



# THE THREE HOUSES OF ESTHER

*A Guide For Being Called, Chosen, and Faithful*

*By*

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Edited by Paul and Betsy Caram

## **DEDICATED**

**To the King of kings and Lord of lords, who rules in the affairs of men, giving to everyone according to their works. and to my dear wife Audrey, who has helped me come to understand and appreciate that all of His ways are in truth and judgment and that He doeth all things well.**

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# *Chapter 1*

## *INTRODUCTION*

Between chapters six and seven of the book of Ezra (a period of 58 years, from 515 B.C. to 458 B.C.), the story of the book of Esther took place. Israel had been released from Babylonian Captivity by Cyrus, King of Persia, and many, but not all of the Jews had chosen to return to Jerusalem. Many others dwelt in the nations of the Persian Empire, in fact, in all of the 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia.

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The reigning monarch was Ahasuerus, best known by his secular name of Xerxes. He is the fourth king mentioned in Daniel 11:2, “Who by his strength and through his riches stirred up all against the realm of Greece.” Ahasuerus truly fulfilled this, for he raised up an army of 2,500,000 men with 3,000 ships and came against the nation of Greece. Initially he was successful, destroying Athens and burning the Acropolis. However, Themistocles, commander of the Athenian fleet, destroyed the Persian Navy in the Bay of Salamis. Without naval support, the Persian army suffered a crushing defeat at Platae in 479 B.C. by a Grecian Army. Thus Ahasuerus was obliged to retreat back into Persia where the historian Heroditus tells us he became absorbed with his harem.

God uses this particular activity of the king to bring His purposes to pass, for it is within this particular period and activity that God brings to the throne as queen a young girl named Esther. Esther, from whom this book takes its name, is at once a heroine for she saved her people, the Jews, from being slaughtered. Also, she is a type of the Bride of Christ. In particular, she is a role model for any young girl or woman in piety, virtue, and true courage.

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The title of this book, “The Three Houses of Esther,” is so named because Esther passed through three different houses—the *house of adoption* in her Uncle Mordecai’s house, the *house of women* where she was purified, and finally she was brought into the *house of the king* where she was crowned by Ahasuerus as his queen. As we will see, these three houses are types of three spiritual phases that the blessed Lord will lead us through that we may be counted worthy to be part of that company that corporately forms His Bride.

The book of Esther could also be termed “The Three Feasts”: The Feast of Ahasuerus, chapters 1-2; The Feast of Esther, chapters 3-7; and, The Feast of Purim, chapters 8-10. Likewise, these three feasts typify the feasts of the Lord: Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles.

There were also three men: Ahasuerus, Haman, and Mordecai. *Ahasuerus*, the very rich king, typifies God the Father. *Haman* represents Satan, the wicked one who sought the death of God’s people Israel. And *Mordecai* is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ who saved the people of God and became the ruler in righteousness next to Ahasuerus the king. One should understand, however, that when we speak of someone being a *type* of another, it is in the context of Hebrews 10:1, which says, “a

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*shadow* of good things to come, and not the very image of the things.” Types cannot always be precise.

Although the name of God is not used in this book, His hidden hand is felt behind every sequence of this unfolding drama. The triumph of right over wrong is to bring to pass His purposes and to tell us, as Nebuchadnezzar of old was told, “. . .Til thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Dan. 4:25).

# *Chapter 2*

## ***THE FIRST FEAST (1:1-9)***

This feast of Ahasuerus took place in approximately 483 B.C. As we have already mentioned, Ahasuerus or Xerxes is a type of God the Father as the great and rich king. Xerxes showed forth the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honor of his excellent majesty. The feast of Ahasuerus was a feast given primarily for his princes, servants, and nobles of the provinces. This feast lasted for one hundred and eighty days.



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This was followed by a smaller banquet of seven days to call people, both great and small, to the capital city in the court of the garden of the king's palace. This has, I believe, spiritual significance because in heaven itself there are ranks and degrees among the saints, and our eternal position will determine in what company and to which proximity to the Lord we will attain. The Apostle Paul writes, "As one star differs from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection..." (1 Cor. 15:41,42).

In chapter 1:6, mention is made of the different-colored hangings, and they, therefore, take on a spiritual truth to help us understand the greatness of God. White is symbolic of His awesome purity and holiness. Green is symbolic of His fertility. In Job 5:25, we read, "Thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth." So great in number are God's children. In Revelation 7:9, we are told of "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." Blue is the color that depicts the Word of God. In Numbers 15:38 the children of Israel were commanded to put upon the fringes of their garments a ribbon of blue to remind them of God's Word. Purple speaks of His royalty (see Luke 16:19). Silver speaks of redemption. Red speaks of salvation. Black speaks of judgment and separation, and gold speaks to us of Deity.

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Thus, we may say that God is shown through these colors by His Deity, His Word, His holiness, His redemptive love, and the multitudes that have and will come to His saving knowledge through His shed blood. These colors also show that He is a God separate from sinners. He is holy, and also He is a God of judgment.

Another aspect of God's nature is shown through the king's commandment to offer royal wine in abundance. Our Lord's first miracle was turning water into wine (Jn. 2:1-11). Wine, in this case, is a type of joy. His banqueting house is filled with flagons of wine (Song 2:4). We may drink in of His presence, and whosoever will may come. Yet, there is no compulsion, and we drink according to our capacity to receive of His Spirit. It is according to our *degree of thirst* and pleasure that we are filled with God Himself.

# *Chapter 3*

## ***THE REBELLION OF VASHTI (1:10-22)***

Vashti, the queen, made her own separate feast with the women. Away from the covering of her husband and with the other wives, she fell into an act and spirit of rebellion. How dangerous it is for women to separate themselves. In so doing, they often lose that sweet spirit of submission and meekness that beautifies the true women of God. Eve brought sin into the world when, in separation from her husband Adam, she yielded to temptation.

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Vashti's refusal to obey the king's command to show forth to the people her royal crown and her beauty, thus honoring the king, brought her the loss of that crown. The consequences of her disobedience caused her husband to become angry, something that all wives by a spirit of meekness should avoid. Wives should concede to their husbands' lawful wishes, not giving an example of disobedience and disdain toward their husbands.

This example of a ruler's wife was enough to cause the seven men (types of the Holy Spirit as the Seven Spirits of the Lord our Counsellor) to advise the king to banish Vashti as a warning to all women to obey their husbands.

It is clear from scripture that wives should honor, obey, and submit to their husbands in all things lawful (Eph. 5:22-24, 33; Col. 3:18). Every man should therefore bear rule in his own household (1 Tim. 3:4, 5). In our days we see the social disasters and upheavals because such laws and customs are not kept by the majority of the population. The phrasing of chapter 2:1 is interesting, warranting a note of explanation. The feast of Ahasuerus took place in the third year of his reign (483 B.C.). The purpose of the feast was to prepare for the expedition into Greece mentioned in the introduction. The

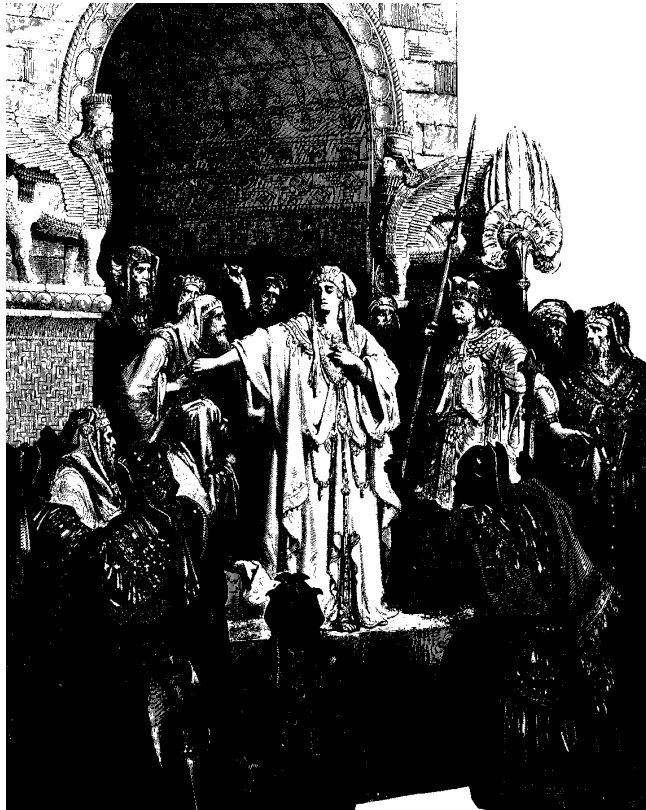
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wars against Athens, the Battle of Salamis, and the final defeat at Platae lasted until 479 B.C., culminating in Xerxes' returning to Persia that same year.

According to ancient history, his queen accompanied him upon those journeys. But upon his return, he remembered the sentence decreed against her and then ordered her banished forever. Thus it was not until the seventh year of his reign (479 B.C.) that the new queen, Esther, was chosen.

This is an important lesson, and it may be advantageous for us to remember Ecclesiastes 8:11, where it states, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." There is no record of repentance being accorded to Vashti, and therefore the sentence determined was fulfilled.



# THE PRIDE OF QUEEN VASHTI

*Vashti was disposed and replaced by Esther  
because of her pride  
and disobedience to the King.*

**“Hold that fast which thou hast,  
that no man take thy crown.”  
Revelation 3:11**

# *Chapter 4*

## ***THE THREE HOUSES (2:1-17)***

Vashti is a type of the nation of Israel who disobeyed their heavenly husband. The Lord longingly cries out, “Turn, O backsliding children, for I am married unto you” (Jer. 3:14). She is the rebellious Church called *Mystery Babylon the Great*, that church who left the highest to walk in paths of darkness, of disobedience, of rebellion, and of filthiness.

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### *The Decree of the King*

The call still goes out to the virgins who would seek to qualify for the royal crown. The Apostle Paul's longing was to present the Corinthian church as a chaste virgin to Christ (2 Cor. 11:2). The Lord Jesus Himself warns us in His parable of the Ten Virgins that although five were wise and five were foolish, even being wise is not enough, for even the wise virgins were not the Bride, but only those who went out to welcome the Bridegroom.

We see also in the Song of Solomon 6:8 something of the degrees and ranks in the kingdom of God. "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number." Then verse nine says, "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her." But we are now going to see the one who qualified for the crown royal, namely Esther, and also the process through which she passed to qualify for that high honor, using the illustration of the Three Houses.



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May we say, at this juncture of the book, that there are many sets of *threes* seen throughout the Word of God. These *threes* flow from this present life into eternity and are seen firstly in creation. The three houses which Esther passed through is one of these threefold sets. The Godhead is made up of a Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They made man in their image, a being having body, soul, and spirit. The Apostle Paul in First Thessalonians 5:23 said that the God of peace is able to sanctify us wholly and our whole spirit and soul and body can be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Also we know that there are three heavens since the Apostle Paul was caught up into the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). These correspond to the three divisions of the tabernacle of Moses. The Outer Court is a type of the first house of Esther in which the blood sacrifices were offered, speaking of the Lord Jesus who died vicariously upon the cross for our sins, thus becoming our Saviour. The laver of water speaks of water baptism. The door into the Outer Court typifies the Lord Jesus the Door of the sheepfold (Jn. 10:7).

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The second house of Esther would be likened to the Holy Place, a place we may only enter by passing through a curtain of five pillars (the number 5 representative of a separated or sanctified life). Baked loaves of bread sprinkled with frankincense were daily placed before the Lord in the Holy Place. These speak of our lives passing through the furnace of affliction that we may become broken bread to feed the multitudes. The frankincense spiritually denotes our faith tried by the fire.

Then the third house, equated with the Holy of Holies, can be understood from Revelation 17:14 where the three qualifications for “following the Lamb” are listed as *called*, *chosen*, and *faithful*. Jesus said, “Many are called but few are chosen.” Beloved, let us study Esther earnestly that we may be found in the third house—not only called and chosen, but *faithful*.

Finally, the three houses of Esther may be compared to the three spiritual stages of Christians as the Apostle John defines them in his first epistle (1 Jn. 2:12-14). First of all, he addresses *little children*, saying “because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.” Believers on this level of maturity know that Jesus is their Saviour and that God is their Heavenly Father. Secondly, he speaks to the *young men*, saying, “Ye have overcome the wicked one.”

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These are they who have overcome or gotten the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. The young man stage is a much greater level of maturity and growth than the little children stage. Lastly, he addresses *fathers*. He terms them *fathers*, saying, "because ye have known him that is from the beginning." The father stage is a very high level of maturity where a believer has come to know God in a very intimate way.

This would correspond to the heartfelt cry of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 3:10, where he said, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Thus with this understanding of the spiritual significance of the three houses, let us now study the First House.

### ***A. THE FIRST HOUSE***

#### ***The House of Adoption***

The parents of a young virgin named Haddassah (meaning *myrtle*) had died. She was fair and beautiful, and her uncle took her and adopted her for his own daughter. Likewise, this is the first stage in our Christian experience. When we accept Jesus Christ into our lives as our Saviour, we receive,

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as the Apostle Paul says in the Epistle to the Romans, chapter 8:15, “the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, ABBA FATHER.” In verse 16, we see the Spirit Himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are now the children of God.

Haddassah received a new name. Her name became Esther, which means *star*. We, too, will receive a new name if we are overcomers like those mentioned in Revelation 2:17. From myrtle, the name of a tree dwelling upon the earth, we will be elevated to that of a star, whose dwelling place is in the heavenlies (see Daniel 12:3). However, from the house of Mordecai (or adoption), Esther was then taken to the House of Women.

### ***B. THE SECOND HOUSE***

#### ***The House of Women***

Esther remained here a period of twelve months, and because she found favor in the sight of Hegai the keeper of the women, she quickly obtained her things for purification. There is an important truth here for our consideration. Some Christians quickly receive the experiences of water baptism,

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separation from the world, and then move on quickly into the power of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, followed by the experience of the crucified life.

It seems that by *our attitude and demeanor* within a shorter space of time we can enter into those truths that enable us to have victory over the carnal nature and thereby be purified from the works of the flesh as did Esther. Yet others, like the remainder of the virgins, seem to have to wait for their things of purification.

How important *good attitudes* are to quick development in our spiritual life. Because she was preferred above others, Esther obtained seven maidens to care for her needs. For six months she was given the oil of myrrh, and for six months she was given sweet odors.

Here we will pause to consider the spiritual truths that these facts contain. Firstly, twelve is the number of government, and Esther was being prepared for the throne. Likewise, we are being prepared to be kings and priests, and co-heirs with Christ. Hegai, keeper of the women, is a type of the Holy Spirit.

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The seven maidens are a facet of the seven spirits of the Lord. It was the Holy Spirit who alone enabled Christ to offer Himself without spot to God (Heb. 9:14), and it is only through this same gracious Holy Spirit's enabling that we, too, can be purified.

The purification of Esther involved six months of the oil of myrrh. Myrrh is bitter. It is the embalming fluid of the Middle East, and scripturally it speaks of meekness. It is through bitter experiences that we come to know what Paul meant when he wrote in Galatians 2:20 about being crucified with Christ, and what it means to develop a meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price (1 Pet. 3:4). Yet, purification cannot be attained solely by painful situations. We need the balance of *sweet odors*. We need the times of refreshing in the presence of the Lord, times of joy and gladness so that we may be purified vessels that are filled with love, joy, and peace.

Another important fact to note here is the concerned actions of Mordecai. He is an example for us all as we watch over, with great care and godly concern, all those who are going through the purifying fires of affliction. And like Mordecai, may we strengthen and lift up the hands that hang down and

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confirm the weak knees, thus bringing encouragement so that they are not tempted to give up or be turned out of the way.

Let us all, therefore, glorify God in the fires, as Isaiah 24:15 exhorts, for then that light affliction will work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory (2 Cor. 4:17). We should count it all joy when we go through different trials, for as we triumph in those furnaces of affliction, we know that we shall come out perfect and entire, lacking nothing (Jas. 1:2-4).

Esther's gracious attitude won her favor in the eyes of Hegai, even as Joseph received favor in the sight of his jailor centuries before. Our attitude is so important. Joyful acceptance brings its rewards when we are in times of great darkness. May God cause us to be triumphant in suffering, knowing that it works for us an infinitely greater measure of glory.

Another important aspect of this story is this—at the time of departure from the House of Women, each maiden was allowed to take any of the treasures from the house that she so desired.

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Again, the attitude of the *chosen one* showed forth. It is written of Esther that she required nothing but what Hegai appointed. How well may Paul write, “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Tim. 6:6).

Yet there is one other main truth before we leave our subject of the House of Women. Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who looked upon her. Of Jesus it is also written that He increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man (Lk. 2:52).

*Chosen ones* have a good report from outsiders. In order that we may qualify to be an officer in the church or in the kingdom of God, it is imperative for us to have an irreproachable witness in our place of work and among our family and friends. “Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil” (1 Tim. 3:7).



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### ***C. THE THIRD HOUSE***

#### ***The House of the King***

Thus, when Esther finally entered into the presence of the king, she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the other virgins. As Solomon wrote prophetically of the Bride of Christ, he tells us there are threescore queens, fourscore concubines, and virgins without number (Song 6:8). But we read in verse 9, “My Dove, my undefiled is but one ... The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.” Verse 13 says, “O Shulamite [the feminine form of Solomon—so identified therefore with Christ], return, return, that we may look upon thee.” The desire of all the other virgins was to behold the beauty of the *one* of their number who was judged worthy to receive the crown royal.

The king made Esther queen instead of Vashti, and in like manner, the Church shall take that honour which should have been accorded to Israel. What a solemn warning the Lord Himself gives to the angel of the church of Philadelphia, saying; “Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown” (Rev. 3:11). There are several instances in the Word of God of those who lost their positions

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and eternal inheritances. Of Judas it was said in Psalm 109:8: “Let another take his office.” Matthias, therefore, was chosen to replace him (Acts 1:20-26). Esau, for one morsel of pottage, sold his birthright (Heb. 12:16), and Jacob, his younger twin, took his inheritance.

### ***A Solemn Warning***

Those virgins who did not qualify for the crown royal were placed in what we may term “The Fourth House,” which was the Second House of the Women. They were placed into the custody of Shaashgaz. They had the rank of concubines, but they came no more into the presence of the king, unless the king delighted in them, and called them by name (2:13-14).

How reminiscent of the prophet Balaam who failed. He was a man who heard the words of God and knew the knowledge of the Most High. Yet, Balaam himself testified that because of his disobedience to the Lord, he would see Him, but not near or up close (Num. 24:17). Hebrews 12:14 warns that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Let us hearken to these warnings, lest we be relegated to the *fourth house*. Let us seek to qualify for the king’s house, receiving the royal crown, ruling and reigning with King Jesus as joint-heirs with Him.



# ESTHER FAVORED ABOVE ALL THE OTHER VIRGINS

**“For many are called, but few are chosen”  
(Matthew 22:14).**

# *Chapter 5*

## **THE SECOND FEAST (2:18-20)**

Esther's feast was then celebrated by the king. He proclaimed it a holiday in the provinces and distributed gifts with royal liberality (2:18). How similar to the marriage feast of the Lamb when He is finally united with His Bride who hath "*made herself ready.*"

What release! What a time of rejoicing that will be! "Blessed are they who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Revelation 19:9 is another one of the ways the Word of God exhorts us to qualify for these high honors.

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As we contemplate the heavenly glories, we are challenged by the truth that there are, as we have already stated, degrees in heaven. May we just consider one aspect that will affect our eternal heavenly standing. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-19: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men [to do] so, he shall be called the *least* in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

As the Apostle Paul, let us not be hesitant to give the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). But also, as David prayed in Psalm 51:6, "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." It is not the hearers of the Word that shall be blessed, but the doers of the Word (Matt. 7:21).

# *Chapter 6*

## ***THE ASSASSINATION PLOT THWARTED (2:21-23)***

Unlike so many novels and films of today, the Book of Esther does *not* conclude with a wedding and the words, “And they lived happily ever after.” No, marriage is a time of new beginnings, of destiny, a time of purpose, a time of setting our faces into the will of God for our lives together, for there is a work to be done. So, too, was it for Esther. She had come to the throne with a mission from God.

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God not only knows the things that are going to take place, but He reveals them so that we may know that he is God (Isa. 41:23). This same God was now preparing the ground for the salvation of the Jews and the election of Mordecai.

Two of the king's chamberlains sought to kill the king. The plot was known to Mordecai, who informed Esther. Esther made known the case to the king in Mordecai's name, and upon inquiry, the matter was verified and the chamberlains hanged. Yet nothing was done for Mordecai at that time, for God had reserved a reward for a latter time to best suit His plans (see Esther 6:1-3).

How patient we must be when we have obeyed Him. How we should strive to be like Abraham, who after he patiently endured, obtained the promise (Heb. 6:15; 10:36).

Sometimes, you do not see the fruit of your labour until many years later. In the natural, you could plant apple trees and not see any significant fruit for years. This is true in the spiritual at times as well. Paul said, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in *due season* we shall *reap* if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). Therefore, let us not faint or be weary.

# *Chapter 7*

## ***HAMAN'S PLOT TO KILL THE JEWS (3:1-15)***

Far from being rewarded, Mordecai, the Jewish leader, found himself bypassed. Instead, a wicked man, Haman, a descendant of the evil nation of the Amalekites, was promoted. Haman's new and exalted office required that all others must bow before him and show reverence.

Mordecai refused to prostrate himself and bow before a wicked man! It is written in Proverbs 25:26, "A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring." Thus the righteous Mordecai did *not* fall down before the wicked Haman. Haman, however, was full of



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wrath against Mordecai. And because he knew he was a Jew, Haman sought to exterminate all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

Sometimes our obedience puts our friends and even our churches in jeopardy. We must not flinch, however, from doing that which is right, but put our whole trust in God, who is the Righteous Judge and gives to every man according to his works.

It was in the twelfth year that they cast Pur, a Persian word which means pebble or a small stone used for casting lots. Proverbs 16:33 declares, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." It was after this fashion that Matthias was chosen to replace Judas in the early Church (Acts 1:26).

Psalm 76:10 says, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." In this case, the Lord had purposed to gain glory unto Himself through the wrath of Haman. But this wrath was restrained since Haman was not allowed to fulfill his evil purposes. How often the enemy plots to overthrow and destroy the righteous, but God through one device or another slows

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him down so that God may bring His own plans to pass and thus thwart the enemy's wicked and evil desires.

The Lord used Haman's superstitious fears in casting a lot to determine a day for the Jews' destruction. He delayed the day until His plans could mature and be brought to fruition, namely to destroy wicked Haman and promote Mordecai. Thus it was God who restrained their purposes for virtually a full year until the thirteenth day of the twelfth month in the twelfth year of Ahasuerus' reign. Surely by the number *twelve* appearing twice, witness is given that God has the government upon *His* shoulder.

In bringing a false charge against them, Haman obtained permission of the king to destroy the Jews. So great was Haman's wrath that he offered to pay 10,000 talents of silver into the king's treasury in order to accomplish his purposes. This sum today would be valued in excess of \$2,500,000. Proverbs 17:23 declares, "A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment." The king declined the silver and delivered the Jews into the hands of Haman to do with as seemed good to him. Consequently, the command was given from Haman for the genocide of the Jews. Then the

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king and Haman sat down to drink, seemingly indifferent to the extraordinary consequences of their evil edict against the lives of thousands of God's people.

Consternation and perplexity reigned in the capital city of Shushan, portraying Proverbs 29:2: "...when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." Yet Proverbs 24:15,16 reassures us that wicked deeds are never blessed in the end: "Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place: . . . [for] the wicked shall fall [by calamity]."

The steps of the righteous are now set out for us by what follows, should we ever find ourselves in similar predicaments.

# *Chapter 8*

## ***MORDECAI AND THE JEWS MOURN (4:1-17)***

Mordecai rent his clothes, which in those days was a sign of great mourning. He cried with a loud and bitter cry, obviously petitioning God as well as the king. Likewise in every province there was great mourning among the Jews who fasted, wept, wailed, and lay in sackcloth and ashes.

In order to avert national calamity, we see Mordecai leading the way with the congregation and the whole nation following suit. Today, leaders and nations need to follow these same steps to turn decreed judgment away from their doors.

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Evidently Esther was at first oblivious to the king's decree to destroy her people. Being in the seclusion of the king's harem, Mordecai sent a copy of the decree and with it a charge (v. 8) that she should go in to the king to make supplications to him, and to make a request for her people. Esther reminded Mordecai of the law that forbids a man or woman to enter into the king's presence without a prior summons.

The penalty was death and the sole exception to that capital punishment was if the king extended his royal scepter. Esther then stated that for the last thirty days she had not been called into the king's presence. How evident it is here that she was counting the cost of her actions. Oh, may we be so filled with the fire of holy dedication in our own hearts that it may be said of us that we loved not our lives unto death (Rev. 12:11).

There then followed a further exchange between Mordecai and Esther when Mordecai warned Esther not to think that she would escape the decree against the Jews just because she was in the king's house. He warned her that if she held her peace at this time, enlargement and deliverance would come from another place but that she and her father's house would be destroyed.

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What a solemn warning to every one of us in this day and hour if we fail to raise our voice against the iniquity and perverseness that pervades virtually every country of this planet. God will judge us for sins of *omission* as well as commission. We must speak out against sin and corruption even in high places and warn people everywhere of eternal judgment.

May it be said of us as it was said of Esther that we are “come to the kingdom for such a time as this.” Esther’s example portrays her as a woman of piety and courage. She besought Mordecai to fast from food and drink three days as also she and her maidens would. Afterwards she planned to go in to the king, uninvited and not according to the law, to make petition for her people. And then, she declared these timeless words, “If I perish, I perish” (4:16).

Admirable courage of the saints was displayed also by the three Hebrew children when confronted by Nebuchadnezzar’s edict to bow down before the golden image. Even on the penalty of death by a fiery furnace, they refused! To King Nebuchadnezzar they boldly declared, “...our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden

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image which thou hast set up” (Dan. 3:17-18). Although they were thrown into the fiery furnace and God did deliver, they were not assured of deliverance until they were actually in the furnace.

Likewise, our walk is a walk of faith and trust, yet we must realize that God is sovereign. In His wisdom He sometimes determines to deliver His children, but in other cases His children are called upon to glorify Him through the fires of martyrdom (see Heb. 11:36-38).

# ESTHER RISKS HER LIFE FOR HER PEOPLE

**Esther's courageous, uninvited appearance  
before the king.**





# *Chapter 9*

## ***ESTHER PETITIONS THE KING (5:1-14)***

Esther went in before the king not knowing what would befall her. Yet God was with her and she obtained favor in the sight of the king. Ahasuerus said to Esther, “What is thy request?” To which Esther quickly replied that she had prepared a banquet, and she wished to invite *only* the king and Haman.

As she came before the king, it seems strange that she did not immediately make her request for the deliverance of the Jews at the first banquet. However, upon closer examination, it appeared that she

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wanted to be thoroughly in the favor of the king by means of the banqueting table. She wanted the assurance that the king's heart would be warm toward her. Thus, she still asked the king to come the next day to another banquet at which time she promised that she would make her request known. The effect of this was certainly *twofold*. The king's heart was made merry, and Haman, oblivious to all that was to happen, was caught off guard.

As Haman left the banquet, he became filled with indignation when encountering Mordecai who again refused to acknowledge him (5:9-10). Returning home, Haman talked with his friends and his wife Zeresh of the glory of his riches and how the king had advanced him above everyone else in the land. “[Even] Esther the queen [he added] did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet . . . but myself; and tomorrow am I also invited. . .”(5:12).

How true is the word of the Lord that says, “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18). Haman's envy and hatred against Mordecai allowed him no rest.

How true that is, beloved! Envy and hatred are like snakes that enter into the heart of man and continually gnaw within, making the soul desolate. They take away peace and other joys and delights

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that a man may have in his accomplishments or possessions. He enjoys no satisfaction when these twin snakes are present in his life.

This was the condition of Haman. He had been raised to very great heights by the king. He was the friend of the king and next to him in power and prestige. Yet, all these honors did not make him happy as long as Mordecai refused to do obeisance to him. His enmity against Mordecai caused him great torment of spirit. Satan also is torn with pride and conflict, and as a result he has no rest. "There is no peace to the wicked" (Isa. 57:21).

The solution that Haman's wife and friends proposed in chapter 5:14 was to build an extravagantly high gallows of fifty cubits (or seventy-five feet) in height. Then they suggested request of the king that Mordecai be hanged; and afterwards he could go with the king into the banquet.

But our God is the God of the *eleventh hour*. When all seems lost, God suddenly moves. The Lord has a perfect timetable. He was never in a hurry with the situation. The Lord waited patiently until Haman's cup of iniquity was full (see Gen. 15:16). Then He moved by His Spirit that night to take sleep from the king and to remind him of Mordecai's past good deeds.

# *Chapter 10*

## ***MORDECAI HONORED (6:1-14)***

We have already said that God does everything well and that applies also to His timing. The enemy of God's people had laid his plans; he had prepared the gallows for Mordecai, and had purposed to make request of the king the next day to execute Mordecai. It appeared that nothing could thwart the enemy—nothing but God.

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The key to the plot was *the king*, for nothing could be done without the king's authority. So what does God do? He moves upon the king to make him sleepless. Thus to find quietness of spirit, the king tries to do some reading.

Therefore, that night the king called for the records of the chronicles to be read before him. The particular section that was read to him related to Mordecai who had preserved the king's life by warning him through Esther of a plot by two of his chamberlains to slay him. (The episode refers back to 2:21-23.)

When Ahasuerus found that no honor had been accorded Mordecai, he asked who was presently in the court. Haman was there, and when he was ushered into the king, the king asked him, "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour?" Haman, filled with pride, thought the king was referring to him. Thus he expounded the most extravagant blessing he could imagine. "Clothe him [said Haman] with royal apparel, place him upon the king's horse, put the crown royal upon his head, and let one of the king's most noble princes parade him through the streets proclaiming, *"This is the man whom the king delighteth to honour"* (6:7 - paraphrased).

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Woe unto Haman, for he was in reality pouring that very blessing upon the head of the one whom he sought to wrong, namely Mordecai, the righteous one. Mordecai was honored before all, and wicked Haman was obliged to proclaim, “Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour” (6:11).

How parallel to the Lord Jesus Christ! Though mocked by His adversaries, yet He rode upon the foal of an ass and was triumphantly worshipped by the multitudes to the consternation of his enemies, the Scribes and Pharisees, on Palm Sunday. Likewise, God says unto us in His most precious Word, “...them that honour Me, I will honour” (1 Sam. 2:30). “Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life” (Isa. 43:4).

Fear not, your enemy shall not forever triumph! With this elevation of Mordecai, God had started to turn the tide. Beloved, watch for *the turning of the tide*. My dear wife and I were in some very difficult circumstances and in a hard place at one juncture of our lives. At this time we felt led to meet a lady who had a true prophetic mantle, and we trusted that in His mercy the Lord would speak to us

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through her, and speak He did through His servant! But then, after she had delivered to us some gracious promises, she instructed us to go to a spot in the nearby river that flows to the sea, for it is the place that is called “*The Turning of the Tide.*” She said that we must see it as a testimony that God was turning our tide, and from that moment on, the tide turned in our favor in our lives. Perhaps in the natural you will never be taken to such a place, but nonetheless, watch for the turning of *your* tide in the spiritual sense.

Zeresh, the wife of Haman, and his wise men, stated clearly that because he had begun to fall before Mordecai of the seed of the Jews, he would not prevail but surely fall (6:13). How true it is that when God *arises* for a person, his enemies are scattered. The beginning of the end had come for this wicked man. The signs were plainly there, and even the counsellors of the wicked could read them.

Likewise was it with Ahithophel, counsellor of David, who followed Absalom. When the counsel of Hushai was preferred above his own, he read the signs and committed suicide (see 2 Sam. 17:23). Surely it is written of the wicked, “For they intended evil against thee; they imagined a mischievous device, which they are *not* able to perform” (Psa. 21:11).

# *Chapter 11*

## ***HAMAN EXECUTED (7:1-10)***

Again the king asked that Esther make known her request. This time Esther revealed that both she and her people were to be executed by the enemy. In indignation the king demanded to know the name of the one who dared presume to do so, to which Esther replied that the adversary and the enemy is “this wicked Haman.”

Fear gripped Haman, and when the king in his anger went out into the garden, Haman fell upon Queen Esther’s bed to plead for his life. When the king returned to the banquet room and saw Haman



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in this position, he interpreted this act as an attack against the queen. And as word of extreme displeasure and judgment came forth from the king's mouth, a chamberlain covered Haman's mouth and face, and another informed the king of the gallows that Haman had erected in his own house to hang Mordecai. The king then commanded Haman be hanged on those very same gallows.

How very awesome! The evil that Haman imagined against Mordecai, the same befell him. The prayer of David in Psalm 35:7,8 became true of Mordecai: "For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause digged for my soul. Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall." Psalm 31:17 is a fitting description of the end of Haman: "Let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave." "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19).

Haman's home was given to Esther, and Mordecai received Haman's ring of authority and ruled over his house. Thus both Esther and Mordecai received the honor that others *forfeited* because of their rebellion and pride. Ultimately, right always triumphs over wrong, and good over evil.



# ESTHER EXPOSES HAMAN'S EVIL PLOT

“The wrath of a king is as messengers of death”  
(Prov. 16:14).

# *Chapter 12*

## ***MORDECAI PROMOTED (8:1-2)***

As with secular life, there is promotion in the kingdom of God. One is not suddenly placed into one's final position and ministry, but we arrive through stages of ascents. This can be best illustrated in the life of David in the Old Testament when he was anointed the first time by Samuel to be king of Israel. God's intent for his life was revealed at perhaps the early age of seventeen. There followed then a time in the house of Saul and yet a period in the wilderness when he was actually fleeing from the

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one whom he would eventually replace. He received the second anointing as king of Judah, at Hebron.

Finally, at his third anointing, he became king over *all* Israel and then assumed the *full* position for which he was first anointed. It was through a series of promotions that he eventually attained unto the position that the Lord had ordained for him.

This principle is also illustrated in the life of Saul of Tarsus, later known as Paul the Apostle. When first the Lord made known His call upon his life, it was revealed to Ananias that Saul was a chosen vessel to bear the Lord's name unto the Gentiles (in other words, a *sent one* or an apostle.)

But then he was placed in the wilderness for three years, and later we find him at Antioch classified as a prophet and teacher. Afterwards he was sent forth with Barnabas as a *junior* member. Only later was he called an apostle and did he enter into the fullness of his ministry of which the Lord had indicated to Ananias. Promotion comes neither from the east or west or south, nor from man, but from God the sovereign Judge. He demotes one, and sets up another (Psa. 75:6,7).

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We have given the foregoing examples to illustrate what happened in the life of that great man Mordecai. At the time he was introduced to us in chapter 2 of the book of Esther, he was a man of substance and distinction. Undoubtedly, it was through stands of righteousness with respect to saving the king's life and not taking sides with the conspirators, and also in giving instructions to Esther to plead for the Jews that he was *qualifying* himself in the eyes of the Lord for a higher office and an area of greater ministry and influence.

Surely Mordecai was ignorant of the Lord's plans for his own life when he saved the king's life, yet it is through tests such as these that we qualify ourselves. Our tests are often in natural mundane affairs of life as is illustrated in the experience of Gideon's three hundred gallant, but ordinary men who had no idea that they were being tested when in Judges 7:4, God said unto Gideon, "The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will *try* them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go" (see Judg. 7:4-7).

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Let us remember the words of the Lord Himself in Luke 16:10: “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.” Promotion comes from God Who thrusts down the wicked *Hamans* and raises up on high the righteous *Mordecais*.

There is also another principle that we should not neglect to mention. So often before the Lord finally judges the wicked by taking them in death, He promotes the one whom they were trying to destroy. Thus to the chagrin of the wicked, he is forced while still living to contemplate the good the Lord has done to the one he hated. Thus, his grief is compounded.

# *Chapter 13*

## **THE JEWS TAKE VENGEANCE (8:3 - 9:16)**

It is not sufficient to remove the head of the enemy (in this case, Haman), but all the enemies must be removed.

Psalm 7:9 exclaims, “Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just.” David continued in Psalm 18:37: “I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again *till* they were consumed.” Otherwise, we must pursue our enemies until we have completely destroyed them so that they never rise again.

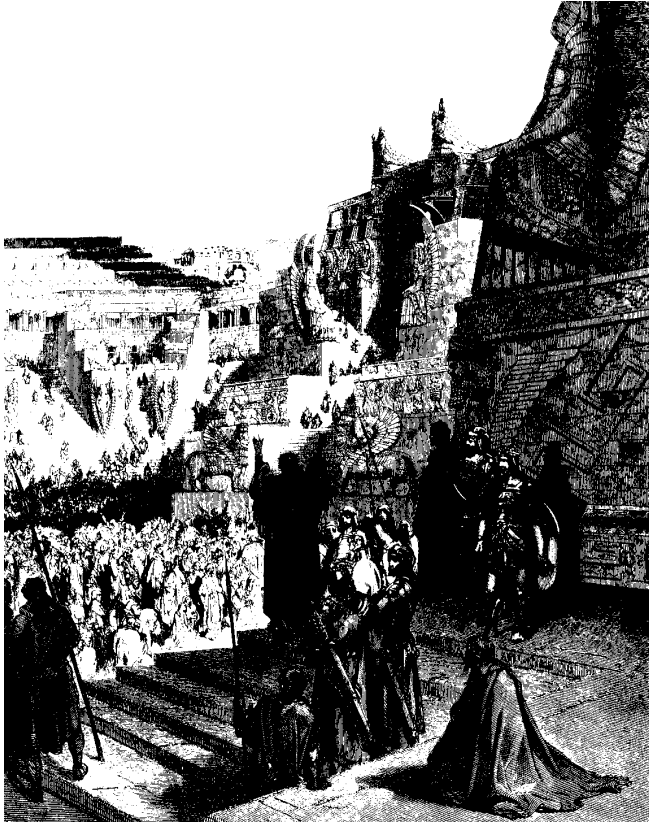
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Thus Esther fell down before the king and made intercession for her people so that the king would put away the evil that Haman had intended against the Jews. The king then acceded to Esther's plea and *reversed* the decision against the Jews. He even went a step further by writing a decree that the Jews in turn might slay their enemies on the very day that Haman had thought to destroy them, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month.

It is important to note that we must deal with all the little foxes that spoil the vine in our own lives. We must not let any escape or grow up into mature old foxes that will plague the fruit of God's Spirit in our hearts and lives. For our end to be good, we must pass the tests along the way. Remember, our goal is a journey from *called, to chosen, to faithful*, and we must not come short of the mark.





# PROCLAIMING A REVERSED DECREE

**On the very day when the Jews' enemies would have destroyed them, a reversed decree gave the Jews the mastery over their enemies instead.**

# *Chapter 14*

## ***THE THIRD FEAST—THE FEAST OF PURIM (9:17-32)***

We thus come to the third feast of the book of Esther—the Feast of Purim. It was a feast of great rejoicing as the Jews celebrated their deliverance. On this day the Lord turned their “sorrow into joy” (Es. 9:22; cf. Jer. 31:13; Psa. 30:11-12). The Lord wants to fulfill this feast spiritually in our lives and deliver us from our enemies and turn our captivity (see Psa. 126).

It was ordered to be celebrated every year. It was held on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the twelfth month in the Jewish calendar, the month of Adar. This would be February-March in our

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modern day calendar. It is the time of the citrus harvest. It also interesting that the Desert Storm Battle of 1991 against Iraq finished on the Feast of Purim. Once again, God was showing us that wicked devices, which are devised against the Jews (or God's people) return upon the heads of them that perpetrate them.

### ***Additional Notes on the Three Feasts***

There are three principal feasts of the Lord mentioned in Deuteronomy 16—Passover, Pentecost (or Weeks), and Tabernacles. In the book of Esther there are three feasts that coincide with these. They are: the Feast of Ahasuerus, the Feast of Esther, and the Feast of Purim. These *two sets* of three feasts may thusly be compared:

**The Feast of Ahasuerus**

Passover

**The Feast of Esther**

Pentecost

**The Feast of Purim**

Tabernacles

*See next page for the further parallels*

**THE FEAST OF  
AHASUERUS**

**Passover**  
*Salvation*

Everyone was invited to this feast. The king wanted everyone to come. This is true of the Feast of Passover, or salvation. “Whosoever will may come” (Rev. 22:17). Salvation is open to all, small and great.

The King of Kings is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9; Jn. 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:4).

Read also Esther 1:1-8. Because we are vessels, we are capable of containing God’s Spirit within us. We can drink in as much as we desire (1:7-8). Many are content to drink a small amount of God’s Spirit and remain at the Feast of Passover (salvation). Let us go on to Pentecost and Tabernacles.

**THE FEAST OF ESTHER**

**Pentecost**  
*Empowerment*  
*Enlargement*

This feast was to celebrate Esther’s selection as queen. Many are called, but few are chosen (Mt. 22:14).

The Feast of Pentecost calls for great commitment. But also it represents Jew and Gentile being joined together in the same house, even as Pentecost opened the door to the Gentiles in the Early Church. (Esther was a Jew and Ahasuerus was a Gentile.)

Pentecost represents power and authority (Acts 1:8). For Esther, it meant coming to the throne with a new anointing and new power.

**THE FEAST OF PURIM**

**Tabernacles**  
*Jubilee*

Tabernacles and Purim are similar in the fact that both are feasts of victory over the enemy. It is a time of jubilee, release, and rejoicing. During the Feast of Purim, they rejoiced over a defeated enemy (Haman), with Mordecai as their godly ruler.

Tabernacles will be celebrated literally in the Millennium when the archenemy of the Church—Satan—and the coming Antichrist and the False Prophet are no longer a threat. The Lord Jesus Christ will be reigning gloriously.

Also, for the Church, Tabernacles represents a great outpouring of the Spirit (Joel 2:23-29), culminating with the return of Christ for a Church without spot or wrinkle (Eph. 5:27).

# *Chapter 15*

## ***THE GREATNESS OF MORDECAI (10:1-3)***

The final chapter in the very beloved book concerning Esther, the heroine who becomes queen, closes with a statement that clears up problems that have been raised as to the book's place in the canon of inspired scriptures, namely that the name of God is never mentioned. This is understandable in light of the fact that the author is drawing upon information written in the secular records of the kings of Media and Persia (10:1,2), and obviously the events of this book would be attributed to the king and not to the God of Israel.

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However, by faith we understand and see with the eye of faith that God is all and in all and commands the destinies of mankind. He is the God who answers prayer and watches with infinite interest and tender care over the affairs of mankind, particularly concerning His own people, the Jews, and us.

The book closes with the final exaltation of Mordecai by the king. He became, in effect, prime minister of the Persian Empire. How great is our God! Impious heathen kings, such as Nebuchadnezzar, Ahasuerus, and later Artaxerxes, were all guided and assisted by God's servants—Daniel, Mordecai, and Nehemiah for the benefit and welfare of His people.

God's purpose was to fulfill the promise He made through the prophet Jeremiah in chapter 30:11: "For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee." And again through Ezekiel 11:16: "Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they come." Mordecai was thus raised up to bless and protect God's people.

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**REVIEW OF THE THREE HOUSES OF ESTHER**

1	2	3
<b>HOUSE OF ADOPTION</b>	<b>HOUSE OF WOMEN</b>	<b>HOUSE OF THE KING</b>
Called	Chosen	Faithful
Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Passover	Pentecost	Tabernacles
Little Children	Young Men	Fathers
David's first anointing	David's second anointing	David's third anointing

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In the House of Adoption, Esther was adopted by and brought into the house of Mordecai. This speaks of our salvation experience where we receive Christ as our Savior, and we receive the “spirit of adoption” which within us cries, “Abba Father” (Gal. 4:6). From the tabernacle of Moses, this is equivalent to coming into the Outer Court where the altar of burnt offering is used for the shedding of blood. At this stage of growth, we are “little children,” and we know that our sins are forgiven (1 Jn. 2:12). Esther received her *call* in the House of Adoption. David also received his call at a very young age when he was anointed by Samuel. This was a *call* to be king (we are all called to be kings, Rev. 5:9-10), but David had to be *qualified* to become king. There were many tests he had to pass before he was *chosen* and installed into that kingship.

In the House of Women, Esther was subjected to the purifying processes. So too with us, if we endure (Heb.12:7) we will then be *chosen* and installed into our call. We are *chosen* or qualified in the furnace of affliction according to Isaiah 48:10. Using the example of the tabernacle of Moses, this is equivalent to progressing from the Outer Court into the Holy Place where stands the candlestick which represents the seven spirits of the Lord (Isa.11:2). In this second house is a new anointing.



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David was anointed the second time after passing his tests in the wilderness, and he was installed into his calling as the king. This is also viewed (1 Jn. 2:13-14) as growing from the *little child* stage into young manhood.

Finally, Esther became established in the House of the king and ascended to the throne. This is arrived at by years of faithfulness to the King. The Third House represents coming into the Holy of Holies where the law of the King is written deeply into the fleshly tables of our hearts (Heb.10:16-20). It is a place of maturity, of being anointed the third time as David, and of becoming a *father* as mentioned in First John 2:13. A father is one who is mellow and has come to know God and His ways very well. The way into the Third House is through years of faithfulness and loyalty to the Lord and His call. A true father who dwells in the Third House, when entrusted with a people, will judge uprightly and with wisdom (read Psalm 75:2).

### ***REVIEW OF THREE MAIN CHARACTERS***

There are also, as previously mentioned, three principal men in this book, *Ahasuerus*, *Haman*, and *Mordecai*. They may be viewed as types. *Ahasuerus* is likened unto God the Father, the exceedingly

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rich king; *Haman* is a type of Satan, the enemy of the righteous man and His seed; *Mordecai* typifies the Lord Jesus Christ (entitled “My servant” in Isaiah 42:1), who triumphs over the evil one and brings peace, prosperity, and glory to His seed—Israel and His Church.

# *Chapter 16*

## **CONCLUSION**

The book of Esther, with Esther as the principal character, is intended to show us the steps to the throne room and the three houses through which she passed. It is also intended to show us that when we have attained unto an earthly or temporal position in either our secular or spiritual life, we are put there by God for a purpose. The purpose is to seek the prosperity and peace of those for whom God has placed under our responsibility.

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May God grant that we be women like Esther and men like Mordecai who fulfilled their courses and became patterns for spiritual and secular rulers—rulers who think not of their own welfare as was said of Timothy in Philippians 2:19-20, but seek only the true good of others. Pastors, remember what David said in Second Samuel 23:2-3: “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me [saying], He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.”

The Psalmist proclaimed in Psalm 75:2, “When I shall receive the congregation I will judge uprightly.” May the Lord give us grace to be rulers who possess integrity, graciousness, and who are full of compassion and righteousness (Psa. 112:4). By God’s grace, let us determine in our hearts to walk along the pathway that leads us not only to being *called* and *chosen*, but ultimately to being found *faithful*.