

October 31, 2015

## Esther 2:19 – 3:15

Mordecai and Esther stayed in the Persian Empire after the Jews were allowed to return home from exile. They put their hope and security in what they could achieve on their own and assimilated into the Persian culture so well that no one knew their Jewish identity. Esther and Mordecai were being promoted with power and position and yet not owning God's mission or their unique identity.

In life there are many questions to which we will not have easy answers – or answers at all, this side of heaven. It is with this tension and ambiguity that we find ourselves as we study the story of Esther. As mentioned, there is moral ambivalence, complicated relationships, and even a display of the spiritual battle that rages against God and His plan to redeem His creation. As we sit in this tension, it is important to remember anew that God is our true King and the one in whom we can and should put our every hope.

### Questions:

1. What are the areas of your life where you find yourself assimilating so well into our 20<sup>th</sup> century, American culture that you are not owning your unique identity in Christ as a citizen of heaven? Please explain.
2. Haman & the Agagites were still alive during the time of Esther because of the Israelites' failure to obey God fully. When was a time in your life when you acted in disobedience that resulted in a more disastrous outcome than if you had originally obeyed?
3. Read Psalm 20:7. What are the ways that you try to secure your safety and comfort in this world? Where is your hope on a day-to-day basis? When crises hit?
4. Read 1Peter 5:6-9 and Ephesians 6:10-20.
  - a. What are the ways to appropriately fight the spiritual battle you are in?
  - b. What spiritual battles are you facing right now?