

1 Why Didn't Mordecai Bow the Knee?

2 Sermon Review

- The Value of Self-examination
 - Ask God (Prayer)
 - Read & Study the Bible
 - Find a Mentor
- Kingdom Principle
 - If we judge ourselves, we won't fall under judgment.
 - If we humble ourselves, God will lift us up.

3 The Book of Esther

- Key Characters
 - King Xerxes
 - Mordecai
 - Esther
 - Haman
- Other Points
 - First book of the Bible to mention the word, "Jew."
 - Contains no mention of God.

4 Haman son of Hammedatha

- After these events, King Xerxes honored Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles. (Esther 3:1 NIV)
- All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor. (Esther 3:2 NIV)

5 Haman son of Hammedatha

- Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?" Day after day they spoke to him but he refused to comply. Therefore they told Haman about it to see whether Mordecai's behavior would be tolerated, for he had told them he was a Jew. (Esther 3:3-4 NIV)
- When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was enraged. Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes. (Esther 3:5-6 NIV)

6 Why Didn't Mordecai Bow?

- . . . he was a Jew. (Esther 3:4 NIV)

- So, does that mean that Jews don't bow to Gentile rulers?
 - Abraham bowed to the king of the Hittites.
 - It is unlikely that Mordecai could have been elevated next to the king if he had refused to kneel before Xerxes.
 - So then it must be something special that causes Mordecai to refuse to bow to Haman.

7 Why Didn't Mordecai Bow?

- Haman was an Agagite.
- The Agagites were a direct descendant of Agag—the hereditary name of the kings of the Amalekites.
- The Amalekites were the first enemies of Israel after the Exodus—who attacked the children of Israel in the desert after the Exodus. Because of their treachery and brutality, God gave Moses the following promise.
 - Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” (Exodus 17:14 NIV)
 - Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner. He said, “For hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD. The LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation.” (Exodus 17:15–16 NIV)

8 Saul's Failure

- All through the book of Judges, the Amalekites were one of Israel's chief oppressors.
- So when the tribes became united, God gave to Saul the responsibility of totally destroying the Amalekites. (1 Samuel 15:2–5)
- Did Saul succeed? No, he defeated the Amalekites, but he did not exterminate them. He and his men kept some of the plunder and did not kill all of the Amalekites.
- To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king. (1 Samuel 15:22–23 NIV)

9 Mordecai's Reason

- In Jewish tradition, the Amalekites represent the archetypal enemy of the Jews.
- So, the most probable reason for Mordecai not bowing to Haman—no self-respecting Benjamite would bow before a descendant of the ancient Amalekite enemy of the Jews.
- Interesting point: If Saul had been faithful in destroying all of the Amalekites, Haman would not have existed.

10 Do not Tolerate sin!

- If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. (Matthew 18:8 NIV)
- And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell. (Matthew 18:9 NIV)

11 Do not Tolerate sin!

- Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. (Ephesians 4:31 NIV)
- But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. (Colossians 3:8 NIV)
- Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. (James 1:21 NIV)
- Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. (1 Peter 2:1 NIV)

12 Tolerance

- Among our cultural elite, tolerance is the highest good.
- However, this value is not biblical. Evil should never be tolerated.
- Obeying God is what counts.
- If we aggressively deal with our spiritual enemies, we will have true peace and be blessed as well.
- But if we tolerate them and seek to make peace with them they will make our lives miserable.
- We need to not only destroy the spiritual Amalekites in our lives but to also engage in a war of extermination against them.

13 Interesting Point

- The Amalekites were the “first of the nations” to attack Israel. At that time they lived in the region known as Edom.
- However, according to the Arab historian Masudi, citing traditional Arab history relates that the Amalekites did indeed exist [before Abraham] having originated in the region of Mecca.
- Why is Mecca important to us today?

14 666.0 Nautical Miles

15 To Finish the Work

- Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? “It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save.” Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? “I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing. (Isaiah 63:1–3 NIV)

16 To Finish the Work

- Jesus is going to finish, what Saul was suppose to do!
- He is going to destroy completely the enemies of God’s people, so that they we can live in peace without fear.

17 To Finish the Work

- Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
- He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
- He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
- His truth is marching on.
- Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!
- His truth is marching on.

18 Conclusion

- For us who are in Christ, Jesus has destroyed our enemy [sin], and given us the means through the Spirit to wage a war of annihilation against its remnant.
- We are not to tolerate sin, or it will make our lives miserable and perhaps make us slaves all over again.
- So when the Lord, points out sin in our life [through self-examination], let us not be like Saul who rejected the Word of the Lord.
- Instead, let us be like Mordecai and not let evil intimidate us or cause us to back down.