

Sunday September 21st 2008
Esther – Part Eight

1). Es 3:1 ¶ *After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and set his seat above all the princes who were with him. 2 And all the king's servants who were within the king's gate bowed and paid homage to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai would not bow or pay homage.*

a). We saw in our study last week how Haman's promotion within Ahasuerus's kingdom, 'above all the princes who were with him' – is a picture for us of the future day when God will allow Antichrist to be seated upon Satan's throne, for the purpose of bringing to completion God's plans and purposes for Israel – the antitype of which we find recorded in - Re 13:2 *Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.*

b). And this is an event, we will remember, that happens at the mid way point of Daniel's 70th week – some 3 1/2 years into the Tribulation and precipitates the final and most intense out-pouring of God's wrath upon the Jewish people through the actions of Antichrist as he attempts to annihilate the Jewish nation.

c). The events of Esther chapters 3-9 deal specifically with the final outpouring of God's wrath during this time and even more specifically with events very close to the end of this time when the Jewish people are brought to repentance and cry out to the God of their fathers.

d). In this respect the events in Esther would coincide with the events of the opening of the 7th seal recorded in - Re 8:1 ¶ *When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.*

e). Within the 7th seal are the 7 trumpet judgments, and within the seventh trumpet are the 7 vial judgments – giving us 3 sets of 7 pointing to the completeness of God's judgments manifested at this time with respect to Israel and the earth dwellers.

f). All of these judgments, along with those continuing from seals 1-6, could possibly occur within the last year of the Tribulation - Mt 24:22 *"And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.*

2). And so, as chapter 3 of Esther begins, setting the stage for the final events of the Tribulation in the type, we see Haman introduced after a specific fashion - *Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite.* And this means of identifying Haman, and also his ten sons, is used no fewer than 5 times in chapters 3-9 [3:1,

3:10, 8:5, 9:10, 9:24]. And needless to say repetition of this kind is not accidental and is worthy of our attention.

a). And the immediate connotations it calls to our minds with respect to an Amalekite king called Agag are unavoidable.

b). And the question to ask of course is why? What spiritual truth is there contained in this association?

c). And to answer the question we need only go back to look at what scripture teaches about the Amalekites.

3). We first see Amalek in - *Ge 36:12 Now Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz.*

a). Amalek was Esau's grandson and as such is associated with the man of the flesh whom Esau represents – setting him in opposition to the man of the spirit, typified in Jacob. And by extension the antagonism that exists between the Gentile nations and Israel, with respect to Israel's calling – although this underlying cause of the protracted Middle East problem is neither recognized, or understood by the protagonists involved.

b). This antagonism between the flesh and the spirit is centered around one thing only – the fulfillment of God's plans and purposes with regards to rulership - *Ga 4:29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.*

c). *Ga 5:17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

d). *Ga 6:8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap [age lasting] life.*

e). Let us be in no doubt that the aim of the flesh, if we can say it this way, because of its connection with this world and the god of this world, is to prevent us from attaining age lasting life and thereby a position with Christ.

f). Our flesh is an adversary who does not 'get better' and does not grow weaker and remains our most poignant antagonist.

g). Our ability to have victory over the flesh comes only as a result of our growth in the spirit as a result of proper engagement with the word of God and the faithful obedience that should attend that engagement. Please do not think otherwise.

h). Without the dedicated, continual, disciplined study of the Word followed by the practice of that Word our flesh will gain the ascendancy.

4). This battle between the flesh and the spirit with regards to rulership is further typified for us in the conflict between the Amalekites and Israel.

a). But if we set this particular aspect of the picture aside for one moment we can begin to see why this conflict is used in association with Haman and his dealings with Israel. As it is the very conflict that has existed between the Gentile nations and Israel ever since Israel became a nation for the purpose of rulership. Only one nation has been chosen to be at the head of the nations and be the conduit for God's blessings to those nations, and that of course is Israel. No Gentile nation no matter how well meaning or philanthropic can stand in Israel's place. Nor could it, as every Gentile nation is subject to the god of this world within the present system of rulership under Satan – only Israel is not to be counted amongst the nations and is separate from Satan's kingdom under Michael their Prince.

b). Ex 17:8 ¶ *Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim.*

c). Immediately following the nations deliverance from Egypt and their passage through the Red Sea, as they begin their march towards the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to rule over the Gentile nations within a Theocracy the attack comes.

d). And the attack comes from the Amalekites, the descendants of Esau, a Gentile nation.

5). Because of the Amalekites actions in being the first nation to attack God's adopted firstborn son with the purpose of thwarting God's plans for him, God issues a decree regarding the Amalekites - Ex 17:14 *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." 15 And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD-Is-My-Banner; 16 for he said, "Because the LORD has sworn: the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."*

a). According to the scripture God will, 'utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven' and 'will have war with Amalek from generation to generation'.

b). Interestingly enough the Amalekites now only exist in the pages of scripture. There is no physical or archaeological evidence that such a people ever existed. God has indeed blotted out their remembrance from under heaven.

6). Not only is Amalek to be utterly destroyed, his destruction is to be at the hand of the Jewish people - De 25:17 *"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, 18 "how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God. 19 "Therefore it shall be, when the LORD your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the LORD your God is*

giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

a). God's command to Israel with respect to Amalek provided another opportunity for Israel's disobedience which we see reaching its zenith with regards to God's injunction against Amalek, some four hundred years after the injunction was given – during the days of Saul and David.

b). And this high point of disobedience with regards to Amalek at this time brings us face to face with Agag - 1Sa 15:18 *"Now the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.'* 19 *"Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the LORD?"* 20 *And Saul said to Samuel, "But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.* 21 *"But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal."* 22 *Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.* 23 *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."*

c). Agag, is the personification of the anti-Semitism that is the prevailing force amongst the Gentile nations and in allowing him to live Saul is not only perpetuating that anti-Semitism, he also gives it his tacit approval. This is why he is rejected as king. His disobedience and the consequences of that disobedience meant that he turned back from, he apostatized, with regards to Israel's calling.

d). And this epitomizes Israel's relationship with the Gentile nations over the centuries. They have formed alliances with and lived among the very nations they should have overthrown – hence God sees their actions as harlotry - Re 17:4 *The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.* 5 *And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.* 6 *I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.*

e). We can only conclude that it is the consequence of Israel's lack of action that has allowed the anti-Semitism personified in Agag to continue that finds its expression in Esther through the actions of Haman.

f). Haman's connection with Agag has more to do with the anti-Semitism that Agag represents than any kind of family connection - Es 3:10 *So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.*

7). In fact any kind of family connection between Haman and Agag is most improbable as it appears that some three hundred years after the days of Saul and David, during the reign of Hezekiah the Amalekites were finally destroyed by the hand of Israel.

a). 1Ch 4:41 *These recorded by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and they attacked their tents and the Meunites who were found there, and utterly destroyed them, as it is to this day. So they dwelt in their place, because there was pasture for their flocks there. 42 Now some of them, five hundred men of the sons of Simeon, went to Mount Seir, having as their captains Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. 43 And they defeated the rest of the Amalekites who had escaped. They have dwelt there to this day.*

b). From this point on in scripture the Amalekites are referred to as a people that existed in past history.

c). The events in the Book of Esther take place some two hundred years after that recorded in 1 Chronicles.

d). There is apparently archaeological evidence of a geographical region within the kingdom of Ahasuerus that was called 'Agag', and so on a very simple level reference to Haman being an 'Agagite' would simply denote the area from which he came. However, I think we would need to see beyond the simple to what the Spirit says with regards to Haman's association with Agag.

e). Of all the regions within Ahasuerus's kingdom that Haman could have come from, for it to have been Agag, given the association of that name with the Amalekites is not just a coincidence.

8). And then if we keep in mind the one whom Haman typifies – the man of sin, the Antichrist, we can see this whole thing brought together for us in the final prophecy of Balaam in - Nu 24:15 ¶ *So he took up his oracle and said: "The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, And the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened; 16 The utterance of him who hears the words of God, And has the knowledge of the Most High, Who sees the vision of the Almighty, Who falls down, with eyes wide open: 17 "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult. 18 "And Edom shall be a possession; Seir also, his enemies, shall be a possession, While Israel does valiantly. 19 Out of Jacob One shall have dominion, And destroy the remains of*

the city." 20 Then he looked on Amalek, and he took up his oracle and said: "Amalek was first among the nations, But shall be last until he perishes."

a). Balaam's prophecy is clearly dealing with that future time when Christ will return and establish His Millennial Kingdom.

b). It is the time when the one Haman typifies, the Antichrist, will be put down and Gentile world power, the times of the Gentiles, will be completely overthrown.

c). And linked with this overthrow of Gentile world power is a proclamation against Amalek – a group of people who will not have existed for millenniums before this time.

d). Why? Because of what this people group represent – they represent all that which is set against the fulfillment of God's plans and purposes expressed through an anti-Semitism that looked for the utter destruction of the nation of Israel.

e). The same Satanic driving force behind the Amalekites is the same as that which was behind Haman and is the same as that which will be behind Antichrist.

f). Therefore in the overthrow of Gentile world power and the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ all that Amalek represents will perish forever. And it is in this sense that Amalek, at this time, will cease to exist.

g). It might just be of interest that according to Hitchcock's Dictionary of Bible Names Haman = tumult. And according to verse 17 of our Balaam prophecy in Numbers, Christ, at His second coming, 'will destroy all the sons of tumult'.

9). And then if we go back to God's original command to Israel to utterly destroy Amalek this is really what takes place at the end of the Tribulation, typified for us in the events in Esther.

a). It is as a result of Israel's repentance that Christ, a Jew in the flesh, will return to the earth and overthrow Gentile world power something we have already seen characterized as the perishing of Amalek.

b). It is in this sense that we can see the command of God given in Deuteronomy coming to its final and absolute conclusion.

c). *Es 7:3 Then Queen Esther answered and said, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. 4 "For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king's loss." 5 So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?" 6 And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman!" So Haman was terrified before the king and queen.*

d). Es 7:10 *So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's wrath subsided.*

e). Es 9:5 *Thus the Jews defeated all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, with slaughter and destruction, and did what they pleased with those who hated them. 6 And in Shushan the citadel the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men. 7 Also Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, 8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, 9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha- 10 the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews-they killed; but they did not lay a hand on the plunder. 11 On that day the number of those who were killed in Shushan the citadel was brought to the king. 12 And the king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the citadel, and the ten sons of Haman.*

10). Agag and the Amalekites are not the only ones from past history who no longer exist as a people who are linked to the one Haman typifies – Antichrist. The same is also true of the Assyrians. With Antichrist himself being called an Assyrian.

a). Isa 10:5 ¶ *"Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger And the staff in whose hand is My indignation. 6 I will send him against an ungodly nation, And against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, To seize the spoil, to take the prey, And to tread them down like the mire of the streets.*

b). Isa 14:24 ¶ *The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, "Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, And as I have purposed, so it shall stand: 25 That I will break the Assyrian in My land, And on My mountains tread him underfoot. Then his yoke shall be removed from them, And his burden removed from their shoulders. 26 This is the purpose that is purposed against the whole earth, And this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations. 27 For the LORD of hosts has purposed, And who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, And who will turn it back?"*

c). Ho 5:13 *"When Ephraim saw his sickness, And Judah saw his wound, Then Ephraim went to Assyria And sent to King Jareb; Yet he cannot cure you, Nor heal you of your wound.*

11). Now we can conclude that Antichrist will rise from within the borders of the old Assyrian empire, which takes us back to the days of Alexander the Great, as we find in the Book of Daniel – Da 8:8 *Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. 9 And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land.*

Da 8:21 *"And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king. 22 "As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power. 23 "And in the latter time of their kingdom, When the transgressors have reached their fullness, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes. 24 His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; He shall destroy fearfully, And shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. 25 "Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means.*

a). But the Assyrian empire and the people group known as Assyrians has not existed for thousands of years – so why the connection?

b). For exactly the same reason as Amalek. Because of what is contained within the designation, Assyria, with respect to complete opposition to God's plans and purposes expressed through anti-Semitic persecution.

c). It was the Assyrians who began the captivity of God's people by taking the northern 10 tribes of Israel captive a considerable number of years before Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians took away the southern tribes of Judah.

d). And again the purpose on God's part was persecution to bring about repentance.

e). In fact the Assyrian association in Biblical typology goes back even further to the days of Moses when an Assyrian Pharaoh attempted the destruction of the Jewish people within the boundaries of Egypt - Ac 7:18 *"till another king arose who did not know Joseph. 19 "This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live.*

f). Isa 52:4 *For thus says the Lord GOD: "My people went down at first Into Egypt to dwell there; Then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.*

g). And Moses, typifying Christ, was sent back to deliver the people from their affliction.

h). Again we see Israel's last great enemy, Antichrist, associated with a previous great enemy. The Assyrian Pharaoh, Amalek, Haman all provide for us the same picture of Gentile persecution towards Israel in an attempt to annihilate the nation. And all of these types then come together in fulfillment in Israel's last great enemy, who is the culmination of all that has gone before.

i). And Assyria is also found in the oracle in Balaam's prophecy in Numbers Chapter 24, in the same context as Amalek - Nu 24:22 *Nevertheless Kain shall be burned. How long until Asshur [Assyria] carries you away captive?" 23 Then he took up his oracle and said: "Alas! Who shall live when God does this? 24 But*

ships shall come from the coasts of Cyprus, And they shall afflict Asshur [Assyria] and afflict Eber, And so shall Amalek, until he perishes."

j). The same end as Amalek is promised to Assyria at Christ's return at the end of the Tribulation even though Assyria, as Amalek will not have existed for millenniums when this event occurs.

12). And not only this, but we have also seen in our Daniel 8 scripture, something also presented in Daniel's image in Daniel Chapter 2, that Antichrist is seen immediately following and therefore associated with the Gentile world powers of Babylon, Media-Persia and Greece – all of which now cease to exist.

a). And the reason for this association, as with Assyria, Amalek and Haman is to point to the absolute certainty of the utter destruction of the kingdom of Antichrist bringing about the complete overthrow of Gentile world power. Just as happened with each of these world powers in past history and each of the individuals within those powers, so with Antichrist in the future. And the reason for the certainty of this is not in the historical record alone but in the pages of scripture – summed up for us beautifully here in - Es 6:13 *When Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him, his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish descent, you will not prevail against him but will surely fall before him."*

b). Completely in alignment with God's statement in - Ge 12:3...*I will curse him who curses you;*

c). And equally certain of course is the repentance and subsequent restoration of Israel as God's purpose for them is brought to completion.

d). Es 9:3 *And all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and all those doing the king's work, helped the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them. 4 For Mordecai was great in the king's palace, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for this man Mordecai became increasingly prominent. 5 Thus the Jews defeated all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, with slaughter and destruction, and did what they pleased with those who hated them.*

13). Here is the conclusion to which our world economically, environmentally, socially, politically and militarily is rapidly and inexorably moving. Let us thank God that we are not in ignorance of it and let the certainty of God's word in respect of this inspire us towards an even greater commitment to faithful obedience as we see the Day approaching.

a). Even so, come quickly Lord Jesus.