

That Time When Haman Visited Your Church

Most people that profess to believe in the Bible are familiar with the book of Esther and the primary villain of the story, Haman. I say primary villain because the book of Esther is filled with questionable characters, moral failures and royal maleficence. Yet, with all of the palace intrigue and ethical issues within the book of Esther, there is no question that Haman is the antihero. It is Haman who instigates and initiates the attempted anti-Semitic holocaust against the Jewish people of Persia.

Thankfully, as we read through the book of Esther, the unseen G-D of the Bible delivers His people from Haman's evil plot, and even until today, we celebrate the holiday of Purim to commemorate G-D's victory over the evil plan of Haman.

However, even though G-D delivered the Jewish people in Persia from Haman's nefarious plan to get rid of the Jews, the spirit of Haman still exists even today, and unfortunately, the evils of antisemitism isn't just propagated among atheists and agnostics and politicians. The truth is that the anti-Semitic spirit of Haman exists and continues to grow within the congregations of those who profess to love the King of the Jews.

Over the years, I have been blessed to speak in churches all over the USA and many other countries. You would be amazed to know the number of times I have heard pastors and other leaders speak words from their pulpits that would have been cheered at Nazi or KKK gatherings. Pastors who introduced me with blatantly anti-Semitic and stereotypical "jokes" about Jews and then clarified that I was not "one of those Jews because I believed in Jesus."

Over the past few years, along with the rise of support for the organization BLM, as well as an increasing number of Christians who have accepted the false narrative of the Israeli Occupation of Israel, more and more Haman-like statements have been made by pastors across the world. Let's not forget those Christians who wholeheartedly accept the propaganda that Jews have a secret plan to rule the world, which has only been accentuated by the financial downturn brought about by the COVID pandemic.

I have heard and read writing from leading pastors preaching words very similar to the words that Haman spoke in Esther 3:8 to congregations who excitedly amen as Haman is quoted with enthusiasm.

"Haman then said to King Ahasuerus: 'There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom whose laws differ from those of every other people and who do not obey the king's laws. It is not in the king's interest to tolerate them.'"

Just recently in the USA, anti-Semitic hate groups proclaimed a Day of Hate. I heard about the Day of Hate on television, on the Internet, on the radio and read about it in newspapers. While I did hear rabbis and Jewish leaders speaking out against those people who were promoting acts of violence against Jewish people, synagogues, Jewish schools and Jewish businesses, I didn't hear one pastor stand up and speak out against these outrageous and openly anti-Semitic threats. I didn't hear or see one pastor get up in front of his church filled with people who claim love for a Jewish Rabbi who came to save them and loudly and unequivocally cry out for an end to antisemitism.

I am not writing this today in anger, but in disappointment with hopes that some of those reading this today will be pricked in their hearts and begin to not only pray for Jewish people, but also stand up and speak out following the example

of another person mentioned in the book of Esther; a non-Jewish hero of the book, a seemingly minor character who is often overlooked and lost within the story. His name is Harbonah, and we read only one verse about him, Esther 7:9:

“Harbonah, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, ‘Look, a gallows 50 cubits high is standing next to Haman’s house. Haman himself made it for Mordecai, who spoke good on behalf of the king!’ The king said, ‘Hang him on it!’”

Harbonah, a Persian who served in the court of the king and understood the absolute truth that I pray every Christian would take to heart. The only way to stop the spirit of Haman, antisemitism, is for non-Jewish people, especially Christians, to speak out loudly and call for its absolute eradication. The only way we are going to see the end of antisemitism is when Christian leaders and church members decide to hang Haman on the gallows built to attack the Jews.

✘ We will see the death of Haman when instead of anti-Semites calling for national Days of Hate, we hear pastors calling for national days of love. When instead of making jokes about Jews from pulpits, pastors begin to teach and share words of thanksgiving for the efforts of the Jewish people to preserve words on the pages of the very Bible where they found their Savior.

As we celebrate the Feast of Purim/Esther this year, I want to encourage every non-Jewish follower of Yeshua to stand up next to our King and join Harbonah in calling for the execution once and for all of the spirit of Haman within their churches. Next time Haman visits your church, please stand up and speak out.

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