

The Esther Series

Message Two An Effective Impact

ESTHER 3: 1–15 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him and set his throne above all the officials who were with him.

2 And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage.

3 Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you transgress the king's command?"

4 And when they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai's words would stand, for he had told them that he was a Jew.

5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury.

6 But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, as they had made known to him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

7 In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that is, they cast lots) before Haman day after day; and they cast it month after month till the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your

kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so that it is not to the king's profit to tolerate them.

9 If it please the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king's business, that they may put it into the king's treasuries."

10 So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews.

11 And the king said to Haman, "The money is given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you."

12 Then the king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and an edict, according to all that Haman commanded, was written to the king's satraps and to the governors over all the provinces and to the officials of all the peoples, to every province in its own script and every people in its own language. It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring.

13 Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with instruction to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods.

14 A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province by proclamation to all the peoples to be ready for that day.

15 The couriers went out hurriedly by order of the king, and the decree was issued in Susa the citadel. And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was thrown into confusion.

ESTHER 4: 1-17 *When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry.*

2 He went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one was allowed to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth.

3 And in every province, wherever the king's command and his decree reached, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 When Esther's young women and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed. She sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.

5 Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what this was and why it was.

6 Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate,

7 and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews.

8 Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her and command her to go to the king to beg his favor and plead with him on behalf of her people.

9 And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said.

10 Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say,

11 “All the king’s servants and the people of the king’s provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days.”

12 And they told Mordecai what Esther had said.

13 Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “Do not think to yourself that in the king’s palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews.

14 For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai,

16 “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.”

17 Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message is to help you know when your time has come for an effective impact for the kingdom purposes and plan of God and how to know when He has prepared you for the moment.

INTRODUCTION:

Many people, and even many Christians, will have spent a large part of their lives climbing the ladder of success, only to discover at the end that it was leaning against the wrong wall.



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In an effort to meet the standards of our world's system, and what it calls success, many people will have missed the purposes of God.

They will have, perhaps, been very great in their careers, in their education, and with their resources, but they will stand before God never having finished the work that He had called them to do.

They are like the man who said, "I was dying to finish high school so I could go to college.

I was dying to finish college so I could start my career.

Then I was dying for my kids to reach eighteen so they would leave home.

I was dying to retire, only to discover now that I'm just dying!"

The sense of purpose is gone.

That purpose for us as believers is our divinely designed reason for being once we become Christians.

The reason we are not raptured to heaven at the moment of our conversion is that God has left us here to accomplish a kingdom purpose.

Unfortunately, today, it's easy to get caught up in the wrong purposes—the purposes of people, possessions, paychecks, power and popularity.

We might sprinkle a little piety in to make us feel a little better, but it is easy to live life without the right endgame in mind.

God's endgame is revealed in the nature and working of His providence—the way God connects circumstances and people to accomplish His Kingdom program.

Even when the devil is doing his worst evil, he is still God's devil.

So unbeknownst to Satan, he is helping to complete the program of God, because God providentially knows how to put the pieces of our life's puzzle together so that things that do not look like they belong wind up fitting together to make the picture of His purposes manifest.

No part of the Bible brings that out more clearly than the book of Esther.

God's name and His Law are not mentioned in Esther, because God wanted a book in the Bible to show us how, when He is not overtly seen, He is still busy.

Esther's time to have an impact for God's kingdom had come.

We can learn from her story how to know when it's our time to be effective for the kingdom.

When is your peak potential to make an effective impact in God's Kingdom?

Five Points

1. When you are presented with a problem

Esther 3: 1-6 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him and set his throne above all the officials who were with him.

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4 And when they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai's words would stand, for he had told them that he was a Jew.

5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury.

6 But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, as they had made known to him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

Your problem may be relatively small, or it may be king sized as it was for Esther, Mordecai and the Jews in Persia.

Your problem may also involve the need to stand against the ruling authorities for the sake of obedience to God.

Romans 13: 1-7 *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.*

2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval,

4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.

5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing.

7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Acts 4: 19-20 *But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge,*

20 for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."



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2. When God connects spiritual preparation with spiritual warfare

Esther 3: 7-15 *In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that is, they cast lots) before Haman day after day; and they cast it month after month till the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.*

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Whenever God gets ready to use you, you will have a spiritual battle to overcome. Spiritual battle is always a prerequisite to discovering your spiritual purpose.

3. When you are positioned to leverage your influence

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12 And they told Mordecai what Esther had said.

Many Christians misunderstand spiritual blessing.

God wants us to use the gifts, talents and resources He has given us to advance His kingdom.

If there is little or no concern for that, you have just cut off your blessing.



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The experiences and opportunities God gives us are not just for us; they're about His kingdom.

When we lose sight of that, we've missed God's plan.

4. When you discover how you can be used to be a blessing

Esther 4: 13-14 Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “Do not think to yourself that in the king’s palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews.

14 For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

Jesus said in ***Luke 14: 34-35*** “Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?

35 It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” that some of His people are useless.

Useless believers have no kingdom orientation and wind up saying, “I don’t know what my purpose is.”

We do not exist for ourselves.

We exist to make a difference—an impact.

The great tragedy today is that if the church isn’t accomplishing kingdom purposes—winning people to Christ, discipling them in the faith and improving their lives so they can be greater impact vessels for God—then we’re just having a weekly party in Jesus’ name.

We need to demonstrate how the kingdom of heaven operates on the earth.

5. When God asks you to intervene in a spiritual conflict

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16 “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will

also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.”

17 Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

Once God has prepared you to be a blessing, He will ask you to take a risk of faith.

II Corinthians 5: 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight.

The challenge for us today is to open our eyes to the opportunities of “such a time as this.”

Esther 4: 14 For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

NO ORDINARY SAND

We usually think of sand as one of the most common elements on earth.

We get annoyed when we get sand in our shoes or our cars when we go to the beach.

We don’t see much use for sand.

But in the Silicon Valley of California, tech experts make computer chips with sand.

Not because it’s different sand, but because it is used differently.

One reason God can’t do much with some of His people is that they are just like sand lying around.

God can’t have His way because He can’t find enough saints whose value is tied to their usefulness.

THE REAL TRAGEDY OF THE TITANIC

The sinking of the great ocean liner Titanic was a horrible loss of 1,500 lives.



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But did you know that many of those people didn't have to die?

Most of the lifeboats leaving the ship were only half-full.

But the people who were in them didn't want to risk turning back to rescue others drowning in the water for fear that they would rush the lifeboats and, in their panic to be saved, overturn them and sink everyone.

So, the people who were saved in the lifeboats simply kept going because reaching back for the others might interfere with them being delivered.

Hundreds of people died because those who were already saved didn't want to save others.

BACKGROUND BIBLICAL HISTORY AND CULTURE:

We're told several times in ***Esther 3: 1*** and ***10***; also in ***8: 3, 5; 9: 24***) that Haman was "the Agagite."

That may not mean much to a lot of people today, but God doesn't waste words in the Bible.

There is an important history behind this mention of Haman's background.

The Agagites were the descendants of Agag, whose story is told in 1 Samuel 15.

Agag was the king of the Amalekites, bitter enemies of Israel who were trying to destroy the Jews many years before Esther's time when Saul was king of Israel.

God told Saul to utterly destroy the Amalekites ***1 Samuel 15: 2-3 Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt.***

3 Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all that they have. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'" including their king, Agag.

But Saul thought he was smarter than God and decided to spare Agag.

So, Saul disobeyed God.

Agag's posterity was not destroyed, and 400 years later, his descendant, Haman, is determined to destroy the Jews.

Their plight was the fruit of a root problem that wasn't dealt with earlier.

So, when the book of Esther says that Haman was an Agagite, the writer is telling us that he's part of a legacy of unaddressed sin that should have been fully eradicated long ago.

Some of us know what it is to have something we should have dealt with earlier, something we wished we had dealt with, but didn't, coming back to haunted

That's why we need to deal fully with sin.

The Pur mentioned in ***Esther 3:7*** is the lot, an ancient version of dice used to determine a course of action or the right choice.

The Esther Series Message Two

An Effective Impact

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- 1. When you are presented with a problem**
- 2. When God connects spiritual preparation with spiritual warfare**
- 3. When you are positioned to leverage your influence**
- 4. When you discover how you can be used to be a blessing**
- 5. When God asks you to intervene in a spiritual conflict**