

### **Recap of 9/22/19 (Esther 3:1-4:17):**

1. Esther chapters 3 and 4 teach us that the challenges of life become the means of seeing God's victory in our lives if we will trust ourselves to Him. With the edict of genocide against the Jews in chapter 3, what looked like the biggest defeat for the Jews, became the means of God's great victory. Their experience of grief turned to victory.
2. In chapter three we're introduced to Haman the Agagite (from the province of Agag in Persia), the antagonist in the story. He is a wicked man; prideful, arrogant, vindictive, and wealthy. His hatred for Mordecai and the Jews will be his undoing.
3. God permits evil in this world and uses it to accomplish His purposes. In Proverbs 16:4, the writer says that: "The LORD works out everything for His own ends—even the wicked for a day of disaster." (see also Exodus 9:16 and Romans 9:17)
4. "From Pharaoh to Hitler, every leader who has tried to destroy the Jews has tasted the wrath of God" (Wiersbe).
5. "Civilizations are born, mature and die—so runs the pattern of human history. It has been like this with the Babylonians, the Persians, the Romans...but not the Jews. Throughout 4,000 years of history they have struggled, fallen, fought, failed, recovered and advanced across the civilizations of time to finally settle in the Promised Land. God has overshadowed them, guided them and protected them" (Hughes).
6. Why did Mordecai and Esther settle in Susa? Why was Vashti deposed? Why was Esther selected for the contest? Why did Esther win Xerxes favor and become Queen of Persia? All these questions and more are beginning to be answered. God arranged these events 'for such a time as this.' This was God's purpose seen in His providential care. God orders the lives of His people. Our destiny may not be as dramatic as Esther's' but we must realize that God has placed us in the circumstances we are in for His purposes. Each of us has a destiny to fulfill. Will we serve God or serve ourselves?