

Esther Series – A Plan for Annihilation Esther 3:1-15

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Open your Bibles. Title of the message this message, A Plan for Annihilation. We're doing the entire third chapter of Esther this message. And let me just tell you - this is NOT a political message. This is a spiritual message that needs to be heard badly.

It is a long message with a ton of historical information, so if you like history, then hopefully you'll stay awake because there's a lot of history. It started back when God made a covenant with Abram (soon to be Abraham), the Father of the Jews and the Father of the nation of Israel. It was an unconditional covenant, which means it was not based on Israel's performance.

Praise God, because if this covenant would have been based on Israel's performance, then God's covenant with you would have been based on your performance, and they failed and you failed and everybody failed. So God made it unconditional, meaning it is based on his faithfulness. So an unconditional covenant made with Abraham based on God's faithfulness, not Abraham's performance.

Here is just a little snippet of that covenant. I'm going to be throwing out a lot of scriptures, and I'll be using the NLT a lot so I don't have to explain the literal translation.

Genesis 17:7-8 God says to Abram, ***“This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you. And I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants. It will be their possession forever, and I will be their God.”***

I need to just give you a little bit of news about God. When he says forever, he means *forever*. God has this special place in his heart, if you will, for the people of Israel, for the Jewish people.

In Zechariah 2:8, God says to Israel, ***“he who touches you touches the apple of my eye.”***

That should be a sufficient warning for people that God is really serious about his covenant with Israel – about his care and his love for the Jewish people. Partly, it's because of the second half of a verse back in Genesis 12, when God first introduced Abram to this unconditional covenant.

The second half of Genesis 12:3 says, ***“All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”*** We know that that means that the Messiah is going to come through Israel. So God makes this everlasting covenant. He guarantees their protection and their care, partly (or maybe primarily), because the Messiah is going to come to the world through the nation of Israel, by which is how you and I get to be saved. So we like his covenant with Israel. We like it a lot.

However, there's the first half of that verse, the beginning half, and it's something that we need to hear today. Because of God's everlasting covenant with Israel and because the Messiah is going to come through Israel, Genesis 12:3 God says, ***"I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt."***

God says to Abram in the very early days of this covenant, ***"I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you."*** God does not throw words around lightly. He makes that really, really serious. We need to hear that. And though this is not a political message, our leaders of this country need to hear that.

When God says, ***"I will bless those who bless Israel,"*** he means it. When God says, ***"I will curse those who curse Israel,"*** guess what? He means it and we're going to see it today. That's always been true and it always will be true. There's only one point I want you to see today. There's only one thing I want you to see today and that is God's guaranteed everlasting, eternal covenant with the nation of Israel, with the Jewish people.

Now you might be saying, "Yeah, but (in our classic American culture way) what does that have to do with me and my life?" In a word: everything. Why? Because if God will keep his everlasting and eternal covenant with Israel, then he will keep his everlasting and eternal covenant with you. And if God lets Israel down, then he'll let you down.

So, do you want to know how strong that guarantee is that God is going to protect and care for the nation of Israel? You do, right? Because it means that you can have faith that if God will do it for Israel, then he will certainly do it for you. That's the application. Let's pray.

Father God, please just show us with one clear sign or one clear fact, one clear truth, that when you said that Israel will always be yours, you meant it. When you said, Lord, that you will always fight for them, you meant it. When you said, Lord, that you would never leave them, you meant it. All through history, you've proven it over and over and over again. Help us to see that, Lord. Help us, God, to let that cause us to fall in love with Israel. Let it also cause us to be just as faithful, Lord; that as you will never leave them, you will never leave us, and as you, Lord, will care for them, you will care for us. Show us those truths today through Your Word, Lord. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Here's the number one thing that proves God's faithfulness to Israel. It doesn't sound very right, but it's true. The number one thing that proves God's faithfulness to Israel is the consistent attempts of the devil to annihilate those people. That, in and of itself, proves a couple of things.

Number one, it proves God exists when you see the history of God protecting them and fighting for them. Number two; it proves that, in fact, they are God's people because there has been this incredible history of the enemy of God never stopping his attempts to annihilate the Jewish people and the nation of Israel.

In fact, back in Genesis, right in the early days, Abram was like us. He made a whole bunch of mistakes. Twice Abram lies about Sarai who would be Sarah, his wife. He says she's his sister. And twice he almost loses her as his wife. Twice God had to step in and go, "Listen, you not-so-smart guy. Get your wife back. She's going to be the mother of Israel, so quit trading her off to kings and pharaohs." Check it; it's there. So God saves his wife.

I don't even have time to get into the Isaac and Ishmael mêlée. You know what I'm talking about? If you don't know about the Isaac and Ishmael mêlée, it's a whole story in itself. Eventually Isaac, the promised seed, is born; and then through Isaac, Jacob (whose name is changed from "heel-catcher" to *Israel* – "governed by God"); and then through Jacob, the twelve tribes of Israel are born. Everybody follows the story. You need to know that story. And then Joseph is in Egypt, there's a famine, and he brings his family. Then 400 years later, they're slaves in Egypt. That's Exodus.

Not only this pharaoh make them slaves, but then the first real attempt to annihilate the Jewish people comes at the hand of the pharaoh when he commands the midwives to drown all the baby boys. A Hebrew baby boy is born, throw him in the river and drown him. Some midwives did. I'm sure at least one did not, and that one put her baby in a little boat and sent him down the river. And he got picked up by the pharaoh's own daughter. That's just like God. God's like, "Yeah, try it!" I think he slaps his knee.

Moses gets sent down the river and the pharaoh's own daughter takes him in and cares for him. And guess what? Here's the thing we have to see. God consistently turns the enemy's attempts to curse Israel back on the enemy. He consistently turns the enemy's attempts to curse Israel into good for Israel.

So in the 10th plague, they finally got Israel released from Egypt. What was the plague? Angel of Death. The Angel of Death came and took out all the firstborn in Egypt. Why? Because they tried to take out the firstborn of God's people. God says, "I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you. You take out the firstborn of Israel; your firstborn are going to get taken out." How about the river thing? "You drown my babies in the river; I'll drown your army in the Red Sea."

We need to have a respect for the God of the Universe. If he says, "Don't mess with my people," then we ought to go, "Hey; let's not mess with his people." There we go through Exodus.

Here's the one I really want you to see. Right after they cross the Red Sea, they haven't even got to Mount Sinai yet and they're already complaining and whining and all that. So they're marching and they're tired and they're worn out, and this scumbag army attacks them from the rear. Not the front, but from the rear this army comes up and attacks them.

This is a very famous battle where Joshua is in the valley running the battle and Moses is up on the hill holding the staff up. He's interceding for Joshua in the battle. That's when Aaron and Hur have to come sit Moses on a rock and they help him hold up the staff so that he can pray. As long as his hands were up and he was praying, then God gave them supernatural victory over this army.

This matters. That army was the Amalekites. The Amalekites were the descendants of Esau. Esau was Jacob's twin brother and Esau has sold his birthright for a bowl of stew. And then Esau and the Amalekites that descended from him became these carnal, worldly, brutal, God-hating people. In fact, they became the sworn enemies of God. So the Lord's not happy with them.

In Exodus 17:14, it says this: ***"After the victory, the LORD instructed Moses, 'Write this down on a scroll as a permanent reminder, and read it aloud to Joshua: I will erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven.'"*** I don't know if you understand it or not, but God has this thing called wrath, and you don't want to be under it.

Exodus 17:16 ***"He said, 'They have raised their fist against the LORD's throne (by attacking Israel), so now the LORD will be at war with Amalek generation after generation.'"***

In Deuteronomy, the second giving of the law (just in case they forgot), the Lord reminds them. Deuteronomy 25:19 ***"You shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you shall not forget."*** It seems like the Lord's got a point here. He's trying to get something across to the leaders of Israel.

What if those Amalekites were sworn to the annihilation of the Jews? What if there was a power behind the Amalekites that drove them to desire the annihilation of God's people? And what if God was acting in these commands to actually save the nation of Israel so that the Messiah could be brought through them so that you and I can be saved? What if that was the case?

So 400 years goes by and Israel gets their first king. He's a guy just like us. No, not David. He's not like us. It's Saul. He's more like us.

Saul comes along and God says to Saul through the prophet Samuel in 1 Samuel 15:2, ***"I have decided to settle accounts with the nation of Amalek."*** It's only been 400 years. God's like, "Man, I'm still kind of worked up about that Amalekite thing."

"I have decided to settle accounts with the nation of Amalek for opposing Israel when they came from Egypt. Now, go and completely destroy the entire Amalekite nation." forever means forever, what does "completely destroy" mean? It means completely destroy, doesn't it? Saul said yes, but his action said no.

Here's another name I need you to remember. The king of the Amalekites at this time was a guy named Agag. Ugh! It's like "Agh!" Remember Agag.

1 Samuel 15:9 ***"Saul and his men spared Agag's life and kept the best of...everything...that appealed to them. They destroyed only what was worthless or of poor quality."***

Now, do you think that's the definition of "completely destroy"? No. And so God removed Saul because of his prideful disobedience for not completely destroying the Amalekites and King Agag. That's the reason – and really it was his pride – that got Saul removed.

Now, you might be wondering: What in the world does that have to do with the Book of Esther, chapter 3? Remember this. The king of the Amalekites was named Agag. He was supposed to be destroyed by Saul. He wasn't destroyed by Saul. In fact, Agag's descendants were named after him. So the descendants of Agag get this stupid name. They are Agag-ites. I didn't write it; I just tried to say it. They're Agagites.

Now you're ready to read Esther 3:1. ***"After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite (it is connected), the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him and set his throne above all the officials who were with him."*** So Haman the Agagite who comes from the sworn enemy of God suddenly gets promoted to the place of highest honor under King Ahasuerus in the Persian Empire. What a coincidence.

There is something going on here that is so much bigger than one man. It is so much bigger than one generation. When we read "Haman the Agagite," we are referring here to a battle that has been going on in the spiritual realm since God made his everlasting covenant with Abram.

We're referring to a battle that goes beyond a person, beyond a generation, and beyond a people. It goes to the source of the battle, because there has been a source of this drive since the beginning of Abraham and the people of Israel. There's been a power behind the drive to always annihilate Israel and the Jewish people. And it's not Agag. It's the power behind Agag.

So we're not going to enter into a Hatfield and McCoy feud type situation here. We're looking at a much bigger picture. I want you to see that. We're looking at a much bigger picture. It's an eternal sized battle between the devil and God. It's an eternal sized battle between those who were driven by the devil and those who are loved by God. There should be no Agagite. His people were supposed to be destroyed as God's response for them trying to destroy Israel.

It seems to me, in verse 2, that maybe – just taking it under consideration – maybe Mordecai knows. Esther 3:2 ***"And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate***

bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage.”

Now some people compare Mordecai’s stance here to Daniel and his friends not bowing to the 90-foot image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. It’s a totally different deal. This isn’t idol worship. This is the respect for a royal position. We can go all through the Bible and find God’s people bowing out of respect to a royal position.

Plus, Mordecai’s no hero of the faith so you can’t say, “Oh yeah, he’s like Daniel. He won’t bow to Haman because he’s a God worshipper.” Nobody can even tell he’s a God worshipper, so this isn’t because he’s worshipping God. So what else is going on, Mordecai? What is it that causes you to not bow to Haman the Agagite?

Maybe Mordecai was not openly religious, but maybe he was zealously passionate for his people. In fact, I believe he was. And I believe he knew very well who the Agagites were and he knew his history very well and he knew that this pinhead was a member of the descendants of those who were sworn to annihilate God’s people: the Amalekites. It puts a little twist on the story, doesn’t it?

Both Mordecai’s refusal and the fact that Haman is a descendant of Agag are going to be key points in the rest of this chapter and, in fact, the rest of the Book of Esther.

Esther 3:3 ***“Then the king’s servants who were at the king’s gate said to Mordecai, ‘Why do you transgress the king’s command?’”*** Verse 4 ***“And when they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai’s words would stand, (look at the end of verse 4) for he had told them that he was a Jew.”***

It’s interesting, isn’t it, that now Mordecai decides to tell people he’s a Jew? Why do you think that would be? Why would Mordecai all of a sudden say, “Okay, I’ve had enough. I’m a Jew. I’m a member of God’s chosen race and I’m not going to hide it anymore.”

Is there a chance it’s because an Agagite has been elevated to the highest position under the king? Is there a chance that Mordecai realizes that at this moment he has to stand up and go face to face with the sworn enemy of God’s people? I think there’s at least a chance, if not a really, really good chance.

The king’s servants tried to get Mordecai to just bow down. “Just bow down to him, man. What’s the big deal? It’s not going to hurt you.” Mordecai says, “I’m a Jew and I’m not bowing to that guy.” And so they go and they tell Haman about it, and they also tell Haman that Mordecai is a Jew.

Esther 3:5 ***“And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury.”*** Verse 6 ***“But he disdained (he thought it was not***

good enough) *to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, as they had made known to him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus* (which of course included Israel and Jerusalem).”

So, one Jew with a bad attitude and the guy in charge wants to annihilate an entire race of people. Doesn't that seem a little out of balance to you? Doesn't that seem a little excessive? Isn't there a chance that there's a bigger picture here? Isn't there a chance that there's a force behind these decisions that we're not seeing? Really, Haman? One Jew has got a bad attitude and you want to annihilate a whole race. It seems a little odd, doesn't it?

I'll tell you why. There's an enemy of God's people who's always at work to annihilate them. Always. Always has been, always will be. Hitler was nowhere near the first. He was one in a long line. And here we have the Hitler of 400 B.C. right here, Haman, who wakes up one morning and decides to annihilate the Jewish race thinking somehow it was his good plan, thinking somehow it was in response to Mordecai not bowing down to him.

It wasn't in response to Mordecai not bowing down to him. It was in response to the devil driving him and giving him opportunity to be a pawn in the devil's ongoing scheme to destroy God's people. That's really what's happening here. And guess what? He didn't stop in 400 B.C.

Esther 3:7 from the NLT *“So in the month of April, during the twelfth year of King Xerxes’ (that’s Ahasuerus) reign, lots were cast (this is important for the story) in Haman’s presence (the lots were called Purim) to determine the best day and month to take action. And the day selected was March 7, nearly a year later.”*

So they cast lots – they called it Purim – in order to determine the best day to annihilate the Jewish people. And so, to this day, the celebration of Purim comes out of the book of Esther. It comes from this word right here – not because Haman and his servants cast lots to determine the day to annihilate the Jews, but because of what happens at the end of the story. Oh, it gets good. But we're not there yet.

Watch how Haman sells it to our crazy king. Remember our king is crazy. If you haven't been with us in the first two chapters of Esther, this guy is off his rocker.

Esther 3:8 *“Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus (watch for the propaganda – watch for the manipulation, the half-truths, and the untruths), ‘There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king’s laws (that’s a lie), so that it is not to the king’s profit to tolerate them.’”*

NLT, help us out. What does it mean? NLT says at the end of Verse 8, ***“So it is not in the king’s interest to let them live.”***

“Hey, King, there are some people. You haven’t heard about them, but they’re all over all of your kingdom and they’re different. They’re kind of annoying, never pay full price. What do you say we just annihilate them? Honestly, to let them live isn’t in your best interest.” Do you see it? It’s a propaganda campaign. Do you realize that propaganda campaigns against the people of God are just as active today as they were in 400 B.C.?

You see this stuff on TV. Thank you, CNN, the great propagandist in our country. When you see this stuff, it’s propaganda. It’s designed for a purpose, just like this propaganda here is designed for a purpose. And the people who are designing it think they’re in charge. They’re not. They’re not in charge. There is a power behind the propaganda against God’s people that is from the pit of hell.

From the pit of hell come these plans for annihilation of the people of God. A thousand years before the Koran was written, the enemy who was planning the annihilation of God’s people was already in full action. Mohammad was late on the scene.

Since Abram was Abram, the enemy has been designing and motivating people to annihilate Israel and the Jews. It’s amazing to study these plans of annihilation for Israel because there’s a consistent theme through them all. They make no sense.

I love this stuff, but I spent a ton of time on this message because of the history aspect of it. I tried to search Hitler’s reason for exterminating the Jews. He didn’t have one. It was just hate. It was just random hate. “I hate all those people. Kill them all. Just annihilate them all. I don’t know why.”

The same as Haman. Haman says, “I’ve got one Jew here who won’t show me respect. I’m going to annihilate the whole race. That makes sense.” No, Haman, that doesn’t make sense. That makes no worldly sense at all. That level of logic still exists today.

Haman, the descendant of the sworn enemy of God’s people seals the deal with King Ahasuerus in verse nine. Esther 3:9 he says, ***“If it please the king, let it be decreed*** (remember, once a decree is written it’s irreversible. Remember the Vashti incident when Vashti could not be returned to the king because he wrote a decree) ***that they*** (the Jews) ***be destroyed and*** (oh, by the way) ***I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king’s business, that they may put it into the king’s treasuries.”***

“Hey, listen, “King A.” If you’ll just sign this little decree, I’ll drop off 10,000 talents of silver.” That is a lot of silver. It’s maybe a couple hundred tons of silver.

Knowing this King like we do, we're not surprised to read Esther 3:10 (from the NLT for instant clarification) ***“The king agreed, confirming his decision by removing his signet ring from his finger and giving it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite (look at the Holy Spirit’s emphasis), the enemy of the Jews.”***

Do you see that? No word is in there by mistake. No word is in there by chance. The Holy Spirit says, “This is the guy who is the enemy of the Jews today.” Before, it was the Pharaoh; before, it was Agag; before, it was the Amalekites. Today, it's Haman. Later it's going to be someone else, but there is always going to be “the enemy of the Jews.” Just like Hitler was in 1940. Just like this Iranian kook is today. I just say kook because I can't pronounce his name; otherwise I would just respectfully say his name. There's always someone who is the enemy of the Jews, always.

Do we not learn anything from history? For thousands of years, the enemy has put an enemy of the Jew in a critical place to attempt to annihilate God's people. This setting where Haman goes to this King would be like (and I could try to say his name but I think you know who I'm talking about) this president of Iran going to our president and saying, “Hey, do you mind if I go ahead and annihilate the Jews? Is that a big deal to you?”

It would be absurd, right? He's already said it. He's already told our president and every other president. “As soon as I get a nuclear weapon, the first thing I'm going to play with it with is annihilating the Jewish people.” We're just like, “Oh, you're kidding, right? You're kidding. We're not going to sell you cigarettes if you annihilate the Jewish people.”

This proves God's existence and this proves the existence of Israel as God's people. Let me just break some news to you. The Devil has not created scheme after scheme for the last 3,000 years to annihilate the Anglo-Saxons! There is no other scheme in the history of the world – there is no other repeated scheme to annihilate a race – besides the race of God's people, over and over and over again, right to today.

It's not because the Jews are annoying. It's not because they've done anything. Study it yourself. It's for no reason. It's because they exists and the ruler of this world doesn't want them to exist. That's the whole of it.

Esther 3:11 (Again, the NLT just to help you see the feel, the inference of the verse)

“The king said, ‘The money and the people are both yours to do with as you see fit.’”

It's a little unclear if the king took this money or not, but at least half the scholars believe that the king is just nonchalantly saying, “Well, if that’s what you want to do, go ahead. If that's what you want to do with both the money and the Jews, the treasury box is right over here. Do what you want with the Jews.”

It's not for sure whether the king took the money or not, but I'm thinking he did. When you're throwing six month parties for an entire kingdom, you need some pocket change to do that. I think he gets some here.

Esther 3:12, Haman immediately moves forward with his plan. ***“Then the king’s scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and an edict (an irreversible edict), according to all that Haman commanded (the king is out of the picture), was written to the king’s satraps and to the governors over all the provinces and to the officials of all the peoples, to every province in its own script and every people in its own language. It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king’s signet ring.”***

Like the King actually made this decision himself. Can you imagine? Can you imagine, let's say, a leader of a country who was just doing what the string pullers behind him told him to do and he just had the look? I'm just saying it could happen.

So another plan to annihilate the Jewish race is put into motion. Just like the plan was put into motion in Hitler's Germany. Just like the plan is in motion today in radical Islam. When I tell you there is a plan in radical Islam to annihilate the Jewish people, it is a well-known, worldwide, guaranteed fact. It's not even a fear; it's just a fact. But they're not first in line. There has always been somebody wanting to annihilate God's people, always, because there is a force behind all of these schemes that's not human.

Really, honestly, how would you like it? How would you like to have a 3,000 year history of person after person and group after group trying to annihilate your entire race? We just can't even fathom that. We can't even understand that. Three thousand years of people trying to annihilate them and then we think they're a little sensitive when this enemy who is bent on their destruction just fires a few thousand rockets into their schoolyards?

“Come on, Israel, it's just rockets exploding in your schoolyards and neighborhoods. Why are you all up in arms about it?” Listen; let's try having Mexico rain down some rockets on the schoolyards in San Diego. Let's see how uncommitted we are, right?

We're like, “Hey, Israel, don't protect yourself. It's only been 6,000 rockets in the last few years. Don't you be an aggressor. Just duck more.” That's what the world says to Israel. That's stupid because the ruler of the world is in charge. (Got a little close to politics there.)

Haman's plan set in motion. Esther 3:13, ***“Letters were sent by couriers to all the king’s provinces with instruction to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews..”*** What do you mean by that? I'm not sure it's clear, the decree. ***“...to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews.”*** you know, that's just what Hitler said, right? And that's just what radical Islam

says. "Listen, all we want to do is to destroy and kill and annihilate all the Jews. Oh, and all the Christians. Oh, and the Americans. That's it."

"...destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day (destroy them all), the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and (look at this end) to plunder their goods."

The phrase there, "to plunder all their goods" means whoever kills them gets to keep their stuff. That's exactly what it means. The NLT says, **"The property of the Jews would be given to those who killed them."** That's just motivation. They used that in Nazi Germany to the SS soldiers. "Listen, if you go in there and wipe out a family, go ahead and take a few things for yourself. It's just fair payment for your work." Same thing that Haman is doing in the Persian kingdom. "Listen, everybody. Go kill yourself a Jew and you get his stuff." Motivation.

The decree sent out posthaste so that everyone can be ready for the killing day. Esther 3:14 **"A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province by proclamation to all the peoples to be ready for that day."** Can you imagine it? Get ready because it's going to happen again, someday.

Verse 15 **"The couriers went out hurriedly by order of the king, and the decree was issued in Susa the citadel. And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was thrown into confusion."**

Again, the end of verse 15, **"And the king and Haman sat down to drink..."**

Haman says to the King, "If I give you a bunch of oil, will you let me murder all of the Jews?" Was it oil? I forget. Whatever it was. "If I give you something, would you let me just go ahead and annihilate the Jews?"

Then King Ahasuerus says, "I don't see why not. Let's have a cold one." That's what he does. "Yeah, sure, go ahead and annihilate a whole race of people. You got a beer on you?" It's unreal. This is unreal. The reason it's unreal is because it's not natural. It is supernatural. It is spiritual in its origin. It's spiritual in its origin. It's not natural and that's why it sounds so unreal. There is a spiritual enemy that is bent on the destruction of God's people. He was bent, he is bent, and he will always be bent on their destruction. That's why the end of verse 15 says, **"But the city of Susa was thrown into confusion."** Why? Because normal people are like, "Why do you want to kill them all? What have they done to you?" The city's in confusion. They don't understand.

I don't want to ruin the story for you, but I just want to jump ahead a little bit and tell you the devil loses. Whoop, whoop! Come on. The devil loses and Haman's plans to annihilate the Jews more than backfire on him.

I just want to skim history for you really quick. From Esther to today, let me just hit a few high points. I cut out tons of historical information for you today.

Skip ahead 300 years to 170 BC. An antichrist named Antiochus – a general of Alexander the Great – makes a decree that the Jews either give up worshipping their God or be annihilated. He takes over Jerusalem. He desecrates the temple; he sacrifices a pig on the altar of God. he puts up an image of Zeus and then his army begins taking out any Jews who refuse to forsake their worship of their God until he gets to a little town with an old priest named Mattathias who has a son who decides to just say, “No.”

This son was called Maccabee. Maccabee means “the hammer.” It does. This old man's son rose up with a guerrilla group of God fearers and they put down the Syrian army and they took over Jerusalem and they restored the temple. They cleansed it and they restored worship in the temple, and in the process they lit a menorah and they were out of olive oil. It was going to take eight days for them to make more olive oil. They said, “No, we've just got to light it. We've got to restore the worship.” So they light the menorah and guess how long the oil lasts in the menorah? Eight days.

Guess what the celebration of Hanukkah is about? That menorah being lit for eight days. Why? Because it was a supernatural, miraculous intervention by God on behalf of Israel to take out an entire army because they messed with God's people. That's why.

It will not end. You watch. A hundred years later, Satan goes back to his baby killing approach. Sometimes I think like his approach is in this country. He got Herod to kill all the male babies in Bethlehem to try and eliminate the Christ child.

Thirty-three years later, Satan thinks he wins, right? “I've got him now, man. I got the religious leaders to crucify him.” On the third day, “Uh-oh. Not good!” That was a major backfire on the third day for the enemy. So you would think he would be like, “Okay. I'm done.” No way. There's no way. It just made him madder. He's more intent on destroying the people of God that he ever was, even after Jesus conquered him once and for all in the resurrection.

So in 70 AD the Romans destroy the temple. You know the story. They exile the Jews. It's the beginning of the Diaspora. They rename the area. Guess what the Romans rename the area? In order to blot out the memory of the Jews in the land, the Romans renamed the territory Palestina because they wanted no reference to the Jews in the land.

In 600 AD a new enemy comes on the scene. One guy decides to roundup all of the Arab nations under a religious zeal called Islam. The Christians get involved in 1100 AD. The Catholic Church. (No.) Yes. The Catholic Church sends the Crusaders to wipe out the Jews. Massacre them all. You mean the devil influenced the church leaders? You don't have a TV? Yeah, he did. That was the Dark Ages and the church decided to massacre the Jews.

The Arabs and the Turks control the land until Britain takes it over in 1917. Then after that, from 1917 on, the British are controlling the land but they want the Arab oil even back then. So they're turning kind of a blind eye to the Arabs' continued massacres of the Jews in the land. It's just unbelievable until 1940.

And the Hitler regimen begins the Holocaust. By 1945 six million Jews are annihilated for no reason, except that one guy is crazy. Do you know the only reason I could find that made any sense at all? Is that Hitler had a syphilis-related mental disorder. That's the best they could come up with why he wanted to annihilate the Jews – because of an STD.

Three years after that phenomenal horror on May 14, 1948, the new state of Israel signs its Declaration of Independence. The very next day, within 24 hours, five Arab nations attack one day old Israel all at once and Israel kicks their butts.

Really? Five superior, zealous-for-destruction nations against a one day old Jewish nation and God says, "Let me help you out here." So not only does Israel win the war of their independence, but three more times these Arab nations gather together to destroy Israel and three more times Israel kicks their tail.

Then do you know what they do? They give them back the land they took from them. That's unheard of. The Gaza Strip wouldn't be a killing zone for Israel had they not given back Sinai once they took it. It would blow your mind how wrong it is when you look at history and go, "Really? The world let's that happen?" Yeah, because there's a ruler in this world.

Here's a funny bit of information. For almost 1,000 years, the Arabs controlled the land that Israel returned to. For 1,000 years, none of them wanted it. For 1,000 years, the land that we call Israel today was a barren, malaria-infested swamp. And none of the Arab nations that claimed control of it ever did a thing to it for 1,000 years.

Now here's my question. Why, the day after Israel becomes a state, why are all five of the surrounding Arab nations suddenly so interested in annihilating the Jews and taking over this land? Is it because of the land? No. It's not because of the land. And it's not because of the land today. They want complete annihilation of God's people. Nothing else will satisfy. They claim it all the time. They teach their children this on TV and in grade school.

It's just the truth. There's no logical reason on earth for the history this world has of trying to annihilate God's people. There's no logical reason, but there's a reason. The reason is the spiritual enemy. It's the spiritual enemy who is dedicated to doing his worst to God by destroying his people – primarily the Jews; primarily Israel. It is the outworking of the Devil's work.

Until the day that he gets thrown into the lake of fire, he will continue to attempt to annihilate the Jews. But he will never, ever, ever succeed. He will never succeed. I wish so bad that I had the time to spell out to you the prophetic side of the enemy's attack against God's people. It takes up the entire second half of the tribulation and it is awesome. It's awesome.

Not to mention the phenomenal prophecies in Zechariah and Daniel about how the whole crazy world gathers together to attack Israel and God just says, "Do you know what? I'm not busy. Let me lend a hand." And God just wipes out the armies of the world because they're messing with Israel.

I want you to know that God wins in the end. God wins in the end. Let me tell you something right now. If you walk out today and the sun's still shining, you can have confidence. If the moon's in the sky tonight and the stars are in their place, you can have confidence that your God is faithful.

Look at Jeremiah 31:35. It says, ***"Thus, says the Lord who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar, the Lord of hosts (that's his military name) is his name."***

Jeremiah 31:36, ***"If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the Lord, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me."***

Here's the deal. Do you want to know how faithful God is? He will be on Israel's side until there is no more sun. He will protect his people until there is no more moon. He will fight for Israel until the stars don't shine in the heavens. That's how long God will be faithful to Israel.

Here's the point. This is the application. That's how long God will be faithful to you. If God says, "As long as the sun and the moon and the stars are in the sky, I will not break my everlasting, unconditional covenant with my people." Then you say, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I'm grafted in. I'm one of those people. If God's character is to not forsake Israel, then the same character is to me. If God won't forsake them, he won't forsake me. No matter what enemy comes against me, if they won't fall to their enemies, then I won't fall to my enemies."

Because of what God does to Israel and for Israel, we can have faith that God will never leave us nor forsake us. As long as the sun and the moon and the stars are in the sky, then God will be faithful to us. Don't forget it. Let's pray.

Oh, Lord. We love Israel, Lord, because of what it means, because of who they are, God. Because they're your people, Lord, we love them. Because of what they represent, Lord, we are blessed to be grafted in, Lord. We are blessed to be grafted in, God.

Lord, we know today, that no matter, Lord, who the enemy stirs up to attack your people, there is no one greater than you, God. There is no God but Jehovah. There is no God but Jehovah. You are Lord. You are the Lord of the hosts of heaven and, Lord; you will fight for your people. Lord, today may we be glad that we're on your side.

Give us the confidence, Lord, and help us to see, Lord, help us to see the tragedy of the ruler of this world constantly trying to annihilate your people. Cause us, Lord, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Lord, help us to see. Help us to see with spiritual eyes that it's not by chance that nation exists. It's not by chance that the entire language, Lord, was rebirth after being absolutely extinct from the world. It's not by chance, Lord, that no matter what comes against Israel that you will fight for them and they will win. It's because you are who you say you are. If you are for them, you are for us.

So we leave here today in confidence, Lord, that we belong to you, also, grafted in and grateful – grateful that you saved your people to bring forth the Messiah to save us and draw us to Yourself. We're grateful, Lord, and we do not cower at any enemy because we know you are with us. In Jesus' name, amen.