

Lessons from Mordechai and Esther

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Well, there are many personal stories and examples in the pages of the Bible. And God gives us these stories and these examples for a reason. We won't turn there, but in 1 Corinthians 10 and verse 11, it tells us that all "these things happened for our example and written for our admonition." It says, "upon whom the ends of the world are come." And the end of the world is getting much closer. So what that is telling us is that the examples we read in the Bible are for our admonition today, particularly as we get closer to the end time.

And there is none so moving or so personal an example as we find in the life of Mordecai and the life of Esther in the Book of Esther. And so what we want to discuss today is the lessons that we can learn from Mordecai and Esther that apply to us today.

This will be more like a Bible Study. So if you have a ribbon or a marker in your Bible, you want to turn to Esther and mark it because we will basically stay there with the exception of a few Scriptures as we go through. But what we're going to do is go through the account of Mordecai and Esther. And we will stop when we see that there's a lesson to be learned for us today. And then we'll talk about that lesson and then we'll carry on with the narrative until we come to another lesson. And then we'll stop and discuss that.

Now let's look at the setting of the Book of Esther. It probably occurred between 483 and 473 BC. And, obviously, all of these dates are subject to a plus or minus (+ or -) error but, as best as can be determined today, somewhere between 483 and 473 BC.

Now let's understand that this was after Judah had gone into Babylonian captivity. And remember Babylon was the first of the four world-ruling empires. And so the Persians conquered Babylon. The Medes and the Persians were the second world-ruling empire. By this time, they had conquered Babylon approximately fifty years before the events in the Book of Esther.

And these Events in the Book of Esther probably occurred between the sixth and seventh chapters of Ezra and before the Book of Nehemiah—just to give a setting of where the Book of Esther fits into the timetable of the Old Testament.

Now the location of where it happens was in Shushan which was the winter capital of the Persian Empire. And that is in modern day Iran in the southwest portion of modern-day Iran. The Persian Empire at that point extended all the way from what is today western Pakistan, right next to India, all the way to the south of Egypt. In Esther it talks about Ethiopia, but in those days Ethiopia was not in the same location as it is today. Ethiopia was south of Egypt in what is

today modern Sudan. So, this empire stretched all the way from Pakistan to south of Egypt—big, big empire, lots of territory, and lots of people.

Now let's look at Esther chapter 1. We're not going to read that. I'm going to summarize it because this occurs before Esther and Mordecai come on the scene. It talks about Ahasuerus. And that is a common Persian name for a king. I won't even attempt to announce the Persian pronunciation of it. It's a real tongue-twister. But this king virtually all historians believe all Artaxerxes which ruled from 486 to 465 BC. And he is the one that succeeded Darius, the first king of the Medes and the Persians.

Now in verses 3 and 4, we read that the king—I will not use Artaxerxes—I'll just call him "the king" to save time, to save my tongue—they had a feast it's called in verses 3 and 4 for a one hundred and eighty days—six months! And this was a giant—what it really was was a giant planning session for the invasion of Greece that was to occur after that. But obviously they had parties and they had banquets and they had wine. And if you read verse 4, it shows very clearly that the king was prideful in bragging about his wealth and his majesty. And he brought all these people in to show them how great he was and what a kingdom he had.

And then in verse 5 at the end of the conference, there was a seven-day affair for all of his court and all of the people in Shushan. And that turned into a seven-day drinking festival—a real debauch for seven days. And verses 10 and 12, Queen Vashti was ordered by the king to parade in front of this drunken crowd. And some commentaries—Josephus in particular—the Bible says, "to wear her crown," the implication in many of the commentaries and in Josephus, she was to wear only her crown. In other words, he was showing her off naked or semi-naked in front of all these drunk men.

And, as you know, she refused. Now she could have been a principled woman and just refused to do that or she could have been rebellious and just said, "I'm not going to do that." We don't know. The Bible is silent.

All we know in verses 13 through 18 they discussed what to do. In fact, in verse 13, it refers to "wise men which knew the times." That means it's a reference to astrologers. And so they sought the best time to do this. But the fact was that the advice the king received was she was removed from being queen. And many have speculated that she was actually executed. The Bible is silent. We are not sure.

So, then the king goes and executes war with Greece. He is defeated twice. That takes up a few years. And then we come on the scene of Esther chapter 2, so let's turn there and begin the narrative in Esther chapter 2.

Esther 2:1. *After these things, [Vashti being removed, after the war with the Greeks, which he, as I said, was defeated twice.] when the wrath of [the] king was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her. (KJV)*

And there is some implication that he remembered that with remorse. He was sad. And, of course, if you're one of the minions and the suck-ups to the king, the last thing you want is the king to be sad because when the king is sad, everybody else is sad. And he makes trouble for everybody else. So there was a movement afoot to take care of his sadness and to make him happy again. And we pick that up in verse 2.

Esther 2:2. Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king: (KJV)

Ha! Good idea! The king's mind, I suppose.

Esther 2:3. And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hege the king's chamberlain [he was a eunuch, by the way.], keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given: (KJV)

And so obviously it goes on it verse 4:

Esther 2:4. And let the maiden which [pleases] the king be queen instead of Vashti. And [this whole recommendation] pleased the king [greatly]; and [so] he did. (KJV)

In verse 5, it says:

Esther 2:5. Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, (KJV)

Now he was in the palace which indicated that he had some kind of job there. We don't know at what level or how important it was, but he was in the palace. So, he was under the employ of the king.

Going on, it goes on and gives his lineage and he was a Benjamite. We will see later on that he was a relative of Saul. Now going on in verse 6:

Esther 2:6. Who had been carried away (KJV)

And it's talking about his lineage. He wasn't born when the captivity occurred.

Esther 2:6. Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. (KJV)

And notice this in verse 7.

Esther 2:7. And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter [his cousin]: (KJV)

Her name was Hadassah. He named her Hadassah to hide the fact that she was a Jewess. He did not want that to be told. And we'll see why. And so he brought her up as his own daughter. And she was apparently quite a bit younger—could have been ten, twenty, thirty years younger than Mordecai.

Verse 7, going on, it says:

Esther 2:7. *And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.*

8) *So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women. (KJV)*

There was a whole building that housed all the women. And he was the keeper of it. He was a eunuch. He had been castrated. So he would not be tempted and the king would not have to look over his shoulder. And he was the keeper of that whole building and all the women therein.

Going on verse 9:

Esther 2:9. *And the maiden pleased him [referring to Esther], and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens [seven younger girls to look after her, look after her every need], which were [suitable] to be given her, out of the king's house: (KJV)*

But notice this:

Esther 2:9b. *he [This is the keeper of the women.] preferred her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women. (KJV)*

She was achieving favor right out of the shoot in this whole thing.

Esther 2:10. *Esther had not showed her people nor her [family]: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not show it. (KJV)*

In other words, she did not tell anyone that she was a Jewess.

Going on in verse 11:

Esther 2:11. *And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her. 12) Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to [the] king, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (KJV)*

Their custom was to purify these young virgins for twelve months. I mean they had oils and they had perfumes and they had massages and they had baths and all of that for twelve months to prepare them for the meeting with the king. A totally different world than we live in today!

He says:

Esther 2:12. *(for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet [perfumes], and with other things for the purifying of the women;) (KJV)*
13) *Then thus every maiden [came] unto the king; whatsoever she desired [for that meeting] was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house. (KJV)*

So the woman could array herself however she wanted for this one meeting with the king. And you can imagine the pressure that was on these young women going for this meeting with the king.

Now verse 14:

Esther 2:14. *In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz [another eunuch], the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: (KJV)*

Now this is the way it worked. She went for—I guess the most polite thing you could say—is a "test drive" with the king. And he had her for one night and part of the next day. And then she was dismissed to go to the second house of the concubines. And so this for these young girls, depending on your motive and your outlook, it was a chance of a lifetime or a chance of something you really wish you weren't there and didn't want to be part of, but you had no choice.

Going on, it said:

Esther 2:14b. *[she went to the second house] Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name. (KJV)*

What that means is that she had this one-night affair with the king. Then she went into the second house, and she would only come out of that house if the king asked for her by name, if he wanted her back. Remember this is the house of the concubines. Not the queen—the house of the concubines. So these poor girls were, after this test drive, went into this house and if he never called for her again, she would never come out. She would never leave that house. She would never go to another man because the king had already had her and she could never have children. She could never have a normal life, but that's the way it way. And that was what was at stake during this whole process.

Now going on in verse 15:

Esther 2:15. *Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. (KJV)*

And she consulted him about what she should wear. And I'm sure he trained her in the modesty, the decorum, the protocol of what to do.

Esther 2:15b. *And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all them that looked upon her.*

16) So Esther was taken unto king into his house royal in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. (KJV)

Now verse 17:

Esther 2:17. *And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. (KJV)*

Now some could say, "Well, did she really go in and have a one-night stand? Or what really happened?" The Bible does not say. I would think because of her training and her background, she might have appealed to the king and to have been as appealing as possible. But if the king wanted to do something he ought not to do, it could well be that Esther said, "If you want me, then you're going to wait because I won't give myself to you until I'm the queen." We don't know. We have not a clue what went on. We just don't know. But the fact is that she was given favor above, what I would assume would be hundreds if not thousands of other young women.

Going on in verse 18:

Esther 2:18. *Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast [dedicated her]; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.*

19) And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate. (KJV)

Now the understanding of this is that at some point down the road, the king wanted to increase the number of concubines, so he went through that process a second time, months, years down the road. But by this time, it says, "Mordecai sat in the king's gate." That means Mordecai, after Esther had become queen, was given a higher position because you didn't sit in the king's gate unless you had a certain rank. Before it said he was in Shushan, the area of the palace, but he didn't sit in the king's gate. Now Mordecai does.

Verse 20:

Esther 2:20. *Esther had not yet [even after all this] showed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him. (KJV)*

And I'm sure Mordecai instructed her about God's commandments and that's what I said earlier about the test drive because she was obviously a very principled young woman.

Verse 21:

Esther 2:21. *In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, [A man named—how'd you like this name?] Bigthan and Teresh, of [whom they] kept the door, (KJV)*

That means they were responsible as to who was let into the king's house, his residence. A very trusted position because they were the ones to protect the king from assassination. And we see here that they were angry with the king and they sought to lay hands on the king.

Verse 22:

Esther 2:22. *And the thing [became] known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther; and [then] Esther [told it to] the king in Mordecai's name. (KJV)*

And then Esther told it to "the king in Mordecai's name" at the end of verse 22. And then this 23, the king made an inquiry into the matter, found out it was true, hanged them both on a tree. Some speculate that instead of being hanged on a tree, they take a tree, cut it off, sharpen it into a point and drop them on the tree, which was common in those days. If you want cringe a little bit and think about the ramifications of that!

And it says:

Esther 2:23b. *and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king. (KJV)*

Going on now in chapter 3:

Esther 3:1. *After these things did king promote [a man named] Haman the ... Agagite, (KJV)*

And we're going to get into that in just a bit. Why it mentioned that it's important that he was Agagite.

Esther 3:1b. *and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. (KJV)*

This man Haman was now Number 2 in the whole Persian Empire.

Verse 2:

Esther 3:2. *And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, [they were required to bow, and reverence] Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. (KJV)*

Now what that meant is if you look in the Hebrew words, it means they were to lay down flat and prostrate themselves before the king. They were to kneel and worship as though this Haman was a god. And they were required to do that.

Now at the end of verse 2, we see:

Esther 3:2b. *But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence. (KJV)*

He did it for two reasons as we will get into in just a bit.

So he refused to do so. Now notice the reaction in verse 3:

Esther 3:3. *Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why [do you] transgress the king's commandment? (KJV)*

"Why are you disobeying the king?"

Verse 4:

Esther 3:4. *Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, (KJV)*

They say, "You're going to get in trouble. You're going to lose your head here!"

Esther 3:4b. *and he [didn't listen] unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: (KJV)*

Whether Mordecai would be allowed not to bow or whether he would be forced to bow or be executed in the process.

Esther 3:4 continued. *for he had told them that he was a Jew. (KJV)*

Now we're going to explain why this is coming up now in just a bit.

Verse 5:

Esther 3:5. *And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. (KJV)*

Now let's understand in chapter 2 and the beginning of chapter 3, there's a lesson to be learned. We're going to stop here and look at the first lesson.

The First Lesson we learn is:

We cannot put a man in front of God.

We cannot put a man between us and God.

And that's exactly what Haman wanted Mordecai to do. "You bow to me before you bow to your God."

Now in chapter 3 verse 2, it says that, "They bowed and revered Haman." The word *bow* means to kneel or kneel down. It's Strong's 3786. And *reverence* is Strong's 7812, which means to prostrate oneself before God in worship.

That was what was required. So Mordecai was required to worship Haman as one would God. Mordecai refused. One reason he refused is he would never bow down to an Agagite—and we'll explain that in a minute. He would never do that. But more importantly, he would never bow down to a man as he would to God in heaven. He would never do that. He was a Jew. He was trained in God's commandments and God's ways and he would never do that.

Look at Matthew chapter 4 and verse 10. Just keep your finger here because we're going to come back. Matthew 4 and verse 10, this was—we're breaking into the context—shortly after Christ had fasted forty days and forty nights, Satan had tempted him. And then Matthew 4 verse 10, Christ said:

Matthew 4:10. Then [said] Jesus unto him [referring to Satan], Get [you] hence, Satan: for it is written, [And now Christ is referring to Deuteronomy 6:13; He's saying,] [You shall] worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (KJV)

Well, obviously Mordecai knew Deuteronomy 6 and verse 13. He was very familiar with that! So we see here that Mordecai refused to put a man between him and God.

Now what does that have to do with the Church today? Well, it's done all the time in the Church today. That's the problem!

In the past, there were many people—sad to say—worshipped Mr. Armstrong. I told you about that man who told me that "If Mr. Armstrong told me to go kill somebody, I would do it"! And there were people that worshipped Mr. Armstrong to that degree. He didn't want it. He never asked for it, but it happened. And people began to put a man between them and God.

And today, some worship their human leader. Sad to say, but it happens. Or some are allowed to worship their human leader even though their human leader doesn't say, "Worship me." He knows people in his congregation do worship him and he does not stop it. That happens today.

And, I've said it before, there was a very good friend of ours said, "I want a strong leader and I want him to tell me what to do." Well, now when you analyze that statement, "I want a strong leader and I want him to tell me what to do," who should that be? It should be God! God is the strong leader that should tell us what to do. Not a man!

And so this First Lesson is very profound for the Church today because we cannot put a man between us and God, or worship a man instead of God, or look to a man instead of God. And yet it happens all the time all too often in God's Church! So, that is the First Lesson from Mordecai and Esther.

Now let's go on in chapter 3. We ended in verse 5. Let's begin in verse 6. Notice this!

Esther 3:5. *And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, [We're in verse 5.]Haman [was] full of wrath. 6) And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai; for they had showed him the people of Mordecai: (KJV)*

Now Haman knew that Mordecai was a Jew.

Esther 3:6b. *wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom, even the people of Mordecai. (KJV)*

He now had a bigger plan. You have to ask yourself, "Who put that thought in his head? Where did that thought come from?" But it was obviously planted on fertile ground and began to grow.

Verse 7:

Esther 3:7. *In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, [which means], the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar. (KJV)*

They were casting these lots to determine when was the best time to destroy the Jews. That was why they were doing that.

Now going on:

Esther 3:8. *And Haman said unto [the] king; (KJV)*

Now notice what he says!

Esther 3:8b. *[Hey, there's a certain people scattered [throughout], dispersed [throughout your kingdom] in all the provinces; and their laws are [different] from all [the rest of the] people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to [allow] them [to live]. (KJV)*

"They're different. They keep these Holy Days. They keep this Sabbath. Totally contrary to what the other residents of the Persian Empire keep!"

Verse 9:

Esther 3:9. *If it please the king, (KJV)*

Now he's not mentioning Jews at all! Hasn't said a word about the Jews! He said:

Esther 3:9. *If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries. (KJV)*

Now what he did, being a good salesman, he is overcoming an objection because all of the people in the kingdom pay tribute to the king. Just like we have—theoretically—everybody should pay taxes and it comes into the treasury of the United States. All of the people paid tribute to the king and it came into his treasury. Now what Haman is saying is, "I'm going to kill a bunch of them!" So the first thought the king would have is, "Well, I'm going to lose a lot of money on this deal because they're going to be dead and they're not going to pay any more tribute." What Haman calculated, he said, "I'm going to pay you this silver to make up to the fact that these people are now dead and not contributing to the coffers of the Persian Empire." Pretty smart man!

Verse 10, and again where did that come from?

Esther 3:10. *And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.
11) And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to [you], (KJV)*

"You don't need to pay me the silver." So obviously he wanted to curry favor with Haman. He wanted Haman on his side. He didn't want a rebellion from Haman. And so he granted him the fact that now he didn't have to pay this bribe.

Esther 3:11b. *The silver is given to [you], and the people also, to do with them as it [seems] good to [you]. (KJV)*

Now this tells you something about the king. The king could care less about his subjects. He didn't even want to know who they were! He didn't even ask how many they were! His loyal Number Two guy comes up and says, "I want to get rid of them." He says, "Fine. Go ahead. Do whatever you want. They're in your hands." A lot of love and concern!

Verse 12:

Esther 3:12. *Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, (KJV)*

Now this is the day before the Passover.

Esther 3:12. *and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language;*

*in the name of [the] king was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.
(KJV)*

It's called a signet ring. You put the wax on the scroll—hot wax. He puts the signet ring in with the embossed surface and that is a signal that it came from the king.

Verse 13:

Esther 3:13. *And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey. (KJV)*

This was a bribe to the people to participate in this carnage. If they had a next door neighbor that was a Jew and they killed them, then they could take the house. They could take the belongings and put it in their own name. Again, Haman's idea to make this thing successful!

Verse 14:

Esther 3:14. *The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.
15) The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed. (KJV)*

They were having a ball, but the city was perplexed because there were a lot of Jews there. And people had friends. And maybe there was some intermarriage. Who knows? But they said, "Why is the king doing this? What's going on here? What's going on?"

So now we're going to stop and look at the Second Lesson that we need to learn. The Second Lesson that we need to learn is that:

We must obey God completely!
Emphasis on the word **completely!**

Because if God had been obeyed completely, this would have never happened! Haman would have never existed if God's people had obeyed completely.

Now let's understand that in this narrative, Haman is a type of Satan. He's symbolic of Satan. Satan attempted to destroy God's people in Egypt. He attempted to destroy God's people in the wilderness. The Amalekites did the same thing. As you recall, Israel was wandering in the wilderness, they tried to attack them—the rearmost, the weak, the struggling, the infirm. And Haman is attempting to do the same thing. He's attempting to destroy the Jews, God's people. We also know that Satan is the accuser of the Brethren (Revelation

12:10). Who is now accusing Mordecai and the Jews? Obviously, in chapter 3, we just read it is Haman. So in all those areas, Haman is a type of Satan.

Now as I said, if God's commandments had been obeyed, this problem would never have existed. Keep your finger here, let's go back to Deuteronomy 25 and we're going to read verses 17 through 19. This is referring to Amalek and what they did to Israel wandering in the wilderness. Moses, at the end of his days, is recounting the history of Israel to the people and he's speaking to all Israel in Deuteronomy 25 verse 17. He says:

Deuteronomy 25:17. *Remember what Amalek did unto [you] by the way [Meaning: on the way out of Egypt to the Promised Land], when [you had] come forth out of Egypt;
18) How he met [you] by the way, and smote the [rearmost part] of [you], even all that were feeble behind [you], [and you were] faint and weary; and he [didn't fear] God. (KJV)*

He wasn't afraid of God to do that! He wasn't afraid of the wrath of God! This is the nation of Amalek.

Verse 19:

Deuteronomy 25:19. *Therefore it shall be, when the [Eternal your] God [has] given [you] rest from all [your] enemies round about, in the land which the LORD [your] God [gives you] for an inheritance to possess it, (KJV)*

This is what Israel was to do:

Deuteronomy 25:19b. *that [you shall] blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; [you shall] not forget it. (KJV)*

"You wipe them completely out!" That was their instruction. They never did. That was the problem.

Now this is why God commanded Saul to remove the Amalekites from the face of the earth in 1 Samuel 15. We've covered that. Let me just read the first three verses and the beginning of verse 8 in 1 Samuel 15.

1 Samuel 15:1: *Samuel also said unto Saul, The [Eternal has] sent me to anoint [you] to be king over his people, over Israel: therefore [listen] unto the voice of the words of the [Eternal]. (KJV)*

Very first thing, very first task that Saul was given! Notice verse 2 of 1 Samuel 15.

1 Samuel 15:2. *Thus [says] the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel [which we just read], how he laid [in] wait for him [along] the way, when he came up from Egypt.*

3) Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and [donkey]. (KJV)

And notice in verse 8, the beginning of verse 8, guess what Saul did?

1 Samuel 15:8. *And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, (KJV)*

Now Agag is the king of the Amalekites. Therefore, Agag is an Amalekite. Haman was an Agagite. He was a relative of Agag. Therefore, Haman was an Amalekite.

Now Saul obviously didn't destroy all of Agag's relatives—remember Samuel hacked Agag to death because Saul spared him—but Agag had relatives that Israel for whatever reason didn't kill. Otherwise Haman wouldn't be alive.

So Haman was related to Agag. Agag was king of the Amalekites. Therefore, Haman was an Amalekite. So we can see one reason why Mordecai didn't want to bow down to those hated Amalekites that shouldn't have been even alive.

Now if Israel had done what they were told, if Saul had done what he was told, Haman would never have existed and this problem never would have happened. Haman's very existence was the result of a lack of complete obedience. And we need to learn that lesson! We can't obey fifty percent. We can't obey ninety percent. We can't obey ninety-nine percent. We have to obey one hundred percent! If Israel had obeyed one hundred percent, Saul had obeyed one hundred percent, this problem would never have happened.

And it's interesting that here Mordecai is now a relative of Saul. And Haman is a relative of Agag. So here the two families come together again down the road.

But look what could have been avoided if there had been complete obedience! And that's the lesson for us today! That's the Second Lesson.

Okay, let's pick up commentary now in Esther chapter 4. Now remember the letter went out. All the Jews are to be killed.

Esther 4:1. *When Mordecai perceived [what] was done, [as was common in those days, he] rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth ... cried [out to God] with a bitter cry;
2) [He] came even before the king's gate: (KJV)*

He couldn't go into the king's gate dressed in sackcloth. He couldn't do that. And so He stood outside the king's gate. And then in verse 3:

Esther 4:3. *And in every province, [wherever] the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. (KJV)*

They had the right attitude. They were turning to God to relieve them from this oppression and from death.

Verse 4:

Esther 4:4. *So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told her (KJV)*

"Mordecai is out in sackcloth wailing in front of the gate here." And obviously, she didn't know what was going on. Then she called, in verse 5, for Hatach, another one of the eunuchs, the chamberlains, and commanded him to go to talk to Mordecai to see what's going on. He did in verse 6. Verse 7:

Esther 4:7. *And Mordecai told him [everything] that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them. (KJV)*

He gave him a copy, in verse 8, of the decree that was given. And obviously, Esther was isolated. She's the queen. She's isolated from the goings on in the city. She didn't know. And so he said:

Esther 4:8. *[Take this decree], show it unto Esther, and declare it unto her, and to charge her (KJV)*

This is the middle of verse 8.

Esther 4:8b. *that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people. (KJV)*

So Hatach came and did that. They had a conversation and then she commanded him to go back to Mordecai in verse 10. And in verse 11, notice what happens.

Esther 4:11. *All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, man or woman, shall come unto the king into the [innermost] court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, (KJV)*

That is a symbol of his power and his authority.

Esther 4:11b. *[His] golden sceptre that he may live: [and I haven't] been called to come in unto the king [for] thirty days. (KJV)*

She says, "I want you to know, Cousin, that if I go into the king unannounced and unasked and I'm standing there and he sees me, one of two things is going to happen. He's going to hold up the golden sceptre and allow me in or he's going to kill me." And so she's just making it plain that to obey Mordecai, she's putting her life on the line.

Verse 12:

Esther 4:12. *[They said] to Mordecai [these] words. (KJV)*

And notice what Mordecai said.

Esther 4:13. *Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, [Don't think with yourself] that [you shall] escape in the king's house, [any] more than all the [rest of the] Jews. (KJV)*

"You're going to die along with the rest of us!"

Verse 14:

Esther 4:14. *[And] if [you] altogether [hold your] peace at this time, (KJV)*

"If you refuse to act and don't do anything:"

Esther 4:14b. *then shall there [be an] enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; (KJV)*

He said, "God will not use you, but He will find a solution somewhere else.

Esther 14:14 continued: *but [you] and [your] father's house shall be destroyed: and who [knows] whether [you are] come to the kingdom for such a time as this? (KJV)*

"Everything that's happened to you up to this point, it could well be that it happened for a reason for this very day for you to take action."

So in verse 15:

Esther 4:15. *Then Esther [made] them return Mordecai this answer, (KJV)*

And this is what she asked. She says:

Esther 4:16. *[Gather] all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast for me, neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. (KJV)*

What an attitude!

Esther 4:17. *So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him. (KJV)*

Now she is putting her life on the line. Let's see what happens, going on in chapter 5. The indication is this was during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Esther 5:1. Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, (KJV)

This is what she if she was accompanying the king in a parade or hosting dignitaries or whatever. She put on the best she had:

Esther 5:1b. and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

2) And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, (KJV)

Okay. Now it's crunch time! You're hoping he's having a good day and he got enough sleep last night. And his bunions aren't bothering him or something like that!

Esther 5:2b. that she obtained favor in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. (KJV)

That is a signal of obedience and understanding the king's authority.

Verse 3:

Esther 5:3. Then said the king unto her, What [do you want], queen Esther? and what is [your] request? it shall be even given [you even] to the half of the kingdom. (KJV)

Now that is common talk and courtesy. That's as we would say "a little bit of bull" because there's no way the king would give Esther half the kingdom. That wasn't going to happen, but it was a sign of respect and honor to his queen.

Verse 4, notice her humility:

Esther 5:4. And Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.

5) Then the king said [real quick because it was the same day], Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther [has commanded]. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. (KJV)

And, undoubtedly, she laid everything out. This was some banquet.

Verse 6, at this banquet—it was obviously in the evening:

Esther 5:6. the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine [They've had some wine; feeling pretty good.], What is [your] petition? and it shall be granted [you]: and what is [your] request? even to the half of the kingdom (KJV)

Notice what Esther did.

Esther 5:7. *Then answered Esther, and said, (KJV)*

Now there's a bit of drama here.

Esther 5:7b. *My petition and my request is;
8) If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it's pleasing to the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, (KJV)*

You can imagine a pause here because the king's wondering, "What does she want?"

Esther 5:8b. *let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to morrow as the king hath said. (KJV)*

And so she put it off for twenty-four hours.

So we're going to stop here and look at the Third Lesson that we need to learn.

We need to step up when the opportunity arises.
We need to stand up; we need to step up when the opportunity arises.

Esther stepped up and put her life on the line. She could have run away. She could have tried to hide. She could have just ignored it and say, "It's not my problem." But she stepped up.

Look what Christ said in Luke chapter 14 and verse 26. She did what Christ wants us to do. Luke chapter 14 verse 26:

Luke 14:26. *If any man (KJV)*

The word *man* is in italics.

Luke 14:26. *If [anybody comes] to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, (KJV)*

Love them less in comparison. We know what that means.

Luke 14:26b. *and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. (KJV)*

She loved her life less than the lives of her people. And she was willing to sacrifice herself in an effort to save her people. And if she had not done that—as Mordecai said—somebody else would have stepped up. God would have worked it out a different way. As we read in chapter 4 verse 14.

As long as we're in Luke 14, let's go to Luke chapter 3 and verse 8 because God says the same thing to us today. Notice the principle. Christ is talking to the Jews of His day. Luke 3 verse 8:

Luke 3:8. *Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. (KJV)*

And if somebody doesn't step up, God's saying, "Okay, you've missed the opportunity. But I can raise up stones to take your place." None of us are special! None of us have a hold or a lock on the Kingdom of God and none of us are favored. The trainer of the two witnesses or the evangelist of the twenty-first century or whatever it might be, God can raise up stones to take care of that!

And so we need to step up, but in doing so not think highly of ourselves. Notice Revelation 21 and verses 7 and 8, Revelation 21 verses 7 and 8. Interesting two words here!

Revelation 21:7. *He that [overcomes] shall inherit all things; (KJV)*

We want to be among that group!

Revelation 21:7b. *and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. (KJV)*

But notice this! Revelation (that was verse 7), 21 verse 8:

Revelation 21:8. *But the fearful, and [the] unbelieving, (KJV)*

And then He lumps the fearful and unbelieving with:

Revelation 21:8b. *the abominable, [the] murderers, [the] whoremongers, [the] sorcerers, [the] idolaters, all liars, (KJV)*

But it's interesting that He puts together the fearful and the unbelieving with all of these other horrible sinners! Now there's a message there! Because in God's eyes they are in the same category! Fearful and unbelieving are as whoremongers and idolaters and murderers and sorcerers.

So what is it about fearful and unbelieving? And He says—He puts them altogether:

Revelation 21:8 continued. *shall have their part in the lake which [burns] with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. (KJV)*

Now the Greek word for *fearful* is Strong's 1169 and it's from the word *deos* which means dread. But it can mean either timid or fearful.

And that relates to stepping up. If somebody is timid, has a chance to stand up for God, for God's Law, for God's way, to stand up and be counted and God

says, "If you're timid, if you don't do that, I'm going to lump you in with the sorcerers and idolaters and whoremongers."

The word *unbelieving* is Strong's 571 and it means unfaithful, without trust in God.

It's not talking about unconverted. It's talking about converted people who are not faithful who do not trust in God when the chips count. When the rubber meets the road, then they are timid and they run away or they go and hide. And they are not faithful to stand up and do what is required.

And so the lesson for us today is obvious. Before this is all over, every one of us is going to be given the opportunity to step up, the opportunity to stand up because God is going to see what we're made of. Just like with Abraham and the knife coming down on Isaac, God is going to be able to say, "Now I know."

But it's only done through trial and test. And the fearful and the unbelieving are not going to pass the test. And so, Esther did and set a tremendous example for all of us in the modern Church today. That is the Third Lesson.

Now let's start in chapter 5 and begin in verse 9. This is now the first banquet is over. Notice what happens to Haman in verse 9.

Esther 5:9. *Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw (KJV)*

He had a glad heart because he was invited to the banquet. He was the only one other than the king invited to the banquet. You know pretty hot stuff!

Esther 5:9b. *but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was [filled with] indignation against Mordecai. (KJV)*

Mordecai wouldn't even move for this guy, which just frosted him no end. I'm sure.

Verse 10:

Esther 5:1. *Nevertheless Haman refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and [he] called his friends, and Zeresh his wife.*

11) And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

12) Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to morrow am I invited with her into see the king. (KJV)

Well, what have we seen here? It's called pride—nothing but pride. "Look at me. Look at what I've done! I've got ten kids. I have this wife. I have this home. I've

been advanced. I've been promoted, all of this kind of thing. And then to top it all off, I'm the only guy invited to the queen's banquet with the king!"

Now what does Proverbs 16 verse 18 say? We won't turn there. It says, "Pride goes before destruction." Pride goes before destruction. This was written before this time. "And a haughty spirit before a fall." And that's exactly what's going to happen to Haman.

God is going to test each one of us. This is the Fourth Lesson:

God is going to test each one of us to see if we have crushed our pride.

Because pride has filled Satan. God is not going to allow anybody in His Kingdom to be prideful because we would have nothing but wars and fightings due to pride in His Kingdom. And God is going to test us to see if we will crush our pride.

And I can tell you from personal example in the past, I thought I'd crushed my pride, but then it pops up. And then it's there and you see it and you go, "How on earth!" It's like a spring. It keeps coming back and coming back and coming back! And it's something we have to be very, very careful.

Pride is crushed through humility. And pride is crushed through the spirit of God. And we're being told here that if we have this kind of pride that Haman had, we are not going to be in the Kingdom of God. God is not going to allow somebody with that kind of pride who has not mastered the pride, conquered the pride, crushed the pride through the spirit of God—they're not going to be in the Kingdom of God.

So the Fourth Lesson we learn is that pride must be crushed. And God is going to test us repeatedly to make sure that it stays crushed. That's the Fourth Lesson.

Now let's pick up the context in chapter 5 and verse 13. Now after all of this bragging and all of this pride, notice. Haman says:

Esther 5:13. *Yet all this [all my advancements, all my possessions] [avails] me nothing, [as] long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate [because he's not paying me the reverence and the respect due me]. (KJV)*

Now notice:

Esther 5:14. *Then Zeresh his wife and all his friends [said] unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to morrow speak unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go [you] merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made. (KJV)*

Where did this thought come from? Where did this recommendation come from?
I think we know.

Okay, let's go on now and read chapter 6. Now the time shifts to that night. The gallows are being constructed in the middle of the night. Haman went to sleep. The king tried to go to sleep.

Esther 6:1. *On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles [that] they [might be] read [to] the king. (KJV)*

And, as we'll see, these were read all night long. He just couldn't sleep.

Esther 6:2. *And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king [himself]. (KJV)*

And then in verse 3:

Esther 6:3. *And the king said, [What's been done to Mordecai to reward him? What dignity has been done? What honor has been done? And his] servants said, [Nothing's been] done. [He's never been honored for this for saving your life.] (KJV)*

Verse 4:

Esther 6:4. *And the king said, [Who's] in the court? (KJV)*

By now it's morning. Haman had had a night's sleep, come to the king's gate because he wants to ask the king to hang Mordecai. And so right at this juncture, the king says, "I want to honor Mordecai. By the way, who's here that we can carry on this commandment?"

Esther 6:4. *And the king said, [Who's] in the court? Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.*

5) And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman [stands] in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

6) So Haman came in [in verse 6]. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king [delights] to honor? (KJV)

Now talk about a lack of humility, guess what's the first thought in Haman's mind?

Esther 6:6b. *Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honor [except me—the wonderful one! It's got to be referring me!] (KJV)*

So Haman thinking that he was the one that was going to be honored now concocts this ritual that's about to occur. Because Haman didn't need money.

He had plenty of money. What Haman lacked was honor and respect. And so what he concocted was a parade that would show the man that the king honored would show honor and respect to all the people in Shushan and the palace.

Esther 6:7. *And Haman answered [and said], For the man whom the king [delights] to honor,*

*8) Let the royal apparel [meaning the apparel that the king himself would wear] be brought which the king [does] wear, and [he says, a] horse that the king [rides] upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head:
(KJV)*

"This man should wear and be on the horse and the crown, everything that you would wear if you were on that horse." Talk about honor!

Verse 9:

Esther 6:9. *And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, (KJV)*

It's going to wind up to be Haman, of course!

Esther 6:9b. *[and] they may array the man [with] whom the king [delights] to honor, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king [delights] (KJV)*

And so the man that's leading the horse has to proclaim what a wonderful man it is who's riding on this horse behind him.

Esther 6:10. *Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as [you have] said, even so [do it] to (KJV)*

And you can just know he was there with his chest puffed out waiting to hear his name called.

Esther 6:10b. *[And he said, to] Mordecai the Jew, (KJV)*

Knowing that he was a Jew, which is another thing that stung.

Esther 6:10 continued. *that [sits] at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.*

11) [So] Haman [took] the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king [delights] to honor. (KJV)

Paraded throughout the whole city! Probably took several hours.

Verse 12:

Esther 6:12. *And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman [hastened] to his house mourning, and having his head covered. (KJV)*

Very much like you see people parading out of a courtroom and they've got their coat over their head or a bag over their head or something because they don't want to be seen. That's exactly what Haman did!

Going on now through verse 12 and then verse 13:

Esther 6:13. *And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends every thing that had befallen him. Then said his wise men [the astrologers] and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom [you have] begun to fall, [you shall] not prevail against him, but [you shall] surely fall before him. (KJV)*

Remember the king now issued this decree and he didn't know who they were. Haman issued the decree. He just said, "Go do it." So as of this moment the king didn't know that he was exterminating the Jews. And here he is honoring Mordecai.

Verse 14:

Esther 6:14. *And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared. (KJV)*

Now it's evening time and Mordecai has been honored. Haman has gone home in shame. And he just wants to probably die, but now he's got to go to this banquet. He's got to go to this banquet.

Now that leads us to the Fifth Point. At the end here of chapter 6 is that:

God works in ways that we cannot know or we cannot imagine.

Now where did all this come from? Because remember Esther was given favor with the keeper of the women. And Esther was chosen above all of the other women. And the king allowed her into his throne room without an invitation after the decree was written. And Esther's plan was to have a banquet and then to postpone it for another day. Where did that come from? Who put that in her head?

Then Haman's family advised him to hang Mordecai on gallows and had them built that night. And then the king couldn't sleep that night. And then the king asked for the chronicles to come. And then Mordecai's loyalty was found. Where did that come from? And then Haman was in court early that day. Where did that come from? And Haman thought he was the one to be honored, but he really decided how Mordecai was going to be honored. Where did that come from?

And all of this was unknown to Mordecai and Esther! Because God was working behind the scenes to make things happen according to His will. Notice Romans 11 and verse 33. Romans 11 and verse 33, we need to keep this in mind when we are going through trials and troubles and it seems hopeless. There's no light at the end of the tunnel. It just seems like a hopeless situation. Remember Romans 11 verse 33.

Romans 11:33. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (KJV)*

God works in ways that we cannot know and we cannot imagine to work His will in us and in his people. And as we get closer to the end time, we must remember that!

God was working behind the scenes when it seemed that all was lost. And yet God was working behind the scenes to work His will.

Now let's go to Esther chapter 7.

Esther 7:1. *So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.
2) And the king said again unto Esther ... What is [your] petition, queen Esther? [What do you want? I'll grant you] half of the kingdom. (KJV)*

Verse 3:

Esther 7:3. *Then Esther the queen answered [again very humbly, she] said, If I have found favor in [your] sight, O king, and if it [pleases] the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: (KJV)*

Now obviously, the king would say, "What on earth are you talking about?"

Verse 4:

Esther 7:4. *For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. (KJV)*

And obviously, the king just doesn't have a clue right now.

Esther 7:4b. *But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen [she said], I had held my tongue, (KJV)*

Verse 5:

Esther 7:5. *Then the king answered and said unto [her] Esther, Who is he, and where is he, that [presumes] in his heart to do [all of this]?
6) And Esther said, (KJV)*

Notice what she said! "The adversary."

Now what does Peter tell us who our adversary is? As a roaring lion going about to destroy God's people?

Esther 7:6b. *[This] adversary and [this] enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.
7) And the king [because he was so angry, as we've seen people do, he got up] from the banquet of wine in his [anger and he] went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.
(KJV)*

The king was not happy.

Not let's understand in these banquets then, there was a table, a low table. They didn't sit upright at a table like we do table. It was a low table and they had couches around the table so that you could lie on your side and you could eat leisurely if you wanted to or a servant was behind and could give you something and you would eat at your leisure. That's how it was.

Now notice. I'm setting the scene because of verse 8.

Esther 7:8. *Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon (KJV)*

The King James says, "the bed." It really means a couch.

Esther 7:8b. *whereon Esther was. [And when] the king [saw it, he says], [Is] he force the queen [Is he going to rape the queen right in front of me, lying on the same couch as the queen]? (KJV)*

And obviously, he was pleading with her, but the king because of God's intervention saw something else going on.

Esther 7:8 continued: *as the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. (KJV)*

This is what would be done before somebody was executed. You get a firing squad and you put a hood over somebody or electric chair. They put a hood over Haman's face.

Esther 7:9. *And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, (KJV)*

Where did this thought come from?

Esther 7:9b. *Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, [stands at] the house of Haman. [And] the king said, Hang him [on it].*

10) So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's wrath [was] pacified. (KJV)

Tradition has it that this was the end of the Days of Unleavened Bread, the same day that the Pharaoh died.

But let's understand, the Sixth Point:

God brings on us what we wish on others.

God will bring on us what we wish on others. Deuteronomy 19 verses 16 through 20 is the Law that says that. Let's read it. Deuteronomy 19 verse 16, it says:

Deuteronomy 19:16. *If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which [he has done] wrong;*
17) *Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days;*
18) *And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and [has] testified falsely against his brother;*
(KJV)

Notice verse 19!

Deuteronomy 19:19. *Then shall [you] do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so [shall you] put away [this evil] from among you.* (KJV)

That was a law! And that's exactly what happened.

In Psalm 94 and verse 23, David says—I'll read it to you:

Psalm 94:23. *And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and [He] shall cut them off in their own wickedness; [says] the LORD God* (KJV)

That's exactly what happened. And that's what Christ said in Matthew 7 and verse 12. He said:

Matthew 7:12. *Whatsoever [that you] would [have] men do to you, [you do unto] them:* (KJV)

And that's exactly what happened. Haman got on him what he wished on others.

Now let's look at the last lesson. Let's go to chapter 8 and see what happened.

Esther 8:1. *On that day did the king give the house of Haman the Jews' enemy unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was unto her [that he was her kindred and her cousin].*

2) And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman. (KJV)

That in a way is a type of Christ because Christ is going to be set before the house of Satan. This world is the house of Satan. Satan will be deposed. Christ will come over the house, this world. Satan is the god of this world. This is a type of that.

Verse 3:

Esther 8:3. *And Esther [spoke] yet again before the king, (KJV)*

This is now a different time. She came back to him. She wasn't invited.

Esther 8:3b. *and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.*

4) Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. [That is the second time she's put her life on the line.] So Esther arose, and stood before the king,

5) And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and the thing [seems] right to the king, and I be pleasing [to] his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces: (KJV)

The laws of the Medes and the Persians said, "You cannot countermand a king's commandment." So what they devised was something very ingenious. Look at chapter 9 verse 1.

Esther 9:1. *Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have [their] power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;)*

2) The Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people.

3) And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them.

4) For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.

5) Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did what they would unto those that hated them. (KJV)

You can read the details. We don't have time to do that, but five hundred were killed in Shushan on the first day. That's chapter 9 and verse 12. And then three

hundred the second day, that's verse 15. And then, seventy-five thousand of the Jews enemies were killed in chapter 9 and verse 16. Also in chapter 9 it tells us that Haman's ten sons were killed. They didn't want to repeat Saul's error because if any of those sons had survived, they would have taken revenge down the road. And so, all of those were killed.

And so that leads us to the Seventh and the Last Point.

In the end, the faithful are protected and blessed by God.

That is what we need to learn from this account. The faithful and those that are loyal to God and His commandments will be protected. It looked very bleak for a time, but the Jews were spared. In fact, at the end was better than the beginning.

Look at Psalm 121 for a closing Scripture—second to the last Scripture. Psalm 121 verse 1, it says:

Psalm 121:1. *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence [comes] my help. (KJV)*

And this is what we need to remember:

Psalm 121:2. *My help [comes] from the [Eternal], which made heaven and earth.*

3) He will not suffer [your] foot to be moved: he that [keeps you] will not slumber. (KJV)

No matter how bad it seems!

Psalm 121:4. *Behold, he that [keeps] Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. (KJV)*

And we're spiritual Israel!

Psalm 121:5. *The LORD is [your] keeper: the LORD is [your] shade upon [your] right hand.*

6) The sun shall not smite [you] by day, nor the moon by night. (KJV)

Verse 7:

Psalm 121:7. *The [Eternal] shall preserve [you] from all evil: he shall preserve [your life]. (KJV)*

The Jews learned that this day.

Psalm 121:8. *The [Eternal] shall preserve [your] going out and [your] coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. (KJV)*

Now we need to know that without a doubt God is going to protect us. God is going to take care of us as He did the Jews in Mordecai's day. We have God's holy spirit. They did not. We are part of the Body of Christ. They were not. And we are the firstfruits. They were not. So how much more will God's people be protected!

So the Seventh Lesson is:

In the end the faithful are protected and blessed by God.

One closing Scripture chapter 8 verses 16 and 17, this is the end.

Esther 8:16. *The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honor. 17) And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. (KJV)*

They hadn't had many good days!

Esther 8:17b. *And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell [on all of] them. (KJV)*

And then notice chapter 10 and verse 2.

Esther 10:2. *And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, [where] the king advanced him, [aren't] they written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of [Medes] and Persia? (KJV)*

Notice verse 3.

Esther 10:3. *For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, (KJV)*

But notice what he did!

Esther 10:3b. *seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all [of] his seed. (KJV)*

That is a righteous man! That is what a leader should do. So let's all learn in these perilous times that we have today, let's all learn The Lessons from Mordecai and Esther.