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The Greatness of Mordecai

10: 1-3

The greatness of Mordecai DIG: For what was Mordecai honored? His character? His behavior? The results? How are those three related? How did Mordecai work for the good of his people and spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews? How are you like that in your life? How would you like to be like that? Give concrete examples?

REFLECT: What is the central point of this book? How is God hidden in its pages? Why do you think He is hidden? How were Mordecai and Esther obedient servants for ADONAI? Is that how you see yourself? Why or why not? Illustrate.

This short chapter is an appendix or postscript to the book, emphasizing the power of King Ahasuerus and the glory that was thereby reflected on Mordecai as his prime minister. During the twentieth year of **his** reign, in 465 BC, **King Ahasuerus** was assassinated. Today, this **king** is mostly remembered for **his** queen, **Esther**, and the one who adopted and raised **her**, **Mordecai**.

King Ahasuerus imposed tribute throughout the empire, to its distant shores (10:1). The book ends on a note similar to that of its beginning - the greatness, wealth, and splendor of **King Ahasuerus**. This example of bracketing is common in Hebrew literature. The author emphasized the great extent of **his** empire to the **distant shores** of the Mediterranean area. Having the power to demand obedience from **his** subjects, **he imposed**, or “forced” **tribute on** them. Possibly, in keeping with one of the themes of the book, the author wanted to show that **the king**, who saved **the Jews** from extinction, later prospered. Although **Ahasuerus** did not receive the 10,000 talents of silver from Haman (**3:9**), **he** was enriched by receiving all this **tribute**.¹³⁹



Nevertheless, it is **Mordecai** who gets the last word. **And all his acts of power and might, together with a full account of the greatness of Mordecai, whom the king had promoted, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia (10:2)? All the power and might of King Ahasuerus** had been transferred to **Mordecai, the prime minister** of the **Persian** Empire, by the end of the book. Because **he** was second only to **the king** it would have been inconceivable that **his** name would not have appeared in the official account of the reign of **Ahasuerus**. **Media and Persia** names the two kingdoms in chronological order, suggesting perhaps an account covering several centuries. When the author put **Persia** before **Media** earlier in **1:3** and **18**, he was accurately reflecting the supremacy of **Persia** in his day.¹⁴⁰

Some think it unlikely that a Jew such as Mordecai could have held such a high position in the Persian Empire. But the Murashu documents show that in Nippur at least two **Jews** had relatively important positions. And as Joseph had become prime minister of Egypt (see my commentary on **Genesis, to see link click Jv - Joseph as Prime Minister**), **Mordecai** became **prime minister** of **Persia**. **Providence!** The other is **Dani'el**, close to **Esther** chronologically, who served in an official capacity in the court of Nebuchadnezzar among others (**Dani'el 5:29; 6:1-2 and 28**).¹⁴¹

Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Ahasuerus, preeminent among the Jews, and held in high esteem by his many fellow Jews, because he worked for the good of his people and spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews (10:3). When life returned to normal after the crisis, **Mordecai** continued to use **his** status as **prime minister** to benefit **his people**. When Haman had worn **Ahasuerus'** signet ring, he was for all practical purposes, **the king of the enemy of the Jews**. But after **Mordecai** wore the same ring **he** was, in reality, **king of the Jews**. As the majority of **the Israelites** continued to live in lands governed by pagan power, **Mordecai** became the model of a **Jew** who could achieve success in

a pagan world and used that achievement for the protection and well-being **of the Jewish people.**¹⁴² **The book ends with a picture of peace, happiness and prosperity of the Jews under the beneficent rule of a Gentile king and the Jewish prime minister.**

As the original **Jewish** readers read this book **they** would have been struck by the way ADONAI's sovereignly protected **them**, often when **they** did not even know it. Many of the circumstances in the book were beyond anyone's control except for the LORD. **Esther** is filled with irony, with ways in which events turned out unexpectedly and benefiting God's **people**.

There are few books of the TaNaKh more relevant to life in a society hostile to the Gospel. Believers are scattered throughout the world waiting for the Lord's return. Although He is present and active now as much as ever, He is usually hidden behind the events of life that He is directing for His own glory and the benefit of His **children**. Although **the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God (2 Corinthians 4:4)**, those who have their Father's eyes are able to recognize His hand at work in the affairs of life. In a world in which hostility to those who love **ADONAI, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 3:16)** seems to grow more extreme every day, **let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised His blessings upon us is faithful (Hebrews 10:23).**

*Praise you dear Father God, You are Almighty and You always have the last word. Kings and kingdoms change, but you never change. Your glory and kingdom will never end. **While I was watching, thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His garment was as white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, its wheels a burning fire. A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him. Thousands of thousands attended Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened (Dani'el 7:9-10).***

I was watching in the night visions. Behold, One like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days, and was brought into His presence. Dominion, glory and sovereignty were given to



Him that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will never pass away, and His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed (Dani'el 7:13-14).

*You are always Almighty, all wise, all loving and always there to help Ysour children. For God Himself has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you" (**Hebrews 13:5**). Praise, love and worship You! In Yeshua's holy name and power of His resurrection. Amen*