

Sermon Discussion

25 July 2021

Read Esther 2:19-3:15

Dig Deeper

Evidently, Mordecai received an appointment to a governmental position as a magistrate or judge because of Esther's influence (v. 19). The "**king's gate**" was where people settled legal matters in the capital. His position probably enabled Mordecai to overhear the plot to assassinate the king (vv. 21-23).

Agag was the name of an area in Media that had become part of the Persian Empire. However, Agag was also the name of the Amalekite king whom Saul failed to execute (*see 1 Samuel 15:8; Numbers 24:7*). By mentioning both **Kish**, Saul's father, and **Agag**, the Amalekite king, the writer may have been indicating that both men were heirs to a long-standing tradition of ethnic enmity and antagonism.

The **10,000 talents of silver** Haman offered to pay into the king's treasury amounted to about two-thirds of the entire empire's income. Many scholars consider this figure hyperbole. Some believe Haman wanted the king to understand that the benefit that would come to him by executing the Jews would be extremely large. Perhaps Haman could have afforded to do this because he had plans to confiscate the Jews' possessions (v. 13). Undoubtedly, he planned to make a large profit personally as well.

1. God is at work in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life (see Mordecai at his everyday job in 2:19-2:23). What are some aspects of everyday life that you've seen God work in the life of others? In your own life?
2. Many things that are outside of our control affect our lives. This was certainly the case with Mordecai when he got passed over for the promotion that went to Haman. Take some time to share things in your life that feel too big to control. What is your typical response? What does it look like to maintain hope even in the face of things that are bigger than you?
3. Why do you think we're surprised when, after walking in obedience, we seem to be rewarded with struggle?
4. In what ways do we treat God as if he owes us? How can the gospel free us from thinking we are owed something after doing what we should be doing all along?
5. The Jews would have certainly been tempted to be fearful and anxious because of the decree. What, if anything, are we as Christians currently fearful or anxious about? How can we cast our cares on him?

Application & Prayer

We don't often face risks as great as Mordecai faced, but we often come face-to-face with tough decisions about what to do and who to follow. Rebelling, or choosing to be different, just for the sake of rebelling does us no good. It only serves to make us our own god.

- Prayerfully consider what areas of your life you are not wanting to surrender to God.
- Confess these areas and ask for the strength and faith necessary to obey and honour Him no matter the risks.

Persecution and injustice are key themes in this passage. Share together about injustices you see, as well as persecution of God's people. Spend some time praying together for the persecuted church and those facing regular injustice.