



slaughter and annihilation. *If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because no such distress would justify disturbing the king."*

⁵ *King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, "Who is he? Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?"*

⁶ *Esther said, "The adversary and enemy is this vile Haman." Then Haman was terrified before the king and queen.*

Esther 7:8 Just as the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was reclining. The king exclaimed, "Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?" As soon as the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

⁹ *Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, "A gallows seventy-five feet high stands by Haman's house. He had it made for Mordecai, who spoke up to help the king." The king said, "Hang him on it!"¹⁰ So they hanged Haman on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's fury subsided.*

The hand of Providence

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THE STORY

FINDING YOUR STORY IN GOD'S STORY

Courageous Queen Esther

The Story—part 20

Book of Esther,

February 26, 2017

Providence:

An overview of the book of Esther

5 central characters:

King Xerxes—the unstable king of Persia

Vashti—Xerxes' beautiful and modest wife

Haman—Xerxes' top assistant, driven to exterminate the Jewish population worldwide.

Mordecai—a faithful Jewish leader; cousin to Esther (acting as her foster father)

Esther—the ravishing Jewish orphan girl that God raised up to rescue His people.

Esther 1:12 But when the attendants delivered the king's



command, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger.

Haman's pride and wicked plot

Esther 3:1 After these events, King Xerxes honored Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles.

² All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor.

Esther 3:5 When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was enraged.

⁶ Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.

Esther 3:8 Then Haman said to King Xerxes, "There is a certain people dispersed and scattered among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom whose customs are different from those of all other people and who do not obey the king's laws; it is not in the king's best interest to tolerate them. ⁹ If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and I will put ten thousand talents of silver into the royal treasury for the men who carry out this business."



Esther's dilemma and courage

*Esther 4:11 "All the king's officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: **that he be put to death**. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king."*

Esther 4:13 "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape.

¹⁴ For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"

Esther 4:16 "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids 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."

Haman's demise

Esther 7:3 Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor with you, O king, and if it pleases your majesty, grant me my life --this is my petition. And spare my people--this is my request.

*⁴ **For I and my people have been sold for destruction and***