

If I Perish I Perish-03 Ministry From Esther

by Major Ian Thomas

The sermon emphasizes the importance of submitting to God's will and trusting in His plan, as exemplified by Esther's obedience to Mordecai's instructions and the king's favor towards them.

Duration: 42:00

Scripture: Psalm 7:3, Psalm 46:1-2, John 7:38-39, Ephesians 5:19-20, 1 John 3:2, Revelation 22:1

Topics: "Esther"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the struggle between the flesh and the spirit in the life of a believer. He emphasizes that when the flesh dominates, it leads to moral defeat and separation from God. However, through the death of Jesus Christ, believers are freed from the power of sin and the old sinful nature. The preacher uses the story of Esther to illustrate the concept of dying to self and surrendering to God's purpose. He concludes by highlighting the importance of the Holy Spirit in guiding believers to live according to God's will.

Transcript

Saul hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Galileo, on Samuel, chapter 15, verse 33. How quickly the boastful swagger of the flesh, in the day of its ascendancy, can be reduced to the sobbing cry of self-pity, when the moment of truth has come.

Beware of this prophecy, and never be sorry for yourself, just be sorry for your sin. If your pride is hurt, and you feel that you have been misjudged, and you become all sensitive and begin to sulk, you can be quite certain that it is only Haman groveling in the distance, sobbing for the mercy he doesn't deserve. Haman is fit only for the gallows.

And Havona, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also the gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman hath made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.

Then was the king's wrath passed off. Chapter 7, verses 9 and 10. What an amazing picture this is.

Haman hanging on his own gallows, the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Nineteen hundred years ago, it was a Roman gallows, and of those who put him there, the Lord Jesus said, You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

John's Gospel, chapter 8, verse 44. How Satan must have relished the idea of God's son hanging on that cross! How carefully the plot was laid, as Satan entered into the heart of Judas's carrier, and persuaded him on that awful night to go out into the darkness, and betray his Lord for 30 pieces of silver. With what ecstatic delight, Satan must have incited the crowd as they looked and stared upon him, shouting, He saves others, himself he cannot save! This was to be his hour of triumph.

But one thing he did not know, there was still more business to be accomplished upon the cross than Satan ever guessed. This was not just the sentence of death upon a man by fellow men, a spectacular public execution, or the untimely end of a noble martyr who drifted to disaster because he lived before day and generation. Die indeed he did, as men must die whose blood is spilled.

It was not the son, however, but Satan himself who bore the mortal blow of God's relentless wrath, as the Savior tasted death for every man. For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 14.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of simple flesh, and forcing condemned sin in the flesh. Romans chapter 8. When the Lord Jesus Christ died for you, he not only paid the price of your redemption, but identified with him there, and nailed to his cross was that old sinful nature that for so long has dominated your soul and frustrated all your hopes. This is something which God wants you to know, for we know that our old unremoved self was nailed to the cross with him, in order that our body which is the instrument of sin might be made ineffective and inactive for evil, that we might no longer be the slaves of sin.

Romans chapter 6 and verse 6 in the Amplified Bible. This is the truth being expressed in the language of the book of Esther, when Haman was hanged upon the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. No longer might Haman exercise the executive powers of government and abuse the king's authority.

No longer would he bring disrepute upon the kingdom through his malicious evil influence over the behavior of this people throughout the length and breadth of the land. The kingdom, representing this human body, was no longer to be the instrument of his evil acts, but by his death it would become ineffective and inactive for evil. As Haman hung by the neck, so the stage was set for that radical change of government which would produce so great a change in behavior, that from one end of the country to the other, everyone would know that something very wonderful had happened in the palace of the king.

The wrong man was out and the right man was in. Chapter 10. On the very day that Haman hanged, Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told what he was unto her.

Esther explained to King Ahasuerus that she belonged by adoption to Mordecai, who had intervened to save the king's life from the hands of the assassin, and that for the king to be identified with her must inevitably involve his identification with Mordecai, if there was to be harmony in his relationship to the queen. In the light of all that had been revealed to him, and with a profound sense of gratitude not only for the preservation of his own life, but for his deliverance from the subtle destructive influence of the enemy

within the palace, on that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman, the Jew's enemy, unto Esther the queen. And the king took off his ring which he had taken from Haman, and he gave it to Mordecai.

Chapter 8, verses 1 and 2. You will notice that the king did two things. He placed the ring upon Mordecai's finger, but he entrusted the administration of Haman's estate to Esther. In this way, although the king invested Mordecai with all the authority that once had belonged to Haman, this authority was to be exercised according to what Ahasuerus now considered to be the better judgment of Esther the queen.

Esther, for her part, indicated at once where she knew the better judgment place. Not in herself, but in Mordecai, whom she sent over the house of Haman. Chapter 8, verse 2. Thus the king identified his will with that of Esther, and Esther submitted her will to that of Mordecai.

And I'm sure that the spiritual significance of this new situation in the palace will be very obvious to you. When the soul consisting of the mind, the emotions, and the will, King Ahasuerus, is in total harmony with the desires created by the Holy Spirit, Mordecai, within a yielded human spirit, Esther, this is what the Bible describes as the fullness of the Holy Ghost. Allow me then to retrace our steps for a moment, so that we may get the overall picture in its full significance, recapitulating stage by stage.

The Holy Spirit resists. This was the first picture portrayed by the situation recorded in chapter 3. Outside the palace, Mordecai was sitting in the king's guests, while inside the palace, Haman was plotting Mordecai's destruction. Fearful left Mordecai, who refused to bow in his presence, should gain access to the king and bring about that change of government which would introduce to the land those wars which Haman hated.

The Holy Spirit received. Though bitterly opposed by Haman, as the Holy Spirit will always be bitterly opposed, resented, and resisted by the flesh, chapter 2 spoke to us of the Holy Spirit coming into the human spirit, as Mordecai came into the life of Esther. The basis was that of adoption, just as you and I must receive the spirit of adoption if we are to be born again of a family of forgiven sinners.

The Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Romans chapter 8 verses 15 and 16. The Holy Spirit grieved.

At the beginning of chapter 4, Mordecai sat clothed in sackcloth and ashes, crying with a loud and bitter cry. This picture brought to us a vivid illustration of what happened when the Spirit of God is grieved. Mordecai had come into the life of Esther, and she did the commandments of Mordecai like as when she was brought up with him, chapter 2 and verse 20.

But Mordecai had not yet come into the life of the king. Haman, still dominated the scene, projected his evil influence throughout the kingdom. Here portrayed as the defeated Christian, described by Paul in his epistle to the Romans.

So you see how it is. My new life tells me to do right, but the old nature that is still inside me loves to sin. Oh, what a terrible thing this is! Who will free me from my slavery to this deadly lower nature? Romans chapter 7, 24 and 25 in the Living Lessons.

The Holy Spirit quenched. This was the picture painted next. As chapter 4 continues, Esther was reluctant to obey Mordecai's instructions, and hesitated to go unsummoned into the presence of the king, thus to hazard her life in the interests of her people, that the seed of Abraham might not perish.

Though his wickedness had been fully exposed to her, until Esther was prepared to die to her own ability to hang Haman, it was impossible for Mordecai to assume responsibility for putting this enemy into the place of death. The Holy Spirit obeyed. As it came to its climactic conclusion, the latter part of chapter 4 introduced us to the implications of true discipleship.

On the third morning, Esther, as good as dead, entered into the royal presence, and the king held out the golden scepter. Losing her life, she found it again, to be identified forever with God's purpose, God's power, and God's people. Thus the decks were cleared for those events recorded in chapters 5, 6 and 7, which would enlighten the understanding of the king, and bring Haman to the gallows.

The fullness of the Holy Spirit. With the enemy deposed, and Mordecai, with the king's wing upon his finger, occupying his estate, and with the king and queen swanned with each other in honoring Mordecai with all the executive powers of government, the stage had now been set for a new and glorious regime. That regime which, when established spiritually within your soul, means that not only does the Lord Jesus Christ live by his Holy Spirit within your human spirit, but that he now controls your mind, your emotions, and your will.

By all that you do and say in are his life, and his likeness are expressed through you. People around you become aware of the fact, though they may not understand it, that by the exceeding great and precious promises you have become partaker of the divine nature. In the second of Peter's epistles, chapter 1 and verse 4, it is important to remember at this stage of the story that, though Mordecai is welcomed and at home within the palace, he continues to communicate with the king through Esther, the queen.

And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief, and to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hamadatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces. Chapter 8, verses 3 and 5. This raises quite an interesting point. We have already discussed in chapter 5 the duality of human conscience, the moral conscience seated in the human spirit, and the animal conscience seated in the human soul.

In the same way, there appears to be a duality in the exercise of the human will. When you exercise your animal will, you make an animal choice governed by your animal conscience. On the other hand, when you exercise your moral will, you make a moral choice governed by your moral conscience.

There is, of course, much that you do by the exercise of your animal will which has no moral significance, and your behavior then is governed only by your animal conscience, for your animal conscience simply decides what is consequentially right, and what is consequentially wrong. When a blazing log falls out of a fire, for instance, you decide not to pick it up with your hands, because that would be consequentially wrong. Your hands would get burned.

No moral issue, however, is involved in this decision. It is an animal choice which any sensible animal would make, faced with a comparable situation. You walk by the exercise of your animal will, the way a dog would walk, except that you only have two legs to do it with.

You sit down physically the way a dog sits down, and you step into a car physically the way a dog steps into a car. That will which you exercise to bring the body into action to do these things is not morally involved. The moral factor may well be introduced, however, if you are sitting down when the work which you are paid to do demands that you be standing up.

Furthermore, though there may be no moral choice involved in the physical act of walking, there may well be a moral choice involved in the direction you have chosen to walk, and the company into which this will bring you. Stepping into the car, starting the engine, and driving down the road may demand no more than a series of physical acts with which your moral conscience and your moral will remain totally unconcerned until you reach the main highway. There you have to decide whether to turn to the right or to the left.

To turn to the right would take you to the club where, as an alcoholic, you used to get drunk. To turn to the left would take you home to your wife and family. Even though you are born again, the same principle which still operates within you will seek to dominate your animal will, so that you make the decisions which will enable the flesh to use your body in order to realize and satisfy its carnal appetite.

At the same time, it will seek to silence your moral conscience, and to persuade your animal conscience that you can do it and get away with it without any unpleasant consequence. Simultaneously, your moral conscience, quickened and undergirded by the Holy Spirit within your human spirit, will exercise its moral will to plead with your animal will to put away the mischief, saying in so many words, do not let any part of your body become tools of wickedness to be used for sinning, but give yourselves completely to God, every part of you, for you are backed from death and you want to be tools in the hands of God to be used for His good purpose. Romans chapter 6 and verse 13 in the Living Letter.

If the flesh is successful in silencing your moral conscience, and in exerting its influence over your animal will, you will turn right at the main highway and end up at the cross, morally defeated. On the other hand, if the Holy Spirit enables your moral will to exercise control over your animals, you will turn left and arrive home to the delight of your wife and children, and to the inexpressible joy of their own soul, morally victorious. But that's just it, you see, right there when I hit the highway and have to make the choice.

That's where I run into trouble. That's where I'm beaten again and again. How can I get my animal will into harmony with my moral will? How in my experience can I get the ring on the right thing? The answer lies in your attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ, whose life you share.

When Esther went in once more before the king, and that sought him with tears to put away the mischief and to reverse the letter, it was in an attitude of utter confidence in Mordecai. She felt certain that as her obedience to him had enabled Mordecai to put Haman into the place of death, so now her continued obedience to him would allow Mordecai to bring his gracious influence to bear upon the king's mind and upon the decisions made in the palace. As she once had died to her own ability to hang Haman, so she continued to die to her own ability to change the character of the king, for on this occasion too she entered unsung into his presence, and once more the king held out the golden scepter toward Esther.

Chapter 8 and verse 4. She was still living in the power of the third morning, resurrection life. This too must be your attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ. In every controversy between your moral will and the flesh, as to how your animal will is to be exercised in determining the things you think and say and do, you will say to him, Dear Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for your Holy Spirit, to whom I yield my human spirit, and by whose gracious presence I share your life and share your victory.

I know that I cannot deal with the principle of sin within me, nor put the flesh into the place of death, but I thank you that you can, and that you did when you died upon the cross, and I died with you. Thank you for your Holy Spirit, who alone can make this real in my experience, mortifying those deeds of my body which have their origin in Satan. I'm willing for you to invade my soul, to control my mind, to control my emotions, and to control my will, so that every decision within my soul will be in perfect harmony with my spirit, and

my spirit in perfect harmony with you, so that my whole being may declare your praise.

Lord Jesus, I can't, but you can. Thank you so much. If you are prepared to practice the presence of Christ in this way, and reckon with him through his Holy Spirit, not only to keep the flesh in the place of death, but to establish his divine sovereignty within every area of your soul, then you will experience that delightful transformation of character which will conform you increasingly to the image of God's dear Son.

It will be a transformation characterized by all that happens throughout the land once Mordecai was given the place of honor in the past. Then the King Ahasuerus said unto Esther the Queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews. Write ye also for the Jews, as it like it be, in the King's name, and seal it with the King's ring.

For the writing which is written in the King's name, sealed with the King's ring, made no man reverse. And it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews. And to the lieutenant, and the deputy, and buddhas of the India unto Ethiopia, a hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.

And he wrote in the King Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the King's ring. Chapter eight, verses seven to ten. So the new edict was published.

It was still in the name of the King, but no longer according to all that Haman commanded. It was now according to all that Mordecai commanded. For Mordecai was great in the King's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces.

For this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater. Chapter nine, verse four. In the royal city of Shushan, throughout the King's provinces, in the villages, and in the unwallied town, all that had happened in the past made a profound and lasting impact.

There was no part of the community unaffected by the change, and everyone knew that something wonderful must have happened to the King. As Mordecai established God's laws in the palace, so God's people to whom these laws had been entrusted had rest from the end. Chapter nine, verse sixteen.

Sorrow was turned to joy, mourning to a good day, while fear was replaced by fellowship, as they sent portions one to another and gave gifts to the poor. Chapter nine, verse twenty-two. Every new instruction, as Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews in the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of King Ahasuerus, brought words of peace and truth.

Chapter nine, verse thirty. Little wonder then that these days were to become days never to be forgotten in the history of this people. When the plot to destroy the Jews had been hatched in the wicked heart of Haman, a plot prompted by Satan's inherent hatred of the promised seed of faithful Abraham, Jesus Christ, Haman had cast lots according to an ancient custom called Purr, that he might select a lucky day on which to bring his evil designs to fruition.

The day chosen in this way was the thirteenth day of Adah, and on this one day all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, were to perish. Chapter three, verse thirteen. Instead, far from perishing on the thirteenth day of the month, on the fourteenth day of Adah, the Jews rejoiced with unspeakable joy as a people wonderfully delivered.

Sentenced to death, they had been raised from the dead, and the wicked device of Haman, which he had devised against the Jews, had returned upon his own head that he and his son should be hanged on the gallows. Chapter nine, verse twenty-five. Years later, Satan's wicked device was to return upon his own head when the Lord Jesus, through death upon the cross, destroyed him who had the power of death, even the devil, and nailed him to his own gallows.

Hebrews, chapter two, verses fourteen and fifteen. So, year by year, throughout their generations, the Jewish people have celebrated a feast of Purim, named after Purim, by which custom Haman cast lots, in celebration of their great and gracious deliverance. Another remarkable thing happened, too, for many of the people of the land became Jews, for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

Chapter eight, in verse seventeen. They knew full well what had been destined for these people. Humanly speaking, their situation had been hopeless, yet they had been snatched from the grave and their enemies slain.

The people began to say to themselves, if this is what it means to be numbered amongst the people of God, then I want to become a Jew. I want to know for myself the kind of God who can save his people from death, destroy their foes, and give them joy, peace, and rest. There is nothing quite so infectious as a man genuinely filled with the Holy Spirit.

True holiness is also always evangelistic. It makes the sinner heartily sick of his sins, and causes him to hunger and thirst after righteousness until he cries out from the depths of his soul, Sir, what must I do to be saved? Acts chapter 16, verse 30. Is this the effect that your life has upon your neighbors, upon your workmates, upon your fellow students, and upon your own children? And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple, and the city of Shushan rejoiced, and was glad.

Chapter 8, verse 15. How different everything has become! It seemed almost as if the sun shone brighter, and as though every cloud in the sky was laughing. The birds sang more sweetly in every flower, and a new fragrance.

The time had been when the king and Haman sat down to drink. Haman then was in the ascendancy, and the city of Shushan was perplexed. Now, with Haman on the gallows, and Mordecai in the palace, the city perplexed had become the city rejoicing.

The psalmist knew something of this, I am sure, when inspired by the Holy Spirit, he penned the 46th Psalm. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear.

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the Tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her. She shall not be moved.

God shall help her, and that right early. Be still, and know that I am God. Psalm 46 verses 1, 2, 4, 5, and 10.

This river has its source in the throne of God and of the Lamb. Revelation chapter 22 and verse 1. It is the life of God in the soul of man, and the promise is to you and to your children. He that believeth on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. John's Gospel chapter 7 verses 38 and 39.

Allow God so to strengthen you by his Spirit in the inner man that the Lord Jesus may be glorified in your heart as he is glorified in heaven. Then the river will flow, and make glad the city of God. Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians chapter 5 verses 19 and 20. Then you will have every right to rejoice and be glad. End of chapter 10 and commencing now chapter 11.

Never break your heart trying to be someone else. In the first place you never will be. You will always be you and no one else.

The person who gets up in the morning will be the person who went to bed the night before. So you might as well get reconciled to the fact that you are the person you're going to live with for the rest of your day. In the second place, it is the way God wants it.

He never intended that you should be anyone else but you. But what he would like is that you should learn how to be the person he intended you to be. King Ahasuerus was a different person at the beginning of the story of the book of Esther from the king Ahasuerus at the end of the story.

It is important to bear in mind, however, that it was the same king, the same mind, the same emotions, and the same will. Had Ahasuerus continued to behave under the influence of Haman, and had he continued to identify himself with Haman's wicked ways, he would have been responsible for one of the cruelest massacres in human history. His name would have gone down in ignominy and shame.

As it was, under the influence of Mordecai and identified with his gracious way, the king earned the honor and respect of a happy and prosperous people. If others were astonished at the change, maybe there were none more astonished than the king himself. Ahasuerus had learned the difference between the man that Haman could make of him, the old man, and the man that Mordecai could make of him, the new man.

He had come under entirely new management. This may help you to understand what the Lord Jesus Christ meant in what might otherwise appear to have been a contradiction, when on one occasion he said to his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Matthew 16 24.

It becomes quite evident from this statement that there is a self to be denied. That is to say, a self to be repudiated. On another occasion, however, when a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? The Lord Jesus Christ replied by quoting from the law, from the sixth chapter of the book of Deuteronomy.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. Luke chapter 10 verses 25 to 27. If you were to love your neighbor as yourself, then you must first love yourself.

Otherwise, on this basis, love for your neighbor would become meaningless. It would appear, therefore, from the answer given by the Lord Jesus to those who questioned him, that there is a legitimate place for

self-love, and that in addition to a self to be repudiated, that there must be a self to be respected. How then is self-respect to be reconciled with self-repudiation? Can they be coexistent? The answer to this problem is clearly illustrated in the person of King Ahasuerus.

He had to repudiate the kind of man that Haman made of him, but he had the right to respect the kind of man that Mordecai made of him. In the same way, the self that you have to repudiate is the self that the flesh makes of you when the flesh is dominant within the soul, abusing and misusing your personality. The self, however, that you have the right to respect is the self that Christ makes of you, filling you with His Holy Spirit, enhancing and using your personality.

I, the self that sin makes of me, am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. The self that Christ makes of me, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.

Galatians chapter 2 and verse 20. This is the you which God wants you to become, for this is the you which God intended you to be. There is most certainly a legitimate place for healthy self-respect in your life as a Christian, but it is the self-respect that derives from your personal relationship to Jesus Christ.

On this basis, you can learn to love the most unlovely of your neighbors, because you know that if there is anything that you can love or respect about yourself, it is only what Christ has made of you. So though your neighbor lies drunken in the gutter, you can love him. Not for the man that sin has made of him, but for the man you know that Christ can make of him, once he has taken over.

For what he has made of you, he can make of him. You do not lose your own personality when you take your place by faith with Christ in death. On the contrary, a transformation takes place within your personality.

You simply come under new management, so that when someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same anymore. A new life has begun.

All these new things are from God, who brought us back to himself through what Christ Jesus did. 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verses 17-18 in the Living Lesson. The new life which has begun, of course, is the life of the Lord Jesus, and your personality becomes his means of expression.

It is he who, as God, works through both to will and to do of his good flesh. Philippians chapter 2 and verse 13. When you are prepared for the Lord Jesus Christ really to get into business like that, you will not want to be anyone else.

You will be far too excited discovering what he intends you to be. It was no good for Jacob to try to inherit the promise, because that was the man the flesh made of him. God had prepared the inheritance for Israel, the man that only God could make of Jacob.

It was no good for Simon to try to be an apostle, for that was the man the flesh made of him. God had called Peter the man that only God could make of Simon. It was no good for Saul of Tarsus to try to defend the faith, for that was the man the flesh made of him.

God wanted Paul the apostle, and that was the man that only God could make of Saul of Tarsus. Has God changed your name yet? Did you ever get in the chance? God changes the name when God changes the man. The Ten Sons of Haman.

I wonder if, as you have been reading these pages, some such thoughts have been passing through your mind. I understand the picture quite clearly. Just as Haman was hanged upon the gallows, so, in the purpose of God, my old sinful nature was nailed to the cross with the Lord Jesus Christ, executing this.

Now that Haman is hanged, however, is that the last that will ever be heard of him? Does this mean that my old sinful nature is wholly eradicated the moment I claim my faith, my identity with Christ in death? Is the new Israel that Christ creates in me never to be troubled again by the old Jacob? And is Peter never again to be confronted by Simon? If this is what you have been thinking, then these are good questions, and I believe the answer is to be found quite easily. Illustrated for us in a fascinating way in the ninth chapter of the book of Esther. Then said Esther, if it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do tomorrow also according unto this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows.

And the king commanded it so to be done, and the decree was given at Shushan, and they hanged Haman's ten sons. Chapter 9 verses 13 and 14. That's the answer.

Haman had ten sons. You may die today to your own ability to put Haman to the place of death, thus allowing the Holy Spirit to celebrate in you the victory of the Lord Jesus, putting Haman on the cross, but this will not do for tomorrow. You will discover that Haman has ten sons.

That is not all for the Haman of your own heart not only has ten sons, but every one of these ten sons has ten sons more. There is no climactic experience by which the evil influence of the flesh may be eradicated once and for all, though the flesh itself in its subtlety would like you to believe it, in the interests of its own self-preservation. Only be persuaded that the flesh no longer exists, and you are not likely to cause it any further inconvenience as it perpetuates its wicked activities in your soul.

Nothing could please the devil more than that. Appropriation of the victory of Christ demands more than just one act of faith. It requires an attitude of faith.

It is a moment-by-moment reckoning, and your reckoning for this moment is never adequate for the next. Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. Galatians chapter 5 verses 16 and 17.

Walking in the Spirit is a continuous process, one step at a time. It means that for every new situation to which every new step brings you, you must reckon positively with the Holy Spirit to keep the flesh in the place of death. I want to emphasize the need to reckon positively, for we are not only to reckon ourselves to be dead indeed in the sin, but we are to reckon ourselves alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans chapter 6 and verse 11. It is our enjoyment of the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Christ through reckoning positively with his presence which sets us free from the law of sin and death. The surest way of reckoning yourself to be dead to sin, that old Adamic nature, is to reckon yourself alive in Jesus Christ and be utterly dependent upon him.

He then will take care of the consequences. Quite obviously, by the statement Paul made in the epistles of the Galatians, he recognized that the flesh is still active in the believer. If to walk in the Spirit is not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, then the converse would be equally true.

Not to walk in the Spirit, that is to say to walk other than in moment-by-moment dependence upon him, means that you will fall prey to the lusts of the flesh and encounter to your discomfort some of Haman's

many sons and grandsons, the evil progeny of Amalek. Israel will encounter Jacob, Peter will behave like Simon, and Paul will have a brush with Paul of Tarsus. The Bible presents an overwhelming case for Christian victory.

As long as we are prepared to fulfill the conditions, and appropriate by faith the victorious life of Christ himself. On the other hand, nowhere in the Bible is there any support for the promise of sinless perfection, save on that wonderful day when we shall see the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. Then indeed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

The first epistle of John chapter 3 in verse 2. Do not allow anyone therefore to deceive, for this will only lead you into dishonesty, no matter how sincere you may be as you seek to reconcile a bad conscience with your claim to sinless perfection. You will simply have to invent some other name for sin, and pretend that it does not exist. The Holy Spirit is your comforter and friend.

He is within you to keep you from falling, but be very sensitive to what he has to say. For the Lord corrects and disciplines every one whom he loves, and he punishes, even scourges, every son whom he accepts, and welcomes to his heart and cherishes. You must submit to and endure correction for discipline.

God is dealing with you as with sons, for what son is there whom his father does not thus train and correct and discipline? Now, if you are exempt from correction, and left without discipline, in which all of God's children share, then you are illegitimate offspring, and not true sons at all. Hebrews chapter 12, verses 6 to 8, in the Amplified Bible. In other words, when the Holy Spirit names it, call it by its name, admit and confess it for the sin that it is.

Claim instantly the cleansing that God has promised through the blood of Christ, and be thankful that the greater Mordecai, the Holy Spirit, is in residence, constantly alert, and ready instantly to expose the wickedness of Haman's breed, and to save you from the evil. The power of veto, and the moral choice. For Mordecai, the Jew, was next unto King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and seeking peace to all who seek.

Chapter 10, verse 3.

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