

Meditations from Esther (1): Ahasuerus and Michael Jackson

1. *The Story of Esther – a reminder*

2. *Hidden is not absent – God in the book of Esther and in our lives*

- hidden is not absent
- purposeful hiddenness
- the response to hiddenness: Ps 10, Ps 13, the cry of dereliction, the blessing of John 20
- where is God in the book of Esther?

3. *The negative example of Ahasuerus*

a) show-off / control freak – longing to be thought generous and powerful

- o display of chapter 1
- o 'generosity' of 2.18-19 (and poss of 3.11 (?))
- o offer of 5.3, 5.6, 7.2
- o his power must be known – 1.10-12 (not enough that ...); rage at thwarted will / shame

(i) think of Adam's sin like this (and the race, our nation etc)

(ii) think of your own sin like this

(iii) think of the Lord Jesus and this sin

- his life is the perfect counter-example – meditate on this and adore him
- his death is the perfect atonement – believe this and adore him
- his resurrection is the perfect power of renewal – rejoice in this, claim it and adore him

b) big baby – driven by passions and fleeing responsibility

- o driven by his passions / appetites: wine, rage, bed-pleasure; disproportion
- o manipulated by others: princes, servants, Haman, Esther all manipulate him: "the will of others becomes law" 1.21, 3.12, 8.9
- o abdication of official responsibility: hands over authority: 3.10-11, 8.8
- o flight from moral responsibility by externalizing what goes wrong:
 - avoiding blame in 2 and 7-8
 - solving things by passing laws

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(iii) think of the Lord Jesus and this sin

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Write these words which Esther said by drawing a line inside the letters:

I will go to the king though
it is against the law
and if I perish, I perish

Put a tick in the right box each time you hear these words:

Esther

Ahasuerus

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How many times is God mentioned in the book of Esther? \_\_\_\_\_

“Just because you can’t \_\_\_\_\_ someone doesn’t mean that they are \_\_\_\_\_.”

In John 20.29, who did Jesus say would be blessed?

Those who have \_\_\_\_\_ and yet have b\_\_\_\_\_.

Ahasuerus had three big things wrong with him

1. He cared too much w\_\_\_\_ other p\_\_\_\_\_ t\_\_\_\_\_ of him.
2. He always wanted to g\_\_\_\_ his o\_\_\_\_ w\_\_\_\_\_.
3. He behaved like a b\_\_\_\_\_ when he should have been g\_\_\_\_\_ up.

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An ABC of Esther (chapter by chapter). Learn them this week if you can.

1. Ahasuerus the show-off
2. Beautiful Esther
3. Cruel, genocidal Haman
4. Distress and discussion
5. Esther holds a banquet
6. Favour for Mordecai (Haman goes ‘grrr’)
7. Game over for Haman
8. Haman’s house handed over and his edict headed off
9. Invincible Jews and the feast of Purim
10. Just like Joseph and Jesus: the greatness of Mordecai