

Meditation #1  
**Esther 4:14**  
Prof. Herman Hanko

*For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knowest whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*

These ominous words were spoken by Mordecai to his niece Esther. Both were Jews; Esther had been chosen from a multitude of young ladies to be the queen of the Persian Empire. She became queen in the place of Queen Vashti when the latter refused to show off her beauty to those drunken revellers at a banquet prepared by King Ahasuerus. Vashti was banished from the palace and Esther, the Jew, was chosen to take her place.

A man named Haman a high official in the kingdom, had plotted the death of every Jew on earth, because the proud Jew, Mordecai, refused to bow before him. What Haman did not know was that Esther was also a Jew.

The book of Esther is a strange book, because the name of God is not found in it. But, although that may make the book strange, it is also significant, for it seems that all the characters in this amazing story were unbelievers. The emphasis of the book therefore, falls on the fact that God's providence controls all the actions of the wicked, but also of God's people, the Jews.

Nor is God's providence arbitrary. For the Jews were the nation that would bring forth the Seed of the Woman, our Lord Jesus Christ. If Haman's plot had been carried out, Christ would have been killed. It was another instance of what is graphically described in Revelation 12. The glorious woman is described as pregnant: the vision is a graphic description of the Old Testament Church pregnant with Christ.

The dragon, the devil, is awaiting the birth of the child with the purpose of devouring him. So the picture is one of the many attempts of Satan to destroy the Christ in the times of the old dispensation.

The question has been much debated whether Mordecai and Esther were true believers. It is my contention that they were not, for no godly believer would commit the sins of fornication that Esther committed to gain the throne as queen with wicked and pagan Ahasuerus.

The entire book is God's Word to his people that no power on earth or in heaven or in hell can possibly prevent the salvation of those who believe in God. But God's providence is a wonderful work of God, for the salvation of the whole church hung that night on the inability of a pagan king to sleep (Esther 6). Ahasuerus was unable to sleep one night and upon reading in the records of the kingdom, found that Mordecai had not been rewarded for uncovering a plot to kill the king.

Memory Verse: *Psalm 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?*

Meditation #2  
**Esther 8:6**  
Prof. Herman Hanko

*For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?*

It would be well if you would read the meditation that precedes this one, in which the importance of the book of Esther is made clear.

When it became known to Mordecai that Haman, the highest man in the kingdom after the king himself, was making plans to kill all the Jews in the entire Persian Empire, Mordecai told Esther to plead with the king for her life and the life of all the Jews. The words of this text are part of that plea.

Esther was risking her life to appear before the king without his permission, but finally gathered the courage to do this. She seemingly missed the opportunity to do what Mordecai asked when she invited the king and Haman to a banquet – not once but twice.

At the second banquet, Esther revealed to the king what made her heart heavy and what was the real reason for asking to see the king. Her nation was in danger of being utterly destroyed.

Ahasuerus heard her plea, killed Haman and gave an order that the Jews might fight back when those appointed to kill them made their attempt.

As we mentioned in our last meditation, neither Mordecai nor Esther made these efforts because they were believers, for they were not. But they were deeply patriotic people: they loved their nation and they knew that if all the Jews would be killed, they also would be among those destroyed.

It is not necessary to be a true believer to be patriotic, for even in our own country there are many unbelievers who love their country and would die for it. The text quoted above makes that clear.

Why then is this book in the Bible?

The answer is that God ordained these events for the salvation of his people. The nation of Israel carried Christ within her, for Christ was born a Jew. Satan knew this and set about with all his might to destroy Christ. This is the teaching of Revelation 12:1-4. If Satan had succeeded there never would have been salvation in this world.

But God had promised to send the seed of the woman to save his elect people. At every attempt, God rescued his people and so rescued Christ. All the attempts of Satan were foiled.

The book presents a remarkable incident of God's mighty and glorious works of providence. His ways are beyond our ways and his works are wonderful. The church has the evidence of God's faithfulness and believers who put their trust in God need never be afraid that his promises will fail, for he even controls the devil and his demons and uses them to save his church.

Memory Verse: *Psalm 2:4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.*