

4. THE FOURTH WOMAN- ISRAEL

We seldom speak of Israel as a wife, but that is how she is often depicted, especially by the prophet Hosea. G-d is her Husband and He cares for her so dearly. We read of this beautiful spousal protection in Proverbs 6:34 *For jealousy is a husband's fury, therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.* G-d will never forsake her. Although she is far from home, He is her Husband until the end. She is, after all, the apple of G-d's eye. (Deuteronomy 32:10)

COINCIDENCES: G-D'S PERFECT PRECISION

Another intriguing point in the book of Esther is all the so called coincidences which took place.

1. Esther, a Jewess, just happens to be chosen queen and ends up saving her people from annihilation.
2. Mordechai just happens to overhear the plot to kill the king, and thereby saves his life.
3. On the very night that Haman plots to kill Mordecai, the king cannot sleep and hears the story of how Mordecai saved his life. As a result, Mordecai gets rewarded and Haman is humiliated.
4. Haman gets hanged on the same gallows which he built for Mordecai.
5. How ironic to see the Persians who were ready to kill and destroy the Jews on the 13th of Adar, now become those who praise the G-d of the Jews. *Megillat Esther 8:17*

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT COINCIDENCES?

How many of us believe in our *lucky stars* when it comes to the events in our lives? Do we believe that everything that happens is a mere coincidence? Proverbs 16:33 says it very differently: *The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the L-rd.*

With so many coincidences in this story, one must argue that only a celestial Designer could have orchestrated all of this. The fact that G-d's name is not even mentioned once throughout the story only adds to the blatant irony of not seeing His hand in action. This drives us to consider how much G-d is there, in all the seemingly natural events of our own lives. Though His name is hidden in this book, His supervening power in every circumstance of our life, is not!

PURIM TEACHES US G-D'S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE ISRAEL

There is nothing like antisemitism to awaken the anger of G-d. It brings us back to Genesis 12:1-3 where G-d promises Abram, "I will bless those who bless you and I will curse him who curses you." Notice how personally G-d reacts to antisemitism. From the plural of the blessings, "I will bless those who bless you", He then switches to the singular "I will curse him who curses you." G-d will seek him (the individual like Haman) who openly persecutes and abuses His people.



We are a Messianic congregation which loves and respects the Scriptures. We believe that Yeshua, Jesus, is the Messiah. His life and works reveal many of the prophecies which were once hidden.

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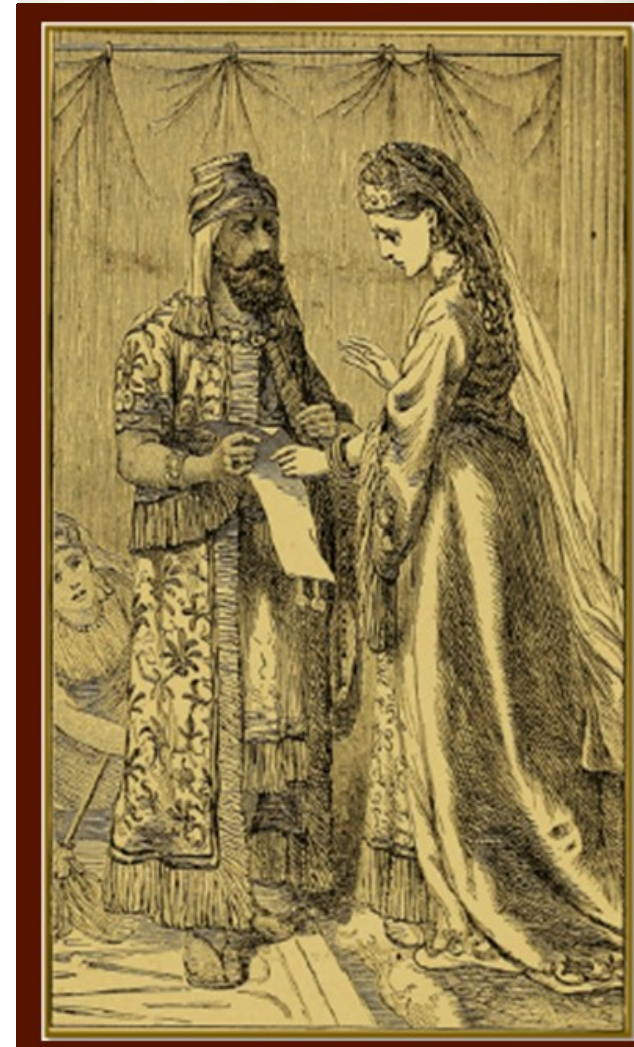
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PURIM פורים

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

TO ISRAEL



Queen Esther reads the edict against the Jews which Mordecai sent her. The eunuch brings her the message: Go into the king's presence and plead mercy for the Jewish people.

PURIM

PROVES
THE PROMISE



Almost every Jew knows the story of Purim. In the days of our childhood, it was a time to celebrate, to put on

colorful costumes, wear vibrant masks and eat plenty of hamantaschen. But have we really appreciated much of what underlies this extraordinary event which took place some 2,500 years ago?

Purim is the story of a miraculous salvation of the Jewish nation in spite of government enforced antisemitism, plotted by an evil man, Haman. He was a descendant of Amalek, the Agagite, who descended from Edom. The Edomites and their descendants were constantly harassing Israel throughout Bible history. This helps us understand the deep-seated spiritual hate motivating Haman's intentions.

Antisemitism did not begin with the Crusaders, but was in practice millennia earlier, when Pharaoh wanted to wipe out **every Jewish male child** under the age of two in an effort to eradicate the nation's quick growth rate.

Antisemitism is a war against the Jews. Every attempt to annihilate this people has been unsuccessful because the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob made an unconditional promise to preserve them. Purim proves it.

HOW DID G-D PROTECT THE JEWISH PEOPLE AGAINST HAMAN'S DIABOLICAL PLOT? AS THE STORY UNFOLDS WE FIND FOUR POWERFUL WOMEN

1. QUEEN VASHTI

The first woman is the beautiful Vashti, wife of the king who defiantly stood her ground against the Medo-Persian Empire. After describing the power and prestige of this empire, we are then faced with an amusing situation as the tables turn to reveal how weak the kingdom truly was when it came to governing its people.

In enters Queen Vashti, unwilling to be publicly humiliated by her husband, the king. He wants her to display her beauty, but she refuses.

What is so ironic is that we have the most powerful kingdom having to decree a law that would demand that a man must be master over his own house. Why? Because of one woman they could not control, who refused to give in to the king's demand.

WHILE VASHTI STOOD UP FOR WOMEN ESTHER STOOD UP FOR G-D

2. ESTHER

The second woman of Purim is Esther, whose other name is Hadassah, meaning myrtle. The name Esther may be from the Hebrew word *seter* which means something hidden, as she was, but not for long. This courageous young woman was providentially put in place, with her identity hidden but ready when her greatest act of heroism was called on. She needed to come before the king, uninvited, risking her life in order to save her nation from annihilation.



...but Haman stayed to plead for his life from Esther
Megillah Esther 7:7

Esther might well have understood how important repentance is so that God would hear and answer. This spiritual battle was fought with courage as she stood up to the ruthless Haman, the second most powerful ruler in Persia, by singlehandedly pointing him out as the enemy of her people, and ultimately as the enemy of G-d.

3. ZERESH

Though standing by her wicked husband Haman, Zeresh was given a clear understanding of the G-d behind the Jewish people and His power to protect them. After Haman was humiliated by having to publicly honor Mordecai, Zeresh warns him with these amazing words, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish descent, you will not prevail against him but will surely fall before him." What a statement! It reminds us of the prophet Balaam who was paid to curse Israel, but G-d pre-vented him from doing so. Instead, a blessing for Israel came from his lips. Here Zeresh, a Gentile, was given revelation that the Jew would not fall and antisemitism would not prevail.