

An Evil
Interlude

Esther 3

Life and pain are synonymous

- Pain is a fact of life in this fallen world and we cannot escape it
 - Physical, Mental, Spiritual, All areas of life
 - **Job 14:1 NLT** “How frail is humanity! How short is life, how full of trouble!
 - **Living Bible** How frail is man, how few his days, how full of trouble

Life and pain are synonymous

- The goal in life is not to get away from the pain of it, but to endure through it, to triumph over it, while learning the lessons only pain can teach us
- Someone said, “Pain is inevitable. Misery is optional.”

Life and pain are synonymous

- Since we cannot be free of pain, the secret of successful living is finding ways to live above the level of misery
- To face the reality of it and learn the lessons pain brings
- Ben Franklin, “Those things that hurt, instruct.”

To begin living with and learning from painful experiences is to understand the theological root of the problem. It is the universal presence of evil, the inescapable reality of sin

- Not just in others, but me and you
- This world of sin is manipulated by the Prince of the Power of the air

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- **Ephesians 2:1-2 NLT** Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.

He longs to take the place of God but to do that he must cause God not to be the God of scripture and the only way is to force God to not be perfect and holy

- To make God not be able to keep just one of His precious promises
- This is why Satan hates the Jews and Christians
- He is after you and me, to silence us, to distract us, to cause us to question God, His promises and our position within in

He longs to take the place of God but to do that he must cause God not to be the God of scripture and the only way is to force God to not be perfect and holy

- I say this not to frighten you, but to drive you to the throne of God, cause you to deepen your relationship with Jesus, to place all your hope in Him rather than your current circumstances
- To pass your deepening faith onto those who come behind you, for they will face this as well

Even in the Cinderella story of Esther evil rears its ugly head, just when everything's about to turn our right

- Interlude = an intervening period of time, a pause between the acts of a play
 - While this is going on, something related is happening over here maybe not even noticing
- We left Esther's story Chosen, Celebrating
 - With a feeling of security for herself and her people

When everyone seemed to be satisfied, pleased and at peace with one another, a tiny seam of evil shows itself

- **Esther 2:21 NIV** During the time Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, became angry and conspired to assassinate King Xerxes.
- There was an offense of some sort and when it isn't checked it will lead to anger and when anger is allowed to fester it will lead to evil

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- **Esther 2:22-23 NIV** 22 But Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai. 23 And when the report was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were impaled on poles. All this was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king.

When everyone seemed to be satisfied, pleased and at peace with one another, a tiny seam of evil shows itself

- See in this Satan attempting to interrupt God's dealings with His people. They are somewhat safe now, but take the king out and put Satan's man in then destruction will follow

Satan never gives up and goes home, often he goes bigger and bolder

- When Jesus defeated Satan in the wilderness, Satan did not give up
 - **Luke 4:13 NLT** When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he left him until the next opportunity came.

Satan never gives up and goes home, often he goes bigger and bolder

- If Satan can't get rid of the king, then let's hinder with wicked counsel
- **Esther 3:1 NIV** 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.

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- Mortdecai is the one who saved the king's life, why not him?
 - Cause life is not only painful it is not fair – why, because of evil

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- Agagite's were descendants of Amalekites and were people that hated the Jews for centuries, this hatred was passed down to their children and it continued to this day
- Children are not born prejudice, their minds must be trained, it is a learned process

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- **Esther 3:2 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.
 - As a Jew, bowing down to any person or thing on earth was considered idolatry
 - It was against the deepest convictions of his faith, "You shall have no other gods before me."

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- **Esther 3:3-4 NIV** 3 Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?" 4 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.

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- **Esther 3:5-6 NIV** 5 When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was enraged. 6 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.

Evil plans are always sowed in deception

- **Esther 3:9 NIV 9** If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and I will give ten thousand talents of silver to the king's administrators for the royal treasury.”
- Without hesitation, without a hint of restraint or glimmer of guilt Haman presses on

Satan never gives up and goes home, often he goes bigger and bolder

- Do you see how quick the roots of evil can take hold and take you to illogical places?
- **Hebrews 3:12 NIV** See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

Evil plans are always sowed in deception

- **Esther 3:8 NIV** Then Haman said to King Xerxes, “There is a certain people dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom who keep themselves separate. Their customs are different from those of all other people, and they do not obey the king’s laws; it is not in the king’s best interest to tolerate them.
- Does this not sound like today?

Evil plans are always sowed in deception

- **Esther 3:12-14 NIV** 12 Then on the thirteenth day of the first month the royal secretaries were summoned. They wrote out in the script of each province and in the language of each people all Haman's orders to the king's satraps, the governors of the various provinces and the nobles of the various peoples. These were written in the name of King Xerxes himself and sealed with his own ring.

Evil plans are always sowed in deception

- **Esther 3:12-14 NIV** 13 Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with the order to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews—young and old, women and children—on a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods. 14 A copy of the text of the edict was to be issued as law in every province and made known to the people of every nationality so they would be ready for that day.

An appropriate response

- Never forget there will always be someone who will resent your devotions to the Lord
 - Expect it, if not you will allow your will to weaken and not be ready
 - You will see it in our schools, company policies and political correctness

An appropriate response

- Never underestimate the diabolical nature of revenge
 - A lack of forgiveness that stays on the back burner has the ability to poison your life if you allow it
 - Many a divorced person is consumed by the poison of unforgiveness
 - Many hurts, even within the church, has the potential to poison your relations with Christ

An appropriate response

- Never overestimate the value of your own importance
 - It's easy to be blinded by ones' position, education and power
 - Some wise counselors should have come alongside the King

An appropriate response

- In everyday life, evil is never very far away
 - A secret plan to walk away from God-given responsibilities
 - A smoldering spirit of anger or unforgiveness

An appropriate response

- It is for this reason that God invaded our polluted world in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ
- Not just forgiveness of sin debt, but to give us built in controls that keeps us from walking in our old nature
- To provide grace in our hearts to clear them from the effects of sin
- God and grace are sufficient to change you and give you hope when evil rears its ugly head

An appropriate response

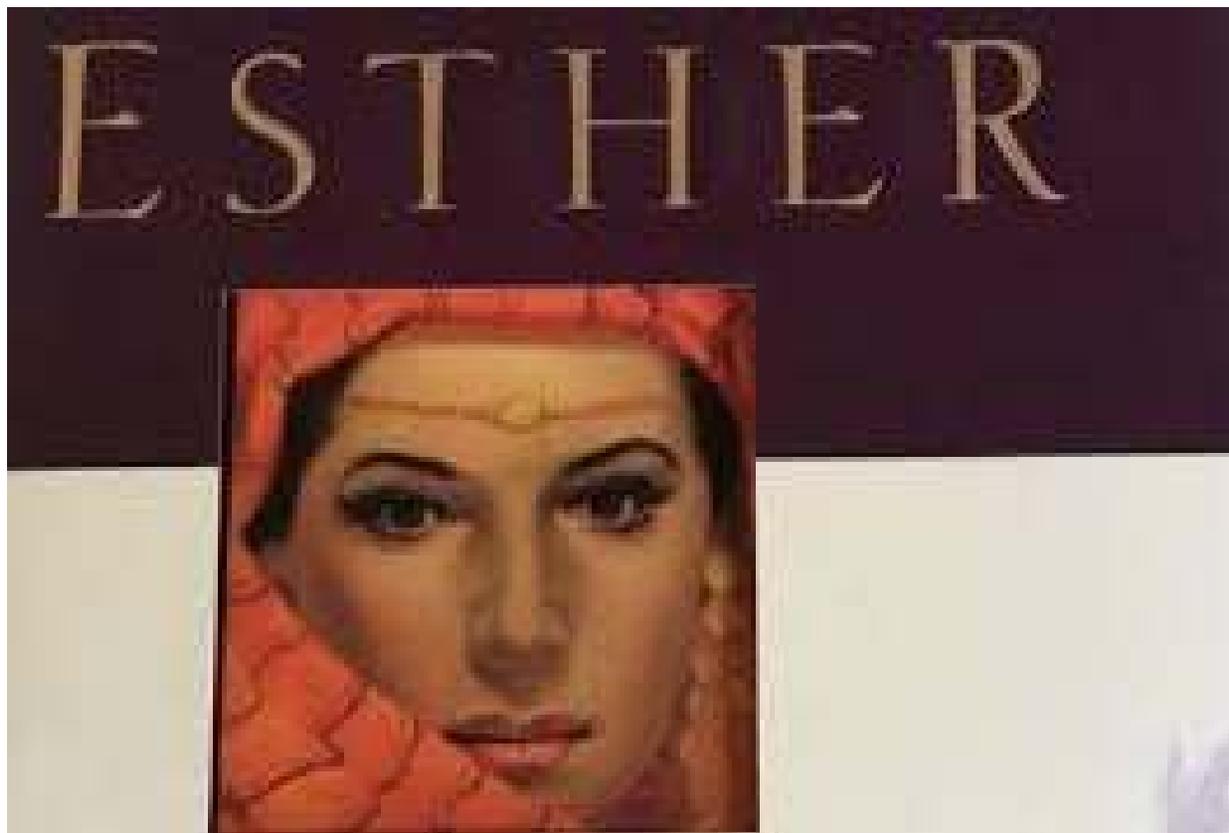
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Our days may include much trouble here,

Our lives lacking power and might.

But there is hope beyond hatred and fear,

How great a Savior is Christ



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