

Glen Park Gospel Church
Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes

Rev Chris Trinham

Esther

No 3

Suffering for the Sin of Saul

A caring friend once said, "Many people suffer greatly due to the consequences of sin, not least of all those who suffer the sins of others." He was referring to his wife who was suffering the scars of abuse she received as a child. There are many ways in which we suffer because of the sins of others, for 'the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge¹.' 'Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us².' Mordecai's stand is explained by this phenomenon, and the lessons are many.

Mordecai, a Son of Saul: Haman, a Son of Agag.

We see this by comparing Esther 2:5 with 1 Samuel 9:1³. Mordecai counted his genealogy back through Saul to Benjamin. Haman on the other hand traced his line back through the tribe of Agag to Amalek. Esther 3:1. There had been war between these peoples for centuries. This is another event in this age long succession.

A Short Summary of Amalek:

A son of Esau. Gen. 36:12. Refer also Malachi 1:2.

Mother was Adah, a Hittite, part of the Amalekite group⁴ Gen. 14:7, 36:2.

A chieftain of the tribe of his people eventually known as such. Gen. 36:16. Fought against Moses Ex. 17:8-13 Sworn enemy of Lord Ex. 17:14-16.

Agag was the king of the then tribe of Amalekites whom God told Saul to slay. Saul disobeyed, keeping the best of the spoil and Agag the king alive. 1 Samuel 15:1-9. For this he was replaced by David

The Western world decries such inter-racial or inter-religious animosity as barbaric, emphasising tolerance. What should be the attitude of the Christian in this environment?

Blood vs blood or Flesh vs Spirit?

We want to be good moral citizens as did

Mordecai but we also want to honour God and be true to His word. The issues are often blurred in our day of fast mass media. Remember. The morals and way of the world is not the way of the Lord. See Isaiah 55:8&9. Do not confuse them (Not always easy).

Here is a distinction that may help:

We reject blood to blood feuds, or family wars as evil, but where the principle of evil is at war with the principle of Christ, we stand for Jesus Christ.

This war is real in the soul-life of the believer when his flesh wars against his spirit.

And it is real in the community too. The world is awash with the blood of true martyrs for Christ today.

If we understand this simple to say, but hard to comply distinction, we will understand the otherwise confusing contradictions of Mordecai, and understanding them we will be instructed in some of the principles of practical Godliness.

Haman Plays His Hand.

The flesh will always try to slay the spirit, just as Satan always tries to overthrow God.

Haman was promoted to the chief of ministers, akin to our Prime Minister. Why did Ahasuerus pass over one who had saved his reign Esther 2:21-23 to promote this man? The answer is that he no longer had any interest in

government. He had tried to exhibit his prowess at emperorship with the attack on Greece and had so miserably failed that he had now given up, was content to enjoy the perks of his position. It was now the twelfth year of his reign, five years after Esther's accession as queen.

Haman's new position included the obeisance of his underlings. Haman craved self aggrandisement and the adoration of others (as flesh life always does.)

When it was pointed out to him that Mordecai did not comply, and that Mordecai was a Jew, he seized the opportunity so as to annihilate as many Jews as possible. It was a plan of genocide v6.

He needed royal ascent but under present conditions that was no problem. Ahasuerus did not even bother to ask who these supposed enemies were. The ring was the royal seal.

Haman sweetened the deal with a promised present of half a year of all royal revenue⁵ (Politicians will promise anything, presumably out of the possessions of their victims)

Mordecai Takes His Stand.

When Mordecai took his stand against

the enemy of his people, he took a deliberately calculated risk. Consider: He would not pay homage to Haman at the king's command v1-3, but he had no qualms about bowing before the king himself as then was the custom. He told Esther to conceal her ethnicity, but advertised his own Esther 2:20 & 3:4.

Saul's Sins are So Often Our Sins.

Read 1 Samuel 15:1-35. Saul was told to utterly destroy all Amalekites and all their possessions v3.

He defeated the Amalekites v7.

He spared king Agag⁶ and the best of the spoil v9.

He justified his actions v13-15.

God was angry and rejected him v11.

Saul tried to bluff it out v13&20-21.

He blamed others v21

He wanted to sacrifice to God in worship that which He had condemned v21

God wants our obedience in trust, not our sacrifice. We often put this the other way around v22-23.

Saul was more interested in his social status than spiritual standing v29-31.

Saul's repentance was crocodile tears.

If the genealogy of Haman was true, Saul did not utterly destroy all, some were able to escape.

FOOTNOTES: 1. Jeremiah 31:29. 2. Luke 11:4. 3 **Kish** Here is an important lesson for any student of the Bible. Bible genealogists often jump generations when making up a family tree. Their objectives, values and formats differ to ours. If you are trying to convert the generations recorded in the Bible to Julian days or the Gregorian calendar, this is only one of the difficulties to take into account. 4. **Hittite** The word means 'a descendant of Heth' and describes both a tribe and a term describing Canaanite people living in the area of Palestine from early days. Traced back through Canaan, then Ham to Noah. **Amalek** the name means 'dweller in the vale' (Young) Baalam called Amalek the first of the nations Numbers 24:20 and the reference in Genesis 14:7 to the region of the Amalekites suggest the people dwelling in the salt sea region. See Wycliffe Bible Encyclopaedia Vol 1, p54 & p799. 5 **Revenue** accounting: Esther & Ruth, Ian Duguid, R&R Publishing Phillipsburg NJ USA 2005. 6. **Agag** It was ancient custom to parade defeated kings as a trophy of victory. **Bible quotations** in this study are from the NASB, unless otherwise acknowledged.

Welcome

Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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