

ESTHER 10 THE GREATNESS OF AHASUERUS & MORDECAI

In this short conclusion to the Book of Esther, we are shown the greatness and power of King Ahasuerus. He ruled over a vast dominion – both on the continent and among the islands – from which he raised a vast revenue. Besides the usual taxes which the kings of Persia exacted (Ezra 4:13), he laid an additional tribute upon his subjects, to fulfill some great need which he had for money. In addition to this instance of the grandeur of Ahasuerus, many more examples of his power and might could have been given; but these were not thought fit to be recorded here in the sacred Scriptures. The greatness and power of this Persian prince would not have been noticed in the Bible at all, if the situation of the people of God had not been connected with it. The Bible carefully carries on the thread of history concerning the successive kingdoms of the world, but only in order to show how they contributed to the introduction of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus. The prophet Daniel was commissioned to tell the king of Babylon that the God of heaven would ultimately set up a Kingdom which would never be destroyed (Dan. 2:44). Therefore, the reader of the Scriptures is enabled to observe just enough to see the Divine footsteps marking the way through these temporary empires and monarchies, to the bringing in of that Kingdom of Christ, which shall stand forever! The Babylonians were succeeded by the Persians, and the Persians were eventually followed by the Roman Empire; and it was in the most peaceable and flourishing time of this government that Jesus was born in human flesh!

This chapter also gives us a quick description of the fame of Mordecai. He was great indeed, and his virtue and piety were highly honored. He was close to the king, as one whom he most delighted and confided in. Mordecai had sat contentedly as the king's gatekeeper for years; and now, at length, he was advanced to the second-highest position in the kingdom. The declaration of the greatness to which the king advanced Mordecai was written in the chronicles of the Medes and Persians; for his actions were very memorable, and contributed to the great achievements of the king himself. Ahasuerus never did such acts of power as those which he did when Mordecai was his right-hand man.

But Mordecai was also a highly esteemed man among his own people, the Jews. What a delightful character was here given of him! He was respected by his brethren, he sought their happiness, and he spoke peaceably to all his descendants. We may imagine that his life fulfilled the description given in Psalm 128 of the blessedness of the man who fears the Lord. But as we think of what a blessing such a man as Mordecai must have been in his days, we must not for-

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ A short description of the greatness of King Ahasuerus – verses 1-2
- ❖ A short description of the greatness of Mordecai – verse 3

get to look to One Who is infinitely higher and infinitely greater than any other in His love, grace, and mercy! Our Lord Jesus is the happiness of all creation in general, and of His Church in a peculiarly sweet way. He not only *speaks* peace to all His sons and daughters, but He Himself is our peace and our portion forever!



We give thanks to You, O Redeemer, for Your selfless sacrifice on our behalf; for even upon Your throne of glory, You do not seek Your own advantage. Rather, like Mordecai did for the Jews, You use Your power for the blessing and good of Your people! Amen.

Some Key Dates in Biblical and Secular History

<i>BC Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
c.1000	The Mayan civilization is established in Central America
975	The Kingdom of Israel is divided into two nations after Solomon's death
c. 889	Elijah stands up in defense of the Lord against Baal
815	Carthage is founded in modern-day Tunisia
776	The first Olympic games are held in Greece
c. 760	Homer writes the <i>Iliad</i> and the <i>Odyssey</i>
721	The Northern Kingdom of Israel falls to the Assyrians
680	The King of Assyria conquers Babylon
620	Aesop is born in Greece
c. 600	The Hanging Gardens of Babylon are built
586	The fall of the Southern Kingdom of Judah to the Babylonians
570	Pythagoras is born in Greece
563	Buddha is born in India
555	Belshazzar sees the writing on the wall, and Babylon falls into the hands of the Medes and Persians
551	Confucius is born in China
c. 550	The Temple of Diana is built in Ephesus
537	King Cyrus of Persia permits the Jews to return from captivity
515	Esther becomes Queen of Persia, and the rebuilding of the second Temple is completed in Jerusalem
490	The Battle of Marathon
467	King Artaxerxes of Persia permits Ezra to return to Jerusalem
457	The Statue of Zeus is built in Olympia
454	King Artaxerxes of Persia permits Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem
432	The Parthenon is completed in Athens
431	The Peloponnesian War begins
416	Malachi's prophecy ends the Canon of the Old Testament Scriptures
c. 350	The Mausoleum of Halicarnassus is built in modern-day Turkey
336	Alexander the Great begins to rule Greece
287	Archimedes is born in Greece

dates based on The Seven C's of History Timeline, produced by Answers in Genesis, 2011