

SUFFERING IS PART OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, PT. 1
Sermon Outline — Esther 2:19-3:15
Sermon Series: Esther — For Such A Time As This
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- † Exodus 17:8,13, 16, "While the people of Israel were still at Rephidim, the warriors of Amalek attacked them . . . ¹³As a result, Joshua overwhelmed the army of Amalek in battle . . . ¹⁶He said, "They have raised their fist against the Lord's throne, so now the Lord will be at war with Amalek generation after generation" (NLT)..
- † 1 Samuel 15:7-9, Then Saul slaughtered the Amalekites from Havilah all the way to Shur, east of Egypt. ⁸He captured Agag, the Amalekite king, but completely destroyed everyone else. ⁹Saul and his men spared Agag's life and kept the best of the sheep and goats, the cattle, the fat calves, and the lambs—everything, in fact, that appealed to them. They destroyed only what was worthless or of poor quality" (NLT).
- † 1 Samuel 15:32-33, "Then Samuel said, "Bring here to me Agag the king of the Amalekites." And Agag came to him cheerfully. Agag said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past." ³³And Samuel said, "As your sword has made women childless, so shall your mother be childless among women." And Samuel hacked Agag to pieces before the LORD In Gilgal" (ESV).
- † Esther 3:10, "The king agreed, confirming his decision by removing his signet ring from his finger and giving it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews" (NLT).
 - The villain in the Book of Esther is Haman. It is personal. The main reason is not _____, but the _____.
 - This is the devil's attempt to destroy God's chosen people and to try to keep God from fulfilling His covenant of a future _____.
 - This feud is not just _____; its _____.
 - Look at Esther 2:19 in your Bible.
 - Look at Esther 2:17 in your Bible.
 - The Hebrew word translated as "love" in Esther 2:17 is [אַהֲבָה, ye'eghav]. It does not refer to "love" as we think, but love for sexual pleasure and sexual arousal.
 - Biblical scholars believe that one of the first things Esther did after being made queen, is she appointed her uncle, Mordecai, to be a _____.
 - Look at Esther 2:20 in your Bible.
- † Proverbs 21:1, "Just as water is turned into irrigation ditches, so the Lord directs the king's thoughts. He turns them wherever He wants to turn them" (TLB).
- † Proverbs 16:9, "People may make plans in their minds, but the Lord decides what they will do" (NCV).
- † Esther 2:21 -23, "In those days, as Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, became angry and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. ²²And this came to the knowledge of Mordecai, and he told it to Queen Esther, and Esther told the king in the name of Mordecai. ²³When the affair was investigated and found to be so, the men were both hanged on the gallows. And it was recorded in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king" (ESV).
 - The phrase "came to the knowledge of Mordecai" is the Hebrew word [wayyiwwada, wayyiwwada]. It means Mordecai did not hear of the conspiracy directly, but somehow learned of it from some _____.
 - Look at Esther 3:1-2 in your Bible.

Why Did Mordecai Refuse To Bow Down & Pay Homage to Haman In Esther 3:1-2?

1. Maybe Mordecai was not interested in _____.
2. Some feel Haman wanted wanted people to worship him as a _____.
 - In verse 2 we are told all the "king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman." The phrase "bow down" is the Hebrew word [כָּרַעַים, kor'im]. The phrase "pay homage" is the Hebrew word [אֲשַׁחֲוִים, umistachawim]. We need to understand that this was more than just refusing to curtsy. In fact, whenever these two Hebrew verbs for bowing and paying homage are combined in the Old Testament, they always refer to worshiping and reverencing someone who is acknowledged to be a king, or a vicar, a prime minister or a satrap and a god.
3. Mordecai was _____ and _____ that Haman got _____ and he did not. And as a result, he reveals a 500-750 year-old _____ the Jews had of the Amalekites — starting with Moses and all the way down to King Agag with King Saul & the prophet Samuel (Esther 4:3-4).

Why Did Mordecai Wait Until That Moment To Reveal His Jewish Heritage?

1. Maybe Mordecai discovered how _____ all the _____ and what came with it really was..

2. Maybe Mordecai realized that _____ to anyone but God was _____ and thus he would be _____ (Esher 3:5-6).

- † *Ecclesiastes 7:15*, "In my useless and vain life, I have seen both of these: I have seen righteous people die in spite of their righteousness and evil and wicked people live a long time in spite of their evil" (EXB).
- † In *Esther 3:7*, we learn of months of Nisan (April) and Adar (March). Haman has lots of dice cast to see what
 - Historians tell us that when a Persian leader cast lots, they brought in what we would call "voodoo doctor." There were astrologers, those who dabble in dark magic, and those who practice in the _____ to cast these lots (dice) before their Persian gods. "Pur" is the Akkadian word for "stone." These stones were usually made from baked clay and shaped like modern dice, marked on all six sides and cast out from a _____.
 - Now why is this significant? The 13th day of Adar (March) is an incredible day for the Jews. It is the day before they would celebrate _____ as a nation to remember how God had delivered them from slavery in Egypt some 900 years earlier.
 - Haman would have seen this as the Persian gods picking a day that mocked the Jews trust in God. What trust? That God could save them from a _____ like they claim God did in Egypt.
- † *Proverbs 16:33*, "We may throw the dice, but the Lord determines how they fall" (NLT).
 - Remember this: even though the hand of God is _____, the grace of God is _____.
 - The Hebrew word translated as "favor" is the most common word used for God: [חֶסֶד, chesed]. The Hebrew implies that when Hegai saw Esther, her character was appealing — suggesting she was _____, _____, and _____.
 - In *Esther 3:8-9*, Haman offered to personally pay King Xerxes 10,000 talents of silver to annihilate the Jews, which he does not have. Where will he get this? From the possessions seized from the Jews. Today, 10,000 talents of silver equals 375 tons of silver, which today is worth \$_____.
 - In *Esther 3:10-11*, King Xerxes approves this by giving his signet ring to Haman. This would give Haman unlimited authority to do as he pleases in the annihilation of all Jews in the Persian Empire.
 - In *Esther 3:12-15*, the king's scribes write the official edict from the king and then disseminate it all throughout the Persian Empire to massacre all the Jews living in the Persian Empire. The encouragement to do this Persian will be allowed to seize and keep some of the personal possessions (wealth) of any Jew.

What Is Esther 2:18-3:15 Saying To Us Today?

1. Our real battles are _____, not _____ and not _____.

- † *Ephesians 6:12*, "For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies—the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic, demonic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world" (PAR).

2. Even though God is _____ and our _____, we will _____ for our faith in Christ.

- † *John 17:14b-15*, Jesus prayed, "The world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ⁱ do not ask that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil one" (ESV).
- † *1 Thessalonians 1:5*, "This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering" (ESV).
- † *2 Timothy 1:8*, "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God" (ESV)

3. Remember, the story of Esther reveals the _____ & _____ of God.

- † *Romans 8:31b-32a, 33-39*, "If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all . . . ³³Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (ESV).
- † *Proverbs 18:10*, "The Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runs into it and is safe" (NASB).