

The Minister of Mayhem

Esther 5: 9-14

Our text today follows Esther's entrance before the king. She was received of Ahasuerus and promised that her request would be granted. She had invited Ahasuerus and Haman to a small banquet that served as an invitation to a larger banquet the following day – where she would reveal her petition to the king.

The passage before us focuses upon Haman. We have already considered the hatred he has for the Jews and the devious plot he presented unto the king. Having obtained promotion to second highest rank in the kingdom, and securing his desire for the annihilation of the Jews, Haman is feeling pretty good about himself and his efforts. He is convinced his efforts to rid the kingdom of the Jews, and Mordecai in particular, are going according to plan. Haman is on top of the world at this moment, and yet he has failed to recognize, or consider, the sovereign hand of God in the lives and well-being of the Jews.

As we move through our text, keep in mind that Haman stands as a picture of Satan, the enemy of the body of Christ. Although Satan is aware of the sovereignty of God, he continues to work against believers in an effort to defeat us and hinder our work for the Lord. In fact, he knows his time is limited and he appears to be working with more fervency as he anticipates the return of Christ. The church deals with the opposition of Satan, and those whom he has deceived, who are working to promote his agenda. As we consider the [diabolical characteristics](#) of Haman, I want to discuss: [The Minister of Mayhem](#).

I. The Disposition of Haman (9-11) – These verses reveal the sinful, arrogant disposition of Haman, and how his disposition influenced his behavior. Consider:

A. His Assumption (9a) – [Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart](#). Haman has just left the initial banquet with Esther and Ahasuerus. He had already been promoted to second in command, and now he has been invited to a private meeting the following day. Haman feels as if he is on top of the world. His stature and influence within the kingdom continue to grow. Apart from Ahasuerus, he feels he is the most influential and powerful man in the Persian Empire. It appears Haman believed there were no limits to his success and prosperity.

- This is the defining characteristic of Satan himself. He was a beautiful angel, created of God, and yet pride consumed him. He desired the worship that God received and desired to possess the position God held. His pride and rebellion were the reasons he was cast out of heaven. Those whom Satan influences are often filled with great pride and arrogance. He

deceives them to believe there is no limit to their sinful ambitions. He often lifts them up within their circles of influence to encourage their arrogance and resolve to his agenda.

B. His Anger (9b) – Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai. The great jubilation Haman felt following his meeting with the king and queen was short lived. As he left the palace, he encountered Mordecai. As usual, Mordecai refused to bow before Haman or show him any honor. His joy quickly turned to indignation – a burning rage and anger toward Mordecai. Sadly, his hatred for Mordecai and the Jews held greater influence over Haman than the positions of influence he had acquired within the kingdom. His hatred was so strong that it consumed his being, becoming the driving force in his life. [Prov.16:18 – Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.](#)

- Unfortunately this is often the case when the love of Christ is absent in the heart of an individual. While one's life is consumed and dictated by sin, godly characteristics such as love and compassion are rarely seen. Those who are bound by Satan, and influenced by his evil ways, often can't enjoy what they possess because their lives are consumed with jealousy, anger, or hatred toward another. Being set free from the bondage of sin through salvation in Christ is the only solution for such behavior. He alone can cleanse from sin and replace hatred with love.

C. His Assessment (10a) – [Nevertheless Haman refrained himself.](#) Haman was extremely wicked, but he was not foolish. He refrained from acting in haste during this moment of rage. He knew the decree had been signed, and I am sure he felt as if Mordecai's day of reckoning would eventually come. He also didn't want to be guilty of acting independently, apart from the approval of the king. Mordecai was seated within the king's gate, where he was usually found. Persian law protected those who sat within the king's gate. An assault on someone sitting in the king's gate was viewed as an attack on the king. Haman chose to ignore Mordecai for now, but his hatred would motivate another plan to rid the kingdom of this man he viewed with disdain.

- We face a determined adversary who is very cunning and wise. He knows he is no match for the Lord, and he chooses his attacks wisely. He waits until the right moment to attack, often during our moments of weakness or isolation.

D. His Arrogance (10b-11) – [and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife.](#) ^[11] [And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.](#) Following his meeting with Esther and Ahasuerus, and his encounter with Mordecai,

Haman went home and gathered his friends and wife to brag of his great accomplishments. He gloried in the riches he had amassed, the children within his family, and his promotion as second only to the king. Haman wanted them to know they were in the presence of a very rich and influential man within the kingdom.

- Satan felt sufficient within himself, seeing no need of God, and those he influences share his pride. Haman felt like a self-made man. He wanted his family and friends to recognize his great accomplishments. Many continue this destructive path today. They feel as if they have all they need in life. There is no recognition of God's goodness or grace, only their ability to secure what is necessary. They boast in their accomplishments and seek the praise of others. They fail to realize that all the wealth and position the world can offer will not reconcile one to God or grant eternal life. Riches and personal achievement will never merit entrance into heaven or gain an audience with the King of glory.

II. The Determination of Haman (12-14) – Being consumed with hatred for Mordecai, along with advice from others, Haman devises a determined plan to kill Mordecai. Consider:

A. The Invitation (12) – [Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.](#) Prior to revealing his consuming hatred for Mordecai, Haman boasts of the meeting he just had with Esther. He relished the fact, that apart from the king, he alone was invited to this banquet. She was planning a great banquet for the next day, and this gathering was reserved for the king and himself. Haman felt as if he was the most important man in the kingdom with the exception of the king. He was convinced this banquet was being held to honor him.

- Haman had no idea the banquet would lead to his demise and death. Rather than continuing to advance his diabolical schemes, the Lord would intervene on behalf of the Jews. This serves as a reminder to those who walk in adversity – God is always in control. We face nothing apart from His will, and He is more than able to meet every need we have.

B. The Indignation (13) – [Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.](#) This reminds me of a spoiled child. After boasting of all his accomplishments and wealth, Haman declares that none of that matters as long as Mordecai is allowed to sit within the king's gate. He could not enjoy his position and possessions because of his hatred for Mordecai. The hatred within his heart was stronger than the desire for power and prestige. Haman was consumed with hatred and this hatred was the driving force in his life. He had more than a man could possibly need, but he did not have the reverence of Mordecai.

- Again this is a tool used of the enemy. He likes to keep people unhappy with what they currently possess, while being consumed with those things that appear just out of reach. He worked this way in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had the entire garden to enjoy, with the exception of one tree. Satan tempted them with that which was forbidden, and rather than enjoy all they had, they succumbed to the temptation. (Genuine peace and contentment is found only through a personal relationship with Christ. Apart from that, one will never be satisfied.)

C. The Suggestion (14a) – [Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet.](#) Desiring to please their spoiled prime minister, Haman's wife and friends offered a suggestion. "Build a gallows, seventy five feet high, on which to hang Mordecai. When you meet with the king tomorrow, get his approval, and then enjoy your banquet with the queen." Haman's evil influence had affected his friends and family. They were willing to support the death of an innocent man to please Haman.

- The gallows they suggested are not what we would think of in our modern culture. In our minds, we think of the gallows that were used in the 1800's and early 1900's to hang those sentenced to death. This refers to a pole that would be erected, and the guilty would be impaled upon the pole. It was to be seventy five feet high, so that all could see, adding to the horror and cruelty toward the Jews.

- We are aware of Mordecai's innocence, and the providence of God that prevented His death. However, centuries later, an innocent man would hang on a tree for the sin of humanity. I am thankful that Jesus took my place, bearing my sin and judgment, so I might be forgiven of sin and reconciled to God.

D. The Satisfaction (14b) – [And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.](#) This suggestion pleased Haman and he ordered the gallows to be made. No doubt he went to bed that night feeling sure of his plan to rid Shushan of Mordecai. Little did he know that he would be the one to suffer and die upon the gallows.

- That is the way Satan operates today. He never reveals the end result of sin. He doesn't show the devastation it brings or the death that results from sin. Many today feel good about their lives and the path they have chosen. They are enjoying the indulgence of sin, but fail to realize the eternal consequence it brings. [Prov.16:25 – There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.](#) [Romans 6:23 – For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.](#)

Conclusion: Haman served as a minister of mayhem in Persia, seeking to eradicate all Jews from within the kingdom. He was motivated by prejudice and hatred. His hatred consumed his life, dictating his very existence. His hatred for the Jews would lead to his quick demise and horrific death.

Sin always leads down a path of destruction. The end thereof are the ways of death. While we are all born in sin, condemned before God, there is a remedy for sin – Jesus Christ, Savior of the world. We must come to him in repentance and faith to obtain salvation. He alone can pardon our sin and reconcile us to God. Have you submitted to Christ in salvation, or are you living as Haman, a life dictated by sin? Church, this passage should challenge us to be a faithful witness for Christ. We are secure in Him, and yet there are many who remain in sin. I pray we share the Gospel with the world, even in the face of determined opposition.