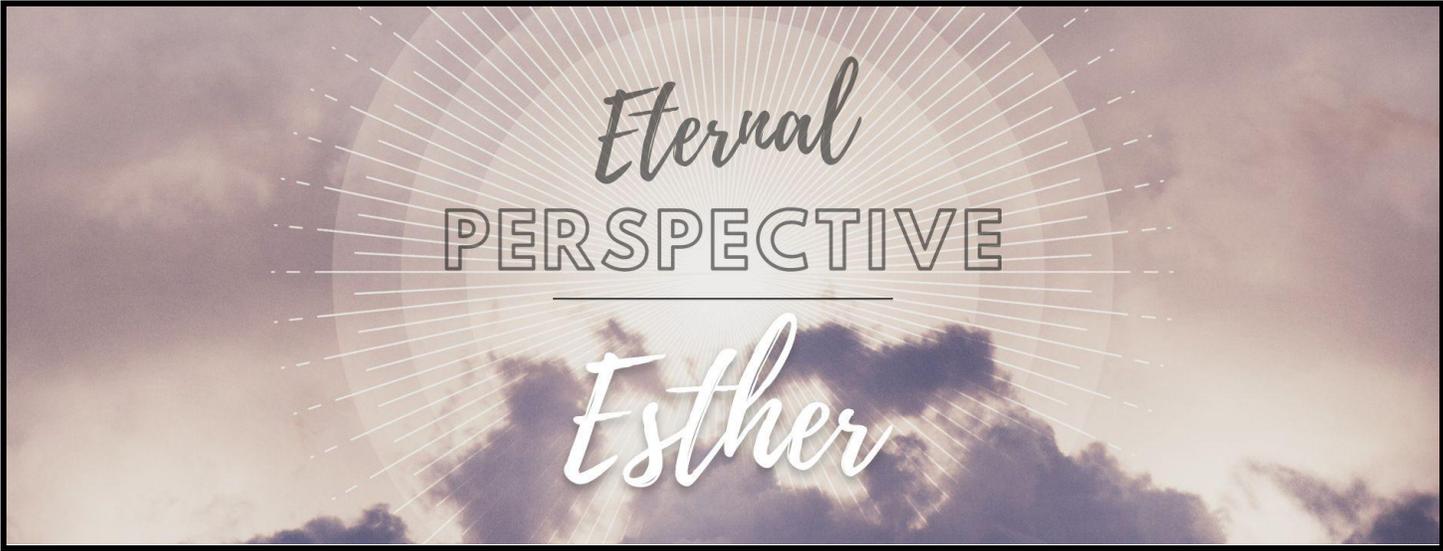


Eternal PERSPECTIVE Esther

BIBLE TEXT | ESTHER 3:1-15

1 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him and set his throne above all the officials who were with him. **2** And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage. **3** Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you transgress the king's command?" **4** And when they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai's words would stand, for he had told them that he was a Jew. **5** And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury. **6** But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, as they had made known to him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus. **7** In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that is, they cast lots) before Haman day after day; and they cast it month after month till the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. **8** Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so that it is not to the king's profit to tolerate them. **9** If it please the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king's business, that they may put it into the king's treasuries." **10** So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. **11** And the king said to Haman, "The money is given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you." **12** Then the king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and an edict, according to all that Haman commanded, was written to the king's satraps and to the governors over all the provinces and to the officials of all the peoples, to every province in its own script and every people in its own language. It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring. **13** Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with instruction to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods. **14** A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province by proclamation to all the peoples to be ready for that day. **15** The couriers went out hurriedly by order of the king, and the decree was issued in Susa the citadel. And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was thrown into confusion.



Eternal PERSPECTIVE Esther

DEVOTIONAL FOR ESTHER 3:1-15

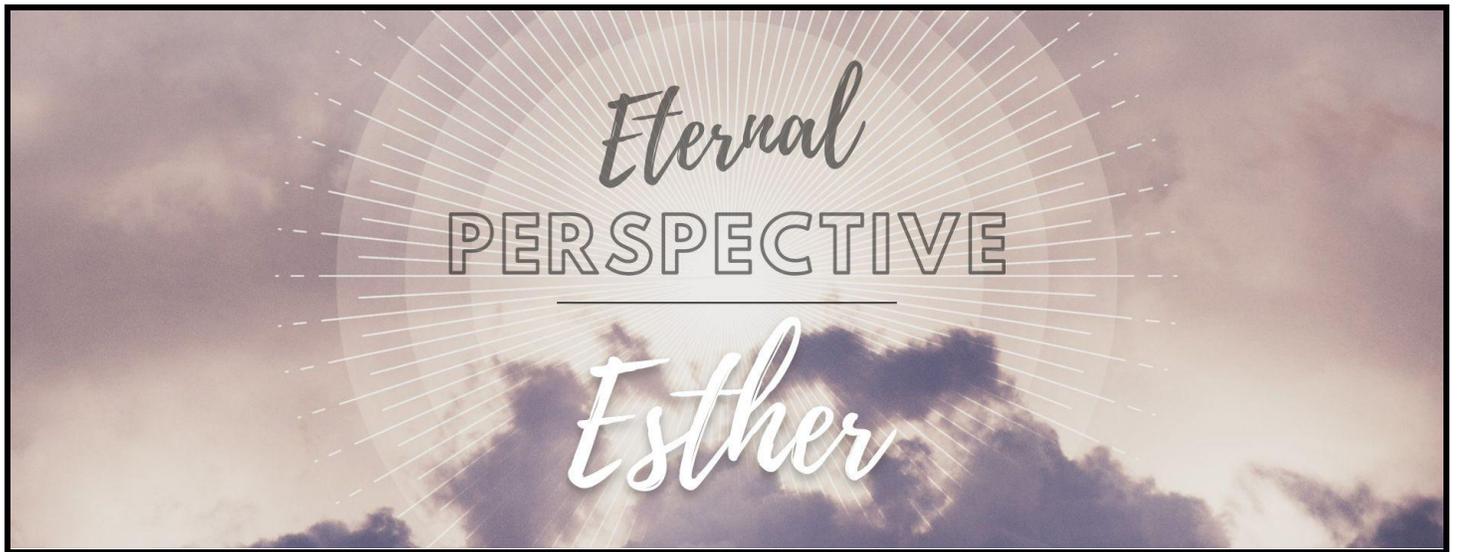
AUTHOR: WAYNE WHITAKER

As a young man at ten years old, I watched my father in a leadership position in a church, get hurt and leave the church. Being the oldest son, I had no way of knowing the ramifications of how his decision would affect me and my family. I watched him and my family slowly drift away from God. My father had a saying, "He could serve and worship God without the church." For forty-six years of my life, I followed after him with the same idea until the Lord called me out of that pattern. My disobedience has had an effect on my family far beyond my imagination. I have seen first hand what the results of disobedience look like in my own life.

In this passage, we see the effect that Mordecai's disobedience to bow before Haman will have as Haman plots to kill not only Mordecai, but the Jewish people living in that area. There is a lot more going on in the story. Mordecai, who is from the descendants of Benjamite, and Haman from the descendant of Agag (the king of the Amalekites), have a family feud that has been going on for over five hundred years. It actually started over a thousand years before (Exodus.17:8-16). Amalek the grandson of Esau, whose people are called the Amalekites, attacked the Jews when they had exited Egypt. "The Lord has sworn, the Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation".

We then move almost 500 years forward and God gives Israel their first King, Saul, a Benjamite, (1 Samuel.15:1-3). Saul was given an order from God through Samuel the prophet to go and completely destroy the Amalekites and their possessions, for what they had done to Israel. Here we see another time where disobedience has an effect on a nation of people for years to come. Saul did not do what God had ordered. He followed what he thought was right in his own eyes (1Sam 15: 7-33). Saul kept King Agag alive, and some of the best of the animals. Because of this disobedience, Saul lost his right to be God's King. He failed his family and the Israelites and would set the things in motion that happen in this passage some 500 years later.

We also see in this story how easily we can be caught up in someone else's scheme. Haman offered King Ahasuerus ten thousand talents of silver to destroy a group of people that he didn't even mention their name. And the King gave his signet ring to Haman, to give an order that could kill his own wife the Queen. We have to be very careful who we trust with our family affairs and business. Trust in the Lord and the Holy Spirit in all your decisions. We see that Haman would give a very similar order as God had given Saul to destroy every man, woman, and child of the Jews. The difference between the two was that God was delivering justice, and Haman was delivering vengeance.



So, what can we learn from this scripture? It is that life is full of choices and decisions. God has given us the freedom to choose life or death (Deuteronomy 30:19-20). "You shall have no other gods before ME. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them nor serve them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, inflicting the punishment of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing favor to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments" (Exodus 20:3-6).

For the last 24 years I have served the Lord, and loved him with all my heart, mind, and strength. I want His will to be done in every part of my life. My curse has been broken by accepting Jesus Christ as my LORD and Savior, and He has forgiven my disobedience from the past. If you are still trying to follow family traditions over God's will in your life, come talk to me, another brother or sister in Christ, or our staff. Let Jesus break those chains.

Questions

1. Do you believe that your disobedience to God and His word affects others in your life?
2. Has God called you to be obedient in an area that perhaps you are resisting? Share that with your Journey Group or other biblical community.
3. Do you believe you can be forgiven for the disobedience in your life? Read this article: <https://www.gotquestions.org/got-forgiveness.html>.