

0 (2s):

Welcome to the Bible teaching ministry of Dr. Ron Jones. Our prayer is that God will use his word to change your life and fill your heart with hope. And now here's Ryan.

1 (15s):

Well, anti-Semitism rears his ugliness in about every generation and in places all around the world. Little history on it. Wilhelm is a, is a German journalist who first coined the phrase antisemitism in 1879 in reference to hostility toward and discrimination against Jewish people. Of course, for us, the most extreme example of Jewish hatred. And here's a new word for me this week. Judeophobia fear of the Jews. The most extreme example of that in our time occurred from 1933 to 1945.

1 (58s):

While Nazi Germany led the state sponsored persecution and murder of European Jews. The name Adolf Hitler, we all know is synonymous with antisemitism,

2 (1m 10s):

With Jewish hatred, but I want to take

1 (1m 13s):

You back to a time, oh, about 2,500 years ago,

3 (1m 18s):

Where a Persian

1 (1m 20s):

Persia then as modern day Iran, a person named Haman had something in common with Adolf Hitler, more than just that both of their names started with an H Haman was a Jew hater. Just understand this. The Iranians have hated the Jews for a very long time, all the way back to the time of queen Esther and Haman as we'll learn was the Hitler of his time. Hey man, never got to carry out his murderous intentions against the Jewish people as Hitler did, but his hatred for the Jews was just as real.

1 (2m 1s):

And we learned about Haman and ancient antisemitism in the old Testament book of Esther there, we also see how God's providential hand protected the Jewish people, those Jewish people who remained in Persia. Those who did not return to the holy land returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of <inaudible>. Now, this is a story about those who remained back in the land of their Babylonian captivity. Now, queen Esther is literally the star of this story. As we come to this section of the ultimate road trip through the Bible Esther's Hebrew name is Hadassah.

1 (2m 43s):

We might call her Myrtle if we were using her a Hebrew name, but her Persian name is Esther. And it comes from a word in the Persian language that literally means star. So Esther queen Esther is the star of the story. Humanly speaking at a Knology aside, queen Esther deserves to be the namesake of the book, much more than Haman does. Haman is the villain. As we will learn the other main characters that we'll learn along the way, a king, a hazardous queen Vashti and Mordecai the Jew. Just keep those names in mind as the story unfolds. There's one other main character in the biblical story that is worth noting.

1 (3m 24s):

Although the author of Esther never mentions him by name strangely, the book of Esther does not contain the name of God or any mention of God, which throughout church history has made some question. Even the placement of the book of Esther in the old Testament, Canon and Martin Luther was one of them that had nothing to do with Esther. If it doesn't mention God, why is it in the Bible? He said a similar but different thing about the book of James. But those are just two reasons why, although Martin Luther was a great man in church history, you don't have to listen to everything that he says, especially as it relates to the book of Esther and the book of James Esther, as you'll come to understand, definitely belongs in the Canon of scripture, but God's name is not mentioned.

1 (4m 12s):

Some argue that God's non mentioned is intentional by the alt author in order to highlight what we might call divine provenance, which speaks of God's invisible activity is work behind the scenes. We might say, Providence refers to the way God acts sovereignly without violating human will and without interrupting the ordinary ongoing of human affairs. In other words, we might say that God works in a clandestine way. He works behind the scenes more often than not George Washington and others often use the word Providence to describe, well, what Washington personally witnessed and experienced while fighting in America's revolutionary war.

1 (4m 56s):

For example, after the battle of Mongolia, I believe it's pronounced or Braddock's defeat took place in the summer of 1775. When Washington was 23 years old, Washington found some bullet holes in his military jacket. He wrote about this in the letter to his brother, John Augustine Washington. This is a matter of history here of the story circulated apparently. And the Reverend Samuel Davies of Virginia mentioned the bullet holes in his sermon, crediting divine Providence with preserving Washington's life. The Reverend said for some important service to his country, isn't it interesting, but the word Providence was very much on Washington's lips and in his letters, as he wrote the non mention of God.

1 (5m 47s):

And Esther reminds us that God's work is not as always as obvious as a miracle. Sometimes we're always looking for God to perform a miracle. That's rare. It's even rare in the pages of scripture, but when God works providentially, when he works behind the scenes, he is no less intentional. And sometimes it takes

more faith and certainly vision to see the providential hand of God at work in a less than obvious way a miracle might produce. And that's what we have in the story. Esther, Esther recalls the story of God's providential protection over the Jews who remained in the land of their captivity, the Jews who did not return to Jerusalem under leadership of <inaudible> and Ezra, think of him this way.

1 (6m 34s):

They're, they're kind of a type of worldly. Christian who loved their Babylonian ways. I don't want to be too hard on them, but maybe they had legitimate reasons for not returning to Jerusalem and to the holy land and re identifying as the chosen people of God. But clearly Esther's story reminds us. There were some who maybe grew up in Babylon during the 70 years of captivity and came to well to love the Babylonian culture and their Babylonian ways. See this group of people as a group of worldly, Christians, we're going to heaven. They're the chosen people of God, right?

1 (7m 15s):

But they just kind of like their worldly ways. And even with that, God test them. He protects them. But if the apostle John had anything to say, first John two and verse 15 might say to these Jews who love their Babylonian ways, do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the father is not than him. Pretty straightforward words from the apostle John. Now let's talk about the rise of queen Esther. It's really quite a story. Esther begins. The book does in the days of a hazardous king of Persia. Remember after the Babylonian captivity, the Persian empire came and, and took over the Babylonians.

1 (7m 57s):

Now at the end of the captivity, those who remain are living in, in Persia, which is modern day Iran. And according to one scholar, a hazardous who was now the king of Persia, was a mixture of passionate extremes, which explains his actions in Esther chapter one and how he treated his wife, queen Vashti, as her as loved a good party. And Esther begins in the third year of his reign, where the king was giving a feast that lasted for 180 days. That's six months of a party. This guy really know how to throw, throw a party. And he threw this party for the sole purpose of showing off his Royal wealth.

1 (8m 41s):

And one day to spice up the party a little bit. He commanded his wife queen Vashti to come and put her crown on and put her beauty on display in front of his drunk. The king had had a little bit too much to drink. And by the way, Basseyy was a Looker. She was a beautiful woman and the king decided,

3 (9m 4s):

Oh, we're going to put her beauty on display. Well, we've asked, you said no way,

1 (9m 8s):

No way she refused. And her refusal enraged the king and raised more than a few eyebrows among the King's officials concerned, grew about the Queen's behavior and how she might influence other women to show contempt for those their husbands look at, look at Esther chapter one, verse 17 with me, it says for the Queen's behavior, and these are the King's officials who are now concerned about the Queen's behavior. Her behavior will be made known to all women, using them to look at their husbands with contempt, since they will say king, a hazardous commanded queen Vashti to be brought before him. And she did not come. And so with that, and at the suggestion of his advisors king, a hazardous deposed Quinn

3 (9m 54s):

Fasty outta here, she was never allowed

1 (9m 59s):

In his presence. Again, just the ways of this king, who, again, it was a mixture of passionate extremes. And in one of those extremes, he deposed his own wife and queen and then king Hazaras spent the next four

3 (10m 15s):

Years looking for a new queen. And

1 (10m 20s):

It was during that time that Esther who was the adopted daughter of Mordecai, the Jew sure became part of the King's harem because of her natural beauty. Now, the Bible doesn't exaggerate when it says that a woman was beautiful in form and face, just know that she was a knockout and

2 (10m 38s):

That was queen Esther, beautiful, beautiful Esther.

1 (10m 42s):

She and others entered beauty training for one year before they were presented to them. The king, that was the custom of the time. And Esther quickly gained favor along with seven others. And they rose to the best position in the best place in the harem. And when it came time, Esther's presentation to a hazardous look in chapter two in verse 17, it says the king loved Esther more than all the women. And she won grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins so that he set the Royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti out with queen Vashti four years later in with queen Esther, she's now positioned in unusual proximity to the king for a young Jewish girl like her to celebrate the king, honored Esther with a feast.

1 (11m 35s):

He abated taxes for everybody. And then he gave generous gifts out that only a king could do. Again, the extremes of such a man, meanwhile, Mordecai uncovered a plot to assassinate the king and because of

Mordecai's relationship to queen Esther, he shared his intelligence report with the queen who then told the king and after an investigation was done, they found out that the plot was real. And that's when the king executed the two henchmen who devised it. And afterwards a hazardous strengthened his security detail by putting a guy named Haman in charge, basically kind of second in charge next to the king.

1 (12m 17s):

And the king told all of his servants to bow in the presence of Haman. When Haman came to work, when he came to the palace, everybody was to bowed out, by the way, Haman is an old Testament type, not of Christ, but at the antichrist, just understand that from a Bible prophecy standpoint, we've been talking about the Christ connections throughout our studies. And where do we see a picture of the Christ who is to come Haman? The hater of the Jews is a, an

3 (12m 48s):

Old Testament type of the antichrist

1 (12m 51s):

Who is to come in in Bible prophecy, which is yet to be fulfilled. And the antichrist will be friendly to the Jews in the first half of the tribulation. And then we'll turn on them because at his heart like Heyman, he is a of the Jews well in retribution for Mordecai's contempt. And because he was a Jew read the texts carefully when Haman learned that Mordecai was a Jew who would not bow down to him, Haman devised a plan to destroy all of Mordecai's people to destroy the Jews who were living throughout the province and the country of Persia.

1 (13m 35s):

And he did this by using a pagan practice for deciding the right course of action by chance, it was called pure. It was the casting of lots, the rolling of the dice. And he kept casting lots and kept rolling the dice until the Lotz justified his rage against the Jews. And he had an exact date when the Holocaust would take place. And then Haman reported it to the king chapter three in verse eight, 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 Kings prophet to tolerate them.

1 (14m 19s):

You see how Haman is just scattering seeds of hatred and doubt into the King's heart.

4 (14m 27s):

And

1 (14m 27s):

Haman's plot to destroy the Jews pleased the king and the king gave an edict for all of the Jews in Persia to be destroyed. Haman's Holocaust plan was set in motion by the king while upon learning of the edict to destroy the Jews. Mordecai arrived at the entrance of the King's gate. He came to work where he served the king there only to that, that day. He came in sackcloth and he was weeping and lamenting loudly, which was not allowed under Persian law. You don't, you don't come into the King's presence or into the king service dressed like that. Let alone, you know, wailing and moaning and lamenting loudly queen Esther learned of Mordecai's public display.

1 (15m 11s):

And she sent word to him and said, you got to change your clothes. You can't come into the King's presence, distressed like this Mordecai refused and sent word back through the messenger, urging Esther to persuade the king, to rescind the edict and protect the Jewish people. But Esther was reluctant to enter into the King's presence without the King's invitation. Why? Because back then, even if you were the queen, even if you were his wife, you didn't come into the King's presence in the throne room without the King's invitation. That was punishable by death. However, Mordecai pleaded with Esther, he said that even she would not escape Haman's Holocaust.

1 (15m 57s):

And then we come to chapter four in verse 14, where he says, and who knows Esther, whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this even Mordecai recognized the providential placement of Esther in proximity to the king where she and she alone was in a position to stand in the gap between Haman's Holocaust and

2 (16m 24s):

The Jewish people.

1 (16m 26s):

Esther came persuaded by Mordecai, and she sent word to him to gather the Jews and Susa for prayer and fasting. As she prepared to enter the King's presence. And three days later, she did, she stood in the inner court of the King's palace at great personal risk until then she had kept secret the fact that she was a Jew Mordecai told her to do that. He knew of the hostilities in the region. And when she won the beauty contest and became the queen, you know, she did not reveal the fact that she was a Jew. So,

3 (16m 59s):

So she, she was standing in the presence

1 (17m 2s):

Of the king about to foil Haman's plan and reveal the fact that these were her people. And she did this at great risk, but no doubt, she breathed a sigh of relief when she stepped into the King's room and a Hazara

held forth his golden Sceptre as a sign that she was welcomed in his presence. Oh, the sigh of relief and assign again of the providential hand of God and his grace and his favor on queen Esther queen Esther knew that the quickest way to a man's heart was with food. And so she invited Haman and the king to a feast. The next day, this king loved to party.

1 (17m 42s):

He loved to eat. And so her plan was to expose Haman's evil intentions. After the sumptuous. Meanwhile, it tells us in chapter five that Haman was building gallows 50 feet high, and his plan was to hang Mordecai, the Jew the next day. And that night, the hand of divine Providence went to work again, because that night the king was sleepless,

3 (18m 11s):

Not sleepless in Seattle. Now he was sleepless and Susan, the king couldn't sleep. He had insomnia.

1 (18m 17s):

And to address it, he asked for someone to read to him from the book of memorable deeds, which contain the record of when Mordecai, the Jew brought to light in assassination plot against the king and the king remembered. He had never rewarded Mordecai for his loyalty. And so the next day Paul's Haman in for a little bit of advice. And in chapter six in verse six, it says that a hazardous said to him, and what should be done to the man whom the king delights to honor. And here's, here's Haman thinking, he's talking about me full of pride. Again, the foreshadowing of the antichrist, who is just so full of himself.

1 (18m 59s):

And so prideful, Haman thought the king was going to honor him. And so Haman says, well, here's what I think you should do. I think you should give the honoree some Royal clothing and place him on a Royal horse and, and give a Royal parade his honor. And the king said, that's a great idea. Go get. Okay. And when that happened, the blood rushed out of Haman's face. He could not believe it, but all of this set the stage for queen Esther in ways that she could never orchestrate herself because the next day she was coming in with her feast and in a providential twist of fate, the king instructed Haman, the Jew hater to make all the preparations for honoring Mordecai the Jew.

1 (19m 49s):

And when the queen held her feast and she exposed Haman's plot to destroy the Jews, the king to everyone's surprise ordered the execution of Haman on the very gallows that he had built for Mordecai. You talk about a twist of fate and something that only God could, his straight and later king hazardous promotes Mordecai to service as prime minister. And if you read chapter 10, it's a short chapter, maybe four or five verses. It talks about the greatness of Mordecai. He goes from a guy who's just kind of sitting there in some lower level, positioned, serving at the King's gate to the prime minister second in charge, and is great among the Jews,

0 (20m 30s):

Even today, Mordecai the Jew.

1 (20m 34s):

But on the very day that Haman had planned for the destruction of the Jews, you know, through that, that pagan practice of rolling dice, taking the chance of it falling on a day. On the very day, he had planned for the destruction of Jews, the exact opposite happened. The Bible says in chapter two, in verse nine, that the Jews gained mastery over those who hated them. And throughout Persia, the king issued a new edict. And when he did the Jews slaughtered those who planned to destroy them, and the next day, the Jews rested and made that day a day of feasting and gladness. And to this day, it is called the feast of

3 (21m 15s):

Pure Rheem Jews today,

1 (21m 18s):

Still celebrate this the time that the providential hand of God protected them from a Holocaust Esther chapter nine beginning in verse 26 says this, therefore they called these days pure Rheem after the term pure. Therefore, because of all that was written in this letter, the letter that the king sent out of what they had faced in this matter and of what had happened to them, the Jews firmly obligated themselves and their offspring and all who joined them that without fail, they would keep these two days according to what was written. And at the time appointed every year that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation in every plan, province and city.

1 (21m 60s):

And that these days of Purim should never fall into disuse among the Jews, nor should the commemoration of these days, Cece among their descendants. And again, they celebrate today,

2 (22m 14s):

The feast of Purim, what a story, what a story.

1 (22m 21s):

And I'm so glad that this story is in the inspired Canon of scripture, sorry, Martin Luther, you were wrong. You're right. About a lot of things but wrong about this one, the story of queen Esther and the demonstration of divine Providence in this book is worth some further contemplation because what do we do with a story like this? How does it apply to us? Esther story teaches us about the Lord's providential timing and his providential placement. Again, all of it behind the scenes, far less obvious than a miracle and without violating human will that, that's a, that's an amazing thing that, that the sovereign God creator God can, can, can manipulate things and move things.

1 (23m 13s):

And without violating human will, but still remain sovereign, put the people in place at the right time and at the right place for such a time as this God's providential timing kind of reminds me of the first Christmas. If you're looking for another example of the providential hand of God, after making the long journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, remember the story of Mary and Joseph, they arrive in Bethlehem where the prophet Micah Messiah would be born. Now, was that a coincidence? I don't know they're there because Caesar Augustus decreed that everybody in the Roman world should be registered.

1 (23m 56s):

That's how they got there, right? Providential, hand of God, working through the normal normal course of human events to put Mary and Joseph in the right place at the right time. Maybe the apostle Paul had this in mind when he was writing to the Galatians. And he says, but when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son and the right time and the right place. Can you look at even the Christmas story and see the providential hand of God, there's miracles in the Christmas story, the Virgin birth and so forth, the angels singing, but behind the scenes and in a less obvious way, God had been moving his key characters into place at the right time.

1 (24m 49s):

I take comfort in knowing that God's providential. Timing is perfect in your life too. That that's the whole point of the story here. That's the, that's the take home? What do we do with a story like this? Let's not leave it in ancient history, understand that God is working behind the scenes in your life in ways you cannot orchestrate on your own right time, right place. And allowing for divine Providence to work in this way requires what I call the patients of faith. Mordecai needed that the patients have faith to know that that God was at work.

1 (25m 30s):

He didn't know how these circumstances would get worked out. There was a time when he was in distress, coming to work that day at the King's gate in sackcloth and weeping and wailing and moaning like he did. He didn't know how this was going to get worked out, but he looked at Esther and said, Esther, you're in the unique position

3 (25m 54s):

To influence the king for such a time as this Esther, or if not you who, if not now when Esther. And so to see the providential

1 (26m 8s):

Hand of God's timing, it just, it just requires again, what I call the patience of faith, waiting upon God. I know you're asking him for a miracle, but maybe he chooses to work in less obvious ways. And it just takes some time for some things to get in place. His timing is always perfect of the providential hand of God also requires

what I call the vision of faith to know, and to see that God, we sang it earlier is really up to something good in your life. That's a Romans 8 28 principle. I have a radio broadcast called something good in the message.

1 (26m 53s):

It says every detail in your lives of love for God is worked into something good. It's not because he's performing a miracle day to keep the devil away. It's because behind the scenes, the sovereign God of the world without interrupting or violating human will is working all

3 (27m 11s):

Things out.

1 (27m 15s):

The Romans 8 28 promises to those who love him to those who are the called according to his, his, his purposes that certainly applied to old Testament. Israel, even those who loved their Babylonian ways, they were still the children of Israel. And God took care of them 2,500 years ago. I wonder if you can see that God might've placed you, right where you are at the time you're there and see the providential hand of God. You might be the lifeline, the spiritual lifeline to the people in your neighborhood, to the people you work with to your immediate and extended family.

1 (27m 58s):

Because child of God, there are no coincidences. There are no accidents in life. Maybe you say, well, you know, we just ended up here in Virginia Beach. We just happened to buy a house over here. No, that's not the way the child of God lives his or her life. Yes. We believe in a God of miracles. And sometimes he's that obvious about things, but we also see the providential sovereign hand of God working all things out without violating human will. Sometimes he does that on a national level. And we not in agreement on that. Esther was uniquely positioned long before Haman came along with his either uniquely positioned in proximity to the king, to be the person who stood in the gap between Haman's Holocaust and Jewish protection.

1 (28m 51s):

But God also works at a neighborhood level. This is where it comes down over. The rubber really hits the road with you. And I are you willing as a child of God to see that God, God puts you in the right place at the right time to be a spiritual lifeline to that neighbor of yours,

3 (29m 12s):

Because who else is going to share Christ with them? Come on. I don't have the proximity for such a time as this and for such a place as this it's you you're in that neighborhood. You're in that place of work. You're in that immediate

1 (29m 31s):

Family, then that extended family, if

3 (29m 33s):

Not you who, if not now, when that's what Esther lays,

1 (29m 41s):

Every one of our responsibilities as children of God, by the way, our life groups strategy at Atlantic shores

3 (29m 49s):

Is based upon this principle. We encourage

1 (29m 53s):

You to gather in ways here at this church, gather for a weekly worship service online in-person, whatever works for you. And then also gathering a life group. And here is our primary way to do life groups. We do them off campuses in a neighborhood near you. You want to know what life group you're a part of. We do it by high school zones, Catherine and I are in the Kellum life it's group

3 (30m 21s):

Because that's where we live.

1 (30m 23s):

And, and the idea of the time our life group strategy is that we would see ourselves as missionaries, not accidentally or coincidentally placed in the neighborhood in which we're in, but providentially placed there and providentially

3 (30m 39s):

Placed in a way that who else has the proximity to these people, but, but you and others

1 (30m 45s):

From our church that are in that neighborhood. And if we can get people gathering there and then leverage

3 (30m 50s):

The presence for such a time as this, but it takes the patience of faith. It takes the vision

1 (30m 59s):

Of faith to see, Hey, maybe God put me here for a reason. Maybe I'm in this job that I hate right now, surrounded by all of these people who don't love Jesus. I'm the only Christian in my office. I hear that time and time again. I want to work

3 (31m 14s):

Around Christian people. Why I don't get that opportunity like you do. God called me into vocational ministry. I don't have the proximity

1 (31m 26s):

You do. Except in my neighborhood, maybe my extended family.

3 (31m 30s):

You, you, you have incredible proximity to people who don't know Christ and perhaps you and you alone

1 (31m 39s):

Are God's instrument to be a spiritual lifeline to those people just as Esther was in the unique position,

3 (31m 46s):

Urged by Morica Hester. You've been placed in the kingdom for such a time as this. She finally got it and was willing to take the risk, the risk. I know it's risky for you to speak out about your faith. It's getting riskier, right? But if not you who, if not now, when for such a time as this,

1 (32m 20s):

The other lesson that I kind of pulled away with this week, kind of reminded me of how you know, I hear parents and grandparents talking about how, and every generation says it's, the world is just getting more and more evil. And we fear for our kids and for our grandkids. Some people go so far as to say, that's why we're not children. We would not want to give birth to children in this evil world and the evil to come. I don't think that way, think this way that God is raising up your kids and grandkids for such a time as their generation will face just easily raised up you. And he raised up me for such a time as we're facing in our generation.

1 (33m 4s):

That's the providential hand of God is providential. Timing is providential placement. It's no accident that we're living in the 21st century and not in the fifth century BC, we are uniquely positioned as children of God to be the spiritual lifelines to people in our generation and your kids and your grandkids. They'll face other evils. Antisemitism will rise rear its ugly head. Again, along with a whole lot of other evils, we cannot even imagine our kids and our grandkids facing, but have confidence had the patience of faith in the vision of faith to know that God is still up to something good in their lives for their generation.

1 (33m 51s):

And he it's our job to get them ready to prepare them to be the spiritual lifelines now, and in the future, when we're gone to the people that they have proximity with and Luther didn't think that this book belonged in the old Testament, Dan, and are you kidding me, Luther right on a lot of things, but not on this. What a beautiful,

the full example of how God works behind the scenes and all I'm suggesting child of God is open your eyes to see that it takes faith to see it. God has me in the right place and at the right time.

1 (34m 36s):

And sometimes he chooses to protect his chosen people. At other times, he didn't Antiochus Epiphanes is another type of Christ. He appeared in about one 60 to one 70 BC, a type of antichrist. I should say the, the pain and suffering he brought to the Jews at that time was unthinkable. And of course Hitler, okay. But even in the midst of all that pain and suffering, God is still working all things together for good to those who love him. And to those who are the called, according to his purpose, it takes the patience of faith.

1 (35m 19s):

It takes, it takes vision,

2 (35m 21s):

Spiritual vision to see

1 (35m 25s):

And believe in the providential

0 (35m 28s):

Hand of God who does all things for his good and his glory in his time and in his way. But he uses you. He uses me. He positions us to be of most valuable to him as a lifeline, the spiritual lifeline you've been listening to the Bible teaching ministry of Dr. Ron Jones for a complete list of resources available from Ron's ministry, visit something good, radio dot.