February 23, 2020   -   Esther 3:-7-15   -   "Haman's' Begins his Evil Plot"

<u>Introduction</u>

In 1994 the Rwandan genocide cost more than a half-million lives. Today in Rwanda there is a ministry center called the "Lighthouse" and it symbolizes redemption. Ironically it sits on land where during the genocide of the last century the country's president owned a magnificent home. This new structure, however, has been erected by Christians as a beacon of light and hope. Housed there is a Bible institute to raise up a new generation of Christian leaders to help heal them from these atrocities. Our Jewish friends have seen atrocities of this sort too many times in their history that stems back to the Pharaohs of Egypt to the evil tyrant Adolf Hitler. In the book of Esther we witness an evil forerunner, pre-cursor of him in Haman.

<u>I. Haman reveals his evil plot to the king. 3:7-11</u>

1. In Verses 7-9 of this chapter Haman is determined to gain the king favor and do this without making the king suspicious of what he's up to. They cast *Pur* is to say, " the lot was cast on the first month (v.7) and landed upon a date exactly eleven months later (v.13) allowing plenty of time for Haman's plot to be overcome and a counter measures ordered. God's hand of providence is seen in that the lot did not fall on an immediate day but gave Mordecai and Esther time to act to avert this destruction. This has to be seen as confirmation of God's assurance that He will preserve His people. The book of Proverbs states, **the lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD.** 16:33)

2. Haman's charge in verse 8 was full of half-truths. There are three things that Haman said about the Jews to get the king to think in the same prejudicial terms as He was thinking? He described the Jews with three "D's". Pay attention to these three d's because prejudice almost always has elements of all three. He called them:

1**. Different-** They think differently, they have different holidays, a different God, different customs, different values. They eat different foods and they dress different too.

2. **Disobedient** – This was not true. Not all the Jews were disobedient to the king's commands. But truth rarely matters when people want to be prejudiced. Haman was basing his assertion on the actions of one man – Mordecai. But that's how prejudice works. You have one experience or know one person or a small group of people from a heritage that is different from your own, and you judge all the people in that entire group.

3. **Destructive** – Haman forecast that the Jews were going to create real problems for the king and the kingdom in the days ahead. They were a homeland security threat. If we allow them to stay, they're going to become a threat to our way of life. They're going to steal our jobs and join up with our enemies against us. It was not in the king's best interest to keep them around.

<u>Application;</u>

Most people hate to be accused of racism, discrimination or prejudice. But these biases are all too prevalent. Even Christians have had a long history of ethnic prejudice. In the first century, Jewish believers were reluctant to accept their Gentile brothers. James addresses this problem with partiality early in his epistle to the dispersed believers. The human race has always been guilty of this but in our day it has become a human tragedy. Mark Twain once said, "Prejudice is the ink with which all history is written". So it is today.

In his autobiography, Mahatma Gandhi wrote that during his student days he read the Gospels seriously and considered converting to Christianity. He believed that in the teachings of Jesus he could find a solution to the caste system that was dividing the people of India. So one Sunday he decided to attend services at a nearby church and talk to the minister about becoming a Christian. When he entered the sanctuary, however, the usher refused to give him a seat and suggested that he go worship with his own people. Gandhi left the church and never returned. "If Christians have caste differences too," he said, "I might as well remain a Hindu." That usher's prejudice not only betrayed Jesus but also turned a person away from trusting Him as Savior. Folks God is absolutely and totally impartial.

The Bible states in," **2 Chronicles 19:7** **"There is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons." Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: Acts 10:34 - Paul said, For there is no respect of persons with God.**

3. Yes, the Jews were a certain people scattered and dispersed; and yes they had their own laws. But their own laws, to this point, did not prevent them from keeping the kings laws as loyal subjects. God does commend us to obey civil government as Paul taught in Romans 13:1-5 and Peter who declares… **Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.**

Haman's suggests that Mordecai's people are really unprofitable to the king, but that he is ready to make King Xerxes magnificently rich. He offers ten thousand talents to the king (v.9) which according to the Greek historian Herodotus was a remarkable amount equal to 2/3 of the annual income of the entire kingdom. Ten thousand talents of silver equal 275 tons of silver. This was essentially the promise of a bribe. This money would not come from Haman's own pocket; it would be obtained from the property of slaughtered Jews.

4. Haman's plea to Xerxes in verse 9 is to slaughter all of Persia's Jews. This was granted and sealed in a document that could not be overturned. When the king gives Haman his signet ring it was the equivalent of the king's signature (v. 10) and therefore his approval of the plan. He did not care enough to ask what group was to be destroyed. Not only did the king pass over Mordecai and promote Haman, he passed a law that is designed not only to result in his death but also of the queen that he professes to love .

6. So why did Xerxes allow this decree to be enacted? When you talk about a threat to a king's throne you are touching something that is very close to his heart. Then in addition, you infer that you have a plan that will make him wealthier, you got his attention. Haman like Satan appeals to the depravity of the human flesh and the pride of this arrogant king.

II. The Proclamation Of Haman. (3:12-15)

1. "Kill…them all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women…and plunder their possessions" (v. 13). Verse thirteen tells us just how evil Haman's plan was, "to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women." And a motive is given for the carrying out this plan is a financial windfall to "plunder their possessions" (v. 13). With this, an empire-wide death sentence on the Jews was announced by the king. This was like other attacks against the Jewish people in history, except it was announced in advance.

2. C. F. Keil was a conservative German Lutheran Old Testament commentator who suggests the eleven month interval could have "caused many Jews to leave their property and escape to other lands, for the sake of preserving their lives. Thus Haman would achieve his object.

3 We note in verse 15 that the last verse states the city of Shushan was perplexed. The citizens of the empire knew Jewish people who lived among them, and they knew that they were good citizens who caused no trouble. Therefore, they were confused that such a decree came forth, declaring that these Jews were dangerous enemies.

Application:

1. Dr. Charles Swindoll makes some compelling applications in relationship to this chapter.
"From Mordecai – Never forget that there will always be someone who will begrudge your devotion to the Lord!
From Haman – Never underestimate the diabolical nature of revenge. There must come a point when we are revolted at our own vileness.
From Ahaseuras (Xerxes) – Never overestimate the value of your own importance!"

Conclusion:
Folks, Haman didn't care what his revenge was going to cost. Ahaseurus didn't care that his kingdom was in chaos. Do you care about the world around you and how your actions affect it?