

And Others with No Name

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Date: 05 October 2025

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[0 : 0 0] Esther chapter 3, verses 1-12 today.

! After these things, look at the beginning of chapter 2, verse 1.

After these things, you ever notice, things are happening, things are going on, but after these things, something special is about to happen. So different things are taking place in the kingdom, but something special is about to go on.

He says, after these things, did King Ahasuerus promote Haman, the son of Hamadatha, the Agagite, and advanced him and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

And all the king's servants that were in the king's gate bowed and revered Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

[1 : 1 6] When the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said to Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment? Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand.

Is Mordecai's reasons for not bowing going to stand up? And then it says, for he had told them that he was a Jew. And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

And he thought scorn to lay hands on Haman alone, for he had showed him the people of Mordecai, whereof Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

In the first month, that is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of the king of Ahasuerus, they cast purr, that is the lot, before Haman from day to day and from month to month to the twelfth month, that is the month of Adar.

And Haman said unto the king Ahasuerus, there is certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people of all the provinces of thy kingdom, and their laws are diverse from all people.

[2 : 3 4] Neither keep they the king's laws, therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. 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 unto the king's treasuries. And the king took his ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hamadethah, the Agagite, and a Jew's enemy.

And the king said unto Haman, that silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee. Then the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and were written according to all that Haman had commanded 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 King Hazarus, was it written and sealed with the king's ring.

Let's stop there. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, I pray this morning that you would help us to learn as we continue going through this, as we begin this passage of scripture.

Father, Lord, that we would understand this, the things that we need to learn from this. Lord, there's many principles here for us as Christians to learn, to take with us as we go.

[4 : 05] Lord, I pray that you would help our eyes to be open to the things you want to teach us this morning. Lord, that we would leave here a change, people. We'd leave here principled in the things of your word.

Lord, that we would leave here understanding that you have commands for us, even through these Old Testament times. Lord, help us to leave here greater fellowship with each other and greater fellowship with you, because we understand these scriptures.

Lord, bless now, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Have you ever found yourself in a position that you're about to do a job or take a position that you never thought you would do?

My very first job, after, you know, you get past the teenage years of mowing lawns and all that sort of stuff, my very first job was in the tannery.

Heartland had a big tannery, employed 500 or 600 people at one time. And my first job was on Friday nights and Saturday mornings. I was still in high school, so I couldn't work other times, but I had this job.

[5 : 10] And my very first job there, any of you familiar with tannery? Anybody been to tannery? Okay. Let me educate you a little bit. Part of what they do, there's a thing called a pasting unit.

And it's just what it sounds like. These big sheets of metal would go through this pasting unit, and it would spray paste on the metal. And then the guys on the other end would take the leather hides, put them up there, smooth them all out, and they'd go around into a big dryer to dry them out.

They were still wet when they went up on the things, but it was to dry them out. Well, Friday night, Saturday morning, that pasting unit would shut down.

And somebody, think of what I just said about what's in there, paste. Somebody had to go in and clean it out. Guess whose job that was? That was me.

And I would go in there, a spatula in one hand, a steam hose in the other hand. And I'm inside this thing, and I'm spraying the steam on it, and I'm scraping the paste off of it, and I'm spraying the steam, and I'm scraping.

[6 : 24] When you have steam, where does it go? Up. Guess what? So did some of the paste. So I'm scraping and steaming, and I'm scraping and steaming, and the steam's going up, and the paste that's up there, it's coming down.

Yeah, it's coming down on me. It's dripping on me and stuff, and everything. So here's my first job. And after I got done doing that, when the things came out of the dryer, the hides of leather came out of the dryer, they'd go into these big vats.

They called them wheels. And they'd go in there to be tumbled, to soften them up, make them, you know, so they were nice and pliable and flexible and everything. And as they did that, they also knocked dust and stuff off of them.

And so here I am with this paste on me after having cleaned the pasting unit. Now I'm going in and I'm cleaning out underneath these wheels. I am red and yellow and green and blue and black and every other color you can think of.

So I've got paste, and now I've got color added to it. And when I'd go home after work, fortunately we had a house with a breezeway with a garage.

[7 : 31] Guess where my mother said, take those clothes off in the breezeway. I couldn't even get through the door of the house. The washer and dryer were right there, but you take those things off out there, and then you can come in.

So that was my first job. I went to school, got a bachelor's degree and a master's degree, because you know what I did not want to do? Working that tannery, especially that pasting unit and all that stuff.

My parents put in over 90 years between the two of them in that tannery, but neither one of them had to do the job I did. So, you know, it's like, there are things you do and you're just like, why am I here?

Why am I doing that? It's like those of you that have been here for a while, you know that before I started coming, when I first started coming here, I was selling insurance, and then I worked at Walmart for a while, and I did, God was training me.

God was getting me ready for all these different things. God's put me in that position at that tannery so that I would learn to go on to school and do other things. stuff. So, God has a plan in whatever he's doing in our life.

[8 : 44] And here, we've been talking about, last week, we were talking about a defeated king, Ahasuerus. He'd lost to the Greeks. We talked about a, yeah, the orphan, promoted orphan.

The promoted orphan, that was Esther. And we talked about a prominent Jew. That was Mordecai. Today, we're going to add another character, Haman. Haman's is not a good guy.

Haman, he's a, he's not the kind of guy you want to be around. But God had him there for a reason. God had Esther and Mordecai there for a reason.

He's trying to teach them things. You ever notice, God can put people in the same position, but they come from totally different backgrounds, and yet God has a way of using them, using their background illustration.

Those of you who are older enough like me, you remember in the 70s, Jimmy Carter, a peanut farmer, became president of the United States. And he had a way of doing things.

[9 : 51] Right after him came Ronald Reagan, a movie star. He had a different way of doing things. God took two guys from different backgrounds, put them in the exact same position, and used them the way he wanted to use them.

Had them ready to go in the way he wanted to. Here, in this book, Esther has been raised to queen in our last chapter. Mordecai is an attendant at the king's gate in that last chapter.

Why are they there? They have no idea. How they got to be there? They have no idea, other than God put them there. And now comes along Haman. Today we get introduced to a man who's going to hate both of these people.

And Esther may be the queen. Mordecai may be in the king's palace. But Haman is also positioning himself for power.

So if you want to keep track, positioning himself for power is our first point. And Haman gets promoted. Here's a wicked king, Ahasuerus.

[11 : 01] He has wicked people hanging around him. We talked about the counselors last week. And he is trying very hard to get himself promoted to where he wants to be.

And the king does it. Notice verse 1 and 2 again. These things the king of Ahasuerus promote Haman, the son of Hamadathah, the Agite. Verse 2.

And all the king's servants that were in the king's gate bowed and revered Haman. And who is this guy? Haman. Why is it so important that he's there? What's the, what's the, what is it about Haman?

Well, let's take a look at his ancestry. You'll find this interesting. The Bible makes special mention. He says he was the son of Hamadathah, the Agite.

Remember, I told you a couple weeks ago, that Mordecai's father, Shimei, was King Saul's brother.

[12 : 04] So, Mordecai has a relationship to King Saul. Okay? Haman is an Agathite.

He's a relative of King Agag of the Amalekites. The Jews and the Amalekites, Israel and the Amalekites, did not like each other.

Matter of fact, Israel had defeated the Amalekites. God actually told him to wipe out the Amalekites. But Saul did not do that. He kept King Agag alive. If you remember, I won't take time to take you there, but if you want to look it up, 1 Samuel 15.

1 Samuel 15, Agag is kept alive. So, there's a relationship there. And the Amalekites hate the Jews, obviously.

So, that's connection between Mordecai and Haman. That's why there's going to be friction and problems there. Then, you take the Haman. He looks to advance himself.

[13 : 07] The advancement of Haman. He is positioning himself so that he can go up in the echelon of the kingdom. He can be close to the king. And he gets promoted.

Only his promotion is kind of a misdirected thing. Do you remember in the last chapter, when we were finished up, Esther becomes queen. And while she's queen, Mordecai tells her of a plot to assassinate Ahasuerus.

And so, she tells the king, they catch the people who were going to do it. The king is saved. He's not killed. He's still alive and going. Do you know what Mordecai got for that? Absolutely nothing.

Not a thing. And yet, here comes along Haman. Haman wants to be moved up. He wants to get promotion. And so, he decides to do that.

He finds a way to do that. Do you remember that you've heard the proverb, and it's not a biblical proverb, but you've heard the proverb, no good deed goes unpunished.

[14 : 11] That's Mordecai. He's about to face some things. He did a good deed, but he's about to face some things. Haman, instead, he finds a way to raise himself up.

Bribery. I can bribe the king into giving me the promotion I want. Notice it said there in verses 8 and 9, he talked, I won't read them, but he talked about the fact that he would offer the king 10,000 talents of silver.

10,000 talents. And when you think of that, you usually think, oh, okay, so he's going to give him 10,000 silver coins. Oh, that's good. No. 10,000 talents was equivalent to 375 tons of silver.

How Haman had that available to him, I have no idea. But apparently he did. 375 tons. Now, if you're like me, you're kind of curious, and I didn't do this all the way out like I probably should have, but I looked up on Thursday when I was going over this.

What is silver worth today? Between \$47 and \$48 an ounce. \$47 and \$48 an ounce.

[15 : 28] He's about to give him 375 tons. That's a whole lot of money. And you remember we talked before, Ahasuerus has lost to the Greeks in his last battles there.

He's running a little short on money. 375 tons of silver? I'll take it. No problem. What do you want? Oh, sure, no problem. We can do that. And so Haman gets this promotion.

He's about to ask for the Jews to be killed. He's arrogant about it. He wants everybody to bow down to him and to give him reverence and everything. You know, he kind of reminds me of the Antichrist.

He's a Persian version of the Antichrist. Listen, or you can actually look up there. Romans, not Romans, Revelation, chapter 13. Look at verse 2.

And the bees which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet was the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his seat and his authority.

[16 : 39] Ahasuerus is going to give Haman his power, his seat, and his authority. And the people are going to bow before him. Verse 6 of chapter 13 there of Revelation says, And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven.

And it was given unto him to make war with the saints to overcome them. It's going to be given unto Haman to make war against the Jews. He's going to go after the Jews and try to wipe them out completely from anywhere in the kingdom.

And remember, this kingdom is from India all the way to Ethiopia, 127 provinces. And he wants to take out every Jew in those provinces.

Verse 8 of Revelation says this, And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him. That's what he wanted. Bow down. Reverence me. Show yourself to me.

That you honor me and who I am. Only one problem. Mordecai. Mordecai refuses to bow. Mordecai refuses to bow.

[17 : 46] Haman is trying to bully everybody into it. He wants everybody to bow. He wants everybody to reverence him. Verse 3 we looked at. Then the king's servants which were in the king's gate said to Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's command?

Why are you going against the king's command? The king said do this. The king said bow. He says nope. And the only explanation he gave to them was, in the end of verse 4, He told them that he was a Jew.

That's the only reason he gave. So we look at Mordecai's disobedience. Bowing and reverencing are acts of worship. You know, prostrating oneself before people. Worshipping them for who they are.

Why did Mordecai refuse? You think in your mind. Well, I can give you a couple of reasons.

And maybe it's a combination of the two. First of all, Mordecai's a Jew. What do the Ten Commandments tell you? There's only one God. You worship him. And him alone.

[18 : 47] That's all. The only one you worship. Second of all, he was a Jew. The Jews had defeated the Amalekites. Why would I bow to somebody we beat?

Make it a combination of those two is probably why Mordecai didn't. It reminds me. I mentioned this in Sunday school. Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego. Remember when Israel was first taken captive?

And they went into Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar builds this big statue that you're supposed to bow down to and pray before. And Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego.

Mm-mm. Nope. Can't do that. When the music plays, everybody's going to bow down. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They're like, mm-mm.

Not going to happen. And they get thrown into the fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar looks in. He says, I see poor. One looks like a son of God.

[19 : 50] They held their ground and did what God wanted them to do. Here's Mordecai. He's doing the exact same thing. Now, in this situation, a lot of people probably would have gone, you know, Mordecai could have gone, you know, I'm supposed to bow before this guy.

And everybody else is over there going, oh, great Haman. And he could have gone, yeah, okay, how you doing here? Okay. Kind of half-hearted, you know.

No. Mordecai stands. Straight up. Nope. I'm not doing it. Not going to follow. No. And, you know, Mordecai sets an example for us.

So often the world wants us to bow. The world wants us to go in a direction. The world wants us to follow them. And we're kind of like, okay. He says, no, stand up.

No. Stand tall. No. Do not follow what they're doing. Sometimes Christians tell themselves, you know, a little compromise. You know, if I do a little compromise, I'll get a chance later to be a testimony to them.

[20 : 59] Mordecai said, nope, I can't do that. It takes courage to do that. And notice Mordecai's declaration. His declaration. What did he tell them at the end of verse 4?

For he had told them that he was a Jew. You know, when questioned about it, why won't you bow? Because I'm a Jew. That was his answer.

Now, that included those things that I mentioned. We worship one God. We beat these guys. I don't have to bow before this guy. You know.

And the thing about it is, Haman wasn't trying to be rebellious, per se, against, he wasn't trying to get others to follow him. He just wasn't going to do it himself. He wasn't trying to recruit people into his cause, and we're going to march forward on it.

No. He was just trying to be himself. I am a Jew. I cannot do this. How about today? I am a Christian.

[22 : 01] I'm going to stand for the Lord Jesus Christ. I am a Christian. I cannot follow this line of thinking. I cannot follow these actions.

I cannot follow, because I am a Christian. When you tell people, I am a Christian. Did you know the unsaved have a picture of what a Christian is supposed to be? They have a picture of what a Christian is supposed to act like.

How they're supposed to think. And a lot of times, it's more strict than what we have. They say, remember, you ever had somebody, or heard somebody, you're a Christian, and you do that?

Well, yeah, we can do, you know. You know how I feel about the word liberty. But okay. You know, we have liberty to do certain things and stuff. But no, I am a Christian.

And a Christian means this, according to the word of God. And I'm going to follow that. And did you notice? All of the people's eyes were on him. All of those others who worked in that gate, their eyes, they knew what was going on.

[23 : 05] They even go to Haman and say, Mordecai is not bowing when you walk by. Is that okay? Is that okay? No. According to Haman, apparently it wasn't.

But they were doing it. He was doing it anyway. To have the integrity. To hold on to what you believe. To have the integrity to say, These are my convictions according to the word of God.

And it's just not our convictions. According to the word of God. We're following God's word. What he has for us. Haman's anger toward Mordecai.

Reveals that he has a hatred toward all the Jews. Because it wasn't just Mordecai he went after. He's about to go after all the Jews. And want to have them all taken out. Big word we hear today.

Anti-Semitism. They had it back then. They've had it all through history. World War II. Six million Jews are killed.

[24 : 07] During World War II. You know. And we still see it in action today, don't we? You watch the news. You'll still see it in place. To go against God's people.

And have you noticed that Satan hasn't given up? People are still going against the Jews. Now they're expanding it to Christians. People are going against Christians. They want them to fail.

They want them to be out of the way. Why are these people here bothering us? They need to go away and just not be there anymore. And we see churches and things being attacked in the news.

God has given us so much. We need to be willing to stand for what he has given to us. You know. Jesus Christ came.

He died on the cross. For us. Jesus Christ came. And he gave his life. For us. He came. So that we could have salvation.

[25 : 08] We could have a home in heaven. We could have his grace. You could have his spirit living within us. We could have him. And his presence. How much has God given to us?

And he says. Just. Be a Christian. Just take the things that are given to you. And use them. Stand for them. Take those.

And make them a part of your life. This morning. We're going to take time. To remember. What Jesus Christ did for us.

We're going to remember. How he gave his life for us. We're going to remember. That Jesus Christ. Paid the ultimate sacrifice. That we might have.

Redemption from sin. That we might be redeemed. As we sang about this morning. Bought back. Given a new life.

[26 : 10] A new home. He is taking care of it all. So this morning. The Bible tells us. In. First Corinthians. Chapter 11. That.

They. Were getting ready to have. Their time. Of communion. And he says. The first thing they did. Was they examined. Themselves.

So we're going to take a few minutes. This morning. To examine ourselves. Is my heart clean. Before God. Is my heart. Where it should be.

Have I. Got any sins. In my life. That need to be. Taken care of. Need to be forgiven. I'm going to ask Jesus. To do that. This morning. I'm going to ask him. To cleanse my heart.

So I'm going to ask you. To take a few minutes. Just take. Some time of prayer. And take a look at. Where you are. This morning. And what needs to be. Taken away. So that you can come.

[27 : 10] Clean. Before. This communion time. So. Go to prayer right now. Thank you.