

ESTHER

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to the book of Esther chapter 1 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Now as you will see, this book's theme, you might say is the providence of God or that God is in control of all things and He is working things out for His purpose, His plan. And as much as this book shows what transpired back then, I think you will see the lessons that God has for us today that we can apply to our own lives.

Now let me set the stage for this book before we dig into it. As you will see, the book of Esther fits in historically between chapters 6 and 7 of the book of Ezra. If you remember from our previous studies, Zerubbabel led the first return from the Babylonian captivity around 538 B. C., bringing with him just fewer than 50,000 people. You can read of this in Ezra chapters 1-6.

Then Ezra led the second return from captivity with just fewer than 2,000 men around 457 B. C. And you can read of this in Ezra chapters 7-10. Thus, between the first and second returns from captivity is some 80 years. The time frame between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra are some 57 years, and it is within this gap, between chapters 6 and 7 of the book of Ezra, that the events of Esther took place, with Esther becoming queen of Persia in around 478 B. C.

As we will see Ahasuerus is on the throne in Persia, that is his Hebrew name but his Persian name is Khshayarsha and most know him by his Greek name, Xerxes and he reigned from 486 B. C. to 465 B. C. And the Persian Empire was large. It extended from modern day Greece in the west, to India in the east, from southern Russia to the north and Saudi Arabia in the south. It covered more than 600,000 square miles!

Now here's the thing. The book of Esther is a controversial book because the name of God is not mentioned and thus, many people, including Martin Luther, felt it should not be part of the Old Testament Scriptures. There is no mention of Elohim, Jehovah, El Shaddai, Adonai, nothing about heaven, hell, prayer, worship and-so-on.

Because of all of that, many feel that it is just a great story, but does not belong in the Scriptures. I disagree, for throughout the pages of this story is the hand of God. Let me make two points regarding this issue and I think you will understand where I am coming from. First of all, like I have said, the theme of this book is the providence of God, which one commentator said regarding the word, "providence" that it is "that continuous agency of God by which He makes all the events of the physical and moral universe fulfill the original design with which He created it. . . . Providence is God's attention concentrated everywhere." I think that sums the word "providence" up pretty well for us.

Now when you read the book of Esther I want you to read it looking for the hand of God throughout the pages. And if you do you will see that God is working behind the scenes, orchestrating the people, the situations, for His ultimate purpose. As G. Campbell Morgan wrote, "While there is no name of God, and no mention of the Hebrew religion anywhere, no one reads this book without being conscious of God."

The second point I want to make is this. The name, “Esther” many feel, means “star.” But the root word means, “something hidden.” Yes the name of God is not seen openly, but hidden behind the story line, you not only see the hand of God working, but you will also see the name of God. No less than 5 times do we see the name of God mentioned in acrostics. Now an acrostic is a word or phrase made up of a pre-selected pattern of letters extracted from a text.

According to Webster, an acrostic is, “A composition . . . in which one or more sets of letters, as the initial, middle or final letters of the line, when taken in order form words, phrases, etc.” The formed words in Esther are, “YHWH” or “YHVH” which is the name of God and this is found four times. And then there is, “EHYH” or “EHVH” which is found once and it means, “I AM.” Let me show you where these are found.

1. ESTHER 1:20 FOUND BACKWARD “HVHY”

Hi Vekal Hannashim Yittenu
“it and all the wives shall give”

2. ESTHER 5:4 FOUND FORWARD “YHVH”

Yabo Hammelek Vehamin Hayyom
“let come the king and Haman this way”

3. ESTHER 5:13 FOUND BACKWARD “HVHY”

zeH ‘eynennV shoveH leY
“this avalith nothing to me”

4. ESTHER 7:7 FOUND FORWARD “YHVH”

kY kilethaH ‘elayV hara’aH
“that evil was determined against him”

5. ESTHER 7:5 I AM “EHYH”

huE zeH veeY zeH
“who is he this [man] and where [is] this [man]”

So as you can see, the name of God is in the book of Esther and if you reject that, that is fine but you can't negate the providence of God that is seen in the book of Esther, it flows throughout the pages! But, as one writer said about the names of God hidden in the book of Esther: "This cannot be of chance, and the difficulty of constructing such forms will be apparent to anyone who attempts it." (W. Graham Scroggie, Know Your Bible, Vol. 1, The Old Testament, p. 96). How true that is!

Let me share this story with you that happened many years ago since there is no longer a USSR but it is now Russia, but I think you will get the point this Soviet Jew is making. We are told,

A Soviet Jew was recently asked by a Westerner what he thought would be the outcome if the USSR stepped up its anti-Semitic policies. "Oh, probably a feast!" Asked for an explanation, the Jewish man said, "Pharaoh tried to wipe out the Hebrews and the result was Passover; Haman tried to exterminate our people and the result was Purim; Antiochus Epiphanes tried to do us in, and the result was Hanukkah!"

- William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary, p. 495

I think he nailed it, don't touch God's people and we are going to see that here in our study of Esther. Yes things may have been dark for the Jews at this time as a majority of them refused to return to Jerusalem, but God is going to bring forth a light to save His people through Queen Esther who was born for such a time as this! With that said, let's begin reading in Esther chapter 1, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word!

ESTHER 1**VERSES 1-2**

1. As I have said, King Ahasuerus was his Hebrew name, although some do feel that this was his title and not his name. His Persian name was Khshayarsha and the name most know him by is his Greek name, Xerxes I, who ruled for some 21 years, from around 486 B. C. to 465 B. C. His father was Darius I, the friend of Daniel. And his grandfather was Cyrus the Great, who defeated the Babylonians. And yet with all the royalty, all the greatness that came to him, Ahasuerus was not great. He allowed the flesh, his passions, to control his actions and because of that, he was ineffective as a King, for he was not really a leader.

2. Here we see that the Persian kingdom was wealthy and extended from modern day Greece to the west, to India on the east, and from Southern Russia to the north, to Saudi Arabia to the south, as I have said. The kingdom covered some 600,000 square miles and within that were these 127 provinces which he ruled over.

3. Now when you read the word, "**Shushan**" it is speaking of a fortified palace and this was the King's winter palace, located some 200 miles east of Babylon.

VERSES 3-8

1. To understand what this party was all about, you have to understand the historical background. Ahasuerus, according to the historian Josephus, was upset over the events that transpired during his fathers reign. His father, Darius I, was defeated by the up and coming Greeks at the battle of Marathon near Athens. So Ahasuerus wants to avenge his fathers defeat and holds this party and strategy meeting for all the leaders of his provinces. Herodotus, the Greek historian (485 B. C. to 425 B. C.) tells us that he was conferring with these leaders about a possible invasion of Greece.

Ahasuerus or Xerxes was able to gather some two million men from his empire to invade Greece, and even though he ends up winning this war, it took a tremendous toll on his army and he lost most of his navy. Yes, at this time the Persian Empire was tremendously wealthy, but that will not last too much longer. And we will talk about this a little more as we get into this book and see Ahasuerus and the losses he had against the Greeks.

2. Some see this as a 6 month party where all these officials have gathered together at the same time, but I don't think so. I don't think they would be away that long just for a party. Here is what I think is going on. I don't think that these leaders all came at once to see the king and enjoy this party, but throughout the 6 months they came at various times, as the king wined and dined them, preparing them to assist in this battle. He was buttering them up so he could count on them for their assistance.

Then, after this 6 month party was over, after all the heads of state had visited with the King and he showed them all his wealth, they returned home and now, as we see in verse 5, he throws this seven day party for all the workers. And yes, this party was not just for the workers but it was open to all the people of Shushan.

And I guess the one positive thing with this party he threw for his workers is he did not force them to drink. He left it up to them and if they did not want to drink they did not have to. That was unusual because many times if you did not drink at these parties, you were sent away!

VERSE 9

1. While the king is throwing his seven day feast for the men, his wife, Queen Vashti is also throwing a party for the women. This was a common practice.

VERSES 10-11

1. So as the boys are together drinking, as the king has shown all the wealth of his kingdom, what is left? Well, you get enough alcohol in you and the sky is the limit. And that is what happens with Ahasuerus here, he is drunk, he is wasted. And that is never good! There is an old Japanese proverb that says, "First the man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, and then the drink takes the man!"

That is what happened to Ahasuerus. He now calls for his wife to come before all these men to show her beauty to them, that was all that was left in the kingdom that he did not show them. And please understand that this was not just a harmless request to present his beautiful Queen before these men. Either he wanted her to come before them unveiled, which was inappropriate in that culture, or she was to come only wearing her crown! Can you imagine a request like that and yet, because of the drunkenness of the King, he stoops that low.

2. Now I am not a big fan of alcohol, I have seen it destroy too many lives. And even though I feel that way, drinking is not forbidden in the Bible, but drunkenness is. But we need to be careful because it is that dangerous. As one person said, “When wine enters into a man’s body, wisdom exists!” Or to put it scripturally, from Proverbs 25:28, which says, “**Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.**” When you drink to the point of drunkenness, you do not have control over your spirit, your flesh is in control and you are headed for destruction!

Listen carefully to what Solomon has to say in Proverbs 23:29-35 regarding drunkenness or those who take in too much alcohol. He wrote, **“Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: ‘They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?’”**

Solomon starts out by showing what happens after a night of drunkenness, how people wake up the next morning, what they are like, how they feel! There is the pain from the fights they were in. There are the heartaches they have caused, and they don't even remember. They wake up with bruises they don't even know how they got. And their eyes are red, bloodshot. And what does the world tell us, “It doesn't get any better than this!” And you know what, they are right! If that is the life you are going to live, it won't get any better, but it will get worse!

And the warning that Solomon is giving us is that we are not to be enticed by wine, taken captive by it and then he tells us why. You see, Alcohol is a poison, it will destroy your liver and brain cells, and let's face it, some of us can't afford to lose those brain cells we have.

Some say it helps them to relax so they can enjoy themselves. Really, what ends up happening is people act obnoxious when they are drunk. They say and do things that seem to be out of character for them. And before too long you begin to see pink elephants or whatever before your eyes.

I just remember when I was young, before I was saved, I would just pass out anywhere and everywhere. You see, when people are drunk they don't care where they lay down. They crash on park benches, lawns, floors, and-so-on. Sometimes they place themselves in a position where it takes their life!

And granted, you may not feel it then, but you will the next day! And notice the bondage that they are in, after a night of drunkenness, they wake up longing for another drink, and they are slowly killing themselves. Don't be in bondage to alcohol, but be free in Christ and enjoy that freedom that He has given to you. For Ahasuerus, we will find out that the demand he made is going to have long and lasting consequences, all because he was drunk and demanded something that he should not have demanded!

3. How will Queen Vashti respond to this command by her husband and King? Let's read on and see!

VERSE 12

1. Now picture what is going on here. The King is throwing this big party, all his guests are there and he told his guests, “I have something that is going to blow your sandals off! I am going to have the Queen come before you with the royal crown upon her head and you will see her beauty! Yes, that is right, just her royal crown and nothing else! And you thought my kingdom was glorious, wait till you see the Queen standing here before you!”

So he sets them up to see the Queen, and the Queen refused to come before the King, which not only made him look like a fool, but it also showed that he couldn't rule his own house, it did not show him in a good light to rule this massive kingdom. And after some time after he told everyone that the Queen would come before them, his eunuchs come and whisper in his ear, “She refuses to come!” And, because of that, he burned with anger over this situation. Proverbs 16:32 says, **“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”**

The root cause of this problem was his drinking and I think the Queen did what was right; she took her stand and did not display her body like some kind of sexual object before the people. Some commentators felt she should have obeyed her husband because it put him in a bad light. Ladies, if your husband tells you to do something like that, he needs to be seen in a bad light, you don't obey wickedness!

It is as Clarke wrote of Queen Vashti, “What woman, possessing even a common share of prudence and modesty, could consent to expose herself to the view of such a group of drunken Bacchanalians? [Speaks of riotously drunken merrymaking]. Her courage was equal to her modesty: she would resist the royal mandate, rather than violate the rules of chaste decorum. . . . Hail, noble woman! Be thou a pattern to all thy sex on every similar occasion!”

2. So now the King has this big problem, how will he correct it? Let’s read on and see.

VERSES 13-18

1. So word gets out that they are now at Defcon 1, nuclear war is imminent! So the King calls his top men in, he consults his wise men, astrologers, soothsayers, to come up with a solution to this problem. They responded by saying, “Look King, you better do something and do it quick. If you don’t you are going to see a women’s liberation movement begin and no husband is going to be able to control his wife if Queen Vashti gets away with this.”

In fact, it was Memucan who stood up against what the Queen had done and I think the reason being was that he was afraid of his own wife and what she might do. I use the term Casper milquetoast to explain men who act like this and many of you don’t know what I mean. So I will bring it up to our day, our vernacular and say that Memucan was a girly man!

To show you what I mean let me share this story with you. This man came into his office one day and was boasting, “Last night my wife was down on her knees to me.” One of the fellows, knowing the situation, was a little skeptical. He said, “What were the circumstances, and what exactly did she say to you?” He looked a little embarrassed and admitted, “Well, she was down on her knees, looking under the bed, and she said, ‘Come out from under there, you coward!’” Again, he was a girly man!

2. Let me say this. It is only when we are in Christ, walking in the Spirit that a marriage relationship will be beautiful, that it will shine brightly for the world to see. Paul put it like this in Ephesians 5:15-21, **“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”**

It is after Paul speaks of being wise where you are walking, paying attention to where you are going, that you are continually being filled with the Spirit of God that the joy that is in you, that love for God you have, will overflow in the way you speak and treat people. And it is then and only then, after we have submitted to the Spirit of God in our lives that we will be able to submit to one another in the fear of God! You see, it is after all this that Paul then speaks of how wives are to treat their husbands, how husbands are to treat their wives, how children are to obey their parents, how employers are to treat their employees and how employees are to treat their employers. It is in the fear of God as you submit unto them because you have first of all submitted unto God! If you are struggling in your marriage, your work, relationships, see how your walk is doing, see if you truly have submitted your life to the Lord because if you haven't, if you are holding back, it will affect how you treat others!

3. Now we are going to find out what the plan will be to rectify this problem. They already have discussed the problem, they have seen what this could cause, now what are they going to do about it? Let's read on and see!

VERSES 19-22

1. The solution to this problem, to try and get things back in order, back to Defcon 5, they suggested that a decree be made and that Queen Vashti be deposed of her position. And once something became a law in this empire, you could not change it. Remember the decree that Darius I made, that for 30 days no one was to petition any other god except for him, and if they did they would be tossed into the den of lions. In Daniel 6:8 we read, **“Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.”**

That is what is being established here.

2. Now as the King signs this decree he sends letters throughout all the provinces of his kingdom. He is trying to put an end to this women’s liberation movement. And once the women of the land see what happened to Queen Vashti for disobeying her husband, they will fall in line, at least that is the thought and it is probably true. But think about it, if you have to rule your home in fear and threats, there is not a lot of love there. It is a forced love you might say. Isn’t it the love of Christ that compels us into the kingdom of God? Of course it is, and may we show that same love to our spouse! I guess it is as simple as this, a man cannot demand or coerce respect from his wife - if it isn’t freely given, then it isn’t worth anything.

3. Now between chapters 1 and 2 of Esther is a time lapse of some 4 years. And during that time the king takes his army to avenge the defeat of his father by the Greeks. He did defeat the Greeks at Thermopylae but was soundly defeated in the Battle of Salamis in 480 B. C. and the Battle of Plataea in 479 B. C. During these unsuccessful attempts to defeat the Greeks, he not only lost a large portion of the kingdom's wealth, but returned home in shame. It is because of all this that we see the events of chapter 2 transpire and also keep in mind that God is at work, things are going according to His purpose and plan!

ESTHER 2

VERSES 1-4

1. As the King settles back into his kingdom after this defeat, he misses his Queen, whom he cast from her position some 4 years earlier. And his men pick up on this and suggest a beauty contest to be held for a new Queen. A kind of Miss Persian Empire contest you might say with the King as the one and only judge! Now what you need to understand is that this beauty contest was only for the King, and the women involved had no choice in the matter.

You see, they would gather together the most beautiful young virgins, without their consent. They would present themselves before the King but before they would do that they would spend time beautifying themselves. And when the time came each would spend a night with the King, to see if he liked them, and if he did he would call for that young virgin again. And if he did not like you, you would become part of his harem, never marrying anyone else. Some feel that Esther was taken in this manner, with Mordecai trying unsuccessfully in hiding her from these men. And, according to Josephus, he tells us that Ahasuerus had a total of 400 women that he was going to chose from!

2. Now why in the world was a man in charge of this harem? Because he was a eunuch and as great of a job as that sounds, he was a eunuch! In other words, he was castrated and the desire for women was gone. It was a way in which the King could protect his harem from the men who were watching over them.

VERSES 5-7

1. Hadassah is her Hebrew name, but we know her by her Persian name, Esther. And Mordecai adopts Esther, after the death of her family, and raises her as his own. Now in verse 7 we are told that Esther was **“his uncle’s daughter”** and that would make them cousins. It is interesting though, if you go to Ask The Rabbi they say that Mordecai and Esther were married, which I do not think the Scriptures support. If they were married then she could not be in this beauty contest because it was only for virgin women!

VERSE 8

1. What I want you to notice here is that she did not go freely but was forced to join this beauty pageant. It says that Esther was, “**taken**” and that tells me it was not by her own choice!

VERSE 9

1. Now why in the world did this eunuch, Hegai favor Esther so much? There were some 400 women and out of those he only favored her, that is like a 0.25% chance of that occurring and yet it did! It is the hand of God upon Esther, that God’s plan and purpose are being orchestrated by Him and it is not just luck or coincidence!

VERSES 10-11

1. Keep in mind that anti-Semitism always had been a curse in the nations of the world, just as we see it today. And it had been in this nation during the time of Esther as well. And thus, we see Mordecai tell Esther not to let anyone know that she is a Jew and she listens to her cousin regarding this.

Now was that the right thing to do, hide their faith, or the wrong thing to do? I am not sure if we are to hide our faith, I think that is wrong, we are not to place our light under a bushel so no one can see it. And the reason I think Mordecai is wrong here is that in verse 11 we see him pacing back and forth in front of the court of the women. You see, he is not resting in the Lord and thus, there is anxiety, worry of what is going to happen.

Psalm 37:7 tells us, **“Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.”** The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“Be still and rest in the Lord; wait for Him and patiently lean yourself upon Him; fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass.”**

I realize that is not easy, but when you give your life to the Lord you know He will do what is best for you and you can just rest in that fact. It is the providence of God. And by hiding our faith, we are denying the Lord if you think about it. Jesus said in Matthew 10:32-33, **“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.”**

And I realize that there are times when we can face trouble and it is better not to say you are a Christian, that you love the Lord, but I am not sure there is such a time. Notice that it says **“whoever”** and not any specific time, but all the time we are to confess Jesus before men. John MacArthur puts this into perspective for us as he wrote,

In his book *I Love Idi Amin* ([Westwood, N.J.: Revell, 1977], p. 112) Festo Kivengere, a leading evangelical minister in Uganda, tells the history of persecution and martyrdom of Christians in that country. In 1885 three Christian boys, ranging in age from eleven to fifteen, were forced to give their lives for Christ because they would not renounce their faith in Him. The king was adamantly opposed to Christianity and ordered the boys' execution if they did not recant.

At the place of execution the boys asked that the following message be given to the king: “Tell his majesty that he has put our bodies in the fire but we won’t be long in the fire. Soon we will be with Jesus, which is much better. But ask him to repent and change his mind or he will land in a place of eternal fire.” As they stood bound and awaiting death they sang a song that soon became greatly loved by Christians in that country as “The Martyrs’ Song.” One verse testifies,

O that I had wings like the angels,
I would fly away and be with Jesus.

The youngest of the boys, named Yusufu, said, “Please don’t cut off my arms. I will not struggle in the fire that takes me to Jesus.” Because of the boys’ testimony that day, forty adults trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation, and indirectly countless more converts were won to the Lord over a period of many years. By 1887 a large number of other Christians were martyred, many of them inspired by the fearless, loving testimony of those three boys. None of those martyrs knew much theology or much about the Bible, because most of them were illiterate and all of them were relatively new believers. But they had a deep love for Jesus that they refused to hide, no matter what the cost. As is nearly always the case, those who died were replaced severalfold by new converts who came to Christ because of their testimony.

- John MacArthur, New Testament Commentary, Matthew

I think that helps to put things into perspective for us. You see, no matter what happens to us, as we shine for Jesus, others will see it, even in death!

VERSES 12-14

1. For 12 months they prepared themselves before they would go before the King. Why the 12 months, they could not have been that ugly could they? Of course not, these were beautiful women and maybe the 12 months of waiting was to make sure they were virgins, that none of them were pregnant! And understand this, for most; it was just a one night stand. If he liked you, he would call for you again. If he did not call for you again, you were relegated to living the rest of your life in the harem of the King, many not ever seeing the King again.

VERSES 15-18

1. When you presented yourself before the King you were allowed to wear anything you wanted. And now it was Esther's turn and she is very wise here, for she asks Hegai what to wear, for he knew what the King liked and disliked. And as Esther comes before the King the King falls for her and makes her his Queen. And then he throws a big celebration for all to see his new Queen. As we are going to see, God is working, He is orchestrating these events to bring forth His plan, His purpose, there will be beautiful music in the end you might say!

VERSES 19-20

1. Now this is kind of strange, the King has a new wife and yet here in verse 19 we see these other virgins mentioned, what is going on? Well, just because the King found a wife for himself don't think for a minute he was going to live a monogamous life. He still had his harem and from time to time it needed to be updated and replenished. You see, a woman, during this period of time was looked down upon, she was seen just slightly above a slave, having no rights of her own, as Queen Vashti found out.

2. Now we also see that Mordecai rose to a position as judge within this kingdom as he sat at the gate, the place where official business took place. How did he get that position? Either the Queen put in a good word for him or God just orchestrated it for him. Either case he is at the gate and we will see that is the place he needed to be!

VERSES 21-23

1. Now being the King you always had enemies that wanted to kill you. You always had to be on guard. That is why the King did not get close to many, but kept his distance. It was those few that were close to the King that would carry out his orders. Here we see these 2 guys plotting to kill King Ahasuerus. And as I said, it was not an idle threat because King Ahasuerus was assassinated in his bedchamber in 465 B. C., obviously not by these men, but others!

2. Where is Mordecai at this time these guys are plotting to kill the King? He is at the gate and as Mordecai finds out their plan, he tells Esther, who then tells the King. And as the King checks out the story he finds it to be true. And thus, he has these men executed for their assassination attempt, their threat to kill the King. In the Hebrew it says that they were, “impaled on a stake.” That is how the Persians dealt with rebellion.

In fact, listen to what Clarke tells us about what they did and it is not pretty. He wrote, “A pointed stake is set upright in the ground, and the culprit is taken, placed on the sharp point, and then pulled down by his legs till the stake that went in at the fundament passes up through the body and comes out through the neck. A most dreadful species of punishment, in which revenge and cruelty may glut the utmost of their malice. The culprit lives a considerable time in excruciating agonies.” That’s going to leave a mark!

3. Think about this for a minute. Mordecai could have come up with many reasons why he should have just kept quiet and let the King be assassinated. But he had a position within the kingdom and he honored the King, not agreeing with everything the King was doing, but he did honor him and let it be known the plan to kill the King.

We may think that by doing something or not doing something we are giving that person what they deserve. Be careful with that because God does not give to us what we deserve, He extends grace and mercy to us and may we do that to others!

4. Now as we are going to see, for some reason Mordecai is not rewarded for his actions, but what he did was placed in the book of the Chronicles. And you may think that this was unfair, he should have been rewarded. Many of you have done things, and maybe you feel the same way. Understand this, God is in control, and if Mordecai was rewarded now, he would not be rewarded later on and receive the greater blessing as we will see.

And the same is true for us. Jesus said in Revelation 22:12, “**And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.**”

Understand that God has a plan and is working through each of us, rest in that and look to Him who is coming with our rewards. God knows not only what you have done for Him, but why you did it! Don't forget that.