

THE BOOK OF ESTHER – LESSON THREE

I. EVENTS SURROUNDING HAMAN'S PROPOSAL AND THE KING'S EDICT TO DESTROY THE JEWS (Chapters 3-5)

- A. King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) promotes Haman to position above all princes (3:1-6)
 - 1. King's servants bow down in reverence to Haman.
 - 2. Mordecai refuses to bow in reference – causing questioning among servants.
 - 3. Servants make known Mordecai's refusal, identifying his people to Haman – He determines to destroy Mordecai and his people.
- B. Haman proposes to the King a possible edict (3:7-11).
 - 1. Pur (lot) cast to determine when edict would be carried out – will fall on 13th. day of the twelfth month (Adar)
 - 2. Proposal spelled out to King – King gives Haman authority to carry out the destruction of all the Jews.
- C. Haman has the King's edict published throughout every province (3:12-15).
- D. Mordecai and Jews mourn and fast in sackcloth while sitting in ashes throughout the provinces upon hearing the edict (4:1-3).
- E. Esther learns of the reason for the Jews' mourning, and is exhorted by Mordecai through a messenger and a series of messages to plea to the King for the saving of her people (4:4-17)
- F. Esther gains invitation to the King and invites the King and Haman to a banquet prepared for them the same day (5:1-5)
- G. At the banquet, King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) requests Esther to make her petition known – She agrees to tell him on the following day at a banquet she has prepared (5:6-8).
- H. Haman returns home and speaks of his importance while still filled with hatred for Mordecai (5:9-14).
 - 1. Mordecai still refuses to bow down and reverence Haman.
 - 2. Haman gathers friends and wife (Zeresh) to recount particulars of his good fortune – It means nothing to him if Mordecai still sits at the King's gate.
 - 3. Wife of friends propose plan to do away with Mordecai – Haman agrees to prepare gallows upon which Mordecai should be, with the King's permission, hanged on the morrow.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Why did Mordecai not honor the King's command to bow down in reverence to Haman?
- 2. Why did Haman plan to destroy all the Jews when it was Mordecai who made him angry?

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3. Does God have any thing to do with the results of Haman's casting of lots?
Casting a "lot" was casting "_____"?
Why is the word significant in the history of the Jews?

4. Why did King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) go along with Haman's proposal regarding Mordecai and his people?

5. What *four points* made up the particulars of the King's edict?

6. What lesson can we learn from Esther sending Mordecai raiment to replace the sackcloth and his refusing it?

7. Esther:
 - a. knew of the King's edict but did not care.
 - b. did not know of the King's edict, but upon learning of the particulars feared for her own safety as being herself a Jew.
 - c. did not know the king's edict, but upon learning of the particulars feared for her own safety to act to save her people.

8. Mordecai's exhortations of Esther reveal what about his faith in God's providence regarding His people?

9. What did Esther command Mordecai to do?

10. What all does Esther's statement, "*and if I perish, I perish*" say about her and her present circumstances?

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11. How did Esther gain the audience of the King?

12. What lessons can we learn about anger in viewing Haman leaving the first prepared by Esther?

13. What did Haman consider in recounting his good fortune?
Do we do the same today?

14. What message was being conveyed in Haman's mind regarding the invitation to Esther's second banquet?

15. What does the proposal regarding Mordecai say about Haman, his wife and friends?