

Chapter Nine

First Chronicles

Esther 2:21-23

Reading the above text prompted me to create, and hopefully coin, a brand-new aphorism:

When impervious to the enemy without, double your efforts to the enemy within.

These, are undeniably words to *live* by!

As in any kingdom, safeguards were put in place to detect and deter a coup. For some reason these two culprits managed to slip right past the royal radar gun of suspicion. Verse 22 tells us, Mordecai, in the right place, at the right time, kept these men from achieving the perfect crime. Had “...Bigthan and Teresh...” reached their goal, today we’d be reading a different version of The Book of Esther, a *condensed* version!

Pardon my poetry, as I attempt to sum this episode up in only three verses:

“Who are these two?” echoed the sound,
In reflection, his mind did recall,
“‘...Wroth...’, the ones, must needs be found,
Or anon, the kingdom will fall.”

“...Inquisition was made...”, the King, he won’t die,
“Hang *them* ‘...which kept the door...’!”
Grace ran its course, she’s passed ‘*em* by,
Guilty, condemned, to breathe no more.

“Saving the King, t’was easy for me!
My word stopped death replete.
Reward? you ask. Read on, you’ll see,
My name, ‘...in...chronicles...’, you’ll meet.”

Nonplussed by this revelation, Mordecai deliberates a course of action. “Word of this treason must reach someone right away”, he reasons, “someone *inside* the palace!” No sooner had these words crossed his mind, when a secret door opened in the palace wall. Severely startled, he was not prepared for what would happen next. All of a sudden, the Queen appeared!

Knowing she’s caught Mordecai off guard, Esther seizes the moment. “From now on Mordi, you hafta call me- ‘*Queen* Esther’ ...ya know!”, she pompously asserts.

“Hadassah, you’ve been *my* queen since the *day* I took you in”, he quickly flies back.

“Cousin...I’m so glad we’re still so close. I was teasin’ ya ‘bout callin’ me Queen...but come ta think of it, it’s TRUE! In *public*, you *hafta* call me Queen...but when we’re alone- just you and me-it’s fine wit’ me if ya call me yur ‘Little Dassah’. ‘Member when ya yusta do dat?”

“That was quite a few years ago, Dassah.”

“Cousin Mordi, I heard ya been sittin’ in the King’s gate. Oh, I see...even though I’m all grown up, ya still wanna pertek your little Dassah.... Dat’s okay wit me! I like havin’ ya near me anyway. I feel *more* secure...y’know what I mean.... By the way, ya know what he tole me the other day?”

“Who?”

“You know-the King. Ya know what he tole me? Well, he brought me to this special room in the Palace...a reeeel fancy room-I never been in *that* room before...and...well-he sat me down and started looking into my eyes. When I looked into his, they were aul watery. Anyway, aul of a sudden, aul emotional like, he started to speak to me reeeel soft. Ya know

what he said? He tole me he loves me so much dat he can't live without me. Ya know...I really love 'im too. D'ya know how I feel, Cousin Mordi? I feel like I'm in one of dose fairy tale marriages...ya know-like the ones dat say, 'an they lived happily ever afta'."

"Dassah, it sounds like you not only won the contest...you won the King's heart too!"

"He really does love me, I can see it in His eyes."

"Esther...ahem-I mean-*Queen* Esther...It was no mistake that you became Xerxes' new Queen. I believe when God joined you to this *Gentile* King; He had a special purpose. Don't forget Jehovah makes nooo mistakes. I'm sure one day we'll both understand *why*. Like Isaiah said, '...His ways are higher than our's.' That reminds me...*it's very important*...just a little while ago, I happened to overhear two of the King's chamberlains talking. They didn't know I was listening to their chatter. It was hard to hear, but it sounded like they were plotting somehow to rid the kingdom of *your* new husband. At first, I thought they were just drunk or something, but...around the time I realized they *were* serious...well...you showed up. Ahem...I thought to advise thee of their intentions...O *My Queen!*"

"I will report this *myself*...the sun will not set, till these two are apprehended. *I will try to see you soon, Cousin...I love you.* Guard, guard-someone call me a guard-*quickly!*"

The King Needs a Saviour Too!

Without Mordecai's heroism, Shushan's King would have *literally* been out of a job! This realization brings up an important question. Now that we have learned that Ahasuerus needed to be saved, in all honesty, can we continue to typify him as Jehovah? Before you answer this question too quickly, let's look at the following thought. There is salvation that saves from *sin*, and there is salvation that saves from *situation*. Every Born Again Christian is familiar with the *first*, and

everyone separated from a loved one through tragedy or peril is familiar with the *second*.

Permit me to give you an example of *being saved from situation*. Just this week, while going to the store, my youngest son, Nathanael, took his favorite stuffed animal along for the ride. Consequently, he lost him along the way. His name was “Turbal the Turtle.” His owner spent the better part of two days crying over his loss. If *you* happen to find him, please return this little green object of love to the address located in the back of this book.

It’s now been a week and a half since Nathanael lost his furry companion. I can honestly say, he’s shown much patience; while waiting for someone to come along and SAVE him from his situation. My son’s hope of being reunited with his special friend has taught me a valuable lesson: When confronted with a loss, even a six year old knows the necessity of *a saviour*.

When I say, Jehovah needed a saviour, I am in no way implicating Him, by suggesting that He *ever* did anything sinful or wrong. On my part, that would be nothing short of *blasphemy*. (Mark 3:22 to 30) *Who* would a Sinless Being sin against, anyway-*Himself*?!

Jehovah needed a saviour, in the *same sense* Ahasuerus needed one. He needed the *USE* of a saviour! Remember; a saviour guaranteed his continued reign. Obviously, no one can kill Jehovah, but an enemy can separate Him from His Kingdom! If you think about it, this was all part of God’s Eternal Plan.

In the same sense that the computerized world has taught us the proper program makes a robot do what it’s commanded; we understand that serving God out of compulsion makes man nothing more than a robot that can be PROGRAMMED! Nowhere in Scripture do we read that God *ever forced* anyone to love or serve Him, who didn’t first want to. That’s why “...The *first* and *great* commandment...” teaches us to love “...*God* with all...” our heart, soul, mind, and strength. (Matthew 22:37-38. See, Exodus 20:6 and Deuteronomy 6:4-5.) What was Adam’s *motivating factor* when “...The LORD God

commanded ...” (Genesis 2:15-16) him to obey His voice? LOVE! But how could God qualify that love? In a word: OPPOSITION! God’s plan *called for, yea, required* an enemy—an enemy willing and able to do that job to the point of enjoyment. A fallen Cherub by the named of Lucifer “fit the bill” perfectly. In Genesis three, Jehovah *allowed* (Job 1:12 and 2:5) this adversary (disguised as a serpent) to tempt Eve through a conversation that lasted just long enough to make havoc of The Kingdom. (II Corinthians 11:3) This would be a sad day for the first man and his beautiful bride, resulting in Paradise no more!

As the Germans say, “Verstehen?” Do you understand? Do you see it now? Like Ahasuerus, *Jehovah* had enemies that *planned to separate Him from His kingdom*. If this is true (and it is!!!), then it should not surprise you, He who said, “...for there is NO saviour beside me...” (Hosea 13:4), *literally had to step outside Himself in order to gain a JEWISH Saviour to save Him from losing His Kingdom!* Could that be why Jesus *had to die*? Absolutely! *His bloody death on Calvary’s cross, coupled with the resurrection, rectified two problems at the SAME time: It saved Jehovah’s Kingdom from sin, and Him, from a bad situation.*

Watch the Birdie, and Smile...

Understanding Bible types is easy, if we look at them in photographic terms. For example, if we compare Mordecai to Jesus, Mordecai would be the film’s “negative” image taken five hundred years before anyone actually saw a “developed” picture of the Saviour.

A negative is a premiere picture of a photograph WAITING to be developed.

This reminds me of the day I was rummaging through my Mother’s old metal file box (a box, by the way, that sat on her closet floor ever since I could remember), and found a two inch square piece of film tucked inside a letter my Father had mailed her some thirty years earlier. It was a negative of

my Father's business, the only one I ever remember seeing. This was amazing enough, but even more amazing (to me) was the moment I realized that this tiny piece of plastic had all at once become an irreplaceable piece of memorabilia—a *one of a kind picture*—which somehow (at that time—unbeknownst to me) tied me to my Father's past.

Even though I've retained this piece of film for almost as long as it had lain in my Mother's file box, it wasn't until a few months ago that an opportunity presented itself to have it developed. Years earlier, I had befriended a man who owns and works in the same kind of business that my Father had labored in many years before. I knew if he saw my negative, he would like it. I was right! He liked it so much that he borrowed it to make a "blow up" picture for himself, and agreed to professionally reproduce a second photo for me. Even though I had to wait a while [after it got developed, my friend moved to a different location, misplacing (both) it and the proof copy] to see the *finished* product—*Shades of Simeon!!!* (Luke 2:25 to 35), I'm positive (*pun intended*), the day I see it again, I will recognize it as the same negative image that I viewed for all those years before.

I'm not the only one whose NEGATIVES are the *sole* source of irreplaceable pictures. Countless others are in the same situation. Hopefully one day they'll find a friend like I did—who will help them process *their* negatives into beautiful proofs! If you think about it, that's the job of every church age "pastor *and* TEACHER." (Ephesians 4:11) In the *darkroom* of study and prayer, these *men* are called of God to shine the light of New Testament revelation through the undeveloped pictures of Old Testament film; to help us produce perfect proofs of photographic *truth*, every time. (Psalms 119:105)

One would think, after thousands of years of familiarizing themselves with their God-given *film*; a good dose of *developed* photographs might have cured Israel's unbelief. Sadly, that was not, nor has been the case. Unbelieving Israel has convinced herself that her negatives are the proofs (the REAL pictures) and everything else thereafter, is false.

Had she “...believed...” (Isaiah 53:1) the host of TYPES given her in the Old Testament, there’s no doubt she would have recognized Emmanuel’s true identity immediately-and that, from birth! (Isaiah 9:6) Hundreds of negatives (*waiting to be processed*) didn’t help these self-proclaimed scholars one bit. (John 9:28b) Even when their Messiah “...came unto *his own...*” (John 1:11), these “...blind *guides...*” (Matthew 23:24) wholeheartedly refused to recognize Him.

Anyone systematically reading through the Bible will find, by the time they come to the New Testament; it’s fairly easy to see how things *developed* along the way. When the final “Amen” is said (see the last word in the New Testament); God’s picture is complete, from beginning to end. Even a short stroll through The Book of Genesis is all it takes to be awestruck by God’s original plan. Imagine (if you can) a world void of sin, sickness, and death? God did, and He wrote about it!

While Genesis is the beginning of all things, The Revelation is the consummation. Genesis starts with a man, a woman, and “...the tree of life...in the midst of...” (Genesis 2:9) Paradise. Comparatively, if Genesis reveals the FIRST, or *UNdeveloped* picture, how do you think the FINAL picture will look? Won’t the *final* picture look *DEVELOPED*?! When we read and compare the *first* three chapters of Genesis with the *last* three chapters of The Revelation; *we* discover we’ve come full circle! What was *first* is now *last*!! The negative has been developed, giving us a before (Old Testament) AND after (New Testament) view of the *same* picture. These two views are neatly placed side by side in a beautiful frame we call *The Holy Bible*.

From *ONLY* viewing the *processed* pictures of the New Testament, who would have ever imagined that Jehovah-*The King* needed a Saviour? It’s NOT THERE! *That truth laid dormant; in the form of a picture that never got developed*. In other words; the unprocessed film of Esther’s Book helped us to see a truth that NOT even the *New Testament* showed us. We can conclude then, that truth’s *best* perspective comes from viewing BOTH the former (*unprocessed*) AND latter (*processed*)

pictures of God's word. The UNPROCESSED picture of Mordecai *foreshadowed* the coming Saviour, AND, the PROCESSED picture of Jesus Christ *revealed* Him. If we understand these things, we can grasp the idea behind The Book of Hebrews. *The Book of Hebrews is a "photo lab," which is said to produce a better picture than the former shadow.* [Better than Angels, 1:4; a better Hope, 7:19; a better Testament, 7:22; a better Covenant, 8:6; a better Promise, 8:6; a better Sacrifice, 9:23; a better Substance, 10:34; a better Country, 11:16; a better Resurrection, 11:35; a better Thing, 11:40; and better Things, 12:24] The SHADOW then, is *the negative*, and the SUBSTANCE, *the printed picture*. Someone saw a SHADOWY "... figure..." (Hebrews 9:9) in the NEGATIVE, and once it was *processed*, made it BETTER!

With a few pictures left, and a few moments to spare, this time let's take a "side view" of the same subject. "WATCH THE BIRDIE...AND SMILE FOR THE CAMERA!"

(Later that day) "I have 'the negative' right here: Mordecai *the Jew* saved Shushan's *Gentile King*.¹"

(A few days later) "I just had *this* picture developed. Would you like to see it? Here it is: Jesus Christ, *the Jewish Saviour*, saved Heaven's *Gentile King*."

You might be asking yourself, "What does all this have to do with our original question?" I'll answer that! Since we

¹ This author admits, at times it *looks like* Queen Esther is the heroine of this story (or at least co-saviour *with* Mordecai). Esther's Author never makes this mistake, and neither should we. The saviour in The Book of Esther is *Mordecai*! Any other notion is far from the truth. Throughout her Book, Esther's role and notoriety remains one and the same. Her bravery should not confuse that issue. Esther's claim to fame, *even after becoming Queen*, was simply following in Mordecai's steps, or as The New Testament calls it, *walking in Christ*. In I John 2:6, Saint John hit this truth right on the head; when saying, we are to...WALK, *even as he WALKED...*" *Walking in Mordecai* put Esther in a perfect position *politically* for "...God *through*..." Mordecai (look that one up-Romans 6:11b) to save her husband from two enemies and later her Jewish countrymen from Haman.

have determined (to the best of our ability) that *both* King Ahasuerus AND King Jehovah needed a Saviour to save their respective Kingdoms; it should stand to reason that King Ahasuerus CAN and SHOULD continue to picture Jehovah. Furthermore, since Ahasuerus mirrors Jehovah in this, and so many other ways, there should be no question whether or not he should continue to do so for the rest of the story.

Looking at the counter on my camera, I see I have one last picture on this roll of film. Even though it's been a long day, the results have been so good; I'm pleased to shoot my last one!

Carefully taking aim through the lens; I observe a change. This time Mordecai is standing way to the right of Ahasuerus. (Hebrews 8:1b) In this shot, the focal point is notably now on the King.

(Days after this roll of film was developed) "After many hours of examination, closely comparing the negative of the last picture with the accompanied photograph, here's what I found: BOTH Jehovah AND Ahasuerus WRITE BOOKS (Esther 2:23-our text); REMEMBER GOOD DEEDS (Esther 6:1); REWARD GOOD DEEDS (Esther 6:3; 8:15), AND PROMOTE THE REWARDED (Esther 10)!"

Extremely tired, I tuck my camera away for the evening, all the while thanking God He thought me worthy to tinker with His photo equipment and view so many of His Impeccable Pictures.

A Family Affair

Never doubt that Jesus Christ has a vested interest in this story. Around the time Esther becomes Queen (520 B.C.), Governor Zerubbabel (Haggai 2:21a), His great ancestral grandfather, led the Jewish remnant back to Judah (Ezra 2:1 and 2), in order to rebuild the temple and restore true worship. At first glance, this might not seem like much, but when you consider that BOTH Zerubbabel and Jesus were: "...*firstborn* son(s)..." (1 Chronicles 3:19; Luke 2:7), from the *same lineage* (Matthew 1:12-Zerobabel, different

spelling-from, *Greek* to English; Zerubbabel-from, *Hebrew* to English.), who-*politically*-reigned (and will reign) over *Judah* from Jerusalem, and who *restored* (and one day, *will restore*) *true worship back to God's Holy Temple*, that's saying ALOT!

Deeply under conviction, Zerubbabel (and Joshua the priest) "...obeyed the voice of...God..." (Haggai 1:12), to return to the work of God which had been neglected for so long. (Haggai 1:14b) Spiritually speaking, this led the way BACK "...from ...Babylon..." to "...Christ..." (Matthew 1:17c), who will one day come as "...*governor* among the nations..." (Psalms 22:28) to build the *last* temple "...at Jerusalem in mount Moriah...in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite." (II Chronicles 3:1) Then, and only *then*, will there be genuine peace to all nations. Read it for yourself!...

"The glory of this LATTER HOUSE..." [Christ's future Temple] **"...shall be greater than the former,..."** [Solomon's temple; Ezra's temple-during the time of Zerubbabel, and all since] **"...saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give PEACE...."** Haggai 2:9

DO YOU REALIZE, IF ESTHER HAD NOT BECOME QUEEN WHEN SHE DID, THE KING WOULD HAVE LOST HIS LIFE, AND HAMAN WOULD HAVE "...killed ALL the Jews that were THROUGHOUT the WHOLE kingdom..." (Esther 3:6) This would have *included* the untimely death of Governor Zerubbabel. Knowing that through *His* loins the seed through which The Saviour (Christ's office at His First Coming) and King (Christ's office at His Second Coming) was to come, his demise would have removed any future possibility of *world* peace (The Kingdom of Heaven) or *individual* peace (The Kingdom of God). We can say with the Apostle Paul, if Christ had NOT been begotten of Zerrubabel, "...we are of all men most miserable..."! (See, I Corinthians 15:12 to 19b) God protected Zerrubabel; by making *sure* this story had a good ending. In God's providence,

“...the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the Queen...” (Esther 2:22)

Outa' Sight, Outa' Mind!

The moment Mordecai learned of their rebellion; the fate of these two desperados was sealed. Before they could literally *execute* their plan, their identity “...was found out...”, and they “...were both hanged on a tree...” (Esther 2:23) In this case, the punishment *fit* the crime: “...Life for life...”! (Exodus 21:23b)

Obscurity convinced the Editors of The Palace Times to print only a few lines about this incident. Anything that seemed even remotely related was buried deep in the King's chronicles. Many who read the paper that day were amused that Bigthan and Teresh's obituaries appeared in the very same issue that carried a glossy, full color commemorative section covering the recent royal wedding. It was called, *Has Love Bloomed Once More In The Palace?* It had a second smaller article called, *Re-thinking Security: How Safe Are YOU in the Kingdom?*

For *saving* the King's life, Mordecai's name was “...written in the book of the chronicles before the king...” (Esther 2:23) If this story had not been recorded in those chronicles, it is highly unlikely we'd be enjoying it today. Think of it like this; had no one bothered to write it down, Mordecai's deed would have been forgotten forever! This point can be easily proven. Anyone familiar with The Book of Esther knows Mordecai's deed (buried in the King's chronicles) *was* forgotten, possibly for years! That's why three whole chapters lay between someone *writing*, and someone *reading* about it. Listening to the chronicles late one night reminded our beloved King that he once needed a saviour by the name of Mordecai. (Esther 6:1 and 2)

Shortly after his name is recorded, Mordecai is out of sight and out of mind! Outside of Esther and possibly the King (Esther 2:22), no one knew of his heroism. That makes me wonder how many people viewed this man as a failure, especially the time he was seen wearing “...sackcloth and

ashes...” in “...the *midst* of the city...”? (Esther 4:1) Had just *one* person read “...the book of the chronicles...”, instead of their daily newspaper or monthly magazine; Mordecai’s true identity would have been made known throughout Shushan. This reminds me of the many Jews who think Jesus was a *failure*, especially the time “...they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the *midst*.” (John 19:18) The way *they* see it, He suffered for His *own* blasphemy. (Mark 2:7; Matthew 26:65) “If *this* man ‘...were *the* Christ...’ (Expression in Luke 3:15b. See next two verses.), why didn’t He establish God’s promised Kingdom on earth?” And I say, “If Jesus isn’t the *TRUE* Messiah, who is?” Two thousand years of unbelief could have been avoided; had the nation entrusted with “...the oracles of God...” (Romans 3:2) believed them. They heard Jesus say, “...Lo, I come: IN THE VOLUME OF THE BOOK *IT IS WRITTEN OF ME...*” (Psalms 40:7) Had these Jews *read and believed* the King’s CHRONICLES (Stay with me, you’ll see it soon!), there’s no doubt they would have recognized The Messiah. Thank God, *one Jew made the connection*. Afterward, that “convert” penned Hebrews 10:7!!!

Anyone who reads and compares the first nine chapters of First Chronicles, to Matthew chapter one, and Luke chapter three, will find the *true* identity of Jesus Christ. Since his audience was mostly *Jewish*: people, elders, scribes, and let’s not forget the “...high priest...” (Acts 6:12; 7:1); in the days of the Apostles, Saint Stephen identified Jesus Christ as the Messiah, by reasoning with them out of those same Scriptures.

“Since they’ve ‘*invited*’ me to be their ‘guest speaker,’” (Acts 6:12b!!!) Stephen thought, “this would be a good time to teach these Jews a Sabbath School lesson. A little *Bible study* will help these ‘...rulers...’ to ‘...know indeed that *this* is the very Christ...’” (John 7:26b) “Hmmm...how can I show ‘em *You*, Lord Jesus?...I want my brothers to have the same peace I do.” Before he could think his next thought, Stephen got the answer, “I know now...*Thank You Lord*...I’ll use BIBLE EXAMPLES (*types*) to show ‘em!” Positioning

himself center stage, he said, “I want to thank you for this opportunity to bring this message.” Before anyone knew what was going on, “...he, being full of the Holy Ghost...” (Acts 7:55a) reared back and preereached!! And preach he did! Beginning with the Patriarchs, he quickly turned to Joseph. What a brilliant move! He compared Joseph to Jesus, by saying, “And the patriarchs, moved with ENVY, sold Joseph into Egypt: BUT *God was with him....*” (Acts 7:9) If Jesus was like Joseph, *then these National Fathers-who just sold Jesus out to the enemy, the Romans (Matthew 27:11 and 12)-were also like the Patriarchs, who were guilty of selling Joseph out to the enemy!* Read Acts 7:9 again. Stephen had just-inadvertently and unwittingly-called these Fathers *envious* of The Messiah. That didn’t go over so well. Stephen was disappointed. He THOUGHT they *didn’t* get the comparison. The funny thing was THEY DID! While regaining his composure, he mustered up an infectious cheery voice, continuing as if nothing had happened. “Hey guys, If you don’t understand this type, don’t sweat it man, you’ll get it ‘...the second time...’ Jesus comes!!” (Acts 7:13) No one even cracked a smile.

As the multitude of threatening faces increasingly stared him down, Stephen stands yet closer to the mike, hoping, with an even greater intensity, to get his message across. Under his breath he says, “If they didn’t get Joseph, I’ll give ‘em a little Moses.” This time, with a smile on his face and a boldness in his soul, he speaks even louder. “*Talk about a saviour, let me show you A SAVIOUR!* Moses mentioned Him in Deuteronomy 18:15. He said, this Saviour will look ‘...like...me...!’” (Acts 7:37b) “Okay then...How many ‘under the sound of my voice’ know what Moses’ *first* miracle was?” There was no response. “Okay, I’ll answer that *for you...Moses turned water into blood! Think hard now...have you heard of anyone else lately, who turned water into wine?*” Again, no response. “One ‘...of your brethren...’ *did-that’s who!*” (Acts 7:38) “You know him as ‘...the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and

Simon...’ His *first* miracle was turning water into wine. Do you remember?” (Mark 6:3)

Thinking again, Stephen says to himself, “I thought *that one* would do it *for sure!* For some reason they ain’t gettin’ this. I’ll try one last time. If they ain’t gonna get this one, I’m gonna take a *looong* vacation-*faaar* away!” He started again. This time he said, “Okay boys, if y’aint convinced yet, turn ta FIRST CHRONICLES, and we’ll talk a spell about de temple!”

Stephen started preaching. (See, Acts 7:45 to 50) He told these men to turn to I Chronicles 17: 1 to 6. This time they *got* the message-real clear! When they “...heard these things...they were cut to the heart...” (Acts 7:54-Please read the entire verse.) What was Stephen saying from *I Chronicles* that would compel these Jews to commence gnashing “...on him with their teeth...”?

“Go tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt NOT build me an house to dwell in...spake I a word...saying, Why have ye not built me an house...?”

I Chronicles 17:4 and 6

“Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will YE build me? saith the Lord...Hath not MY hand made all these things?” Acts 7:49 and 50. [Even though God *did* agree to men building Him an earthly Temple, it was man’s idea, NOT GOD’S! *His* idea of a *perfect* temple will be seen at the Second Advent. It will be ruled by a *perfect* Man, dispensing *perfect* judgment, in a new and *perfect* environment.]

When Stephen started to preach about THE TEMPLE, these Jews *knew* “their number was up”! *Their* idea of a “...holy place...” (Acts 6:13), was NOT so *holy!* If The Lord wouldn’t let “...David: *Who found favour...*” with God (Acts 7:45-46), build Him a house, *how would/could their own house stand?* If this didn’t upset them, the warning God gave Solomon would.

“...If ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them; Then...this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all nations.” Remember; Stephen was preaching to these Jews about their *continued* National IDOLATRY. *Acts 7:39 to 43!!*

“And this house², WHICH IS HIGH, shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus...unto this house?” II Chronicles 7:19 to 22

These Jews had associated their idolatrous actions with God’s Holy Temple. That’s why they didn’t want *anyone* to tell them that their religion, or anything about it, was no good. Could this be what drove these Jews to crucify Jesus? Didn’t He show them, their ideas about the temple were (let’s say) misguided? Let’s look at a few of these examples:

YOU HAVE NO REGARD FOR THE TEMPLE, BUT I DO...

“...Barachias, whom YE slew between the temple and the altar.” Matthew 23:35

“...Make NOT my Father’s house a house of merchandise.”
John 2:16

“Woe unto you...which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, IT IS NOTHING; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is debtor!...for whether is

² The whole Book of I Chronicles details (a second version of) a building that *God really WASN’T interested in*, in the first place! *Don’t forget, before the writer of I Chronicles ever dipped his pen in ink, the temple he was referring to in I Chronicles chapter seventeen was destroyed, and about to be RE-built!*

GREATER, the gold, or THE TEMPLE that sanctifieth the gold?" Matthew 23:16 and 17

THE TEMPLE IS NOT GREAT, I AM GREAT...

"...I say unto you, in this place is one GREATER than the temple." Matthew 12:6. Don't forget; this is now the *third* temple, *Herod's* Temple!

THIS TEMPLE WON'T LAST, MINE WILL...

"...There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matthew 24:1

"...Destroy THIS temple, and in three days I will raise it up."
John 2:19 **"...He spake of the temple of his body..."** John 2:21

Just to make His point, when Jesus died, He ripped "...the veil of the temple...in twain from the top to the bottom..." (Matthew 27:51) This told these non-spiritual, self-righteous, Pharisaical Jews that God would've rathered Adolf Hitler bring in the "Third Reich," than for them to continue in their religion. On a positive note, "...Christ being come an high priest...by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, NOT MADE WITH HANDS, that is to say, NOT OF THIS BUILDING..." Not of what building? A building NOT MADE WITH HANDS. Remember; *man* (WITH hands) built the temple. Again, not of *what* building? NOT of THE TEMPLE!!! "...Christ... through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, PURGE YOUR CONSCIENCE FROM DEAD WORKS...", like the Jews' *religion*, "...to serve the LIVING God..." (Hebrews 9:11 to 14)

These Jews were satisfied with the way things were. Their motto was: "Don't rock the boat. We go to temple; we pay the tithes; and we know *our* scripture! WE DON'T NEED ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT...WE DON'T WANT ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT!!!" They have The

Scriptures all right, but they DON'T have The Messiah. They didn't want Him *then*, and they don't want Him *NOW*! Why? If Jesus was The promised Messiah, these JEWS would have had to admit that they were WRONG, by confessing Him publicly. (See, Acts 2:22 to 38) The *obvious* problem here was giving up (the SIN of) loving their RELIGION *more than* loving GOD. Do you think I'm wrong? See what the Apostle Paul said on this subject...

“For ye have heard of my conversation in times past in the JEWS’ RELIGION, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:...”, just like the crowd standing before Stephen was about to “waste” him!!! **“And profited...”**, (you know-money, “*gelt*”), **“...in the JEWS’ RELIGION...zealous of the traditions...”** Galatians 1:13 and 14. (See what Jesus said about *tradition*; in Mark 7:6 to 13)

The reality was, these Jews didn't *want to* believe their OWN BOOK concerning “...the coming of the Just One...” (Acts 7:53) Believing it; would have put them at odds against their OWN religion, like it did a *former* Pharisee named Saul. (Acts chapter 9) Years after getting saved, and welled up with compassion, Saul (now Paul) addresses this issue in his Epistle to the Romans.

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal for God, but NOT according to knowledge. For they being IGNORANT of GOD’S righteousness, are going about to establish their OWN righteousness have NOT submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. FOR CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.” Romans 10:1-4

Even though “...they have not all obeyed the Gospel...” (Romans 10:16a), a day is coming when “...the lost sheep of the

house of Israel...” (Matthew 10:6) will be converted in “...ONE DAY...” (Isaiah 66:8) That Day will complete God’s plan of Redemption, and bring in God’s long awaited KINGDOM- The Kingdom of Heaven.

We today, who are thriving on Israel’s “...fatness...” (Romans 11:17), should, at the same time, be praying for her salvation. Remember, it was through her beautiful *unprocessed* pictures, that “...we have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write...” (John 1:45) Christian, it’s our duty to give Israel the Gospel. Tell these “...natural branches...” that it’s not too late to “...be grafted...” back “...into their OWN olive tree... for God is able to graft them in AGAIN...”! (Romans 11:23 and 24)

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is NONE OTHER NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

“...For the same Lord over all is rich unto ALL that call upon him. For WHOSOEVER shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:12 and 13

As we close this second chapter, a final word of admonition: Lest ye forget what Mordecai has done for you, every now and then, read The King’s *Chronicles*.

