

Mordecai

Mordecai was a Benjamite son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, who was taken as a prisoner to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, [Esther 2:5-6].

Mordecai, when his aunt and uncle died, he adopted their young daughter Esther probably because his own parents were dead and he felt responsible for her, [Esther 2:7].

Mordecai inherited an official position among the Jewish captives that kept him around the palace even after the Babylonians were driven out.

Even when Esther was chosen as the new queen, Mordecai continued to advise her.

At one time, when he overheard plans to assassinate Xerxes the king, Mordecai reported this to Esther the queen and saved the king's life.

Mordecai's life was filled with challenges that he turned into opportunities.

Shortly after Esther became queen, Mordecai found himself in conflict with King Xerxes' recently appointed second-in-command, Haman, [Esther 3:1-6], by refusing to bow down to him.

Although willing to serve the king, Mordecai refused to worship the king's representative Haman, which made him furious.

Haman planned to have Mordecai and all of the Jews killed.

Haman's plan became a law of the Medes and Persians which could not be revoked unless changed by another edict sealed by the same king, [Esther 3:8-15].

Esther 4:1-17 [New King James] *“When Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry. He went as far as the front of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. So Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her, and the queen was deeply distressed. Then she sent garments to clothe Mordecai and take his sackcloth away from him, but he would not accept them. Then Esther called Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend her, and she gave him a command concerning Mordecai, to learn what and why this was. So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square that was in front of the king's gate. And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews. He also gave him a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people. So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai. Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: ‘All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden sceptre, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days.’ So they told Mordecai Esther's words. And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: ‘Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?’ Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: ‘Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go*

to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!’ So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded him.”

God was about to use this strong bond between Mordecai and Esther to save the Jewish nation.

Within the actions of Queen Esther we see the wisdom of Mordecai that had come from the Creator God and the direct hand of God influencing the king, [Esther 5:1-7].

Esther 6:1-3 [New King James] *“That night the king could not sleep. So one was commanded to bring the book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. And it was found written that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king’s eunuchs, the doorkeepers who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. Then the king said, ‘What honour or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?’ And the king’s servants who attended him said, ‘Nothing has been done for him.’”*

Here was God’s direct intervention at just the right moment, bringing Mordecai’s deed to light and the entry of Haman into the court.

What Haman thought was to honour him, much to his surprise, was to honour his hated enemy, but because it was the king’s command, he had to go through with what he had planned for himself, [Esther 6:4-13]. This event was an example of **Proverbs 16:18**.

Esther 7:1-10 [New King James] *“So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther. And on the second day, at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, ‘What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!’ Then Queen Esther answered and said, ‘If I have found favour in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king’s loss.’ So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, ‘Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?’ And Esther said, ‘The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman!’ So Haman was terrified before the king and queen. Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine and went into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king. When the king returned from the palace garden to the place of the banquet of wine, Haman had fallen across the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, ‘Will he also assault the queen while I am in the house?’ As the word left the king’s mouth, they covered Haman’s face. Now Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the king, ‘Look! The gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good on the king’s behalf, is standing at the house of Haman.’ Then the king said, ‘Hang him on it!’ So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king’s wrath subsided.”*

The way was now open to save the Jews from the king’s edict prompted by Haman.

Esther 8:1-15 [New King James] *“On that day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told how he was related to her. So the king took off his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther appointed Mordecai over the house of Haman. Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme which he had devised against the Jews. And the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, and said, ‘If it pleases the king, and if I have found favour in his sight and the thing seems right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to annihilate the Jews who are in all the king’s provinces. For how can I endure to see the evil that will come to my people? Or how can I endure to see the destruction of my countrymen?’ Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, ‘Indeed, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he tried to lay his hand on the Jews. You yourselves write a decree concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king’s name, and seal it with the*

king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring no one can revoke.' So the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces in all, to every province in its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed it with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses bred from swift steeds. By these letters the king permitted the Jews who were in every city to gather together and protect their lives, to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, both little children and women, and to plunder their possessions, on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province and published for all people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. The couriers who rode on royal horses went out, hastened and pressed on by the king's command. And the decree was issued in Shushan the citadel. So Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad."

What a wonderful end to what was an evil plot to destroy the Jewish nation. The result of a man who was faithful to his people and had a close relationship with the Creator God.

In Mordecai's life, the Creator God blended character and circumstances to accomplish great things.

The Creator God has not changed the way He works. Pause and ask God in humble prayer to help you to respond appropriately to the situations you find yourself in today, that in the end it will bring glory to Him.

Mordecai's life shows also that rewards for doing what is right are sometimes delayed, but they are guaranteed by the Creator God Himself.

Remember also that the opportunities we have when offered to the Creator God to use, will be far more important than the opportunities we wish we had.