

AN APPOINTED TIME

THE
FEAST *of*
PURIM



GARY HARGRAVE



DO YOU BELIEVE IN DIVINELY APPOINTED TIMES IN GOD? I DO. GOD IN HIS TIMING HAS SPECIAL MOMENTS, SPECIAL DAYS IN WHICH HE DETERMINES BY HIS NAME THAT HE IS GOING TO MOVE. I BELIEVE THAT THE FEAST OF PURIM, ALSO CALLED THE FEAST OF ESTHER, IS ONE SUCH OCCASION.

In the Book of Esther, King Ahasuerus reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces and sat on his royal throne in the citadel in Susa. He decided to entertain his nobles and princes with lavish banquets to display the riches of his glory and the splendor of his great majesty (Esther 1:1-8). After much drinking and celebration, the king ordered Queen Vashti to appear before them wearing her crown to display her beauty. The queen refused to come and was banished for showing contempt at the king's command. When the king's anger subsided, he spoke a decree to gather every beautiful young virgin in his kingdom to the citadel of Susa, so he could find a new queen to replace Vashti.

FROM EXILE TO QUEEN

Esther was a beautiful Jewish exile who lived in Persia during the fifth century BCE. She was an orphan, so her cousin Mordecai raised her as his own daughter (Esther 2:7). When Esther was taken to the citadel of Susa as a contender to become the new queen, Mordecai warned her to tell no one she was a Jew. After months of preparation, Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus and she "found favor in the eyes of all who saw her" (Esther 2:12-16). The king loved Esther and highly esteemed her, so he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen over all the land of Persia (Esther 2:17). As the story unfolds, the king established Haman with great authority and commanded that all the king's princes and all his subjects should bow down to him. Being a Jew, Mordecai refused to bow down. In his rage, Haman was set to annihilate the Jewish people.



Satan often works through different individuals, generations, and families; Haman was a descendant of Agag, king of Amalek. When Amalek fought against Israel at Rephidim, God swore in His wrath, “I will utterly wipe out the memory of Amalek from under heaven” (Exodus 17:14). That is why God was set to destroy Amalek, because from the very beginning, the Amalekites were determined to destroy Israel (1 Samuel 15:32-33). In his plan to kill Mordecai, Haman told King Ahasuerus, “There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom ... and they do not observe the king’s law, so it is not in the king’s interest to let them remain” (Esther 3:8). The king placed his signet ring on Haman’s hand and told him to do as he pleased with this people (Esther 3:10-11). Thus, a decree was issued throughout the land to destroy the Jews, “being written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king’s signet ring” (Esther 3:12). By the law of the Medes and Persians, once a decree was sealed with the king’s signet ring, it became irrevocable.

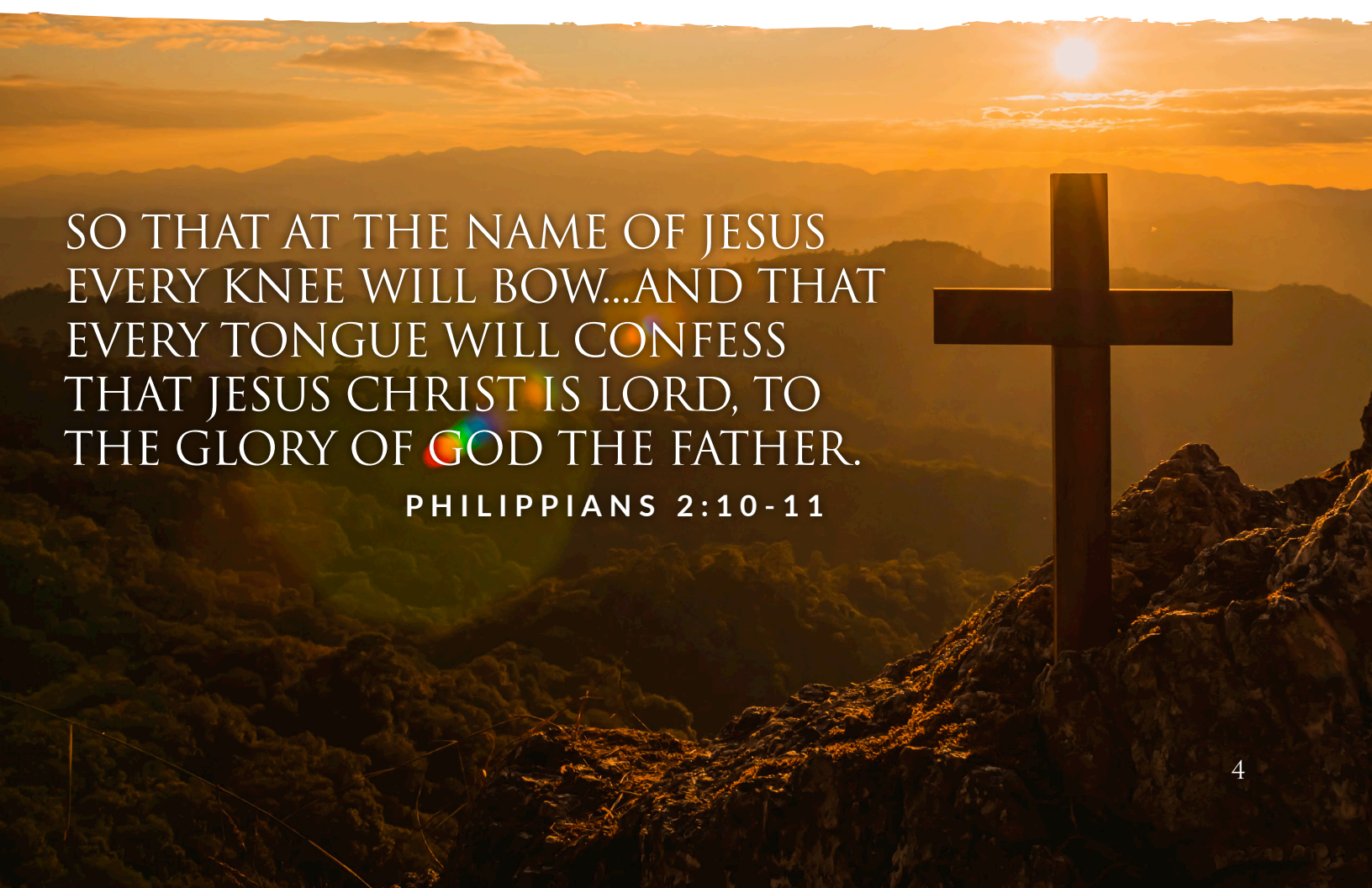
ESTHER FINDS FAVOR; A PLOT UNCOVERED

Mordecai discovered Haman’s plot, informed Esther, and convinced her to go before the king to expose it. “For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14). In order to save her people, she had no other choice! So Esther asked Mordecai and all the Jews to fast for three days; “if I perish, I perish” (Esther 4:16). Fortunately, Esther “obtained favor in his sight; and the king extended to Esther the golden scepter” (Esther 5:2). So, with intent to reveal Haman’s plot against the Jews, Esther invited the king and Haman to a party that lasted for two days with festive eating and drinking. At the conclusion, Haman’s wicked plan was revealed. Infuriated, the king ordered Haman to be killed. Eventually, Haman and his sons were hung on the gallows he had constructed for Mordecai—Haman’s evil plot boomeranged and destroyed him and his family.

Although Haman was dead, his evil plan to annihilate God's people was already set in motion, so something else was still necessary to stop it. Esther had to go before King Ahasuerus again. Why? The proclamation and decree to kill the Jews was still alive. So Esther pleaded again with the king and said, "You dealt with Haman. But now deal with this issue of the decree to destroy my kindred" (Esther 8:6). The king answered, "You and Mordecai take care of it. Write to the Jews in the king's name and seal it with my signet ring" (Esther 8:8). If you have the signet ring of the King, you have all power. You can do anything in the name of the King. This is relevant to Christians because through the cross of Christ, He has given us His signet ring that by the authority of the name of Yeshua (Jesus), every knee will bow and every tongue confess His Lordship (Philippians 2:10-11).

THE REDEMPTION OF THE JEWS

Returning to the story of Esther, a second decree was issued and signed by the king, which enabled the Jews to defend themselves against their enemies. "And no one could stand before them, for the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples" (Esther 9:2). Had it not been for the Jews defending themselves, there would be no Jewish people today—and Messiah would not have been born! We have the Jews to thank for the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus).



SO THAT AT THE NAME OF JESUS
EVERY KNEE WILL BOW...AND THAT
EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS
THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, TO
THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.

PHILIPPIANS 2:10-11



THE FIRST DELIVERANCE

In summary, two very clear deliverances took place in the story of Esther. The first was absolutely initiated by the king and Haman was hung. In like manner, our first deliverance from death was through Christ the King, who came and died on the cross to bring us salvation. He did that without any participation from us. By the blood of Christ, satan has been judged and his wickedness has been brought into captivity by the cross. But we continue to see a world filled with hate, evil, wickedness and sin and understand that people are being destroyed by satan's plot. That is why the Church is still trying to deliver people from this death decree by the salvation message. We know that satan is judged, right? But his plot against the world to destroy all flesh still exists.

THE SECOND DELIVERANCE

The second deliverance in the story of Esther came after Haman's death. It was left to the Jews to execute their own deliverance. Likewise, the King of the ages by His divine power and by His authority and supremacy has ended satan for all time by the blood of Christ, but He is anointing a people to finish the job. The Body of Christ must deal with satan's plot to destroy all mankind. Christ the King gives us His signet ring. He gives us His authority and allows us to use His name. The war may be over, but the minefields still need to be cleared. Every plan and everything that was ever set in motion by satan and his kingdom of darkness must also be destroyed. We have His name—"the name which is above every name" (Philippians 2:9). It is time for us to intercede and to believe for the end of every plot against God's people, both Jews and Christians. Our cry is, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). God has left the destruction of satan's plan up to our intercession. The final act that God is going to perform will be through His people, and it is the time!

PURIM—FROM SORROW INTO GLADNESS

In this story of deliverance, God and His people turned the day “from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday” (Esther 9:22). Mordecai sent letters throughout the land recognizing Purim as an appointed time and compelled the Jews to celebrate this great deliverance annually. Thus, the Jews determined that “these days were to be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, every family, every province and every city” (Esther 9:28). As a result, the Feast of Purim is to be celebrated for two days on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the month Adar (February or March) by all Israel and her allies every year with feasting and great rejoicing (Esther 9:21-22).

In Israel, the children dress in costumes and everyone dances in the streets in a great festive celebration. As Christian allies of the Jewish people, we can celebrate this time of great joy with them by our love and intercession to see every promise fulfilled over God’s people. We bless the Jewish nation and proclaim their release from all that has oppressed them. Satan is determined to destroy all flesh, so this feast is important for Christians as well. But God declares, “I will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you” (Haggai 2:23). We have all authority in His name.

I WILL MAKE YOU
LIKE A SIGNET
RING, FOR I HAVE
CHOSEN YOU...

HAGGAI 2:23





We proclaim that every enemy of God is removed. We voice it for all Israel that every enemy is removed! We voice it for the Body of Christ that every enemy is removed! Satan sought to destroy the Jewish people because he knew that from the seed of Abraham and the lineage of David would come the Messiah. Now he is set to destroy the Body of Christ as well, but the Feast of Esther is a time for proclamations of faith that will do away with our enemies. Just like the king in our story, God is mad at the enemies of His people and He will answer.

THE FULFILLMENT OF PURIM

We are facing two very special days during the appointed time of this feast. And I believe that the prayers we have prayed for years will explode into fulfillment. Satan is set to destroy all flesh, but we declare the end of his plan and destroy the spirits of division, hate, poverty, futility, and sin. Together, we declare that every plan against God's people—against Jews and Christians alike—will come to an end. Our faith declares it in the name of Yeshua Messiah our Lord!

ABOUT GARY HARGRAVE



GARY HARGRAVE has a passion for leading people into spiritual maturity. Gary effectively ministers the life-changing truth of God's Word through Bible teaching and prophetic revelation that emphasizes the Lordship of Christ.

Gary embraces the teachings and insights of the Hebrew Scriptures as the essential foundation of God's Kingdom and the roots of Christian faith.

By cultivating spiritual maturity in Christians, Gary is deeply committed to teaching and inspiring unity in the Body of Christ and between Christians and the Jewish people.

Throughout decades of ministry, Gary has worked closely with leaders in the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant communities to build relationships based on commonality and understanding. He frequently leads study tours to Israel and the lands of the Bible.

Gary is the host of a weekly podcast entitled *Growing In God*, and is the founder of Shiloh University, an accredited online Bible college and seminary.

Gary and his family reside in Hawaii.

For other insightful resources by Gary Hargrave, including podcasts, books, articles, videos, and other educational materials, please visit: www.HargraveMinistries.org

ABOUT HARGRAVE MINISTRIES

The calling of the Lord upon this ministry is to lead people into spiritual maturity by revealing biblical truth. **Our passion is to see the Kingdom of God manifest on earth** as the Body of Christ grows in unity, power and love.

Everything we do flows from the revelation of the Jewish roots of our Christian faith. It is our desire and privilege to bless the land and people of Israel. Our Israel outreach includes:

- **Feed the poor** and break the cycle of poverty in Israel
- **Support the orphans and widows** of fallen Israeli soldiers
- Provide physical and emotional care to **child victims of terrorism**
- **Build bridges** between Christians and Jews with biblical study and research
- Support archaeology and **preservation of the biblical City of David**
- Provide 24/7 **care for Holocaust survivors**
- **Help persecuted Jews** around the world return to Israel and start new lives
- Plant trees to **reforest Israel** and **help create "The Gospel Trail" between Nazareth and Capernaum**

Hargrave Ministries is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization supported through the generous contributions of ministry friends and partners. To learn more about the work of Hargrave Ministries or to partner in its outreach to Israel, please visit: www.HargraveMinistries.org

