

Through the Bible

ESTHER

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ESTHER



BOOK OF ESTHER IS THE **ONLY** BOOK IN THE BIBLE IN WHICH THE WORDS 'GOD' AND 'LORD' NEVER APPEAR. BUT WE SEE THE HAND OF GOD EVERYWHERE IN THE BOOK -- **INVISIBLY** AT WORK **BEHIND THE SCENES**, **SUPPORTING** AND **HELPING** HIS PEOPLE. THE BOOKS OF **EZRA** AND **NEHEMIAH** DEALT WITH THOSE JEWS WHO **LEFT** THE **COMFORT** OF **BABYLON** AND **MEDO-PERSIA** AND WENT TO **JERUSALEM** TO DO THE DIFFICULT **TASK** OF **REBUILDING** IT. THEY DID IT BECAUSE THEY HAD A **BURDEN** TO **ESTABLISH** A **TESTIMONY** FOR **GOD** IN **JERUSALEM**. SO GOD **OPENLY** MANIFESTED HIMSELF IN **SUPPORT** OF THEM. THE EVENTS MENTIONED IN **ESTHER** TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE 6TH AND 7TH CHAPTERS OF **EZRA** -- **AFTER** THE **FIRST** BATCH OF **JEWS** HAD **RETURNED** TO **JERUSALEM**.



IN **ESTHER**, WE READ OF THE JEWS WHO DID **NOT** WANT TO **PAY** THE **PRICE** OF GOING **BACK** TO **JERUSALEM**, BUT WHO WANTED TO LIVE IN THE **COMFORT** OF **BABYLON** AND **MEDO-PERSIA**. SO GOD **DID NOT** PERMIT HIS NAME TO BE **ASSOCIATED** WITH THEM **OPENLY**. MANY BELIEVERS IMAGINE THEMSELVES TO BE VERY **DEDICATED** PEOPLE JUST BECAUSE THEY FEEL **EMOTIONALLY** MOVED ON **SUNDAY** MORNINGS. BUT THE HUMAN **HEART** IS **DECEITFUL**, AND SUCH BELIEVERS CAN **GO** FROM SUCH MEETINGS TO **LIVE** FOR **THEMSELVES**. THEY **LOOK FORWARD** TO GOING TO **HEAVEN** AND THEY **SEEK** GOD FOR **HEALTH** AND FOR **PROSPERITY**.



BUT GOD STILL **CARED** FOR THEM. GOD MAKES THE **SUN** TO RISE UPON THE **GOOD** AND THE **EVIL**. HE GIVES **MATERIAL BLESSINGS** AND **PHYSICAL HEALTH** TO **BOTH** **BELIEVERS** AND **UNBELIEVERS**. AND SO HE **PROTECTED** THE **JEWS** WHO STAYED IN **PERSIA** TOO. KING **AHASUERUS**, WHO WAS THE **WORLD RULER** OF HIS TIME, GOT DRUNK ONE DAY AND TOLD HIS QUEEN **VASHTI** TO COME AND APPEAR BEFORE ALL THE OTHER MEN (I:10, 11). SHE WAS A MODEST QUEEN AND SAID, "I **WON'T** COME." THE KING WAS **ANGRY** WITH HER AND **REJECTED** HER FOR **DISOBEYING** HIM, AND THEN BEGAN TO LOOK FOR **ANOTHER** QUEEN. **ESTHER** WAS A PRETTY JEWISH GIRL. SO HER UNCLE **MORDECAI** **ENCOURAGED** HER TO APPLY FOR THE **JOB**!

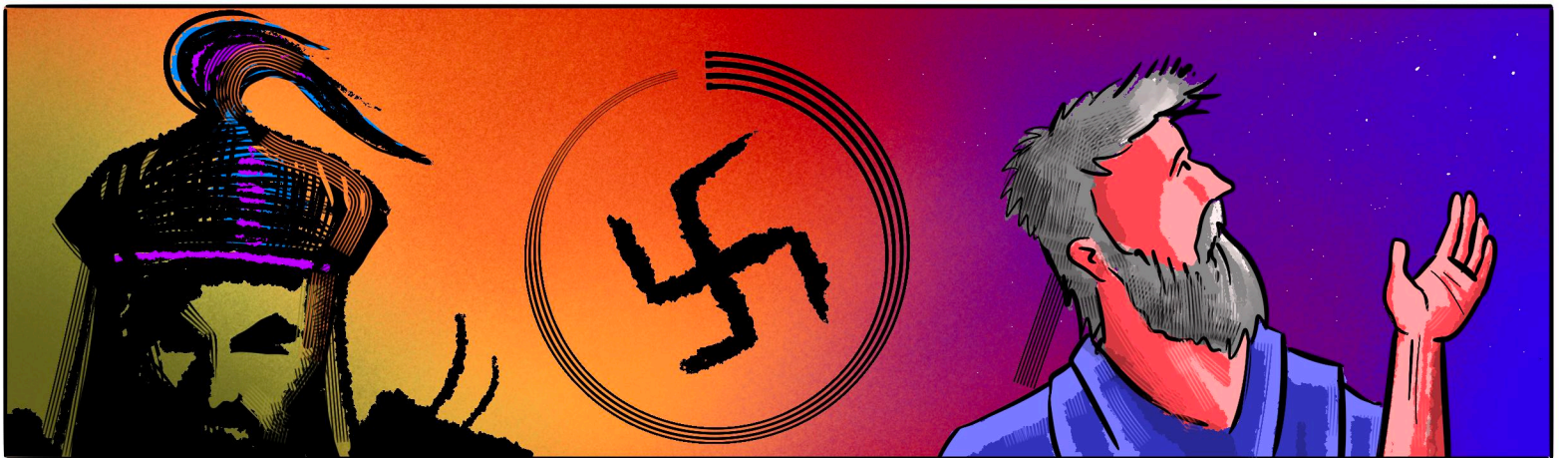


MORDECAI WAS A **GOD-FEARING** MAN WHO HAD MANY **GOOD** QUALITIES. BUT HE WAS A COMPROMISER. THE WALLS AND GATES OF JERUSALEM WERE BROKEN DOWN AT THIS TIME. BUT MORDECAI WAS **NOT CONCERNED** ABOUT ALL THAT. **NEHEMIAH** WHO CAME ALONG 35 YEARS LATER AND LIVED IN THIS VERY **SAME** COUNTRY, HOWEVER WAS **CONCERNED**. THERE WE SEE THE **QUALITATIVE** DIFFERENCE BETWEEN **NEHEMIAH** AND **MORDECAI**. WHEREAS MORDECAI WAS CONCERNED ABOUT HIS **OWN SAFETY**, NEHEMIAH WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE PURPOSES OF **GOD**. MORDECAI AND NEHEMIAH REPRESENT **TWO TYPES OF BELIEVERS** -- THOSE WHO **STAY** IN BABYLONIAN SYSTEMS AND THOSE WHO **LEAVE** THOSE SYSTEMS AND MOVE TO **JERUSALEM**. GOD DOES **NOT** FORSAKE THOSE IN **BABYLON**. NO. HE **PROVIDES** FOR THEM AND **PROTECTS** THEM FROM HARM. BUT IF WE WANT TO FULFIL GOD'S **PURPOSES**, WE HAVE TO MOVE **OUT** OF **BABYLON** AND SAY, "LORD, SHOW ME **YOUR WILL** FOR MY LIFE."

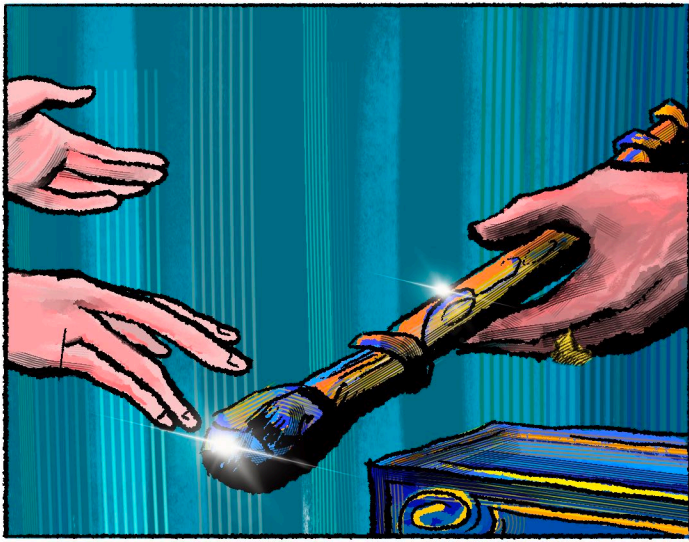


MORDECAI KNEW THAT THE **SCRIPTURES** CLEARLY TAUGHT THAT A JEWISH GIRL WAS **NEVER** TO MARRY A **NON-JEWISH** MAN. THIS WAS A VERY **SERIOUS** SIN. **NEHEMIAH** HAD TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM A FEW YEARS LATER (NEHEMIAH 13:25). BUT MORDECAI **ENCOURAGED** THIS MARRIAGE, JUST BECAUSE THE BRIDE- **GROOM** HAPPENED TO BE THE **KING!**

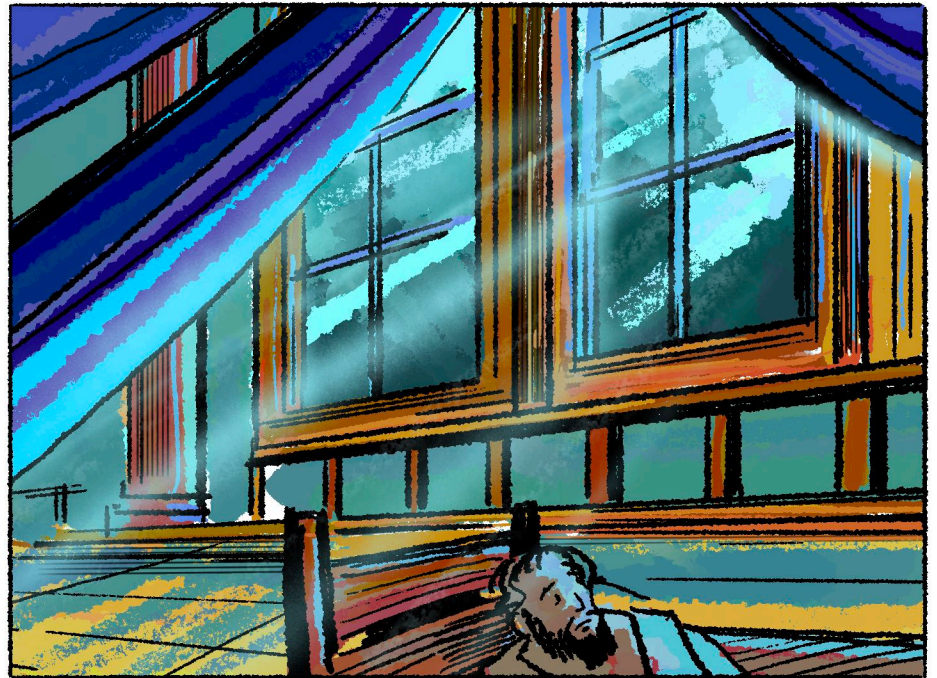
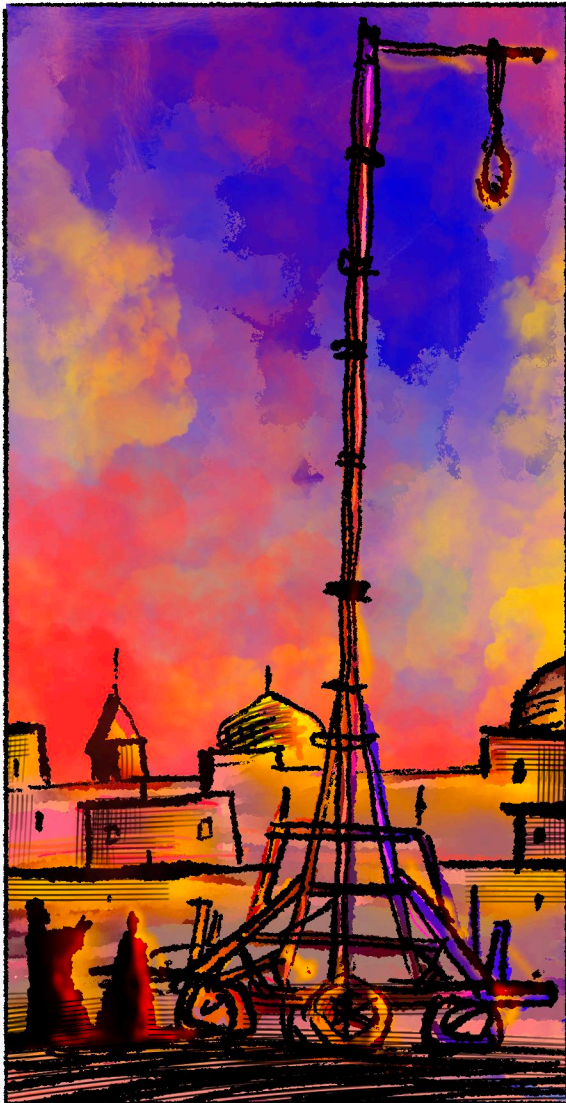
DO YOU THINK MORDECAI **FELT** HE WAS DOING SOMETHING **WRONG** IN ENCOURAGING ESTHER TO MARRY A HEATHEN KING? NO. WHY? BECAUSE **ONCE** A PERSON STARTS **COMPROMISING** IN **ONE** AREA, HE GETS SO USED TO IT THAT VERY SOON HE CAN COMPROMISE IN **ANOTHER** AREA, WITHOUT HIS **CONSCIENCE** TROUBLING HIM. YET THE LORD IN HIS **SOVEREIGNTY** OVERRULED THEIR MISTAKES AND BROUGHT **ESTHER** TO THE THRONE IN ORDER TO **SAVE** THE JEWISH PEOPLE ..



NOW MORDECAI WAS A **GOD-FEARING** MAN AND **REFUSED** TO BOW TO **HAMAN**, THE COUNTRY'S **TOP** OFFICIAL. SO **HAMAN** BECAME **VERY ANGRY** WITH THE **JEWISH** PEOPLE. HE DECIDED TO **WIPE OUT** THE WHOLE **JEWISH** RACE AND VERY **CLEVERLY** GOT THE KING TO PASS AN ORDER THAT ON A CERTAIN DATE ALL THE JEWS WERE TO BE **KILLED**. HE WAS A **RICH** AND **INFLUENTIAL** MAN. **HAMAN** WAS THE **HITLER** OF THE 5TH CENTURY B.C. BUT **HAMAN** DID **NOT** SUCCEED. **NEITHER** DID **HITLER**, 25 CENTURIES LATER. **NOBODY** CAN **SUCCEED** TO **EXTERMINATE** THE JEWS, BECAUSE GOD **PROMISED** **ABRAHAM** 4000 YEARS AGO THAT HE WOULD **BLESS** HIS **DESCENDANTS**. **HAMANS** WILL COME AND GO AND **HITLERS** WILL COME AND GO, BUT **GOD'S** **PURPOSES** WILL BE **FULFILLED**.

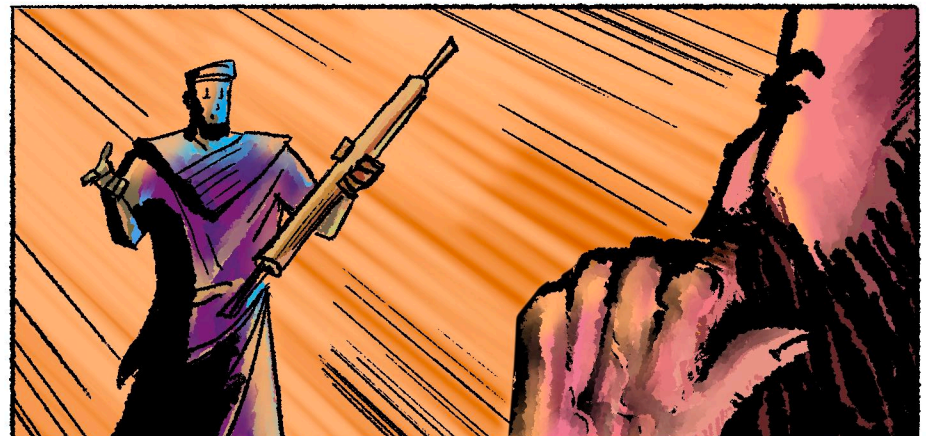


WHEN MORDECAI HEARD ABOUT THIS PLAN, HE SENT A MESSAGE TO ESTHER AND TOLD HER, "YOU HAVE ATTAINED ROYALTY FOR THIS PARTICULAR TIME." (4:14). MORDECAI TOLD HER, "DON'T IMAGINE THAT BECAUSE YOU ARE LIVING IN THE KING'S PALACE YOU CAN **ESCAPE**. IF YOU REMAIN **SILENT** AT THIS TIME, WHAT WILL HAPPEN? DELIVERANCE WILL COME FOR THE JEWS FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE." WE DON'T FIND THE WORD 'GOD' EVEN HERE, NOT EVEN THE WORD 'PRAYER'. EVEN ESTHER TOLD THE JEWS ONLY TO **FAST** FOR HER FOR THREE DAYS AND NIGHT. SHE DID NOT TELL THEM TO PRAY, ONLY TO FAST (4:16). THE KING'S AUTHORITY WAS SUCH IN THOSE DAYS THAT EVEN QUEEN ESTHER COULD NOT GO BEFORE HIM IF SHE HAD NOT BEEN INVITED BY HIM. THE **PUNISHMENT** TO GO INTO THE KING'S PRESENCE UNINVITED WAS **DEATH**. BUT ESTHER'S ATTITUDE WAS "IF I **PERISH**, I PERISH" (4:16). SHE WAS **WILLING** TO LAY DOWN HER **LIFE** TO SAVE GOD'S PEOPLE AND SHE WENT BEFORE THE KING. SHE OBTAINED **FAVOUR** IN HIS SIGHT AND SHE INVITED HIM AND HAMAN FOR A BANQUET.



THAT NIGHT THE KING COULD NOT SLEEP (6:1). **GOD** KEPT HIM AWAKE. WHEN PEOPLE ARE PLOTTING AGAINST US, **GOD** WORKS ON OUR **BEHALF** TO PROTECT US FROM THEM. BECAUSE THE KING COULD NOT GET ANY SLEEP, HE ASKED THAT THE HISTORY BOOKS OF THE EMPIRE BE READ TO HIM. PERHAPS HE THOUGHT HE WOULD GO TO SLEEP AS THE HISTORY BOOKS WERE BEING READ!! SO THE HISTORY BOOKS WERE READ -- AND HE **STILL** COULD NOT GET ANY SLEEP. **GOD** MADE SURE OF THAT. THEY WENT ON READING THE BOOKS TO THE KING RIGHT THROUGH THE NIGHT. AT ABOUT 6 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING, THEY CAME TO THE STORY OF HOW MORDECAI HAD **SAVED** THE KING'S LIFE. WHEN THE KING HEARD THAT, HE SAID, "WHAT DID WE **DO** FOR MORDECAI FOR SAVING MY LIFE?" (6:3). THEY SAID, "**NOTHING** HAS BEEN DONE." SO THE KING PLANNED TO **HONOUR** MORDECAI.

HAMAN BOASTED .. "BUT", SAID HE, "ALL THIS DOES NOT SATISFY ME AS LONG AS I SEE THIS MAN **MORDECAI** NOT BOWING DOWN TO ME" (5:13). SO ZERESH HIS WIFE AND HIS FRIENDS SUGGESTED TO HAMAN THAT HE MAKE A HUGE GALLOWS 75 FEET HIGH TO **HANG** MORDECAI. 75 FEET HIGH IS THE HEIGHT OF A 7-STOREY BUILDING. YOU DON'T NEED A 75-FOOT GALLOWS TO HANG A MAN. YOU NEED ONLY A 10-FOOT GALLOWS. WHY DID HE MAKE ONE 75 FEET HIGH? SO THAT **MORDECAI** COULD BE **HUMILIATED** AND SO THAT THE WHOLE **CITY** WOULD BE ABLE TO SEE HIM HANGING THERE.



AT THAT VERY **MOMENT** (AMAZING TIMING OF GOD) HAMAN CAME TO THE KING'S PALACE TO GET PERMISSION FROM THE KING TO HANG MORDECAI.



THE KING SAID, "GO AND DO THAT FOR **MORDECAI** STRAIGHTAWAY" (6:10). I WOULD HAVE LOVED TO HAVE SEEN **HAMAN'S FACE AT THIS TIME!** IT IS **WONDERFUL** TO SEE HOW GOD **TURNS** THE **TABLES** ON SATAN. BUT THIS WAS ONLY THE **BEGINNING** OF HAMAN'S **HUMILIATION**.



BEFORE HAMAN COULD SPEAK, THE KING TOLD HIM, "I WANT TO HONOUR **SOMEBODY**. HOW DO **YOU** THINK I SHOULD DO IT?" HAMAN, **CONCEITED** MAN THAT HE WAS, **IMMEDIATELY THOUGHT** THAT THE KING MUST BE **THINKING** OF HONOURING **HIM**. SO HE SAID, "LET HIM RIDE ON THE **KING'S** HORSE AND LET A **PRINCE** LEAD HIM DOWN THE **STREET** AND SAY, 'THIS IS HOW THE **KING** WILL **HONOUR** ANYONE WHO IS **FAITHFUL**.'"



WHEN HAMAN WENT TO ESTHER'S BANQUET THAT NIGHT, ESTHER **EXPOSED** HAMAN'S PLAN TO THE KING. HAMAN FELL DOWN BEFORE ESTHER AND **BEGGED** FOR MERCY. HE WHO HAD WANTED THE **JEWS** TO KNEEL BEFORE HIM NOW **KNEELS** DOWN BEFORE A **JEW**. THE LORD SAID TO ONE OF HIS **FAITHFUL** CHURCHES, "I WILL MAKE THEM TO COME AND BOW DOWN AT YOUR FEET AND TO KNOW THAT I HAVE **LOVED** YOU" (REVELATION 3:9). BECAUSE HAMAN HAD **BOASTED** TO MANY ABOUT THE GALLOWS HE HAD MADE FOR MORDECAI, OTHERS **KNEW** ABOUT IT. THEREFORE THEY SUGGESTED TO THE KING THAT HAMAN HIMSELF BE HANGED ON IT. HOW GOOD IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IF HE HAD KEPT **QUIET** ABOUT IT. HE WHO HAD WANTED TO **HUMILIATE MORDECAI** BEFORE THE NATION IS NOW **HUMILIATED HIMSELF**. "HE WHO DIGS A PIT FOR **OTHERS** WILL FALL INTO IT **HIMSELF**" (PROVERBS 26:27). "THE **RIGHTEOUS** IS **DELIVERED** FROM **TROUBLE** AND THE **WICKED** TAKES HIS PLACE" (PROVERBS 11:8). WE NEED NEVER HAVE ANY **FEAR**, EVEN IF MULTITUDES OF PEOPLE SCHEME AGAINST US. WHEN WE SERVE THE LORD, SATAN WILL GET MANY PEOPLE TO TRY AND **HARM** US. JUST TRUST IN GOD -- AND SLEEP LIKE MORDECAI DID! THIS IS THE GOD WE **WORSHIP** AND SERVE. THE JEWS WERE **TRIUMPHANT** THERE IN THE BOOK OF ESTHER AND THE ENEMY WAS **DEFEATED**. IT WILL BE LIKE THAT IN **OUR LIVES** TOO.

