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had exiled.

And he was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. Now the young lady was beautiful of form and face, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

In these verses we are given the background of these two major characters.

Mordecai, of the tribe of Benjamin, great grandson of Kish who had been taken into Chaldean captivity in the second deportation in 597 BC.

Neither Mordecai nor his family returned to Jerusalem when the opportunity presented itself. So geographically, they were out of the will of God. But God can still work in their lives under his permissive will.

Mordecai is a Persian name taken from the pagan god Marduk.

He had an official position in the court of Susa, but what precisely, we are not told. He is too often too well informed on what was going on to be an outsider.

Esther also is a Persian name meaning STAR. Her Hebrew name was Had-ass-ah, which is the Hebrew word for Myrtle [tree].

We are told that her parents died and she was raised by her older cousin, Mordecai.

We are also told that she was beautiful of form and face.

Used of only the two most beautiful women in the O.T.

Genesis 29:17 for Rachel and here in Esther 2:7 Esther

It means she was a total knock out, she was very beautiful.

Esther 2:8

So it came about when the command and decree of the king were heard and many young ladies were gathered to Susa the capital into the custody of Hegai, that Esther was taken to the king's palace into the custody of Hegai, who was in charge of the women.

1. The words command and decree refer to a royal edict in which there was no opportunity for disobedience.
2. The verbs gathered and taken are both Niphal stem which is declarative passive voice.
3. This grammatical structure would indicate that Esther did not have a choice in going into the palace harem.
4. However, once there she did have a choice as to her behavior and conduct according to the Law of God.

Esther 2:9

Now the young lady pleased him and found favor with him. So he quickly provided her with her cosmetics and food, gave her seven choice maids from the king's palace, and transferred her and her maids to the best place in the harem.

1. The food that was provided would not have been prepared according to Jewish dietary laws, so that was a problem.
2. Even some of the types food would have been forbidden by O.T. Law.
3. But the main problem was the whole reason she was there being pampered by the eunuchs and the maids.

Esther 2:10-14

Esther did not make known her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had instructed her that she should not make them known.

And every day Mordecai walked back and forth in front of the court of the harem to learn how Esther was and how she fared.

Now when the turn of each young lady came to go in to King Ahasuerus, after the end of her twelve months under the regulations for the women-- for the days of their beautification were completed as follows: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with spices and the cosmetics for women--

the young lady would go in to the king in this way: anything that she desired was given her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace.

In the evening she would go in and in the morning she would return to the second harem, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the concubines. She would not again go in to the king unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.

NOW IT MAY BE EASY to say that this activity just went with the territory and after all, when in Persia, do as the Persians do.

WE COULD EVEN RATIONALIZE by looking to the end of the story and seeing how this all turned out and think that the Jews would not have been spared had Esther not sleep with the king. But that is all nothing more than a compromise of principle.

READ DANIEL, CHAPTER ONE

One hundred and fifty years before the time of Esther, another young Hebrew found himself in the court of a foreign king.

v 3-4 The best of young men of Israel were brought to Nebuchadnezzar's court to be prepared for service to the Chaldean government.

v 5-7 The indoctrination begins, first a geographical change, now even a name change.

v 8 Daniel's refusal to compromise

v 14 The 10 day test

v 15 Daniel's obedience is vindicated

DANIEL, CHAPTER THREE:

v 1-2 The golden image and the command to worship it

v 12-13 Daniel's three friends refused to worship the image

v 22-23 Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego into the furnace

v 25-26 God's vindication of their stand

v 28-29 Royal permission to worship Jehovah

DANIEL, CHAPTER SIX: Daniel, older now, part of Persia:

v 7 A conspiracy against Daniel, cannot pray

v 10 Daniel prayed about it and kept on praying

v 16 Daniel in the Lion's den . . . note the prophecy

v 20-24 God vindicates the faithful obedience of Daniel

v 25-28 Darius issues a decree for man to fear Jehovah, the God of Daniel

NOW THESE EXAMPLES FROM DANIEL ARE PARALLEL TO what is going on with Esther but with one major difference. Daniel refused to compromise principles of doctrine while Esther did not hesitate to compromise the truth that God had given her people.

PRINCIPLE: We do not have to compromise principles to promote God's plan. He doesn't need us to concede truth and reproach standards to get his will accomplished.

PRINCIPLES ON COMPROMISE:

1. God's attributes are never compromised. His plan for man in salvation, life, and ultimate glory never compromises his justice or his righteousness.

He is omnipotent and with God all things are possible but his power never compromises his essence.

2. Since God was able to achieve his perfect plan without compromise, we can fulfill the perfect plan that God has for us without compromise.

He did not compromise, neither must we compromise

3. Compromise is a distraction for believers of all levels of maturity. There is the potential for compromise with young believers and mature believers alike, although from different sources and in different ways.

4. The young believer may be compromised by fear, which is sin, and fear is a M.A. of worry, anxiety, and compromise.

5. Principle is far more important than practice. We must never compromise principle just because we cannot see the practical side of principle or how the application of the principle will work.

6. Politics is an arena of compromise. The political approach to a crisis is not standing on principle but compromise of principle.

7. Whenever a culture is socially compromised that nation is in its decline and fall (I Kings 9:20-21 and Judges 3:5-7).

8. To avoid the compromise of doctrine in your soul, separation is often necessary. Example: Nehemiah 13:1-9 Tobiah.

9. Numerous examples in both the O.T. and the N.T. warn against different forms of compromise:

a. The Abraham Compromise: Abraham passing his wife off as his sister to save his own skin, Genesis 12:12-20

b. The Saul Compromise: I Samuel 13 and 15. Saul offers sacrifices and refuses to slay the enemy. Thought he had a better idea.

c. The Obadiah Compromise: I Kings 18:1-16 A compromise with fear by an immature believer.

d. The Elijah Compromise: I Kings 19:3-14 A compromise with fear by a mature believer.

e. The Paul Compromise: Acts 21:20-24 As a mature believer Paul took a Jewish vow in order to get people to give him a hearing. Compromised grace to get a congregation.

f. The Galatian Compromise: Galatians 3:1-3 The idea of being saved by faith in Christ but living by the O.T. Law.

10. Flexibility is not compromise of Bible Doctrine But rather it is the ability to modify and adapt in the application of principle to problems.

11. At best, compromise is retreat, at worse it is surrender. It is at all times contrary to the mandate to the believer to stand firm:

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Remember Esther 2:9, "Now the young lady pleased (Hegai) him and found favor with him. So he quickly provided her with her cosmetics and food, gave her seven choice maids from the king's palace, and transferred her and her maids to the best place in the harem."

While the text does not state how many virgins were assembled, Josephus states that there were 400. So out of the 400 Esther is noticed by the eunuch in charge.

Israel Loken (Dallas Theological Seminary) and Carl Baker (Grace Theological Seminary) believe this contest took five years to resolve. After the night with the king the young woman could have been dismissed or become a part of the king's concubines who may be called upon at a later time.

Baker states regarding the hiding of her national identity that: For the masquerade to last that long [five years] she [Esther] must have done more than eat, dress, and live like a Persian. She must have worshipped like one too.

We saw a few weeks ago that Esther, a young lady beautiful of form and face, is going to compromise and through this compromise will end up being the queen of Persia.

Her compromise comes in four areas:

1. She ate the food of the Persian court, which was not prescribed by Jewish law
2. She allowed herself to be prepared for fornication with the king
3. She kept her race and faith (at least the faith of her people) a secret:

Esther did not make known her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had instructed her that she should not make them known.

Yet Mordecai was checking on her daily

But in contrast to this, Mordecai makes it very clear that he is a Jew.

Esther 3:4b He told them (the servants of Haman) that he would not bow down to Haman because he was a Jew.

So he uses his Judaism as an excuse to not bow down to Haman. Would he have bowed down to the King? If he was a member of the court he would have had to do that or . . . off with his head.

Much speculation can be made regarding what would have happened had Esther said she was Jewish. Very likely she would have been dismissed from the contest because Persians saw the Jews as inferior, useful but inferior.

4. Then she engaged in fornication with King Ahasuerus

Esther 2:15-18

Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai who had taken her as his daughter, came to go in to the king, she did not request anything except what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge

of the women, advised. And Esther found favor in the eyes of all who saw her.

So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus to his royal palace in the tenth month which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

And the king loved Esther more than all the women, and she found favor and kindness with him more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Then the king gave a great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his princes and his servants; he also made a holiday for the provinces and gave gifts according to the king's bounty.

Esther, above all the other beautiful virgins of Persia, won the contest. She used her beauty and her femininity, and sex to win the king's heart.

This was a complete violation of the reason God invented sex and gave it to the human race.

DOCTRINE OF SEX

Sexual activity, outside of marriage and with anyone other than husband or wife is:

1. Sin
2. A violation of Divine Institutions
3. Emotionally destructive
4. Physically destructive
5. Spiritually destructive

Marriage is the only institution that sanctifies or sets a part the physical expression of love (Sex). Therefore, marriage is the sphere of freedom for the physical expression of love between two people.

Fornication, pre-martial sex, adultery, is accepting a substitute in order to satisfy a biological or emotional urge. And it is nothing more than that!

Fornication, and all sexual sins are forbidden by God in the Word because they destroy the capacity for future happiness.

Sexual promiscuity is only physically gratifying and then only for the time of the encounter. It plays havoc with the emotions and the physical desires.

God has designed the physical relationship between man and woman to be monogamous, within the boundaries of marriage.

Sexual promiscuity is physically destructive.

Since premarital or extramarital sex is only physically satisfying for the moment, a physical frustration occurs in which more is desired but the sanctification level decreases and this results in sexual frustration. and can result in the inability to be physically satisfied.

Also, studies have shown that young people who are sexually active go into impotency at an alarmingly early age. Like in their thirties. They cannot be satisfied and as a result lose interest in physical relationships.

Men and women who marry and were sexually active with others fall into the comparison trap. They compare the sexual relationship they have with husband or wife with the relationships they had prior to marriage. This creates a physical frustration as well as sublimation which is an insult to the husband or wife.

God has designed Right Man, Right Woman, and marriage to be the ultimate in physical expression and only that relationship is fully and continually satisfying. Anything else falls far short and is physically destructive.

Self discipline and self control are key factors in avoiding promiscuity:

Alexander the Great at the age of 29 had conquered the whole world but could not control his body. He was promiscuous in the extreme and at 29 died of syphilis.

Self discipline and self control means making a decision when not under pressure and sticking with it when you are under pressure.

ILLUSTRATION: You decide you are not going to go beyond a simple show of affection in dating and then you stick to that decision.

MARRIAGE AND SEX: The sexual relationship as an expression of a monopoly that belongs to a husband and a wife.

Sex is the invisible wall between you and your parents.

Sex creates an invisible home, a fantastic system of intimacy and privacy. Sex demands that even among husband and wife there must be privacy.

In the function of sex in marriage there are two authorities. The wife has authority over the husband's body, and the husband has authority over the wife's body. When two authorities coalesce in sex, there is equal authority, which is no authority (I Cor 7:4). This means sex does not recognize, during that period, the authority of the husband over the wife or the submission of the wife to the husband. Where there is no authority there must be the highest form of virtue.

In sex, virtue makes demands on the husband: thoughtfulness, tenderness, patience, self-control. Therefore, in sex, the husband is not exercising his authority, he is exercising his virtue.

The husband must realize that sex in marriage is not the demand syndrome; he does not use his authority in marriage to force his wife into something she does not understand or resents. Sex is not putting your lust or desire into a slot machine. Self-gratification is an arrogant intrusion upon the purpose and meaning of sex.

On the part of the wife there must be the combination of abandonment on the one hand and initiation on the other.

Sex does not attack the authority of the husband, but strengthens it where the husband possesses virtue. The sex act in itself does not emphasize authority, but the fulfillment, unity, intimacy, privacy of marriage.

God invented sex for recreation and procreation. In recreation, the sex act gives the husband a vacation from his function in authority and the wife a vacation from her subordination function in marriage. Authority is set aside in the sex act. Where authority is not set aside, there is not

intimacy. Where authority is set aside, there is the ultimate in intimacy. With this intimacy is created respect for the privacy of the other person. Sex is the unity in marriage.

In marriage neither male nor female body is complete without the other. Therefore, sex portrays more than any other relationship in life the interdependence of marriage.

Interdependence means mutually dependent on each other. Interdependence rejects nagging from the wife and bullying from the husband, the demand syndrome, unrealistic expectation, self-righteous arrogance, self-justification, role-model arrogance, and the feet-of-clay syndrome.

Sex portrays the beauty of interdependence in marriage just as Bible doctrine indicates the believer's dependence on God and God's grace.

Each spouse must bring into the marriage something more than sex. God, in His marvelous sense of humor, invented sex so that each spouse would lack something whereby the other spouse would have control over his or her body.

Sex in marriage is God's invention: God's grace designs so that for a short time the structure and authority of marriage can take a brief holiday for recreation and refreshment.

Sex can be for better or for worse in marriage. Better or constantly improving sex depends upon the husband and the wife and their advance to compatibility and the rapport stages.

Sex was designed for husband and wife to complete each other; and in so doing, an invisible wall is established around that husband and wife, and unity is established behind that wall. This unity means privacy, intimacy, a personal virtue, in which husband and wife together execute the three divine mandates of marriage. This unity is dramatized by leaving father and mother. You go from family privacy and unity to marital privacy and unity.

Sex was not designed for the gutter, but for the castle.

THAT IS WHAT SEX WAS INTENDED TO BE . . . AND THAT IS NOT HOW ESTHER

USED SEX, SHE USED IT FOR PROMOTION OF SELF.

See Topic (Grace Notes): Sexual Health in the Bible

Esther 2:19

And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate.

This second gathering of the virgins of the court was second to Esther's banquet mentioned in the previous verse.

Mordecai, Esther's cousin, sitting at the king's gate.

This would indicate some official position that he held in the palace of the king.

Esther 2:20

Esther had not yet made known her kindred or her people, even as Mordecai had commanded her, for Esther did what Mordecai told her as she had done when under his care.

This verse is given at this time to show that Esther, at the direction of Mordecai, is still hiding her Jewish identity.

Rather than take a stand and reveal her identity, which would have probably kept her out of the king's bed, she is hiding her relationship to the people of God.

This was a test and this was a test failed in numerous ways by Esther.

And she was doing so at the direction of Mordecai, so he also was failing the test.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Your identity as a believer is a basic foundation for spiritual advance.
2. Until you come to grips with your part in God's plan you will never understand God's part in your life.

3. To hid or deny your position in Christ is to not even be on the battle field of spiritual advance.

4. This is paramount to being a traitor to the cause, a traitor to Christ who died for you.

5. The most vivid example of this type of denial of spiritual identity was seen on the eve of the crucifixion:

Matthew 26:34-35 Jesus said to Peter, Truly I say to you that this very night, before a cock crows, you shall deny Me three times. Peter said to Him, Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You.

Matthew 26:74-75 Then Peter began to curse and swear, I do not know the man! And immediately a cock crowed. And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, Before a cock crows, you will deny Me three times. And he went out and wept bitterly.

6. The fact that hardship and difficulty may come when we take our stand as a Christian must never deter our spiritual identity:

I Peter 4:16 But if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name (the name of Christ and you who are a people called by his name, Christians) let him glorify God.

Mordecai had not come to grips with his spiritual heritage which for the Jew was parallel to our spiritual identity.

And thus we see that what is to occur is not done out of the divine motive, influence, or power available to him.

Esther 2: 21-23

God allows Mordecai to become aware of a plot against the:

In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's officials from those who guarded the door, became angry and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

But the plot became known to Mordecai, and he told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name.

Now when the plot was investigated and found to be so, they were both hanged on a gallows; and it was written in the Book of the Chronicles in the king's presence.

MORDECIA COULD HAVE DONE WHAT HE DID in three ways, all resulting in the same action:

1. He could have being doing all that he did as unto the Lord. Knowing that God ordained human government he could have revealed the plot because he was a believer:

The motive would have been grace, the influence would have been doctrine, and the power would have been the Spirit not through the F/HS but in obedience to the Word available to all O.T. believers.

2. He could have done what he did because he was a moral person and fulfilling his responsibility as a good servant of the king.

Motive would have been morality, the influence would have been loyalty to the king, the power would have been Mordecai's human good.

3. He could have also done what he did out of opportunism and a desire to promote self.

Motive would have been power lust, influence would have been loyalty to self, and the power would have been sin from Mordecai's OSN.

These three systems would have all resulted in doing the same thing, and while that would have appeared the same to man, would have been very different to God.

We can really take any legitimate thing we do in life and see that it can be done by these one of these three systems.

Either the Divine System, the Human Good system, or the Sin System. And from the outside, you cannot tell the difference.

NOW WE ARE GOING TO GIVE MORDECAI A BREAK and assume he did what he did out of human good, loyalty to King Ahasuerus.

THE PREVIOUS STATEMENT showing a denial of his and Esther's Jewish heritage allows us to assume that he was not operating off the divine system.

AND THE FACT THAT HE received no reward at this time makes the opportunist angle unworkable.

So he was acting out of loyalty to the king, which is alright if that is all you have. But a poor second when you can be motivated by grace, influenced by doctrine, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

NOW HE DID NOT RECEIVE ANY REWARD OR RECOGNITION FOR what he did, and realize he did a great thing. He could have been credited with saving the king's life. But nothing is done for him at this time.

BUT THAT DOES not mean that God is not at work. God allowed Mordecai to become aware of the plot, reveal the plot, save the king's life, for a purpose.

Later on there would be reward and then it will come at the proper time:

AND HERE WE SEE SOME INTEGRITY on the part of Mordecai, he did not complain or grip about the lack of reward from the king. He just continued to do his job at the gates of the palace.

SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION:

1. We may often do things that result in no immediate reward or consolation.
2. However, if we are doing what we are doing as unto the Lord, it is his responsibility to reward us.
3. If we do what we do looking for reward, we will often be disappointed. Unrealistic expectations will shoot us down every time.

4. If our motive is reward, God will often withhold the reward to show us that our dependence must be upon Him

5. The Divine principle of reward is given in Psalm 19:11

Moreover, by [God's judgments] Thy servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.

NOTE: The reward is in keeping God's Word. It doesn't say as a result of keeping God's Word we are rewarded but in keeping them there is great reward in itself.

6. In Matthew 6:1-6 the Lord gave us a choice of what reward we might seek, reward from man or from God.

Turn to and comment Matthew 6:1-6

7. In Luke 6:20-26 the perspective we are to have regarding reward is explained. Our perspective should be eternal, not temporal.

Turn to and comment Luke 6:20-26

8. The ultimate in reward is eternal because that lasts forever and found in association forever with Christ:

Revelation 22:12 Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

9. We may do some great thing, and be completely ignored by man. But God never ignores us. He has perfect eternal reward for us and he may even have reward for us in time, but always according to his perfect timing.

Esther, Chapter 3

Esther 3:1

After these events King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Ham-me-da-tha the Agagite, and advanced him and established his authority over all the princes who were with him.

We have a very interesting situation developing following the events of Chapter two. These

events take place about four years after Esther became queen.

Mordecai, Esther's cousin, has saved the king's life and received no reward at that time.

Instead, we read that: After these events King Ahasuerus promoted . . . Haman.

Mordecai is not rewarded nor promoted. The promotion that we assume may have gone to Mordecai goes to Haman. And that promotion includes tremendous authority.

Haman is introduced to us for the first time in the account. He is said to be the son of Hammedatha the Agagite.

This would mean that he is a descendant of the Amalekites whose king was Agag who Saul failed to execute (eventually executed by Samuel). Saul was to exterminate the whole race of Amalekites and yet for profit, sheep and cattle, he did not do it.

The Amalekites became the ancient enemies of the Hebrew people. And here we have a descendant of these people who will be another enemy of the Jews.

Principle: If Saul by faith obeyed the Word of the Lord, Haman would not have been around. So again, we see sin resulting from sin.

Esther 3:2

Tells us of the protocol established in the Persian court for honoring high ranking officials:

And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman; for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage.

Mordecai refused to bow down or to pay homage:

This is KA-RA to bend the knee and SHA-HA bow down. Neither carries a required religious idea of worship, but rather the showing of respect.

Mordecai refused to show respect for the office held by Haman

Esther 3:3,4

The supposed reason Mordecai refused to bow down

Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, Why are you transgressing the king's command?

Now it was when they had spoken daily to him and he would not listen to them, that they told Haman to see whether Mordecai's reason would stand; for he had told them that he was a Jew.

THE REASON FOR THE REFUSAL WAS . . .
I am a Jew:

Implied in this is the O.T. Law that Jews were not to bow down to worship pagan gods. But Mordecai was applying this principle a bit further and refusing to bow down to a person of superior rank . . . because he was a Jew.

NOW HERE IS THE PROBLEM: In the last chapter we saw that Mordecai was refusing to identify himself or Esther as Jews.

Remember Esther 2:20 Esther had not yet made known her kindred or her people, even as Mordecai had commanded her.

But not he uses his Jewish heritage as an excuse not to bow down and give honor to Haman.

This is what we might call the selective application of doctrine.

1. Mordecai would not admit he and Esther were Jews when it meant that there was possibility of advance and promotion.
2. However, when he did not want to bow down to Haman, he used his Jewishness as the reason.
3. This is the result of an attitude of subjectivity in the application of doctrine.
4. Not only did he selectively apply doctrine, he also went further in his application than the Law of God allowed.
5. This would be parallel to using the fact that you are a Christian to get out of doing something you do not want to do in the first place.

In the workplace, no one knows you are a Christian. But then someone asks you to put in some extra hours, on a Sunday, and your excuse is that you are a Christian and Christians don't work on the Sabbath.

6. This is paramount to using doctrine for your own advantage rather than letting doctrine use you for God's advantage.

7. We must be objective in our applying of doctrine as well as in our learning of doctrine.

Subjectivity drove Mordecai into using the Word of God for his own advantage. This was fueled by inordinate mental attitudes on the part of Mordecai that came out one an object of competition was in place, Haman.

DOCTRINE OF INORDINATE COMPETITION

There is legitimate and inordinate competition in life. The Bible condemns inordinate (unrestrained, unregulated, undisciplined) competition.

Philippians 2:21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

II Timothy 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.

Competition in the business world or in the athletic realm is legitimate, excellent, and advisable, but in the social, sexual or spiritual realm is a source of sin, evil and controversy.

2 Timothy 2:5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

Inordinate competition is found in social, sexual, and spiritual spheres of life. It is a sign of arrogance and pride or jealousy, insecurity. The inordinate competitor is insecure socially, sexually and spiritually.

The person who doesn't compete behind your back is a relaxed person; they are reliable, with capacity for great friendship. But getting into social, sexual, spiritual competition destroys capacity for love in all categories.

A competitor always tries to impress you with the wrong things (like Ishbosheth's head). A competitor is never relaxed around others. He is always trying to prove something; always trying to impress someone; always trying to put someone down.

Inordinate competition comes in many forms and performs many adverse functions in life. It has a facade of sweetness, flattery, pseudo spirituality, but behind it is an arrogant, jealous, insecure hypocritical person, waiting to strike.

The inordinate competitive person likes to play games like spiritual king of the mountain, asking questions and telling you the answers, using violence to impress you, a muscle flexor, a man who brags about his sexual conquests, a person who boasts about how he outwits other, or a person who uses sarcasm to put people down. Not a pleasant person to be around.

He is motivated by pride and jealousy. He is emotional, therefore, self righteous, legalistic, anti authority, and sometimes conspiratorial. He seeks to put down authority in order to put himself up.

Hosea 4:4 Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another: for thy people are as they that strive with the priest.

The believer must learn to spot him, his games, and separate from him. Only in isolation does the competitor wake up to his need of doctrine.

The backsliding competitor does not function on the grace and faith principle that unless God promotes you, you are not promoted.

The inordinate competitor becomes a distraction to doctrinal perception both in himself and others, because he concentrates more on being superior to his contemporaries than he does on humbling himself under the mighty hand of God.

1 Peter 5:6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

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Esther 3:5,6

Now we see the result of Mordecai's misuse of doctrine:

When Haman saw that Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage to him, Haman was filled with rage.

But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him who the people of Mordecai were; therefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

We know the story of Esther is how Queen Esther saved the Jews of annihilation. But how many look into the book to see why they were going to be annihilated?

It was because one Jew, who never told anyone he was a Jew, decided to use his being Jewish as an excuse to put down someone he was competing with.

The rest of the story is all about God, using providential circumstances to clear up the mess that Mordecai made when he finally decided to reveal his identity in being a Jew.

PRINCIPLE: Doctrine misapplied can be even worse than doctrine not applied.

FIVE RULES FOR APPLYING DOCTRINE:

Objectivity: Apply doctrine equally to situations. Not just to the situations that happen to go along with what you already agree

Consistency: Apply doctrine consistently to all situations.

Aggressiveness: Seek areas in your life where there is no doctrinal impetus and apply doctrine in those areas.

Compassion: If your application of doctrine is going to hurt someone, think about some more. You may end up having to apply it anyway, but do so with an attitude of compassion.

To Self First: Apply doctrine to yourself first, before trying to apply it to others.

So Mordecai's problem was misapplying the Word of God. Haman also has a problem in that he is reacting in anger:

Observations on Haman's Reaction:

We see here a reaction: Haman was filled with rage.

The Hebrew word for rage is CHE-MAH is a word used for poison, the idea being that this type of anger poisons the whole being.

The verb FILLED is a declarative passive imperfect which would mean that Haman was caused, by the action of Mordecai, to keep on being filled with the poison of anger.

At this point Haman is failing a people test. He is letting Mordecai get to him and the anger reaction is building and building.

Haman has lost control. He is now living in reaction and the reaction factor here is a boiling anger.

As a result of his boiling anger he desires to eliminate Mordecai.

This desire is thwarted when he learns who the people of Mordecai are. There were many Jews in Susa and entire Persian Empire.

And Mordecai was of an important enough position that Haman disdained to lay hands on him alone.

To DISDAIN is two words in the Hebrew, AYIN BA-ZA, which means to see one in a despicable manner, or to think of one as being nothing.

BUT MORDECAI was someone and apparently well enough connected that Haman did not want to single him out.

THEREFORE, Haman's solution is to destroy all the Jews in the entire empire.

DESTROY is the infinitive form of SHAM-AD which means to exterminate. A very strong word.

So now we see an insignificant act, refusal to give a bow to a person in authority result in

anger and then the anger result in what is the first case of mass anti-Semitism in history.

Esther 3:7

In the first month, which is the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, Pur, that is the lot, was cast before Haman from day to day and from month to month, until the twelfth month, that is the month Adar.

Haman depended on the Pur or the Lot to determine the day to exterminate the Jews of the Persian empire.

Here is where we see the control of God behind the scenes. The lot was cast and cast and came up twelve months later. The events of this chapter occur in the month of Nisan and the lot pointed to the month of Adar.

The phrase day to day from month to month, indicates that the lot had to determine the day and then the month, and certain days of certain months were holy days so they were out, as the lot was cast and cast, twelve months kept coming up.

Esther 3:8

Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of all other people, and they do not observe the king's laws, so it is not in the king's interest to let them remain.

Haman fabricates a two-fold argument to Ahasuerus for the extermination of the Jews:

1. Their laws are different from those of all other people.

That is true, because the Jews had been given their Law by God and their Law remained as the most advanced legal system in the ancient world.

2. And they do not observe the king's law.

Look back to verse 3: Mordecai did not obey the king's commandment in one small area.

But Haman presents the case that no Jew obeys any of the king's law at any time.

His recommendation is that there is no reason of interest to the king to let the Jews remain.

The word REMAIN is YAN-ACH and means to allow to stay.

Haman is building his argument, he gets the king to begin to think ill of the Jews and then in the next verse he throws in the idea of systematic genocide.

Esther 3:9

If it is pleasing to the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who carry on the king's business, to put into the king's treasuries.

The word DESTROYED is ABAD and means to forcibly depose, but is still not as strong as exterminate or kill.

Haman at this point wants permission to do with Jews what he wills, so he is carefully choosing his words to the king.

He is even willing and offers to pay the cost of removing the Jews from Persia, ten thousand talents of silver:

That would be about 750,000 pounds of silver worth millions of dollars today (at \$10.00 and oz = \$120 million).

This may have been a mistake, the suspicion that Ahasuerus will later on have regarding Haman may have started right here when Haman was willing to go so far as to pay this huge sum to remove the Jews.

Esther 3:10, 11

Here is what Haman was waiting for: *Carte blanche*, power of attorney, the signet ring of the king:

Then 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.

And the king said to Haman, The silver is yours, and the people also, to do with them as you please.

The king refuses the offer of the silver and give Haman full control over the fate of the Jews:

That fatal phrase: To do with them as you please.

Esther 3:12-15

Notice that it is Haman who is dictating the edict:

Then the king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and it was written just as Haman commanded to the king's satraps, to the governors who were over each province, and to the princes of each people, each province according to its script, each people according to its language, being written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring.

Any question as to Haman's intent is certainly removed by wording of the edict:

And letters were sent by couriers to all the king's province to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to seize their possessions as plunder.

Destroy . . . kill . . . annihilate . . . plunder

A copy of the edict to be issued as law in every province was published to all the peoples so that they should be ready for this day.

The couriers went out impelled by the king's command while the decree was issued in Susa the capital; and while the king and Haman sat down to drink, the city of Susa was in confusion.

This type of action was so contrary to the normal civil laws of the Persians that it threw the people into a state of confusion.

You see, Persia was filled with minority populations and each one was wondering, are they to be next?

We have here the revenge that is sought by Haman and the indifference displayed by the King. Resulting in a terrible decision to destroy a people based upon race alone.

Esther, Chapter 4

Esther 4:1, 2

If there has been any question as to Mordecai's culpability regarding the order by Haman to exterminate the Jews, the beginning of this chapter lays any doubts to rest.

When Mordecai learned all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city and wailed loudly and bitterly.

And he went as far as the king's gate, for no one was to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth.

As soon as Mordecai hear of the order he blames himself and he expresses great remorse in what he has caused:

When Mordecai learned all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city and wailed loudly and bitterly. And he went as far as the king's gate, for no one was to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth.

We begin with a Qal perfect LEARNED: He had a full and complete understanding of what the order meant.

The words ALL THAT HAD BEEN DONE is a Niphal perfect indicating that this was a result of other action, a passive action that resulted from his active refusal to honor Haman and use as an excuse his heritage as a Jew.

Then we have a number of infinitives that resulted from his knowledge of the order of extermination:

1. He tore his clothes
2. He put on sackcloth and ashes
3. He wailed loudly and bitterly
4. And he went to the king's gate but did not enter into the courtyard

Esther 4:3

Tells us that a similar reaction occurred everywhere the order of extermination went:

And in each and every province where the command and decree of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay on sackcloth and ashes.

With the Jews of the provinces we have the statement that this was mourning accompanied with fasting . . .

This mourning was for their own death while Mordecai's reaction was one of regret and remorse.

WE CAN ALMOST SEE THE realization that hit Mordecai as he finds out what his simple act of arrogance and pride resulted in. Up to that point he was too proud to bend the knee to a higher ranking official. He knew his high connection in the Persian government would keep him from any harm but now he sees that the harm will go far beyond him and affect his entire race.

WE HAVE QUITE A CONTRAST with the Mordecai of Esther 4:1-2 and the Mordecai who defiantly stood against Haman in Chapter 3.

Nearly 1000 years before this, Moses wrote a principle that now applies to Mordecai:

Numbers 32:23 But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the Lord, and be sure your sin will find you out.

The sin of Mordecai which was a sin of pride and disobedience has now found him out and the results are disastrous.

We can certainly see that Mordecai expresses grief and he regrets what he has done, but his regret brought him to repentance:

TOO OFTEN WE CONFUSE THE CONCEPTS OF GRIEF AND REGRET AND REPENTANCE

The Doctrine of Repentance

The word repent in both Hebrew and Greek is a technical term. Too often, Christians today, define terms in light of their experience and culture.

How often do we hear some evangelist or preacher shouting Repent, Repent . . . but there is more to repentance than just the repeating of a word.

In the seven letters to the seven churches of Revelation 2-3 we have the command to repent given to these churches on six occasions with the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia escaping the command.

Repentance is not an end unto itself. Repentance only sets the stage for further action and decision-making that is in line with the plan of God.

C.S. Lewis said: Repentance is not something God demands of you before He will take you back . . . it is simply a description of what going back is like.

Thus, repentance is descriptive of getting back into fellowship.

WORD STUDY OF REPENTANCE:

1. There are two Hebrew words and two Greek words that the Bible uses which are translated repentance.

2. The first Hebrew word is NAC-HAM which is translated repent about 45 times and should not be.

On other occasions it is translated COMFORT or COMFORTED in the passive.

How does REPENT and COMFORT relate? Well, the word NAC-HAM means to sigh.

Let's see if I can come up with a good sigh.

Thus, when something is wrong you sigh or you sigh with someone in comforting them.

2 Samuel 12:24 And David comforted Bathsheba his wife.

Thus, they both sighed or regretted what had happened in the death of their child

God is often said to NAC-HAM in the OT. Which has confused some because the translation then reads that God repented . . . we in our thinking means to change our minds which God in immutability does not do.

Genesis 6:6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

Exodus 32:14 And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

Whereas in Numbers 23:19 we read:

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

The apparent contradiction is cleared up on two points:

- a. The word NAC-HAM is used in its very basic form when it speaks of God repenting . . . God sighs and is disgusted with the will of man which so easily turns against its creator.
- b. Secondly, the word is used anthropopathically to communicate. Like language of accommodation so that we in our limited finite minds can at least partially understand what God is doing. Gives human traits to God's actions.

Mostly, NAC-HAM is used of God and communicates the idea of a change in prior policy as far as man can see but is not a change in the plan of God. We see change, God sees an unfolding of a perfect plan set from eternity past.

3. Now when the O.T. calls on believers to repent we have an entirely different word. The Hebrew word SHU-B which is translated repent and most often turn.

I Kings 8:47 Yet if they shall think of themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;

Ezekiel 18:30-31 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent, and be made to turn (use twice) yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

NOTICE that repenting is a turn towards God's will and plan but is not doing God's will or plan . . . it precedes the Spiritual Life.

4. Therefore, the O.T. word SHU-B is the idea of turning or changing your mind regarding what is currently going on. This is a prerequisite to making any further decisions inline with the plan of God.

You may both MAC-HAM and SHU-B in that you regret what you have done, which leads then to a change of mind, repentance, but then must go on to confession.

Don't underestimate the sorrow you may have for sins but don't let sorrow become a substitute for proper action which is changing your mind and then confession.

5. In the N.T. we have a word METAMELOMIA found in:

Matthew 21:28-29 A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.

Matthew 27:3-4 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

Therefore, this word is not to change the mind but to regret, feel sorry for what was done.

In Judas' case he even confessed, but to man, and there was no repenting in the sense of a change of mind towards sins committed.

6. The word most often translated repent in the GNT is METANOIA, which is a compound of two words:

META: A preposition in compound meaning CHANGE

NOUS: The noun for mind

Thus, a change of mind.

7. This change of mind, translated repentance, is never an end unto itself but sets the stage for further action in compliance with the plan of God:

Mark 1:15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Acts 26:20 But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet (as a result of) for repentance).

8. If there is no change of mind all the actions in the world are not going to be of any value. Repentance must precede proper action.

Luke 13:3 I tell you, . . . except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

PRINCIPLES ON REPENTANCE:

1. There is no human merit in repentance. Any one with a mind can change their mind.

There is merit in regretting something because that requires a standard. But any standard developed from Bible Doctrine is grace and you can take no credit for that which is received in grace.

2. Repentance occurs at salvation when we change our minds regarding ourselves, our need for a Savior, and our condemnation as unbelievers. This then sets the stage for belief in Christ.

Until you realize you can't save yourself, you change your mind regarding that bit of human viewpoint, you will not see any need for a Savior and thus not believe in Christ.

Arrogance then is an antithesis to repentance . . . a change of mind.

We are moving on from the repentance at salvation:

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of

repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.

3. Repentance for the Christian occurs when we change our mind regarding our sins. We know we are sinner, know we are O.O.F. and know the only way back is through confession of our sins.

4. If we refuse to change our minds regarding known sins, which means we make excuses or rationalize or ignore, we have no change of mind

Called harboring unconfessed sins . . . refusing to admit those attitudes and actions are sins because there has been no change of mind regarding them.

5. With sins of ignorance, we cannot admit them nor can you then change your mind regarding them. That is why God promised that if we sin we will be forgiven.

A repentant attitude, one that draws near to God claims forgiveness of even sins done in ignorance.

James 5:15 If he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

The public ministry of the Word of God is aimed at getting people to repent or change their mind:

Mark 6:12 And they (the Twelve) went out, and preached in order that (INA) men should repent.

Thus, we have to have something from the Word of God to change our minds to . . . if not we merely regret and even unbelievers regret what they do.

But we repent and then proceed with proper divine function which requires BD in the soul.

2 CORINTHIANS, CHAPTER SEVEN:

BACKGROUND: Paul has written a letter to the Corinthians. This would be one of the two Corinthian letters God did not preserve for us.

In this letter he chewed them out. Then he received word that some turned against him, denied that he was an apostle etc. But also received word that some were devastated.

Then Titus visited Corinth and returned to Ephesus and reported to Paul that yes, they were devastated but then went on from devastation to repentance in their attitude towards him.

Paul is their communicator and his letters are Bible Doctrine communicated to them. Their attitude is not then just one of personality but an attitude towards learning the WORD OF GOD.

v 8 Remember the concept of METAMELOMIA - Regret, and METANOIA - Repent. Now we add a third concept and that is the word LUPEW, which means GRIEF.

The order of mental attitude would be regret (based on some standard), grief, change of mind . . . all attitudes that even the UB can have regarding that which he might think, say, or do.

For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it--

For now I see (and keep on seeing) for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while--

PRINCIPLE: The Word of God can come along and devastate you. You can be grieved; you can regret attitudes and actions. The communicator may even feel some grief for hitting you so hard but it is only for a season, a short while.

v 9 I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us.

And there we have METAVOIA, sorrow to a point where they did not stay in their sorrow but changed their minds.

For you see, you were grieved according to (KATA - a standard) God in order that you would suffer no loss by us.

In their negative, hostile attitude towards Paul, the communicator, and his message of BD they were losing out by being OOF. If their grief moves them to a change of mind and on to confession they recover.

v 10 A right and wrong kind of sorrow or grief: For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death. But the grief of the world works towards death.

PRINCIPLE: Unless regret, grief, repentance comes through that which God provides it brings death rather than salvation.

v 11 Then Paul looks at the out working of this grief from regret through repentance:

For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you

The Greek word for earnestness is SPOUDE

Translated also diligence, care, business. Also by the verb STUDY in 2 Timothy 2:15.

Therefore, this is what comes from regret, repentance, being diligent in the plan of God.

Then the results: Six of them listed:

1. Vindication or Clearing of Yourselves: To give an accurate defense. Our defense in fellowship is that Christ died for our sins
2. Indignation: This is irritation or annoyance. The idea here is that with correct biblical standards that which falls short is an annoyance in life.
3. Fear: This is the fear that we do not take advantage of the grace God has for us. The believer OOF doesn't fear this fear but fears all the wrong things. This correct fear is a motive in the life of the believer.
4. Longing or Vehement desire: To long for or desire the grace that God has for you. A word that looks at the motivated believer who longs for spiritual growth.
5. Zeal: The Greek word ZEAL and here includes the idea of putting the priorities straight in you life.
6. Avenging of wrong: A desire to see that justice is done, and since revenge or vengeance belongs to the Lord a desire to see his justice executed on earth.

CONCLUSION AND PRINCIPLES:

1. As the Word of God is communicated the convicting of the message can bring the believer OOF to regret for his attitudes and actions and then to be grieved or sorrow over his current state. This can occur either while the Word of God is taught or after it is taught, when it is remembered.

2. The regret and sorrow is not the issue but merely a means that Paul looks at that brings the carnal believer to that which is the issue . . . repentance and confession.

3. Is regret and sorrow necessary to bring the believer to repentance and confession? NO . . . consider this:

You need not regret or sorrow after sins of ignorance yet God has provided in repentance the promise that those sins are forgiven when you draw near to Him.

James 5:15 and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

Therefore, any regret, sorrow, grief will only lead you to doing that which God commands and that is to admit and to repent

Psalm 38:17-18 For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin.

The word for sorry is DA-AG which means to have careful thought, to have fear. Thus David has fear that regarding his sin.

This sorrow is removed upon confession of sin and to continue in sorrow is to not accept the forgiveness granted by confession:

Ecclesiastes 11:10 Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh:

4. Confession or Admission is a prelude to Repentance. You must change your mind regarding attitudes and actions that are sin but you must change your mind from one thing to another . . . and the another is the grace of God in having Christ die for all sins on the Cross.

To confess while holding back that which you know is sin yet have rationalized or made some

excuse for it is to reject the very Word of God regarding that sin. Lack of honesty which David mentioned in:

Psalm 51:6 Behold, thou desires truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shall make me to know wisdom.

This is to be dishonest with God and self and harbor, hold back, keep, unconfessed sins

5. The Roman and Greek Church concept of PENANCE is unknown in the grace of God.

Webster defines penance as a sacrament involving confession, repentance, and then submission to an imposed sanctification for absolution of sin.

They have it backwards and they add to it. The satisfaction for sins is the Cross and repentance precedes confession, not follows it.

6. Therefore the divine mandate is a change of mind from the attitudes and actions that you now are willing to admit are sins and then turning from them to God, this is repentance and Spiritual recovery.

Last week we saw Mordecai regretting what he done is expressing his arrogance to Haman. We noted that regret, remorse, sorrow is not repentance. We look at the Hebrew and Greek words that are often translated repentance and found out that repentance is more than regret, it is a turning away from a turning to. From self to the Savior.

We looked also at Paul used of both regret or sorrow and repentance in what he wanted from the believers of Corinth (2 Corinthians 7:8-11). Let's begin today by looking at come conclusions from our previous studies..

CONCLUSION AND PRINCIPLES:

As the WORD OF GOD is communicated the convicting of the message can bring the believer who is out of fellowship to regret for his attitudes and actions and then to be grieved or sorrow over his current state.

This can occur either while the WORD OF GOD is taught or after it is taught, when it is remembered.

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Therefore the divine mandate is a change of mind from the attitudes and actions that you now are willing to admit are sins and then turning from them to God, this is repentance and Spiritual recovery.

Beginning with verse 4 we see Esther informed of the decision to exterminate the Jews. It is interesting to note that she, the Queen, is in many ways the last to know.

But understandable when you consider that no one knows she is a Jew. The edict would, in the eyes of the king and even in the eyes of her personal servants, have no effect on her. But it does, she too will die.

Esther 4:4

When Esther's maidens and her eunuchs came and told her, and the queen writhed in great anguish. And she sent garments to clothe Mordecai that he might remove his sackcloth from him, but he did not accept them.

Upon hearing that her cousin is at the gate, clothed in sackcloth, Esther is said to have writhed in great anguish.

This is an adverb and a verb: ME-OD HUL which means exceedingly great and intense pain and anguish.

Reasons for her extreme reaction:

1. Could be so extreme because she thinks someone close to them has died
2. Could be in empathy for her cousin, knowing that he is in pain she feels the pain also
3. Could also be very self-centered and sees this as an embarrassment to her and her new position

To a certain point I favor the latter reaction.

She sends clothes to him prior to even inquiring about what is wrong. Then later when she finds out about the edict her first response is to get out of doing anything about it . . . but that is supposition only.

HOWEVER: While it is supposition in our story, the fact that we have a tendency in the human nature to eliminate or cover up embarrassment at all cost and often not be aware of the circumstances is fact.

This type of noble compassion was so well illustrated by the Lord who went to the outcasts, the poor, the lame, even the leper to offer them help in a time of need.

DOCTRINE OF EMBARRASSMENT

Webster defines Embarrassment as: Feelings of self-consciousness, confusion, and being ill at ease. This results in a loss of composure and poise and a growing feeling of shame or inadequacy.

Embarrassment is a very strong emotion and can motivate actions that can bring much pain to others.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Our focus in life can either have eyes on God, eyes on self, or eyes on others.
2. To correctly balance your focus, you should first put your eyes on God:

Hebrews 12:2-3 Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against

Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

With that correct and primary focus, you then look at self and then at others in light of the person, work, and word of Christ.

3. Embarrassment, however, leaves out the primary focus and has eyes on others and eyes on self. The result of this, because we are inadequate, will be all those feelings of embarrassment Webster so well described.

4. Embarrassment that results from sin occurs when we recognize our sin and should quickly give way to regret, repentance, and restoration. This type of embarrassment is really not in view in our study (very easily dealt with). Nor is the simple embarrassment we experience in jest with our friends or when we say something from the pulpit that is really dumb.

God has designed a plan for you that allows you to advance spiritually.

Pastor R.B. Thieme has stated that: Spiritual maturity understands and accepts one's own limitations and at the same time recognizes that there are no limitations to the execution of the plan of God except negative volition toward Bible doctrine. You are not embarrassed by what you do or who you are, even in comparison with others you have succeeded more than you from a human viewpoint. You are no longer threatened by such superficial nonsense. The only thing in your life that ever rises above your limitations is your advance to spiritual maturity. You recognize that there are no limitations in your advance to spiritual maturity except your own negative volition.

5. Therefore, embarrassment will only come when you take your eyes off the Lord, take yourself out of his plan, and put your eyes on people and self.

- a. We see Peter's denial of the Lord as being motivated by embarrassment and a desire to cover himself.
- b. David was embarrassed to receive Absalom after he had banished him and then allowed him to return.

c. Later on in Antioch, Peter was embarrassed to be seen with Gentiles when the Jews came into town.

d. Nicodemus may have even come to Jesus by night because he was embarrassed to be seen talking to this man from Galilee.

e. And there were those who were embarrassed at Paul's imprisonment and tried to distance themselves from him.

f. Jesus Christ even spoke of those who are embarrassed by Him:

Mark 8:38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him . . .

6. Embarrassment then is the attitude of the weak and immature. That is probably why Jr. High girls live in almost a constant state of embarrassment.

7. Once your eyes are on the Lord and off self and others, there is no need for embarrassment.

Embarrassment is replaced with confidence in God and His plan.

8. The real problem in embarrassment is in what embarrassment does to cover itself and eliminate the feelings of shame or inadequacy.

We may have a fleeting feeling of embarrassment, but can quickly look to the Lord and relax.

But too often we take action to eliminate embarrassment that ends up hurting others and making us insensitive and callous

9. The bad reactions in embarrassment can take three courses:

- a. Cover-ups: In the case of Esther and Mordecai she wanted to cover up the grief her cousin was expressing so she sent him clothing.

This is an insensitivity in which you think more of what others will think than what ever might be the reality of the situation.

In operation cover up you never even ask what is wrong, just cover it up,

b. Ignoring and Avoiding: Now when someone is doing something that is sin or immorality, avoiding may be the best thing to do. Isolation of sins.

Someone comes up and begins to gossip, we are better off just walking away. A person's foul language can be an embarrassment and ignoring them or avoiding them is correct action.

But when someone does something or is something that is an unfounded embarrassment to us, we so often in our insensitivity ignore them or avoid them.

This can even be to the point of pretending we do not know them.

c. Putting others down: When someone is a source of embarrassment to us we try to cover ourselves by putting them down. This is verbal sins, criticism, and maligning in order to make us look good.

Someone is critical of someone we know, but we join in with the criticism, putting him or her down, so we are not associated with him or her.

These reactions express an insensitivity that is a result of our own hypersensitivity.

10. The alternative to this unfounded embarrassment and its insensitive results are to keep your eyes on the Lord.

Then, realize any embarrassment is a test, a people test and a self test, and in passing the test apply:

a. Grace Orientation: Treat others in Grace as the Lord treats us in Grace.

Are you not glad that we are not such an embarrassment to the Lord that he just covers us over, ignores us, or puts us down

b. Spiritual Love: Love others based on you integrity not their actions, attitudes, station, or behavior

Spiritual Love seeks the best for others just as God sought our best in sending His Son to us.

c. Humility: In the sense of realizing that your Lord endured tremendous humiliation for our sakes and that he has not called us to endure anything he himself had not endured.

11. There is no embarrassment in heaven:

Revelation 21:4 He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.

And we should reflect that heavenly position on earth by putting our trust and our confidence in Him

Esther 4:5

Esther, for whatever reason, wanted an external change. Take off the sackcloth and put on the garments I have sent you. But that was external and the remorse and regret that Mordecai was experiencing went all the way to the soul and outer garments would not help.

v 5 Then Esther summoned Hath-ach from the king's eunuchs, whom the king had appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what this was and why it was.

Esther 4:6, 7

Mordecai tells Hath-ach the story that led up to the edict to exterminate the Jews.

So Hathach went out to Mordecai to the city square in front of the king's gate.

And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews.

The fact that Mordecai knew the exact amount of money Haman had offered Ahasuerus shows that Mordecai had inside information from people well placed in the palace.

Mordecai leaves nothing up to rumor or hearsay, he provides Hath-ach with a copy of the edict to take to Esther.

Esther 4:8

He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict which had been issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show Esther and inform her, and to order her to go in to the king to implore his favor and to plead with him for her people.

This was done to SHOW her and to INFORM her:

Both are Hiphil infinitives, RA-AH and NAG-AD, they could be translated, show and tell:

The Hiphil stem is causative active showing that Mordecai wants to make the seriousness of the situation very clear to Esther, no doubts that this is anything less than an order for murder.

And there is a purpose in this. Mordecai was going to order Esther to go to the king and implore his favor and plead with him for her people.

1. The word ORDER is SA-WA which looks to an order given as part of a chain of command with a view towards responsibility and obedience.

Mordecai was not merely requesting this, but giving an order to his cousin whom he had cared for and raised.

2. The word for PLEA is BAQ-ASH which means to peruse after or strive after in making a petition or request. Means to not let it rest. Mordecai wants Esther to press the point.

Esther 4:9-11

Hath-ach comes back to the palace and Esther gives her reply:

And Hathach came back and related Mordecai's words to Esther.

Then Esther spoke to Hathach and ordered him to reply to Mordecai

All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that for any man or woman who comes to the king to the inner court who is not summoned, he has but one law, that he be put to death, unless the king holds out to him the golden scepter so that he

may live. And I have not been summoned to come to the king for these thirty days.

The reply: Now understand that Esther has just read a document that states that all the Jews of Persia will be killed in less than one year from now:

Her first reaction is rejection of the order given to her by Mordecai.

Rather than consider what God might do and how God might use her in this tragic situation, she looks at the circumstances that would preclude any action.

This is an illustration of looking at the problem rather than looking at the solutions:

1. Any problem puts us in the position of opportunity
2. Too often we look at the problem, with all its complexities, and are defeated
3. We also can try to solve the problem by our own human abilities. Taking the problem apart, figuring out all the what ifs, coming up with various scenarios, solving every part every possible outcome. Wasting a lot of time.
4. But it is far better to depend on the person who has know the solution to every problem from eternity past, the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon Him, because He cares for you.

5. ILLUSTRATION: Have you ever had a problem over which you worried about not only the problem, but also the solution to not only the problem but also all the possible fall out the problem might create? All the what ifs and all the solutions to the possibilities.

And they see the Lord solve the problem in some way or manner that you did not even see, consider, plan on, or imagine,

When that happens the Lord is trying to tell you something . . . depend upon me in the first place.

6. Esther comes up with all the complexities of the order given her by Mordecai. The king has a law, a golden scepter, I could get killed (not

likely), I have not seen the king for thirty days . . . on and on.

She is distracted from any solution by the complexity of the problem.

7. She, like many of us in a problem situation, failed to realize that Jesus Christ is the problem solver. Put ourselves in his hands, for his use, and depend upon him.

Father, I don't know how you are going to solve this problem, all I know is that the solution is in Jesus Christ. And I will trust in Him.

Esther 4:12, 13

When the servants related Esther's reply to Mordecai, he was not willing to take no for an answer.

And they related Esther's words to Mordecai.

Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, Do not imagine that you in the king's palace can escape any more than all the Jews.

The word REPLY is SHUB also translated repent, the reply then is very strong, not only giving an answer but an alternative to her rejection and unwillingness.

Mordecai reminds her, you too are a Jew and you are not insulated from this edict.

Esther 4:14

For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?

The words REMAIN SILENT translate a verb in the Hiphil infinitive, a caused result. She may keep silent as a result of fear. She is placing her fears above the welfare of her people.

The statement, Relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, shows that Mordecai, while not a great man of faith, did understand the covenant relationship between God and His people.

He knew what we have studied, that the Covenants of God to Israel are unconditional. And that no man can completely eliminate the Jewish race.

The Other place is a reference to the Jews in Jerusalem. Mordecai realizes that every Jew in every place except Jerusalem is expendable. That something will happen in the next year to preserve a remnant, but maybe not in Susa.

So he then adds, if you do not go to the King and plead the plight of the Jews, you are going to die anyway . . . so why should she fear death in going before the presence of the king?

If you are under a sentence of death, you would try anything to get out, even if it meant further danger.

Esther 4:15-17

Esther agrees to approach the king:

Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai,

Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way. And thus I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.

So Mordecai went away and did just as Esther had commanded him.

The request for the Jews of Susa to fast on behalf of the mission Esther is undertaking is very interesting.

Normally, fasting, when it was done, was always seen as a part of prayer preparation. It would have been very normal to request fasting and prayers, but prayers are not mentioned.

That, of course does not mean that the Jews of Susa did not pray for themselves and for Esther in this situation, but it is not mentioned in this book.

HERE AGAIN WE SEE the deliberate attempt by the writer to remove the active presents of God from this book and its characters in order to show the providential work of God on behalf of his people.

When she states that she might perish and accepts that we see her as a great patriot of the Jewish people.

She and Mordecai will be heroes of the Jewish nation, but not invisible heroes in the plan of God. They are not portrayed as positive advancing believers.

Esther, Chapter 5

With the beginning of Chapter Five we have a new act in the drama:

In Esther 5-7 we have the evil plot exposed:

Principle: Proper timing in life can mean the difference between success and failure in anything we do.

Esther 5:1, 2

Esther approaches the King:

Now it came about on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace in front of the king's rooms, and the king was sitting on his royal throne in the throne room, opposite the entrance to the palace.

And it happened when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, she obtained favor in his sight; and the king extended to Esther the golden scepter which was in his hand. So Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter.

PRINCIPLE: All the effort and energy of Esther 4:11 as Esther thought of all the reasons she could not take this matter to the king, proved to be wasted effort and wasted energy.

Some Observations:

1. Human solutions to man's problems require a great deal of time, effort, and energy.
2. Human solutions to man's problems waste time, effort, and energy for the believer.
3. God will solve the problems His way, when we depend upon Him, His grace, and His Word.

4. The fasting that was done by Esther, her maids, and the Jews of Susa is a picture of the cessation of human activity in problem solving.

5. Once human activity was stopped, and dependence upon the Lord instituted, the Lord moved to solve the problem.

6. All Esther had to do was show up. She put on her royal robes and went and stood at the entrance to the King's chambers.

7. We can parallel the putting on of the Royal robes to our putting on of the righteousness of Christ, being in fellowship and clothed in doctrine, and then making ourselves available.

PRINCIPLE: It is availability that counts, not human ability.

As the original readers of this book in Jerusalem examined this text, they would have been reminded that God is at work. That, through his sovereignty he would accomplish his purpose. That God would protect them even from an evil administrator and a manipulated pagan king. That everything is under the control of the mighty hand of God.

Esther 5:3

The divine solution goes beyond human expectation: Then the king said to her, What is troubling you, Queen Esther? And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it will be given to you.

The word TROUBLING is not in the text. Remember that no one in the Persian Empire was allowed to come into the presence of the king with a troubled look on their face.

The question is more simply just an inquiry; he has not seen her for thirty-three days and asks what she wants.

He then tells her that whatever it is, up to half his kingdom, it would be given to her.

This is really an idiom that expresses his love for Esther and his pleasure in being able to fulfill her request whatever it might be.

Esther 5:4

Her request was very simple: And Esther said, If it please the king, may the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him.

She wanted Xerxes and Haman, the king's highest administrator, come to a banquet she had prepared.

What lead her to not talk about the edict right away and what lead her to invite both the king and Haman to a luncheon remains unknown to us but known to God.

WE ARE GOING TO SEE in the action that Esther takes to resolve the problem a great lesson in proper timing. However, the timing is not of Esther's design. It is God's proper timing working out in the actions of mankind.

Esther 5:5,6

The Banquet:

Then the king said, Bring Haman quickly that we may do as Esther desires. So the king and Haman came to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

And, as they drank their wine at the banquet, the king said to Esther, What is your petition, for it shall be granted to you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done.

Here is where we see the perfect timing of God.

We see no reason in the text that Esther could not have told the king that she wished the decree to exterminate the Jews be cancelled.

But God had some work to do and for some reason beyond our simple understanding, he was able to over ride the outworking of volition at this point and caused Esther not to say anything other than invite them for lunch the next day:

Esther 5:7, 8

So Esther answered and said, My petition and my request is:

if I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition

and do what I request, may the king and Haman come to the banquet which I shall prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king says.

And between that day and the next, God is going to do two things. One work in the life of Haman and another in the life of the king, Ahasuerus.

THE PERFECT TIMING OF A PERFECT GOD:

1. Man is a creature of time and is restricted to time. Therefore he must at times be patient.
 2. God is not limited to time and does not see creation in terms of time. Thus, patience is not a part of divine thinking.
 3. The demand of patience we have is really coming to a point of awareness of the perfect plan of God.
 4. When we exercise patience we do so by means of three principles of Divine Truth::
 - a. God's perfect timing: God is never in a hurry and he is never late.
 - b. General Faith-Rest in the character or essence of God. This is a general principle of faith-rest. Knowing that a perfect God is in control of His perfect plan for your life.
 - c. Specific Faith-Rest: Learning, thinking, and applying specific promises that deal with specific situations.
 5. Patience then is following God in His plan. Impatience is getting out ahead of the plan of God.
 6. Patience is a human virtue that can either be based upon human reasoning with no value in glorifying God . . . or a Christian virtue that can be based upon proper motive, influence and power and thus can glorify God.
 7. The key to gaining patience is to be in sync with the plan of God, His essence, His Word, and His timing.
- THE KEY ISSUE IN PATIENCE THEN IS GOD'S TIMING vs. YOUR TIMING:
1. Any test of patience is a test of your attitude, your trust in God.

2. There are three principles that help orient the believer to patience:
- You cannot change anyone else except yourself. Do not have unrealistic expectations of others. God is never late, man is always late (women too).
 - Any problem that requires patience is a problem that has a biblical solution.
 - Any problem that requires patience is designed to bring you into greater dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. Patience that comes from training, home life, education, empiricism is helpful to life but not in bringing about the perfect timing of God in your life.
- Only patience that is based upon correct motive, influence, and power will advance you in God's plan and bring glory to him and honor to the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. Christian patience then put you into a position of following the Lord and his perfect timing. Knowing when to wait and knowing when to move out.
5. Once you are oriented through doctrine to God's essence including his perfect plan and its timing, you can then move on to applying specific promises and principles that apply to your specific situation.

But first you must come to grips with the fact that God has not lost his grip on you . . . he is in control.

Esther 5:9,10

First we see what happens in one day to Haman as God gives him time to let his anger towards Mordecai build and boil:

Then Haman went out that day glad and pleased of heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, and that he did not stand up or tremble before him, Haman was filled with anger against Mordecai.

Haman controlled himself, however, went to his house, and sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh.

The elation that Haman felt in dining with the king and queen is quickly dispelled in a seeing Mordecai:

The fact that he had to control himself shows us that he was angry at Mordecai.

The word for CONTROL is AP-HAQ which means to refrain from something, and Haman refrained from an uncontrollable anger he had towards Mordecai.

His anger was so intense that he called for his friends and his wife, Zeresh, to calm help him stay calm.

In order to look on the bright side he recounts his wealth and station in the Persian Empire

Esther 5:11, 12

Then Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches, and the number of his sons, and every instance where the king had magnified him, and how he had promoted him above the princes and servants of the king.

Haman also said, Even Esther the queen let no one but me come with the king to the banquet which she had prepared; and tomorrow also I am invited by her with the king.

I think it is interesting to see that he takes great pride in being invited to lunch with the Queen, yet he has no idea that she is opposing him.

This is a case of delusion, thinking something to be a compliment when actually it is going to result in a condemnation.

Esther 5:13

But all that Haman had accomplished did not satisfy him: Yet all of this does not satisfy me

every time I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

The word for SATISFY is SHA-VAH which means to keep level. Haman was unable to keep emotions level when ever he came in contact with Mordecai.

But his dear wife and his friends have a suggestion:

Esther 5:14

Then Zeresh his wife and all his friends said to him, Have a gallows fifty cubits high made and in the morning ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on it, then go joyfully with the king to the banquet. And the advice pleased Haman, so he had the gallows made.

Esther, Chapter 6

We are going to see the entire course of Jewish history changed because a pagan king, hundreds of miles from Jerusalem, could not sleep.

PRINCIPLE: Sometimes insignificant events in the eyes of man make a tremendous difference in eyes of God.

Esther 6:1

During that night the king could not sleep so he gave an order to bring the book of records, the chronicles, and they were read before the king.

Between the first and second banquet hosted by Esther we have the events of Esther 5:9-14 in which we see God giving Haman enough rope to hang himself. Now in Esther 6:1-3 God is going to deal with King Ahasuerus.

In this section of Esther we see God at work behind the scenes of human events.

The tables will be turned against Haman and the king will elevate Mordecai to an even higher position than held by Haman.

Esther 6:2

Here we see the providence of God.

And it was found written what Mordecai had reported concerning Bigthana and Teresh,

two of the king's eunuchs who were doorkeepers, that they had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

Of all the books of the chronicles of the king, the one that was selected and read by the king was the one that recorded the event of Mordecai saving the king's life five years earlier.

Now reading something when you cannot sleep is common practice even today. Especially reading legal records, if that cannot put you to sleep nothing will.

But just happening to open the chronicles to a specific event that will elevate Mordecai and humiliate Haman is not common place, it the power of God.

RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT SITUATION

WE HAVE ALREADY examined the providence of God, and in that we that God is Sovereign, omniscient, and omnipotent. And we have studied the providence of God.

He wills to do to His good pleasure . . .

His essence is active in the affairs of man:

ESSENCE OF GOD

When we approach the subject of the Essence of God, we do so based solely upon the information revealed to us in the Bible. Can God be Defined? Some have said no, and thus give up ever understanding divine essence.

But the Bible does reveal information regarding God. And since the Bible gives us this information, we are challenged to assimilate it.

TERMS THAT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD:

1. ESSENCE: The combination of the sum of divine characteristics of God as revealed in the Bible
2. ATTRIBUTES: The individual characteristics of God that when combined form his revealed Essence.
3. THE GODHEAD: The tri-unity or trinity of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit.

4. **PERSONALITY OF GOD:** The revealed person of the trinity, thus, a reference to any one member of the trinity.

5. **GOD IS ONE IN ESSENCE, THREE IN PERSONALITY:** Each member of the Godhead shares identical essence.

6. **LANGUAGE OF ACCOMMODATION:** Finite man attempts to define the infinite God. Can only be done through language of man. Thus, the need for:

7. **ANTHROPOMORPHISM** - Ascribing human physical characteristics to God

8. **ANTHROPOPATHISM** - Ascribing human mental or emotional characteristics to God

The important issue to keep in mind is that all three members of the Trinity share the same essence. What is revealed regarding the Son is also true of the Father and the Spirit. If a passage tells us God is sovereign that sovereignty extends to all three members of the Godhead.

Whereas, if from the sovereignty of God, God is said to act from essence, in (for example) creating the world, that action is accomplished by one member of the Trinity. In that case the Son.

FURTHER ILLUSTRATION: God is love - Essence of Trinity

God our Savior - Action of the Son in Love

There is no one passage of Scripture that refers to all the attributes of God. However, in the Psalms we can find certain places where David sang praises to God and describes God in great detail. So let's begin by turning to

READ Psalm 111:1-10

In the ten verses of this Psalm, we have many of the attributes of God that compose his essence revealed to us.

As King Ahasuerus makes a decision to honor Mordecai for saving his life five years earlier, God worked it so that Haman, the arch enemy of Mordecai, would be in the palace.

Esther 6:5

And the king's servants said to him, Behold, Haman is standing in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

We have already noted that this is a demonstration of God's control over the affairs of man. His providential working in the lives of those who, in this case, are unbelievers and for Mordecai and Esther, believers who do not really care about the things of God.

Esther 6:6

Haman came in and the king said to him, What is to be done for the man whom the king desires to honor? And Haman said to himself, Whom would the king desire to honor more than me?

In his self-delusion fueled by his arrogance, Haman thinks the king is going to honor him.

So the honor that Haman outlines is what he wishes to have:

Esther 6:7-9

Then Haman said to the king, For the man whom the king desires to honor,

let them bring a royal robe which the king has worn, and the horse on which the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown has been placed;

and let the robe and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble princes and let them array the man whom the king desires to honor and lead him on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him, Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor.

As we noted last week, money is not part of the honor. Haman was a very wealthy man so he did not need cash. But what he wanted was a semblance of royalty and for the people to honor him as they honor the king.

Five Things on Haman's Wish List:

1. A royal robe the King has worn: This would have been seen by the others in the palace and now is seen on Haman.

2. A horse on which the king has ridden: This would be one of the fine Persian horses of the king which the people had admired and seen.
3. And on whose head a royal crown has been placed: On the horse making it distinct from the horses of the nobles, this was a specific sign of royalty.
4. The king's most noble prince becomes this man's valet: Haman wanted to be served by nobility as would be the king.
5. This noble prince would also herald the coming of the man the king wishes to honor by preceding him through the streets.

I CANNOT READ THIS WITHOUT being reminded of another who aspired to be something he was not, and to be something he could never be.

In eternity past Lucifer, the highest Angel of God, also wanted to be something he was not, He wanted to be God. Lucifer also had a five point wish list.

Isaiah 14:12-15 Satan's Five I wills . . .

PRINCIPLE: When you want something you cannot have, when you think you deserve to be something you are not and never will be, you are under a delusion of self. At best it is arrogance and at worst it is Satanic.

God is perfect, his plan is perfect . . . yet man is imperfect and when man gets in the way of the perfect plan of God, the result is imperfect contradiction.

Contradiction to perfection, to essence, to grace.

PRINCIPLES:

There are three inordinate attitudes you as a believer might have in the perfect plan of God for your life.

1. Inordinate Ambition: This is getting ahead of the plan of God and thinking that you know what God's will is for self, for a collective body such as a church, and for others.

2. Inordinate Competition: This is competing in an inappropriate manner against others and at the expense of others.
3. Unrealistic Expectations: This is expecting others to operate in the manner in which you think they should operate especially towards you. Expecting others to like you or to love you or to approve of what you are doing.

Many disappointments in life are related to inordinate expectations.

Each of these, Ambition, Competition, Expectations, are a normal part of life but they become contradictions to the plan of God when they are inordinate or inappropriate. When they go beyond the normal to the abnormal and are accomplished at the expense of the grace plan God has for you.

EXAMPLE: As an authority you can expect certain behavior from subordinates such as children, players on a team, employees.

Inordinate Ambition, Competition, and Unrealistic Expectations eliminate reliance upon the Lord and His Word, they are self centered and egotistical and will result in great disappointments in life . . . and it is a contradiction to grace for you to ever be disappointed with the perfect plan that God has for you.

All three problems result in deception [see doctrine of Deception to Exaltation]

Sidney Harris has said: The more power you acquire, the less you know. A powerful man is totally insulated by his subordinates, who tell him only what he wants to hear or what will support their agendas, and not what he should be told.

Remember in Esther 5:14 Haman's wife and friends, friends of a powerful man, told him to build a gallows and eliminate Mordecai. That was what he wanted to hear. And that will be his undoing.

Power in itself is neither good nor bad but becomes what the holder makes it. In the hands of Churchill it was good; in the hands of Hitler it was bad. In the hands of Haman it is disastrous.

When God's judgment against evil begins to move, it moves quickly and completely. Haman, the villain of our story, is about to see what it is like to be on the wrong end of the justice of God.

Esther 6:10

The tables are dramatically turned:

Then the king said to Haman, Take quickly the robes and the horse as you have said, and do so for Mordecai the Jew, who is sitting at the king's gate; do not fall short in anything of all that you have said.

I would give almost anything to see Haman face at that point. He thought he was in line for reward for reward and honor but now everything is turned around.

The king issues three commands (all at once on slide)

1. Take: A Qal imperative, declarative command
2. Quickly: A piel imperative, intensive command
3. Do so for Mordecai: A Qal imperative, declarative

His arch enemy, Mordecai, will receive the honor he wanted. He was planning on having Mordecai killed that day, but instead:

Esther 6:11

So Haman took the robe and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor.

The verbs in this verse are mostly imperfects indicating that he did this for a period of time only. He did so because at this point he saw no way out.

In Haman's greed for reward he had said that the man who is to be honored would be served by the highest noble in the palace. Haman was the highest noble and he ends up serving Mordecai rather than being served.

He spelled out his own humiliation. He wanted to have such a vestige of royalty that he wanted to have the highest noble as his servant, but now he is humiliated by having to serve and herald Mordecai.

The PRINCIPLE we see is actually a DIVINE LAW:

Matthew 7:1-2 Do not judge lest you be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

The standard of judgment that Haman measured out against the highest noble is now measured against him.

WE SEE IN THIS ALSO that what you desire in life, if it is not in line with the will of God for you, can become a source of grief and pain:

1. God desire for you is to have his highest and best. This is the abundant life promised in John 10:10.
2. We, however, too often try to seek what we think would be the best for us.
3. God, being a perfect gentleman, will allow us to exercise our freewill against his perfect plan is get what we want.

He does this with the attitude of a father giving a child enough space to learn how weak his decisions can be.
4. But God will not allow us to find lasting peace and happiness when we travel our own path to our own goals.
5. He loves us so much and wants so much for us that he will let us have our desires but also let us see that they can never replace what he has for us.
6. Only when we can come to the point of saying: Not my will but thy will be done will we have access to and capacity for the very best God has to offer.
7. The Bible is full of stories of those who thought their desires were far better for them than God's.

So Joseph's brothers threw him into a pit because they were tired of their younger brother

So Saul offered sacrifices rather than wait for Samuel

So David was able to get Bathsheba into his bed

Jonah went west instead of east and then sat on a hill waiting for God to do what Jonah thought best, destroy Nineveh

And Paul went to Jerusalem rather than to Rome and disaster resulted

8. But most of us need go no further than the record of our own lives to realize that when our desire, our will is set before God's highest and best for us, we may get what we want, but it never bring the satisfaction and lasting joy we desired.

Esther 6:12

Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman hurried home, mourning, with his head covered.

With Mordecai's return to the gate we have a simple declarative verb, but . . .

With Haman: He hurried to his home with his head covered, we have two passive verbs. He was caused to do this out of the shame he had experienced.

He covered his head so that he would not be recognized. Here the once proud and powerful Haman had to lead Mordecai through the streets of Susa and proclaim him before the people. So now he hides his face.

He goes home hoping to find some comfort, but there is none.

Esther 6:13

And Haman recounted to Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and Zeresh his wife said to him, If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish origin, you will not overcome him, but will surely fall before him.

PRINCIPLE: When you are on the wrong side of the justice of God there is no comfort to be found, there is no place to run, there is no place to hid.

Even his wife and his friends saw that this was just the beginning of the end. He had begun to fall and the fall would be complete.

We can also see implied in this that his friends are beginning to abandon him. They see that the days of his position and power are numbered. Who wants to back a loser?

Esther 6:14

While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hastily brought Haman to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

Esther, Chapter 7

This chapter begins with Haman drinking wine with the King and the Queen and ends with Haman impaled on a 75 foot stake.

So the tables will continue to turn against Haman, the enemy of the Jews.

Esther 7:1,2

The setting:

Now the king and Haman came to drink wine with Esther the queen.

And the king said to Esther on the second day also as they drank their wine at the banquet, What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done.

The meal is completed and the after dinner wine is being sipped and now the King, again, asks Esther what she wants.

And again he uses the idiom: Even to half the kingdom.

Esther 7:3,4

The day before she did not make the request, today she gets right to the point:

Then Queen Esther answered and said, If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me as my petition, and my people as my request;

for we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed and to be annihilated. Now if we had only been sold as slaves, men and women, I would have remained silent, for the trouble would not be commensurate with the annoyance to the king.

She is so proper and polite in her request for her life and the life of her people that I am reminded of Maria Antoinette when she ascended the gallows to be beheaded she stepped on the foot of her executioner and apologized to the dear man . . . that is poise.

Her petition is worded in such a way that we see considerable thinking has gone into it:

1. Let my life be given as my petition
2. And my people as my request

The word PETITION is the Hebrew SHE-ELAH which views a request from a standpoint of reason.

If she has found favor . . . if it please the king.

In exchange for the pleasure she has given the king and the favor she has found in his sight, she asks for her life, which is a reasonable request.

The word REQUEST is BAQ-QAS-HAH, and views a request from an emotional standpoint. An earnest emotional seeking or request.

So for self she uses an appeal of reason and for her people she uses an emotional appeal.

WE ALSO NOTE that at this point she admits her people, that she is a Jew.

ALSO NOTE THAT the fear of doing this previously was unfounded. The king sees her being a Jew as being no problem what so ever.

MANY OF OUR PROBLEMS ARE ONLY PERCEIVED AND end up being no problem at all:

PRINCIPLES:

1. Man's nature gets him to think ahead. While in certain areas of planning this is good, in the areas of perceived problems this is bad.
2. We too often presume and in doing so worry about problems that never come about.
3. Also in hyper-sensitivity we can create problem areas that do not even exist.
4. Both presumption and hyper-sensitivity are contradictions to the Christ Centered Life.

I Corinthians 13:7 tells us that the dynamic of love that we can have from God: Bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

That love creates in us an attitude that is without presumption and without hypersensitivity.

5. We are told to live one day at a time:

Matthew 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

Luke 9:23 And He was saying to them all, If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

6. In living one day at a time we take care of the problems of that day, and leave the problems of tomorrow in the Lord's hands.

Matthew 6:34 Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Each day has problems, troubles you have to apply doctrine to. Leave the possible problems of tomorrow in the hands of the one who is already there.

7. We have no idea today what will occur tomorrow. We can worry and fret about a problem that may vanish, change, and even intensify tomorrow. Why try to solve it when you do not even know what it will be.

James 4:14-25 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

PRINCIPLE: Be concerned with doing the Lord's will today and leave tomorrow in his hands.

Now Mordecai and Esther had the presumption that if their identity was known, if the king knew Esther was a Jew it would be a problem. But it was not.

We have enough problems dealing with the day that is at hand without worrying about the presumed problems of tomorrow.

Esther 7:5

Now the king has a problem, he wants to know who has done this. He does not remember the details of the conversation he had with Haman back in Esther, chapter 3. Remember also that he really left the whole matter up to Haman so the details of the order and edict would have been unknown to king Ahasuerus.

Then King Ahasuerus asked Queen Esther, Who is he, and where is he, who would presume to do thus?

It could also be assumed that while the king gave Haman permission to do with the Jews what he wished, he did not think that total genocide was his plan.

The word PRESUME translates two words FILLED and HEART:

The idea is that the plan to exterminate all the Jews has filled the heart of the man wishing to do this.

The king asks: Who is he, and where is he . . . Well, he is a lot closer than you might think.

Esther 7:6

And Esther said, A foe and an enemy, is this wicked Haman! Then Haman became terrified before the king and queen.

Haman's day just got a lot worse . . . Esther calls Haman a foe, an enemy, and wicked:

“Foe” is TSAR which is an athletic term for an opponent. By using this word, Esther says . . . you lose.

Esther had been an opponent of Haman's and Haman did not even know it. He thought he was getting on the Queen's good side. How wrong he was.

“Enemy” is AY-AB which refers to a hostile enemy. Haman was not only an enemy of the Jews but also of the king because he would have seriously damaged his kingdom.

“Wicked” is RA a word for evil that is straight from Satan.

With the divinely inspired use of that word we can see who is really behind this, Satan himself. If Satan could have eliminated all the Jews he would have destroyed the line of Messiah.

Haman's reaction to all this is described as being terrified before the king and queen.

The Hebrew word for TERRIFIED is BA-AT which is much more than fear. It means to be overtaken by sudden terror to the point of physical reaction and revulsion.

Esther 7:7

The king reacts to this in an interesting manner:

And the king arose in his anger from drinking wine and went into the palace garden; but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that harm had been determined against him by the king.

The king walked out of the Banquet chamber into the garden right in the midst of a crisis.

WHY? He was so angry he needed to calm down, to stabilize his thinking:

OBSERVATIONS:

He was emotionally angry: The word is CHE-MAH which refers to an intense anger; it is even used for types of poison.

This poisonous type of anger builds and builds especially in the presence of the object of anger.

The king knew he had to take some action that must not be based on emotion.

Emotionally he probably wanted to kill Haman right then and there.

He needed to stabilize his thinking to think of a proper course of action.

PRINCIPLE: When we are under emotional duress, we must take the time to gain control and begin thinking again.

But while he was in the garden gaining his senses, Haman is in the banquet room digging himself in even deeper. What he does flares up the anger of the king all over again.

Esther 7:8

Now when the king returned from the palace garden into the place where they were drinking wine, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, Will he even assault the queen with me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

Haman is at the queen's reclining couch begging for his life, but that is very improper.

The king accuses Haman of attempting to rape the Queen

Assault is KA-BASH which always carries the idea that the force is required to subdue one who is unwilling.

It can be used of military conquest but also of physical rape.

When we read: They covered his face, the THEY refers to the servants and eunuchs.

The covering of the face here looks at condemnation. the face of the condemned is covered prior to execution.

Esther 7:9

Then Har-bo-nah, one of the eunuchs who were before the king said, Behold indeed, the gallows standing at Haman's house fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai who spoke good on behalf of the king! And the king said, Hang him on it.

The servants always know what is going on and they know that that very day Haman had built the gallows for Mordecai. They inform the king and the king issues the order:

Esther 7:10

So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the king's anger subsided.

As Haman the villain was impaled on the 75 foot stake, then the king's anger, that poisonous anger, subsided.

This is one of the great illustrations of poetic justice in literature. The villain is impaled on the gallows he built for another.

IT WAS KING AHASUERUS WHO GAVE THE ORDER but it was the judgment of God that controlled the circumstances to being about Haman's death:

JUDGMENT BY DEATH:

1. Judgment by death is the function of God's grace in the preservation of the human race during the entire course of human history.
2. God has promised that the human race and planet earth will not be destroyed until the end of the Millennium.
3. But the problem is that mankind keeps trying to destroy himself on earth through the folly of his bad decisions from a position of weakness. Mankind, in arrogance, is determined to destroy mankind through lust for power. Man has invented destructive weapons but nothing will destroy the existence of man on earth until God's proper plan is fulfilled.
4. Man's freedom and function of volition apart from personal virtue and establishment

restraint is self destructive. When man is negative toward establishment, the authority defined in it, and the responsibility developed from it, he becomes degenerate under either organized and disorganized evil.

5. So judgment by death is radical surgery to separate the infected part of the human race from the non contaminated part of the human race. The separation is permanent, since God removes through physical death those contaminated, thus giving the rest of the human race the grace opportunity to believe in Christ.
6. The illustration is Sodom and Gomorrah. This gave the progeny of Abraham the chance to use their volition for or against Christ the promised Messiah.
7. Perpetuation of the human race down through the last day of the Millennium is God's grace function in judgment by death.
8. Hence, each category of divine judgment has a purpose. Judgment by death destroys one portion of the human race to preserve another part, where total self destruction might be imminent.

Application to Believers

If it were not for judgment by death in previous generations of history, we would not be here now, and we would not be believers.

The perpetuation of the human race is only possible through judgment by death. It means blessing to us as believers. Judgment by death is a grace blessing to the living.

Esther, Chapter 8

In the previous chapter we saw the demise and death of a Haman. He was executed by King Ahasuerus but we also noted that it was God who arranged this judgment by death. The purpose was to preserve the Jewish race.

As Haman went down, Mordecai goes up.

Back in Chapter six we saw that the king honored Mordecai and Haman even had to serve as his valet and herald.

NOW IN CHAPTER EIGHT we see all that Haman had is given to Mordecai and Esther:

Esther 8:1,2

The promotion of Mordecai:

On that day King Ahasuerus gave the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther; and Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had disclosed what he was to her.

And the king took off his signet ring which he had taken away from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

We see four things happening in as this chapter opens:

1. Haman, who wanted to confiscate the property of the Jews, now has his property taken and given to a Jew, Esther the Queen.
2. Esther disclosed the relationship between her and her cousin Mordecai. Again we see her declaring her Jewish heritage. The king and the court knew Mordecai was a Jew.
3. Mordecai is elevated in the court to such a high position that the king gives him his signet ring. This gave great authority to Mordecai.
4. Esther sets Mordecai over the property of Haman.

IT IS AT THIS POINT in our story tha we can begin to see some analogies between the events of the book of Esther and our position of privilege in the Church Age:

SO BY WAY OF ANALOGY AND APPLICATION:

Haman is parallel to Satan, the enemy of God and all believers. This enemy was defeated on the gallows.

Satan and Sin were also defeated on a gallows, the gallows of the Cross when Jesus Christ died spiritually for all sins.

Haman's household is analogous to planet earth which after his defeat is given to the hero.

In his victory over the enemy Jesus Christ received title deed to planet earth which was lost at the fall.

His crown of thorns, part of the curse, represented his victory over nature and securing of the earth for himself.

Hebrews 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

Colossians 1:19-20 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

1 Corinthians 3:21 So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you.

The revealing of the relationship between Esther and Mordecai is parallel to the relationship that exists between all believers in Christ.

We have the privilege of giving to one another, helping one another. This is accomplished in the sphere of spiritual identity with Christ and therefore with one another.

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

As the king gave Mordecai his signet ring, the King of kings and Lord of lords has also given the believer that same authority, position, and privilege.

- Identified him as a high servant of the king
- Gave him authority to speak the word of the king
- Gave him the privilege of drawing on the king's accounts
- Gave him access to the king
- Allowed him to use the resources of the king

And as believers in Christ we have that same privilege

NOW WITH THE PROMOTION IN POSITION we also again see the principle that God is the one who promotes according to his good timing. Mordecai has taken a quantum leap ahead and God is the one who is working all these things together.

Esther 8:3-6

Having all these assets and this high position is for a purpose. Esther and Mordecai will have an immediate opportunity to apply what they now have.

Then Esther spoke again to the king, fell at his feet, wept, and implored him to avert the evil scheme of Haman the Agagite and his plot which he had devised against the Jews.

And the king extended the golden scepter to Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king.

Then she said, If it pleases the king and if I have found favor before him and the matter seems proper to the king and I am pleasing in his sight, let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the king's provinces.

For how can I endure to see the calamity which shall befall my people, and how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

Remember back in chapters 4 and 5 when Esther hesitated to go to the king, worried about it, took three days to prepare to enter the king's chamber? All that has changed.

Now she goes to the king fell at his feet, wept, and implored him to avert the evil scheme of Haman.

Then the king, after she is already there, lowers the scepter.

JESUS CHRIST IS OUR KING and he holds in his hand, at the right hand of the throne of God, the scepter of righteousness:

Hebrew 1:8 But of the Son He says (From Psalm 45:6), Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, And the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.

And just like Esther, we are to go boldly to the throne of our King:

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

When we do that, our King, our Lord Jesus Christ lowers his scepter to receive us.

NOW ESTHER gives an emotional appeal at this time. Back in Esther 7:3 she appealed to the king by way of reason. Now she adds here heartfelt feeling to the request.

In 8:3, the word AVERT is 'AB-AR which means to cross over or make a transition.

Esther requests that the King cross over of eliminate or supersede the earlier decision.

In verse 5, REVOKE is the Hebrew SHUB which is at times translated repent. Her request is for a complete removal of the earlier edict.

BUT THERE IS A PROBLEM:

Look at the end of verse 8: A decree which is written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's signet ring may not be revoked.

The word REVOKED is SHUB so he tells her the law is such that the edict cannot be reversed.

A FEW PRINCIPLES TO THIS POINT:

Esther asked the king to do that which was impossible for the king to do within the law.

In the same way believers often go to God asking him to do that which he cannot within the law of his eternal essence.

EXAMPLE: Make me sin no more, make someone a believer, give me virtue and character right now apart from growth, make me a mature believer overnight,

In his dealings with creation, God must function within the sum total of his divine attributes. He cannot overlook his justice in a function of his

love. He cannot ignore his righteousness is the exercise of his sovereignty.

Hence, just as King Ahasuerus could not revoke the prior edict, God our King will not just do whatever we think is best.

However, just like Ahasuerus, God our King has a way to bring blessing out of cursing and work all things together for his good and the good of his people.

Esther 8:7,8

The King's solution to the dilemma:

So King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given the house of Haman to Esther, and him they have hanged on the gallows because he had stretched out his hands against the Jews.

Now you write to the Jews as you see fit, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's signet ring; for a decree which is written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's signet ring may not be revoked.

In responding to Esther's request, King Ahasuerus said he could do nothing . . . but that Esther and Mordecai could do something.

He tells them that they now have the assets to solve the problem. They have the wealth, the position, and they have the signet ring that allows Mordecai to speak the very words of the king.

BY WAY OF ANALOGY:

- We may ask God to do something in which he has already given us the assets to do.
- We have position in Christ, we have spiritual wealth, and we have the right to use the very words of the King of kings.
- Just like with Esther and Mordecai, we have to make application of the assets we have.
- It is in applying the assets that we have that we see the answer to our requests.
- If we pray for a particular virtue, God will tell us we already have what is necessary to

gain the virtue, we have the words of the King.

If we pray for peace in our lives he tells us we already have the assets necessary to have that peace.

If we pray for a problem to be solved, we must consider if he has already, by his grace, given us the problem solving doctrines that will solve the problem.

God often directs us to our assets in answering our prayers and then tells us, Some assembly is required . . .

The ten unique factors of the Church Age:

1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit.
2. The unique protocol plan of God.
3. The unique equality factor of the computer assets. For the first time in history, all believers have equal privilege and equal opportunity under election and predestination.
4. Our portfolio of invisible assets.
5. Our unique royal commissions of royal priesthood and royal ambassadorship.
6. The unique mystery doctrine of the Church Age.
7. The indwelling of all three persons of the Trinity.
8. The unique availability of divine power.
 - a. The omnipotence of God the Father is related to our portfolio of invisible assets.
 - b. The omnipotence of God the Son related to the preservation and perpetuation of human history.
 - c. The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit related to the operational-type divine power of the CCL
9. The only dispensation of no prophesy, only the unfolding of history.
10. Invisible impact.

These unique factors of the Church Age make it possible for any and every believer to have this fullness of God. There is no excuse for any member of the body of Christ failing to execute the protocol plan. Therefore, there is no excuse for any Church Age believer being a loser. The only reason for it is your own bad decisions from a position of weakness.

These ten unique factors relate to how we deal with problem:

1. Admission or Confession of Sins, because we know we are forgiven
2. The filling of the Spirit. by faith alone
3. Faith-rest drill.
 - Stage 1: Mix the promises of God with faith.
 - Stage 2: Mix doctrinal principles with faith.
 - Stage 3: Faith controls the situation.
4. Grace orientation.
5. Doctrinal orientation
6. Personal love for God the Father.
7. Impersonal love for all mankind.
8. +H or sharing the happiness of God.
9. A personal sense of destiny.
10. Occupation with Christ, the priority solution.

We have seen that through the victory over Haman, the man of sin, on the stake, that Mordecai and Ruth have been honored. Mordecai is now the King's most high servant.

The analogy we see in this is to the victory over sin and Satan that occurred at the Cross. And in the analogy we also see that the one who believes in Christ is elevated to the position of high servant of the King of kings, Jesus Christ.

We also saw that King Ahasuerus was not able to cancel the prior edict. But that he had already, in verse 2, given Mordecai the means to deal with the problem.

We noted that by way of analogy, we as believers so often pray for things God cannot do

or things for which he has already given us the means to conquer. When we pray for a spiritual victory it will be accomplished by the choices we make using the doctrine he has already given us.

We must apply the spiritual assets to the situation and we do that by a choice of faith.

Verse 8 illustrates this principle: Now you write to the Jews as you see fit, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's signet ring; for a decree which is written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's signet ring may not be revoked.

In verses 9-13, a new edict is going to be written that will not cancel the old one but stand against it providing the Jews with the authority to defend themselves.

Esther 8:9

So the king's scribes were called at that time in the third month (that is, the month 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 which extended from India to Ethiopia, provinces, to every province according to its script, and to every people according to their language, as well as to the Jews according to their script and their language.

The new edict was written in the third month, giving the Jews to the twelfth month, or nine months, to prepare.

The edict was sent to the entire world, according to the Persian Empire. To all people of all languages.

Esther 8:10

And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, and sealed it with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horses, riding on steeds sired by the royal stud.

The message was backed up by the king in every part, even to the extent of the royal manner in which it was delivered.

Esther 8:11

In them the king granted the Jews who were in each and every city the right to assemble and to defend their lives, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate the entire army of any people or province which might attack them, including children and women, and to plunder their spoil,

The edict contained four parts:

1. The right to assemble
2. The right to defend their lives
3. The right to destroy, kill, and annihilate any army that might attack them
4. The right to plunder the spoils of battle

Esther 8:12,13

on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar).

These rights were granted for one day only, the one day the prior edict was to be effective

A copy of the edict to be issued as law in each and every province, was published to all the peoples, so that the Jews should be ready for this day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

And the edict was issued as the law of the king and thus, irrevocable under the same force as the prior edict

THEIR ARE NUMEROUS ANALOGIES TO OUR POSITION IN CHRIST:

1. The plan of God always gives the believer sufficient time to prepare for spiritual battles, God doesn't throw his lambs to the wolves. He gives them time to become rams
2. God's message of truth, hope, and life is given to the entire world, all the provinces and in all languages
3. Every part of God's message to us, the Bible, in its full counsel, is the word of the King and is even delivered to us by the faithful men who God used to write, preserve, and teach the Word.

2 Peter 3:2 You should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

4. The Word of God, our edict from the king, is irrevocable and stand sure forever.

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

5. The spiritual battles we fight are fought according to God's perfect timing.

For the Jews to act upon this edict prior to the appointed date would have been wrong. For us to get out ahead of the plan of God and go into battle too soon spells defeat.

We as Christians must remember that the conclusive battle against Satan and his demons occurs at the Second Advent. Until then we wrestle with Satan and we have the positional victory of the Cross, but it is premature to think that we can fight Satan, round up the demons and run them out of town.

6. The edict gave the Jews the right to defend. Not the right to initiate an attack. But rather to defend themselves against those who are clearly not only their enemies but those who are coming against them.

When it comes to our enemies and the enemies of God whether Satan or immorality or systems (that is almost redundant) we are to defend not attack.

7. In the final outcome of the conflict between God and Satan, those who return with Christ will annihilate the demons and the earth, which has been under Satan's control since the fall, will be the spoils of war and will be again control by the Lord in the millennial reign.

The edict issued by Mordecai in the name of the king is parallel to the orders issued by God our

King to us. The Bible and its doctrines are we operate by and live by:

The Importance of Bible Doctrine

1. Bible Doctrine is the only way to know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. Gospel information is Bible Doctrine

John 20:31 But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and believing ye might have life through his name.

2. Doctrine is the only way to love the Lord Jesus Christ. No one ever loved Jesus just because they say they do. It is Bible Doctrine that can you can bring into memory center on which your love for Jesus Christ is based.
3. Bible doctrine in the soul and in the frame of reference leads to occupation with Christ.
4. Bible Doctrine in the believer produces confidence in God
5. Bible Doctrine is the source of Divine Viewpoint that can be the production of Divine Good in the Christian.
6. Bible Doctrine is the basis for orientation to the Divine plan of God for your life.
7. Bible Doctrine produces stability in the soul of the believer
8. Bible Doctrine is the basis for divine guidance.
9. Bible Doctrine in the soul and as communicated is the basis for conviction the believer.
10. Without Bible Doctrine Satan corrupts the mind.

Esther 8:15

Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal robes of blue and white, with a large crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced.

We see that what was once sought by Haman is now the standard for Mordecai.

By way of analogy, Satan wanted to have the position now enjoyed by believers in Christ in the Church Age.

While we are not higher than God, no creature could be higher than the creator; we are higher in position than the angels and we in union with Christ.

Hebrews 1:4-14 tells us that the humanity of Christ is higher than the angels and we are in Christ. Positionally seated with him in the heavenlies. And we share in his superior position.

We wear the royal robes of the Royal Family of God.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

We will have crowns of victory reserved for us now and given to us at the BEMA

1 Peter 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

And we will have a garment of white, the uniform of glory of the winner, the victor.

Revelation 3:5 He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments.

PRINCIPLE: Christ has given us as a grace gift what Satan has tried to achieve for millions of years. And we got it by grace . . . can you begin to see why Satan hates you.

Esther 8:16,17

The response of the people to the second edict:

For the Jews there was light and gladness and joy and honor.

And in each and every province, and in each and every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree arrived, there was gladness and joy for the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.

The response included seven things:

1. There was light: The word is ORAA and is used here metaphorically for the light and cheerful expression of one's face upon hearing the new edict.
2. There was gladness: SIM-HA which means to have gladness with the whole being or disposition. There was nothing unhappy in the edict; the readers were happy all over.
3. There was joy: SA-SON which means to abound in delight. This is the physical expression of the inner and total happiness they had.
4. There was honor (given to Mordecai): YE-QAR, precious, honor, splendor, pomp. The honor was given to the one who secured the edict and that would have been Mordecai.
5. A feast: Celebration by having a dinner and inviting friends.
6. A holiday (a good day in the Hebrew): This means a good day, the people probably took the day off work and had a party.
7. And many Gentiles became believers because of the dread of the Jews.

DREAD is the Hebrew PA-HAD and refers to a sudden fear that here, resulted in a sudden change of attitude regarding the Jews.

Upon hearing of the favored status of Mordecai, reading the new edict, finding out that the Queen was a Jew, the whole attitude towards being a Jew changed in the Persian empire.

This is similar to what we see when a sports hero or a political leader takes a stand and professes Christ as his Savior. The attitude

towards being a Christian changes and by the testimony of some, many are saved.

OF COURSE WE CAN SEE AN ANALOGY to the response of the Jews and the Persians to the good news of the new edict:

Upon hearing of the good news of Christ, the gospel, we should have light, gladness, and joy.

This joy should come from the inside, the gladness that we experience with our total disposition upon hearing that Christ died for our sins.

We should give honor to one who has done everything for us, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our new feast is with Christ, in communion with Him, and in fellowship with other believers.

We should begin to look at every day as a good day, a holy day. A day in which we will learn more about the Lord and have opportunity to apply His word as we serve the risen Savior.

An all this should be a living testimony of our life to others. Remember, we are the Christ the world sees, we are the only Bible many will ever read.

Do we live like we have a favored status granted to us by the King of kings? And do others see the joy that we have in Christ? Even to the point of wanting to have we have?

Esther, Chapter 9

In Chapter 9 we jump ahead nine months to the day when the two edicts take effect.

Esther 9:1

Now in the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar), on the thirteenth day when the king's command and edict were about to be executed, on the day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, it was turned to the contrary so that the Jews themselves gained the mastery over those who hated them.

This would have been the end of February or March:

The word CONTRARY is HAP-HAK which means to turn completely around and to contradict.

MASTERY which the enemies of the Jew hoped to gain over them and yet was gained over the enemies of the Jews by the Jews is SHA-LAT and means to completely dominate and control.

And so as we have seen so often in this story, God turns the tables against those who wish to harm his people.

THE EVENTS OF THE DAY (Two days in Susa) can be summarized as follows:

1. The Jews had prepared and now assembled together as one force.
2. The Royal and Civic Officials of every province assisted the Jews because they saw how Mordecai, a Jew, had been honored and promoted by the King.
3. The Jews then attacked those who came to attack them:

In Susa, the Jews killed 500 men including the 10 sons of Haman.

4. The Jews, while they had been given the right to seize the homes and property of the enemies, did not take that right.

PARALLEL PRINCIPLE: The wealth we will have we will given by Christ and not gained by plunder.

5. Esther requests of the king that an additional day be granted the Jews of Susa. Probably because that was a strong hold of Haman and there were many enemies of the Jews in that city. See verses 12-14 Request of one more day

The king granted the request and granted her request to impale Haman's ten sons on the gallows as a warning.

6. On the second day in Susa, 300 men were killed by the Jews.
7. In the other provinces the Jews killed 75,000 of the enemy but even there did not lay hands on the plunder

8. In the provinces the Jews made the next day, the 14th day, a day of rest and feasting and rejoicing.

In Susa, the celebration came on the 15th day of Adar.

Esther 9:2-19

The Jews assembled in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm; and no one could stand before them, for the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples.

Even all the princes of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and those who were doing the king's business assisted the Jews, because the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them.

Indeed, Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for the man Mordecai became greater and greater.

Thus the Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying; and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.

At the citadel in Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men,

and Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,

Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha,

the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

On that day the number of those who were killed at the citadel in Susa was reported to the king.

The king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman at the citadel in Susa. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your petition? It shall even be granted you. And what is your further request? It shall also be done."

Then said Esther, "If it pleases the king, let tomorrow also be granted to the Jews who are in Susa to do according to the edict of today; and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows."

So the king commanded that it should be done so; and an edict was issued in Susa, and Haman's ten sons were hanged.

The Jews who were in Susa assembled also on the fourteenth day of the month Adar and killed three hundred men in Susa, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

Now the rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces assembled, to defend their lives and rid themselves of their enemies, and kill 75,000 of those who hated them; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

This was done on the thirteenth day of the month Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

But the Jews who were in Susa assembled on the thirteenth and the fourteenth of the same month, and they rested on the fifteenth day and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

Therefore the Jews of the rural areas, who live in the rural towns, make the fourteenth day of the month Adar a holiday for rejoicing and feasting and sending portions of food to one another.

Esther 9:20-26

Then Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,

obliging them to celebrate the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same month, annually,

because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and it was a month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday

The origination of the name of the Feast of Purim:

For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews, had schemed against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that is the lot, to disturb them and destroy them.

But when it came to the king's attention, he commanded by letter that his wicked scheme which he had devised against the Jews, should return on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

Therefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur. And because of the instructions in this letter, both what they had seen in this regard and what had happened to them,

Esther 3:7 In the first month, which is the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, Pur, that is the lot, was cast before Haman from day to day and from month to month, until the twelfth month, that is the month Adar.

The name of the feast is a testimony to the fact that God is even in charge and in control of the dice that Haman rolled.

Esther 9:28

Includes a statement that tells us the purpose for such feasts: So these days were to be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and these days of Purim were not to fail from among the Jews, or their memory fade from their descendants.

The celebration of the feast of Purim was to remind the Jews of two things:

1. That they would have enemies who would seek to destroy them.
2. That God is in control.

Esther 9:29-32

The establishment of Purim is confirmed by the Queen, Esther

Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim.

He sent letters to all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, namely, words of peace and truth,

to establish these days of Purim at their appointed times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had established for them, and just as they had established for themselves and for their descendants with instructions for their times of fasting and their lamentations.

The command of Esther established these customs for Purim, and it was written in the book.

Esther, Chapter 10

Esther 10:1-3

Now King Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land and on the coastlands of the sea.

And all the accomplishments of his authority and strength, and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai, to which 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 second only to King Ahasuerus and great among the Jews, and in favor with the multitude of his kinsmen, one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.

King Ahasuerus levied a tax on the people and the connection of this tax with the promotion of Mordecai in verse 2 indicates that it was for Mordecai's use.

The king **ADVANCED** Mordecai or **MADE HIM GREAT**, greater than he was at his first promotion.

Mordecai became the second most powerful man in the nation and became an example of patriotism and benevolence for the entire population of the Jews in Persia.

PRINCIPLE: God is in control and we can say whether we know it or not, appreciate it or not, like it or not.

End of Esther Study
