

God, Unseen but Present

The Book of Esther

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Part 2: “When Evil Advances”



What do you do when evil seems to be winning—and God appears silent?

Esther 3 introduces the central conflict of the book. Haman, newly promoted by King Xerxes, demands honor from all. Mordecai refuses to bow, likely out of loyalty to God. Enraged, Haman escalates from personal offense to genocidal hatred, plotting to destroy all Jews in the Persian Empire. The king unknowingly approves the decree, and the chapter ends with confusion in Susa—while the king and Haman sit down to drink. God is not mentioned—but His providence is quietly setting the stage.

ESTHER CHAPTER 3

Section	Description	Verses	Key Details
I	The Promotion of Haman	3:1–2	Haman elevated above all officials; Command issued for all to bow before him
II	The Refusal of Mordecai	3:3–4	Mordecai consistently refuses to bow; His identity as a Jew becomes central
III	The Rage of Haman	3:5–6	Anger escalates into hatred; Personal offense expands into a plan for national revenge
IV	The Plot Against the Jews	3:7–11	Casting lots (Pur) to determine timing; Haman deceives the king; Royal approval granted
V	The Proclamation of Destruction	3:12–15	Decree sent throughout the empire; Jews marked for annihilation; City in confusion while the king remains at ease

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did Mordecai refuse to bow to Haman? Was this pride or principle?
2. What does Haman's reaction reveal about unchecked pride?
3. Why does King Xerxes agree so quickly without investigation? What does this teach us?

KEY POINTS

- Evil often begins with wounded pride.
- Small acts of faithfulness (Mordecai's refusal) can have massive consequences.
- God's silence does not mean inactivity—He is working behind the scenes.
- Unchecked authority can become a tool for injustice.
- Spiritual conflict often escalates before God intervenes.

THREE TAKEAWAYS

- Stand firm in your convictions—even when it _____.
- Guard your heart against _____; it destroys more than you think.
- Trust God's _____; even when circumstances look dark.