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Old Testament Literature

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The Book of Esther

In the book of Esther, King Ahasuerus, Hanan, Esther, and Mordechai are the main characters. Esther and Mordechai are the last two remaining good Jews. Hanan, a Persian soldier, who does not deserve the power he received.

Haman was cruel for all the things that he had asked King Ahasuerus to do. King Ahasuerus promoted Hanan, even though he was an Agagite and not a Persian. He also took advantage of the power that he had over the people of Persia. Even when Hanan requested King Ahasuerus to destroy all of the Jews, he agreed. So eventually, King Ahasuerus proposed a decree to destroy all of the Jewish people, but at that moment, he did not realize what he had done.

Esther was a Jew in disguise. She hid her identity to enter the beauty pageant to become the new Queen of Persia. She became queen because of her beauty and body. Mordechai asked her to keep her identity a secret because it would be for the best for her people. So Mordechai kept his relationship to Esther a secret as well. "Esther had not made known her people or kindred, for Mordecai had commanded her not to make it known." (Est 2:10 ESV). Esther was made Queen for a reason. Without her, the Jewish people would not be alive.

Mordechai was also a Jew but everyone including Haman knew that. Haman tried to do everything in his power to get rid of Mordechai. Even though Mordechai is a Jew, he is a good

individual, but Haman thought otherwise because he did not bow down to him. One of the things that he had done was he prevented the King from death. Since no one was able to cross the king, his only option was to warn Esther so she can protect him. Instead of King Ahasuerus agreeing with Haman's plan, he believed that Mordechai should be honored for saving his life. "So now Haman had to lead Mordechai around the city on a royal horse telling everyone to praise him"(TheBibleProject 5:00). Haman went to the king thinking he would be the one getting praised and being able to kill Mordechai but none of his wishes were granted. This was one of the ironic instances in the Book of Esther.

There are several heroes in the Book of Esther but the main hero of this story is Esther. Without the things that she had done, all of the Jews would be dead. She helped save her people despite everything. One of the most famous verses in the book was "and if I perish, I perish" (Est 4:16 ESV) because of the amount of courage she had. She was willing to talk to the king even though she was not allowed to. The possibilities of her talking to the king without a summon or an invitation could potentially lead her to death. Esther believed she had to do whatever she had to do because the decree that was made, had to be brought up and removed. She didn't want to live in a reality where she did not take action. As the Queen of Persia, she wanted her voice to be heard.

Even though God was not mentioned in the book of Esther at all, He was there. He was there with Esther when Persia needed help. "And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Est 4:14 ESV). Mordechai made an assumption that the reason Esther became the Queen of Persia was to help the people in need. "God's control can not be calculated, God's solution can not be anticipated, and God's plan can not be thwarted,

because no one has all the necessary information” (Hill & Walton, 352). God works in so many ways and we will never know how He does it. Only He has all the necessary information so we do not have any chance of preventing anything when it comes to His plans.

Sources

- English Standard Version
- A Survey of The Old Testament - Hills and Walton
- The Bible Project <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JydNSlufRIs>
- <https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/tools/ask-a-scholar/ahasuerus-and-esther>