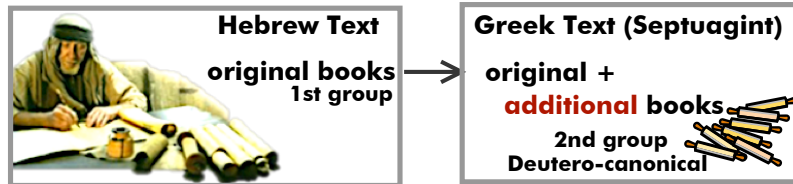


Lesson #39 - Esther 2019

Before starting this lesson, read the book of **Esther**. You may find it helpful to read the book, go thru the lesson and then read the book once again. Since it is a short book, it will not be difficult to do.

This book requires an explanation about its writing and additions. Some of your Bibles have parts of Esther that are written in italics or have chapters called A, B and C. In other Bibles, after chapter 10, there is a section entitled *Supplements - found only in the Greek text*. And then some Bibles only have chapters 1-10. To understand, we have to go back some 2400 years.

The Old Testament was written in **Hebrew** and put together in 400 BC. Some 200 years later, Jews translated it from Hebrew into **Greek**. After they finished the original books, they included other favorite Jewish literature in the **Greek** text. To show the difference, the original books were called the 1st group of writings. The additions were called the 2nd group of writings. The technical name of these writings became *deutero-canonical* meaning 2nd group.



Today, the Hebrew Bible and many English Bibles have only the 1st group of writings from the original Hebrew. Other Bibles have both the 1st and 2nd group of writings and are careful to show which is which. We see this in the book of Esther. Bibles with the chapters the Jews added to the **Greek** text are in italics, called A, B and C or called a supplement.

These lessons are based on the chapters and books in the Hebrew Bible. So if your Bible has chapters in italics or entitled A, B, C, you will need to skip them and go to the section that says *chapter 1*.

Esther is one of the popular stories in the Bible, so let me start with a word of warning. Never use movies or novels of these stories for your knowledge of the Bible. Movies and novels are interesting but never accurate. The writers always add, subtract and change the facts of Scripture. Whenever God's Word is involved, we need to focus on the facts God has given us and then use facts of history to fill in the details.

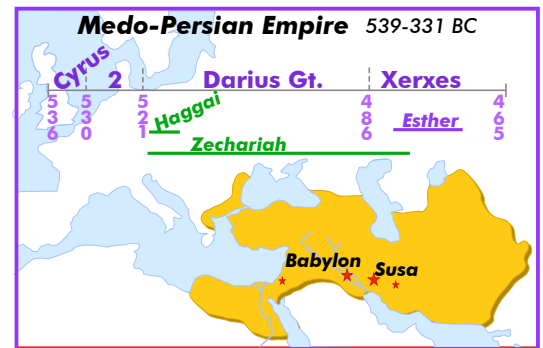
Esther 1:1 gives the setting, *This is what happened during the time of Xerxes or Ahasuerus*.

We have the name of the king. But his name is not mentioned in the rest of Scripture, so we have no idea where he fits chronologically.

From past lessons, we have seen that **Cyrus** was the first king of Medo-Persia - from 536-530 BC. He was the one who let the Jews go back to Jerusalem. During *his* time, the Jews laid the foundation of their new temple. But then they stopped.

When they started 15 years later, **Darius** the Gt. was the Persian king - king number 4. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah began their ministry in his 2nd year. Their books were written from Jerusalem and focused on the lives of the 50,000 Jews who had returned.

But the majority of God's people were still in Babylon. What about them? And what about the Persian government under King Darius?



From secular history we learn that Darius the Gt. expanded the Persian empire, all the way east to the border of India. Going west he took everything up to the border of Greece. To keep it organized and united, he developed a postal system. In addition, he built new palaces and moved his own residence from Babylon to Susa. The old name was Shushan; the modern name is Susa. Darius the Gt. was king for 35 years from 521 to 486 BC.

The next Persian king had such a difficult name that every language had to change it, to fit their alphabet and pronunciation. In Persian, his name was spelled **Khshayarsha** - X-sa-yar-sa. In Hebrew his name was changed to **Ahasuerus**. In Greek he was known as **Xerxes**. Secular history uses this name. Xerxes was a famous king, but not a great king. He ruled for 21 years, from 486 to 465 BC. The story of Esther takes place during 10 of his 21 years - from 483 to 473 BC. This means the last 3 years of Zechariah in Jerusalem are the first 3 years of Esther's story in Susa.

DATE of book.

The information about the events were written by Mordecai as they happened.

Then c. 450 BC, Jewish scribes, guided by the Holy Spirit, took parts of it and put it together as a book, in Jewish style.

REASONS for book.

It explains the beginning of a new Jewish holiday or festival.

It also shows God's protection of His people, even when they are living outside the land of Israel.

OUTLINE of book. It is put together around the topic of banquets or feasts.

The feasts of Xerxes and Vashti 1-2

The feasts of Esther 3-7

The feast of Purim 8-10

BACKGROUND of book

Chapter 1:1 says **Xerxes** or his Jewish name, Ahasuerus, rules from India to Cush.

Based on today's geography, this would be from West Pakistan to northern Sudan and Libya - an empire of 3000 miles east to west. Some Bibles use the name Ethiopia, but the footnotes will say the Hebrew name is Cush (also spelled Kush). The Ethiopia or Cush of the Old Testament is our present day northern Sudan or Nubia.

Verse 3 says it is the 3rd year of Xerxes reign - 483 BC.

Verses 3-5 are typical of Jewish writing. It starts with a summary.

Verse 3 says Xerxes has a banquet in the 3rd year of his kingship.

The verse then backs up to explain what happened earlier - why and for whom he was giving the banquet. The king had asked certain people to come to Susa for 6 months.

Verse 5 repeats the summary statement - After these people had met for 6 months, the king has a banquet.

In other words, verse 3 and verse 5 are talking about the same banquet, with verse 4 giving the reason for it.



Secular history fills in the details.

It tells us that in his 3rd year, Xerxes has all his army chiefs, princes and governors from throughout the empire come to Susa. His purpose is to plan an invasion of Greece, the one area he still has not conquered. But Greece is a long way from the Persian capital. Many of the leaders do not think it is possible.

So Xerxes shows them all the greatness and resources of the Persian empire. This is exactly what verse 4 says, *he displayed the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of his majesty.*

After 6 months of military planning, the king has a week of relaxation, entertainment and good food for the political and military leaders, along with their staff and servants. The Bible describes them as the least to the greatest. Since they had known it would be a long session, these men had either brought their wives or part of their harem. So the queen provides the same kind of week for the women.

On the 7th day, at the final meal, the king gets drunk. He commands the queen to come and show her beauty to the men. She refuses because it violates both their culture and their laws.

The fact the women are eating separate from the men, shows they did not socialize together. A married woman did not display her beauty to male strangers. As we know, this is still true in the Middle East and particularly in Iran. Persia is the former name of Iran. This story is about the Iran of 2400 years ago.

In the 400's BC, King Xerxes would never dream of commanding the queen to show her beauty, if he were not drunk. But in his present condition, what else might he ask her to do? So on the grounds of decency, culture and the laws, she refuses. **She does what is right** and the cost is heavy. She loses her position as queen and most likely is killed.

THEME of book

Doing what is right, no matter what is a theme running thru the story.

Another theme is how God works thru ordinary events.

It is not unusual for a king to get drunk at a banquet.

It is not unusual he would make unreasonable demands when he is drunk and he would get angry when they are refused.

God is working thru **ordinary events to bring a change in the palace** and even a change in history.

THE STORY BEGINS

Plans are now made of how to replace Vashti.

At some point, beautiful virgins from thruout the empire will be brought to Susa and then given a 12-month beauty preparation.

Vashti is deposed in the 3rd year of King Xerxes - 483 BC. 1:3

Esther is chosen in his 7th year - 4 years later, in 479 BC. 2:16

But no Middle East king would let that much time go by without replacing a queen. That is, unless there are unusual events.

History describes these events.

In Xerxes' 4th year, he puts down an unexpected rebellion in Babylonia.

In his 5th and 6th years he leads his army into Greece and successfully burns Athens.

Then he goes to a small island called Sálamis. But there he suffers a disastrous naval defeat in September of his 6th year. (Sept. 21). Leaving his troops and generals in Greece, Xerxes immediately returns to Susa. When his troops suffer another defeat the following year, he brings all the troop home. It is the last Persian effort to take the area.

The decision to **how** to replace Vashti was made before Xerxes left for battle. But it was not carried out because no one knew how long the war would last and how long Xerxes would be gone. But as soon as he returns - his 6th year, the search and preparation began. In his 7th year, 479 BC, he makes his choice and chooses Esther.

During the next year or two, **Mordecai** becomes a royal official, at the king's gate.

The city gate or king's gate always means city hall, the place of government business.

Once again God works thru the ordinary.

Mordecai, a government official overhears the conversation of 2 other officials. They are plotting to kill the king. Thru a messenger, Mordecai reports it to Esther. She tells the king, giving credit to Mordecai. The matter is investigated, found to be true and the 2 men are put to death.

In the historical records, it is noted that Mordecai reported the plot and saved the king's life.

Four to five years go by - it is now the 12th year of the king - 474 BC. Esther is still queen.

Chapter 3 introduces us to a new, major player in the story. His name is **Haman**.

He has become prime minister or secretary of state. Everyone is expected to bow before him, but Mordecai refuses.

When Haman learns the refusal is based on Jewish belief, he resolves not only to kill Mordecai, but all the Jewish race.

Mordecai understands Persian culture. He knows that the king and his representative are considered, not only as human, but also deity. So bowing or showing honor would be a recognition of their deity. Since that would break God's command, he refuses. Mordecai is now the 2nd person **willing to do what is right, no matter what**.

Knowing the family line of Haman is the **key** to this story.

Chapter 3:1 identifies him as son of Hammedatha, the Agagite.

If the verse had read, son of Hammedatha, the *Pharaohite*,

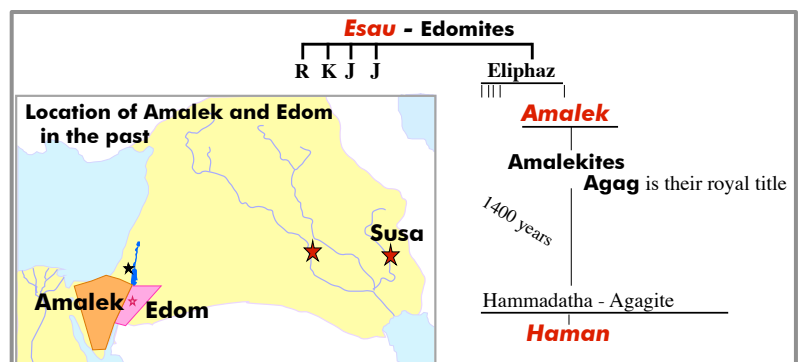
we would immediately know he was descended from the royal family in Egypt.

The word *Agagite* is a similar title. It

tells us he is descended from the royal family of the **Amalekites**.

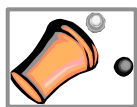
We get Haman's family records from the book of Genesis. There we have the story of Jacob and Esau. Esau never forgave Jacob for his deceit. He passed on his bitterness and resentment to his descendents.

Esau's descendents were the Edomites. From one of Esau's 5 sons came a grandson who was named Amalek. From him the Amalekite race developed.



Over the centuries the Edomites (all the descendents of Esau) and the Amalekites (descendents of 1 grandson) used every opportunity to destroy the Jews. Now, 1400 years after Esau's grandson, we find his descendent **Haman**, an Amalekite, once again wanting to kill the Jews.

In 3:7 we are told Haman develops his plan in the 1st month of the 12th year 474 BC. He believes the day and month of the Jews' destruction must be determined by the gods. The way to get answers is thru a Persian priest who will cast lots - an action somewhat like throwing dice.



The priest take 2 stones of different colors - one meaning *yes*, one meaning *no* and puts the stones in a sacred container. Sitting crossed-legged with something over his lap, he shakes the container and lets one stone fall out. Whichever it is, the stone representing *yes* or *no*, is the answer.

Haman starts out by asking, *shall we kill the Jews next month, the 2nd month?* The Persian priest shakes the stones, casts a lot and the stone representing *no* comes out. *Should it be the 3rd month?* The priest casts another lot. Again the stone for *no* comes out. He does this for each month until finally a *yes* answer appears. It will be in the 12th month.

Then he continues to cast lots in order to know the exact day. Should we do it the 1st day? The 2nd day? After casting lots 13x, the *yes* answer finally appears. So based on the lots, all Jews are to be killed on the 13th day of the 12th month.

12th Month											
				1	2	3	4				
5	6	7	8	9	10	11					
12	13	14	15	16	17	18					
19	20	21	22	23	24	25					
26	27	28	29	30							

That means nothing can happen for 11 months. Proverbs 16:33 says *the lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.* (see note at end of lesson). God was the One who caused a 11-month gap between the time Haman is planning this and the time it will actually happen. **God will use these 11 months and ordinary events to bring about extraordinary results.**

Haman's plan involves so much property and so many people, he needs the king's permission. To make sure he gets this permission, he first of all is vague when telling the king about these people. He probably knows the king will never approve of killing the Jewish people, since they are prominent business people thruout the empire. So Haman describes them as a *certain people* scattered thruout the empire who do not obey the king's laws. It would be better for the empire if they were destroyed. Then he offers the king a bribe - 10,000 talents of silver, which would be 15 million dollars in our money.

Each year the Persian empire took in about 17 million dollars. But the naval defeat 6 years earlier had hurt their resources. Haman knows this extra 15 million would certainly help. But Xerxes does not accept the money. He knows if Haman is offering 15 million, the confiscated property of whatever people it is, must be worth a lot more. So he lets Haman keep the 15 million and the Persian government will take the rest.

Haman has told the king it will be for the good of the empire and the king believes him. So permission is given and Haman makes it into law. All Jews thruout the empire are to be killed the 13th day of the 12th month. Since it is a new law, it has to be announced to the entire kingdom. But how is everyone going to know about it in an empire 3000 miles wide?

Chapter 3:14-15 explains that couriers or messengers are sent out to deliver the message and provide a copy of the law.

The Persians were known for their postal system. Heródotus, a Greek historian who lived at that time, wrote about the Persian wars. He also described **their postal system**. He writes in 450 BC.

Nothing mortal travels so fast as these Persian messengers. The entire plan is a Persian invention and this is the method of it. Along the whole line of road, there are men (they say) stationed with horses in number equal to the number of days which the journey takes, allowing a man and a horse to each day. And these men will not be hindered from accomplishing, at their best speed, the distance which they have to go, either by snow, or rain, or heat, or by the darkness of night. The first rider delivers his dispatch to the 2nd and the 2nd passes it to the 3rd and so it is borne from hand to hand along the whole line...

As you can see, our postal system and pony express came from the Persians. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, our pony express covered 1800 miles in 10 days. So the 3000 miles of the Persian empire could easily be covered in 1- 2 months. By the 3rd month everyone would know the new law, **all Jews are to be killed the 13th day of the 12th month.**

In the capital of Susa, Mordecai hears this law on the day it is issued. He sends a message to Esther - *go to the king and beg him to have mercy and spare the Jews.*

But in the royal palace things are not that simple. It is true that Esther is queen, but she does not have access to the king every day. She lives in a royal house separate from the king. She is the king's wife. But he also has other wives and a large harem. She only sees the king when he asks for her.

Persian law says the king must call for the person he wants to see. It is possible to ask for an appointment or even just appear before him, but unless the king holds out his golden scepter, the person is killed immediately. Since the king has not called for Esther in 30 days, asking to see him could easily bring refusal. Appearing unannounced could mean immediate death.

Mordecai reminds her, *God has put you in this position for **this** situation.*

Realizing the seriousness of it, she makes a commitment. She is now the 3rd person, **willing to do what is right, no matter what.** *If I perish, I perish.*

Knowing the spiritual is more important than the physical, she and the Jews in the capital, fast for the next 3 days. They use the time to confess their sin and then ask God to intervene on their behalf. Esther uses this time to spiritually prepare so she will be sensitive to God's timing.

Then she appears before the king. He puts out the scepter and asks, *What would you like?* She invites him and Haman to a private meal that afternoon. At the special meal the king again asks what she would like. She invites the 2 men to a special meal the next day and says she will make her request at that meal.

Haman is thrilled with these invitations. But as he leaves the palace, when Mordecai does not treat him as deity (to rise), the joy disappears. At home, he tells his family about it. They suggest he kill Mordecai the next day and then he can really enjoy his time with the king and queen.

Haman likes this idea. He orders gallows built on the city walls. This would make them 75 feet above the city streets. Everyone will be able to see what happens to a man who does not bow to him. But he needs the king's permission because Mordecai is a royal official. He plans to get that early the next morning.

Esther has had two opportunities to tell the king about Haman and his law, but both times she only invites him to a meal.

This is not out of fear or because of cleverness.

Her time of prayer has made her sensitive to God's timing. God has told her to wait.

It is while she is waiting that God begins another series of **ordinary events**.

Chapter 6:1 begins, *that night or that **very** night* - meaning the exact night between Esther's 1st meal and the one she will have the next day. God's timing is always perfect.

That night the king cannot sleep - certainly something **very ordinary**. He has historical records read to him. In that culture and time, that also was **ordinary**. God's part was to control which of the thousands of records would be chosen - the record of Mordecai saving his, the king's life, some 3-4 years earlier. As the king hears it read, he asks what reward had been given him.

The servants check and say that nothing had been done. The king wants to remedy this oversight, but is not sure what to do. By this time, it is morning so the king gets up, gets ready and goes to the royal hall. On the way he asks the servants if anyone is in the outer court. They reply that Haman is there waiting to see him. The king has him sent in to ask his opinion.

Remember, Haman has come for permission to kill Mordecai. But before he can open his mouth to make his request, the king asks, *If I want to honor someone, what should I do ?*

Thinking of himself, Haman suggests the person have a robe the king has worn, put around him. He should be put on the king's horse that has the royal crest and then be led thru the central part of the city with someone proclaiming, *this is the man the king has honored.*

The king says, *wonderful. Do everything you have said, for Mordecai..* Can you imagine the expression on Haman's face?

What a turn of events! Haman wants to kill Mordecai but now he has to honor him. There must have been something in Haman's expression because the king adds, *do not leave anything out of what you have said!*

Haman has to do it. But when he is finished, he goes home absolutely mortified, humiliated. In fact, he is so upset he completely forgets about the banquet. The servants come and get him.

At the meal, Esther now makes her request. She pleads for her life and the life of her people.

The king is shocked.

First of all, he did not know Esther was Jewish.

And then, he was not aware of any threat against the Jews. Remember, Haman has merely said it was a certain people.

When the king asks who would dare do such a thing as kill Esther and her people, she replies, *Haman is the man.* The king leaves the room in a rage. When he returns, the servants know Haman is to be killed. So they cover Haman's face - a sign he is to be executed.

The final touch is that after Haman is killed, he is hung on the very gallows he had built for Mordecai.

They had been elevated so everyone in the city could see what happened to a Jew who would not bow to him.

Now all can see what happened to **Haman** because **he** tried to kill the **Jews**.

It is at this point that Mordecai gets his true reward. He is given Haman's position and becomes secretary of state.

However the Jews are still in danger. A major weakness of the Persian government was that once a law was made, it could never be changed, not even by the king. The only way to deal with a bad law was to make another law that would counter-act the first. So Mordecai writes a law that when people try to kill the Jews on the 13th day of the 12th month, not only do the Jews have a right to kill their enemies, but the government will support them.

12th Month						
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

The first law had gone out in the first month. This law goes out in the 3rd month using the king's royal horses, the fastest horses available. This means the news will get to the entire kingdom in less than a month. Everyone will know about it by the 4th month and have 8 months to prepare.

Chapter 9 now jumps ahead to describe what happens on that fateful day - the 13th of the 12th month.

Many in the Persian kingdom hate the Jews and use the 1st law as an opportunity to attack and kill them.

But on the basis of the 2nd law, the Jews defend themselves and kill 500 of their enemies in Susa, plus the 10 sons of Haman.

Esther hears the enemy plans to attack the Jews in Susa on the next day. So she gets permission for the Jews to defend themselves on the 2nd day. The Jews are foreigners living in the Persian capital. They would not dare kill Persian citizens unless the king gave permission.

The king agrees to their defense. According to chapter 9:15, the Jews kill 300 more people the following day.

Verse 15 does not say the Jews were attacked. But the law said Jews could only kill Persian citizens **if** their lives were endangered. In order for the Jew's actions to be acceptable, they had to be attacked.

According to verse 16, in the rest of the empire, as the Jews were attacked and fought for their survival, they killed 75,000. The law had said they were entitled to all the property and goods of those who attacked them. But the Jews were not in it for the money. They only wanted the right to survive. We are told 2 separate times the Jews did not take any property or money of their enemies.

After the danger is over, Mordecai says the Jewish people are to remember this day for the rest of their history. It will be called the **Feast of Purim**. The Persian word for *lot* was *pur*. To decide the month and date of the Jews' destruction, the Persian priest had cast 24 lots. So the plural form of the word is used - *purim*.

The 13th day of their 12th month is to be a time of fasting and prayer, remembering what Esther and the people had done. The 14th and 15th are for exchanging gifts and celebration. From 474 BC to this day, Jews have celebrated the Feast of Purim. It is their last holiday in the Jewish religious year - usually during our month of February or March.

In the original Hebrew, the book of Esther never mentions the name of God. Yet the book is completely about God.

It was years later that Jews added extra parts so the Jewish concepts of God, prayer, temple and worship would be included.

When they translated the book into Greek, they included these additions only for the Greek text.

But in the original Hebrew text, God chose to leave His name out for a reason.

He had given the Jews opportunity to return to their land. However the majority preferred an easier life in Babylon or Persia.

To put it simply, the Jews did not want to be in the land God gave them - the land He gifted to them.

God's people were **openly** disobeying, so He could not **openly** bless them.

The book of Esther shows God hiding His face - leaving His name out of the book and yet being there to protect them.

As the British writer and scholar, J. Sidlow Baxter says, ...

God may be out of sight, but they are never out of His sight....

He may seem strangely silent, but He remains actively sovereign.

If God had not intervened, the Jews would have been totally annihilated

There would have been no Bible

No Jewish Messiah and

No salvation message.

Anti-Semitism, the desire to destroy the Jews, did not begin with Haman. It goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden.

God told Satan that a descendant of Eve would destroy his power (crush the serpent's – Satan's – head. Genesis 3:15).

Because of the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Satan believed that descendant would be the Jewish Messiah.

He would come from the Jewish race.

Obviously Satan wanted to keep his power. This meant he could not let the Messiah be born.

Satan's goals

- ★ **To destroy the Jewish race.** If there were no Jews, the Messiah could never be born.

In 3 major events, Satan used people to try and accomplish this.

When the Jews were still in Egypt, he used **Pharaoh** to kill the Jewish baby boys.

During the time of Esther, he uses **Haman** to plan the destruction of the Jews.

In the years between the Old and New Testament, a Greek king named **Antiochus Epiphanes** tries to destroy the Jews.

Satan did his level best to keep the Jewish Messiah from being born. But Jesus **was** born and Satan believed Jesus was the promised Messiah. Satan knew he lost the 1st battle. So he set a new goal.

- ★ **To keep Jesus from making payment for sin on the cross.**

Satan knew Jesus' payment would destroy his power.

Satan used **Herod** to kill all the baby boys in the area of Bethlehem.

28 years later, **Satan** himself tempted the humanity of Jesus.

If Jesus had given in, His payment on the cross would have been only for His own sin. But Jesus did **not** sin.

At first, when Jesus died on the cross, it looked like Satan had won. But Jesus' resurrection proved Jesus won and Satan had lost. John the apostle in 1 John 3:8 said, *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*

After Jesus' resurrection and Ascension, Satan began his 3rd and final battle plan –

- ★ **To keep Jesus from being King over an earthly kingdom.**

Satan knows Scripture and Satan believes Scripture.

He knows that Jesus cannot return as King until the Jews as a nation repent and ask Him to come. So he reasoned,

*If there are **no** Jews left in the world, they cannot ask Jesus to return. Jesus, therefore, cannot return and there can be no kingdom. This would mean that I, Satan, prince of this world, can keep my kingdom.*

So the goal of Satan, from the 1st century AD to the 21st century has been to get rid of the Jews.

His most effective way has been to create anti-Semitism - hatred and the desire to kill the Jews.

In our day, anti-Semitism is once again on the increase, in our country and world-wide. In addition, those of us who support the Jews because we believe what the Bible says, are also under attack.

The New Testament tells us things are going to get worse. But as in the days of Esther, God is going to intervene.

Satan is going to lose the final battle, just as he has lost the others. One day, the Jews as a people and nation will enjoy a physical kingdom, with Jesus as their Messiah King. We, as the Body of Christ, are going to meet Jesus in the air, to be with Him forever and to also share in His kingdom.

This is why Jesus said,

*When you see all the **chaos** and **evil** in the world increasing - when it looks like **Satan** is **winning**,*

***Do not let your hearts be troubled - Do not be afraid.** You believe in **God**; believe also in **Me** John 14:1*

Note from page 4 about "casting lots"

Proverbs 16:33 *The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.*

In the days of the Old Testament, all cultures used judges or people in authority for making decisions involving civil matters. But there were situations when they had no idea how to decide. To insure fairness, these were the time that lots were cast. It was the way to decide when to attack the enemy or who was to blame for some catastrophe. The Jews did it in the days of Joshua when the Promised Land was divided among the 12 tribes (Joshua 18:10). Samuel did it to show the Jews whom God had chosen to be their first king. (1 Samuel 10:20-21). The apostles did it to choose the replacement for Judas. (Acts. 1:28). Whether it was the enemy of God's people planning to harm them, or God's people needed direction, in the Old Testament, God guaranteed that He would control the answer that came thru the casting of lots.

However once the Church began and the Holy Spirit came to live within believers, the apostles no longer cast lots to make decisions. We, as God's people are to depend on God's guidance that may come thru common sense, wisdom of others, prayer, Scripture, circumstances, opportunities that open up or that are suddenly closed, etc. Our way of making decisions has changed. If others, who want to harm us, are still using random ways to get answers, we can be sure that God will still intervene to control the answers they get.

EXTRA INFORMATION FOR THE STUDIOUS AND INQUISITIVE

In the days of the Bible, Satan made many other attacks to keep the promised Messiah from destroying his - Satan's - power.

There were attacks in Old Testament days to keep the Messiah from being born

Cain kills Abel. The line of the Messiah was stopped. Abel was dead and Cain rejected God.

God gave Adam and Eve another son and thru him the line would continue. Genesis 4:8, 25

Satan corrupts the human race, so God had to destroy everyone except the family of Noah. Genesis 6:4-7, 11-13

Esau wanted to kill Jacob. Genesis 27:41

Saul tried to kill David by throwing a javelin at him. 1 Samuel 18:10-11

Queen Athaliah killed all the royal line of David except for one baby boy. 2 Kings 11:1-3

He was miraculously saved by his nurse, hidden and raised in the temple. His name was Joash.

There were attacks in New Testament days to keep Messiah Jesus from making payment for our sin.

Near the end of Jesus' 2nd year of ministry, He crossed the Sea of Galilee and was sleeping in the boat. Suddenly there was a **storm** so severe that even experienced fishermen thought they would die. I personally think the storm was another effort of Satan to kill Him. When Jesus rebuked the wind and waves He used the same words as when He rebuked demons in the life of a man. He said, *Be muzzled*. Mark 4:39
Satan was trying to kill Jesus.

At the end of Jesus' ministry, He and His disciples are heading for Jerusalem. Jesus tells them He will be put to death. **Peter** responds, *Lord, do not go to Jerusalem. You cannot let that happen to You*. Do you remember what Jesus says to Peter? *Get behind me, Satan*. It was Satan who put the idea and words in Peter's head.