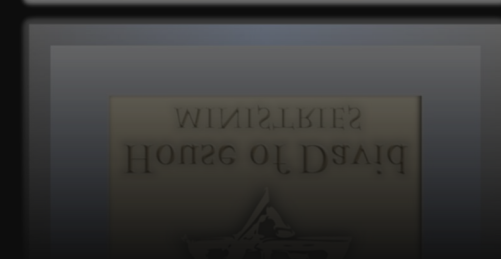
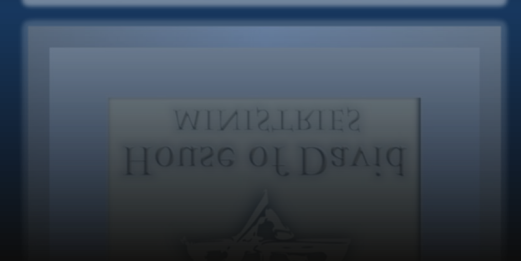


Purim & the Spirit of Amalek

March 5, 2021



Part 1
The Story



The Reader's Digest Version



House of David
MINISTRIES

1. Our enemies tried to kill us.
2. God overcame them.
3. We won—Let's eat!



Credit: Spaceballs (1987). Co-written,
produced and directed by Mel Brooks.

The Slightly Longer Version



House of David
MINISTRIES

A long time ago in a galaxy far,
far away....

The Medium Version



House of David
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- ❖ It all began in Ancient Persia in the fourth century BCE.
- ❖ The Holy Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed more than 50 years earlier, and the Jews were subjects of the mighty Persian empire that extended over 127 lands.



Source: The Basic Purim Story. Chabad.org.

The King's Celebration



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- ❖ King Ahasuerus ascended the Persian throne.
- ❖ He celebrated by throwing a grand 180-day-long party for all his subjects.
- ❖ Vashti, his queen, refused to join the celebration, and at the recommendation of his adviser ordered Vashti's execution.

Lonely for a Wife



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- ❖ The king was lonely for a wife, so his servants suggested that he order a beauty pageant.
- ❖ The girl who would find favor in the king's eyes would become the new queen.



The Leader of the Jews



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- ❖ The leader of the Jews at that time was a Shushanite resident named Mordechai.
- ❖ He had a cousin, Esther, who was orphaned as a young girl.
- ❖ Mordechai raised her and treated her as a daughter.

Esther Taken to the Palace



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- ❖ Esther was forcibly taken to the king's harem to participate in the contest.
- ❖ While all the other contestant beautified themselves with perfumes and lotions, Esther did nothing.



The King Fell in Love



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- ❖ When Esther appeared before the king, he immediately liked her.
- ❖ Esther became the new Queen of Persia.
- ❖ And per Mordechai's directive, she refused to divulge her nationality to anyone, even to the king.

The Plot to Assassinate



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- ❖ One day, Mordechai overheard two of the king's chamberlains discussing a plot to assassinate him.
- ❖ Mordechai reported them, and the traitors were hanged.



Haman the Virulent Jew Hater



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- ❖ Meanwhile, Haman, one of Ahasuerus's ministers, was promoted to the position of prime minister.
- ❖ Haman was a virulent Jew-hater and a descendant of the anti-Semitic nation of Amalek (hold that thought).
- ❖ Immediately after his promotion, the king issued a decree ordering everyone to bow down whenever Haman appeared.

Mordechai Refused to Bow Down



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- ❖ When Mordechai, a proud Jew, refused to bow down, Haman was infuriated.
- ❖ He resolved to take revenge against all the Jews and threw lots (called Purim) to determine the “lucky” day when he would execute his plan.
- ❖ The lot fell on the 13th day of the Hebrew month of Adar.

Haman Approached the King



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- ❖ Haman approached Ahasuerus and offered him 10,000 silver talents in exchange for permission to exterminate the Jews.
- ❖ Ahasuerus replied:
- ❖ “The money is yours to keep, and the nation is yours to do with as you please.”

Haman Sent His Proclamations



House of David
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❖ Haman immediately sent proclamations to all the king's land, sealed with the royal signet ring, ordering the people to rise up against the Jews and kill them all—men, women and children—on the following 13th day of Adar.



Mordechai Contacts Queen Esther



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❖ When Mordechai became aware of the decree, he sent a message to Esther, asking her to approach the king and beg him to spare her people.



Esther Responded



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❖ Esther responded that anyone who entered the king's presence unsummoned would be put to death unless the king extended to that person his golden scepter.

❖ “And I,” Esther said, “have not been summoned.”



Another Message



House of David
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- ❖ Mordechai sent another message:
- ❖ “Do not think that you will escape the fate of all the Jews by being in the king’s palace. For if you will remain silent at this time, relief and salvation will come to the Jews from another source, and you and the house of your father will be lost. And who knows if it is not for just such a time that you reached this royal position.”

Esther Agrees to Approach the King



House of David
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- ❖ Esther then agreed to approach the king.
- ❖ She asked Mordechai to gather all the Jews in Shushan and let them fast with her for three days and nights.
- ❖ After the fast, Esther would approach the king and put her life into his hands.

The King Extends His Scepter



House of David
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- ❖ Esther donned royal garb and entered Ahasuerus's chambers.
- ❖ Immediately, the king extended his scepter.
- ❖ "What is it?" Ahasuerus asked. "What is your request?"



Esther Invites the King and Haman



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- ❖ “I would like to invite the king and Haman to a feast I have prepared,” Esther responded.
- ❖ So, the king and Haman joined Esther for a wine feast.



Another Invitation



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- ❖ During the feast, the king again asked Esther whether she had anything to request.
- ❖ “Yes,” Esther responded.
- ❖ “I would appreciate if tomorrow, again, the king and Haman would join me for a feast. And then I will tell the king my request.”

Haman Plots Against Mordechai



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- ❖ Haman left the party a happy and proud man, believing the queen desired to honor him at another banquet.
- ❖ Standing at the king's gate was Mordechai, who still refused to bow to Haman.
- ❖ When Haman arrived home, his wife and advisers counseled him to erect a gallows, and then to go to the king and request permission to hang Mordechai.

Sleep Eluded the King

- ❖ That night, sleep eluded the king, so he asked his servants to read to him from the Royal Chronicles.
- ❖ They read how Mordechai saved the king's life when two of his chamberlains plotted to kill him.



Was Mordechai Rewarded?



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- ❖ “Was he rewarded for this fine act?” Ahasuerus asked.
- ❖ “No, he was not,” the servants responded.
- ❖ At that moment, Haman entered the king’s courtyard.
- ❖ His purpose was to ask the king’s permission to hang Mordechai.

How Shall Mordechai be Honored?



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❖ Before Haman could utter a word, Ahasuerus addressed him:

❖ “My Haman, in your estimation, what shall be done to a person whom the king wishes to honor?”



Royal Garments and a Royal Horse



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- ❖ Certain that the king wished to honor him, Haman responded:
- ❖ “Bring royal garment and a royal horse. And let one of the king’s nobles dress the man and lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming before him, ‘So is done for the man whom the king wishes to honor!’”

Haman Honors Mordechai



House of David
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- ❖ “Great idea,” Ahasuerus responded.
- ❖ “Now go get the garments and the horse and do so for Mordechai the Jew!”
- ❖ Haman had no choice but to comply.
- ❖ On the next day, he went and honored Mordechai as the king had ordered.

The Second Banquet



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- ❖ Haman then rushed to join the king and Esther for the second feast.
- ❖ “What is your request?” a curious King Ahasuerus asked Esther.



Esther Pleads with the King



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❖ “If I have found favor in your eyes, O King,” Esther pleaded, “and if it pleases the king, let my life be granted me by my plea, and the life of my people by my request. For my people and I have been sold to be annihilated, killed and destroyed!”



Esther Identifies the Evil Person



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- ❖ Esther then identified Haman as the evil person who wished to perpetrate this atrocity.
- ❖ The king was greatly angered.
- ❖ When he was then informed that Haman had built a gallows for Mordechai, he ordered that Haman be hanged on that very gallows.

Haman's Estate Given to Esther



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- ❖ Also on that day, Haman's estate was given to Esther, and Mordechai was appointed prime minister in Haman's stead.
- ❖ The king gave Mordechai and Esther permission to write a decree that countermanded Haman's edict.
- ❖ The decree granted the Jews permission to defend themselves against their enemies.

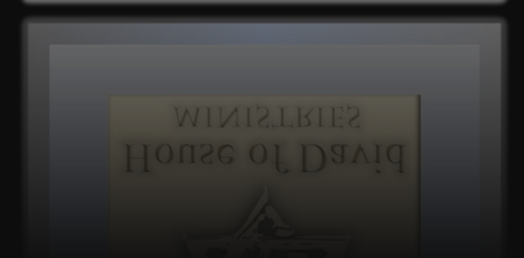
The Jews Celebrate Purim



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- ❖ On the 13th and 14th of Adar, that year, the Jews throughout the Persian Empire mobilized and killed the enemies who sought to annihilate them.
- ❖ Among the dead were Haman's 10 sons.
- ❖ The Jews of Shushan then rested and celebrated the first Purim on the 15th day of Adar.

Part 2
The Spirit of Amalek



Wipe Out Amalek

- ❖ Earlier we read that Haman was a virulent Jew-hater and a descendant of the anti-Semitic nation of Amalek.
- ❖ But who were Amalekite people, and how did Haman become associated with them?



House of David
MINISTRIES





Who Were the Amalekites?

- ❖ The Amalekites were an ancient biblical nation living near the land of Canaan.
- ❖ They lived to the southern Land of Israel, in what is now known as the Negev Desert.
- ❖ Over the millennia, the identity of Amalek has been lost.

Amalek & Esau



House of David
MINISTRIES

- ❖ Amalek grew up in Esau's household, and adopted Esau's pathological hatred of Jacob's descendants.
- ❖ His offspring became the nation of Amalek.
- ❖ They were the first nation to attack the Jewish people after their Exodus from Egypt.
- ❖ And they are seen as the archetypal enemy of the Jews.

Wipe Out Amalek

❖ We read in the Bible that the Prophet Samuel ordered King Saul to attack Amalek and spare no one, killing men and women, infants and sucklings, oxen and sheep, camels and asses.



House of David
MINISTRIES



Only Blot Out Amalek



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- ❖ During the Biblical period, there were many nations who attacked Israel.
- ❖ So, why were the Israelites only commanded to blot out the memory of Amalek?
- ❖ Why were they instructed to commit genocide?

Satan & the Evil Inclination



House of David
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- ❖ Some rabbis says that Amalek is *Samael* or Satan.
- ❖ In Barcelona (ca. 1300) there were commentators who said that Amalek means *Yetzer Hara*, the evil inclination.
- ❖ In other words, they say we are commanded to blot out Satan or the evil inclination, not a physical people called Amalek.

Amalek Still Exists



House of David
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- ❖ Other prominent rabbis, such as Maimonides, stated that Amalek still exists as a physical people.
- ❖ Some rabbis even identify Amalek with a specific people group today.



Germany & Amalek



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- ❖ Rabbi Yosef Haim Sonnenfeld (ca. 1868) believed that the Germans are descendants of Amalek.
- ❖ Other prominent Jewish leaders identified the Nazis with Amalek back in the 1930s.



Anyone Who Hates Israel



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- ❖ Some rabbis say that anyone who hates the Jewish people is from the seed of Amalek, for example, the Soviets, Nasser, and the Mufti.
- ❖ And more recently, Rabbi Jack Riemer wrote that the Muslim fundamentalists are Amalek.

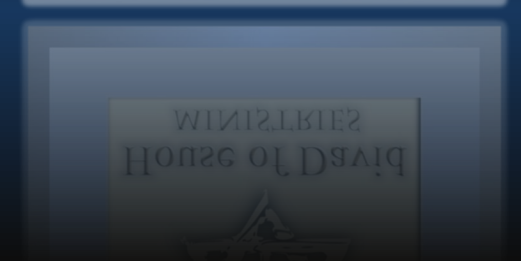
The Spirit of Amalek



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- ❖ Is Iran today descendant from Amalek?
- ❖ It is impossible to know.
- ❖ What I believe is that Amalek is a spirit, and most likely the vilest spirit who is the persona of Satan himself.
- ❖ One day he will manifest as the lawless and evil one, the Anti-Christ, and will ultimately seek to annihilate the Jewish people.

Part 3
Who Was Esther?



Who Was Esther?



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- ❖ What was the biological relationship between Esther and Mordechai?
- ❖ Were they cousins or uncle and niece?
- ❖ And was Mordechai Esther's adoptive father or even possibly her husband?

First Cousins



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- ❖ According to the Megillah, Esther is the daughter of Mordechai's uncle, and thus, Esther and Mordechai are first cousins.
- ❖ Comparably, Abraham and Sarah were also first cousins.
- ❖ When Esther was orphaned, Mordechai adopted her.

Husband & wife?



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- ❖ But, according to the rabbinic texts, Mordechai was also likely Esther's husband.
- ❖ This rabbinic exegesis is based on the interpretation of the Aramaic text.



Daughter & House



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- ❖ The term *bat* (daughter) is understood as *bayyit* (house), and often carries the meaning “wife” in rabbinic exegesis.
- ❖ A common word for “wife” in the Talmud’s Aramaic is *de’beit’hu* meaning “of his house.”

My House & My Wife



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- ❖ R. Yossi ben Chalfta said:
- ❖ “I always refer to my wife as “my house” and my house as “my wife.”



Nathan's Parable



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- ❖ To support this opinion, the Talmud sites Nathan's parable of the poor man with his sheep, where he allowed it to sleep in his "bosom" and treated it like a "daughter."
- ❖ The Talmud says that this must be a euphemism, since wives, and not daughters sleep in a man's "bosom."
- ❖ Hence, we see that the word *bat* (daughter) can also refer to a wife.

A Type and Anti-Type



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- ❖ If Esther was indeed Mordechai's wife, then we can begin to see a type and anti-type.
- ❖ Mordechai is a picture of God and Esther represents her people, Israel.



God is Married to Israel



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❖ God is married to Israel.

❖ As we read:

❖ “For your Maker is your husband, The LORD of hosts is His name; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth” (Isaiah 54:5).

Israel was In Exile



House of David
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- ❖ At the time of Esther, Israel was in exile because of her idolatry; thus, God had turned them over to the Gentiles.
- ❖ The Lord declared:
- ❖ “Where is the certificate of your mother's divorce, Whom I have put away? Or which of My creditors is it to whom I have sold you? For your iniquities you have sold yourselves, and for your transgressions your mother has been put away” (Isaiah 50:1).

The Redemptive Blessing



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❖ Here is the redemptive blessing:

❖ Prior to King Ahasuerus ascending the throne, King Cyrus of Persia had issued a decree to Nehemiah to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

Hebrew Date	Secular Date BCE	Chronology Leading to Purim Events	Hebrew Date	Secular Date BCE	Chronology Leading to Purim Events
2448	1313	The Jewish people leave Egypt, and cross the Sea of Reeds. On the way to receive the Torah they encounter Amalek who wages war.	3389	369	The Jews begin building the second Temple, but work on it is halted. (The reason why is given in the entry, below.)
2488	1273	After wandering in the desert for close to 40 years, just before entering the Promised Land, again Amalek wages war.	3392	369	After Cyrus dies, Achashverosh II becomes emperor. He orders that the building of the second Temple be stopped.
2488	1273	Moses passes away and the Jewish people, led by Joshua, enter the Promised Land.	3395	366	In the third year of his reign, Achashverosh II makes a great banquet, lasting for 180 days, at the end of which Vashti, his queen, is killed. Eventually Esther becomes queen.
2884	877	After approximately 400 years of being led by the Judges, Saul is appointed king. He is charged by the Prophet Samuel to wage war on the nation of Amalek. King Saul does, but fails to complete the task by leaving Agag, the king of Amalek, alive - ultimately leading to the revival of anti-Semitic Amalek.	3404	357	Achashverosh's minister, Haman, casts lots (Purim) in a plot to annihilate the entire Jewish people. His evil desire is granted by the king. Esther intercedes, pleading with the king to nullify Haman's plan.
2884	877	David becomes king.	3405	356	Eleven months after Haman's decree, the Jews are victorious, and on the following day, the 14 th (and 15 th) of Adar, the holiday of Purim is established.
2935	827	The Jewish people complete the building of the Temple in Jerusalem, under King Solomon.	3408	353	Seventy years after being exiled, the Jewish people return to the Holy Land and resume the building of the second Temple.
3338	423	The (first) Temple is destroyed and the Jews are exiled to Babylon (today Iraq).	3622	139	The Chanukah events take place - in Israel
3389	372	King Cyrus of Persia (today Iran) encourages the Jews to rebuild the Holy Temple. Forty-two thousand Jews return, and work of building the second Temple begins.			

3388	375	King Cyrus of Persia (today Iran) encourages the Jews to rebuild the Holy Temple. Forty-two thousand Jews return, and work of building the second Temple begins.	3625	136	The Chanukah events take place - in Israel
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Cyrus the Anointed One



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- ❖ Regarding King Cyrus we read:
- ❖ Thus says the Lord to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held... For Jacob My servant's sake, and Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name... I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways; He shall build My city [Jerusalem] and let My exiles go free..." (Isaiah 45).

A New King of Persia



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- ❖ King Ahasuerus withdraws Cyrus's order and halts the construction.
- ❖ But some number of years later, another king would arise in place of King Ahasuerus.
- ❖ His name was King Darius, and he would reissue the decree to finish construction of the Temple in Jerusalem.

The Church as God's Bride



House of David
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- ❖ And how does the church fit into this picture?
- ❖ We are the bride of Christ (*bat*):
- ❖ Indeed the LORD has proclaimed To the end of the world: ‘Say to the daughter of Zion, Surely your salvation is coming; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him’” (Isaiah 62:11).
- ❖ “For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:2).

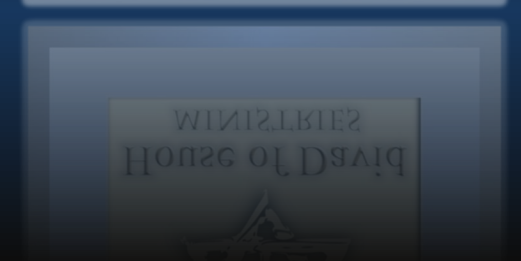
The Church as God's House



House of David
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- ❖ And we are His house (*bayyit*):
- ❖ “For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place” (Psalm 132:13).
- ❖ “But Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.” (Hebrews 3:6).

Part 4
A Christian Celebration

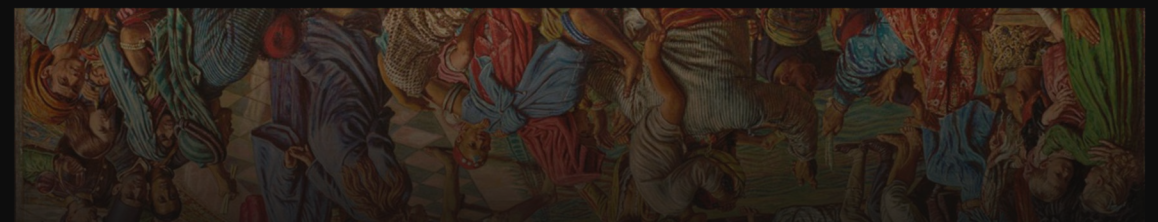
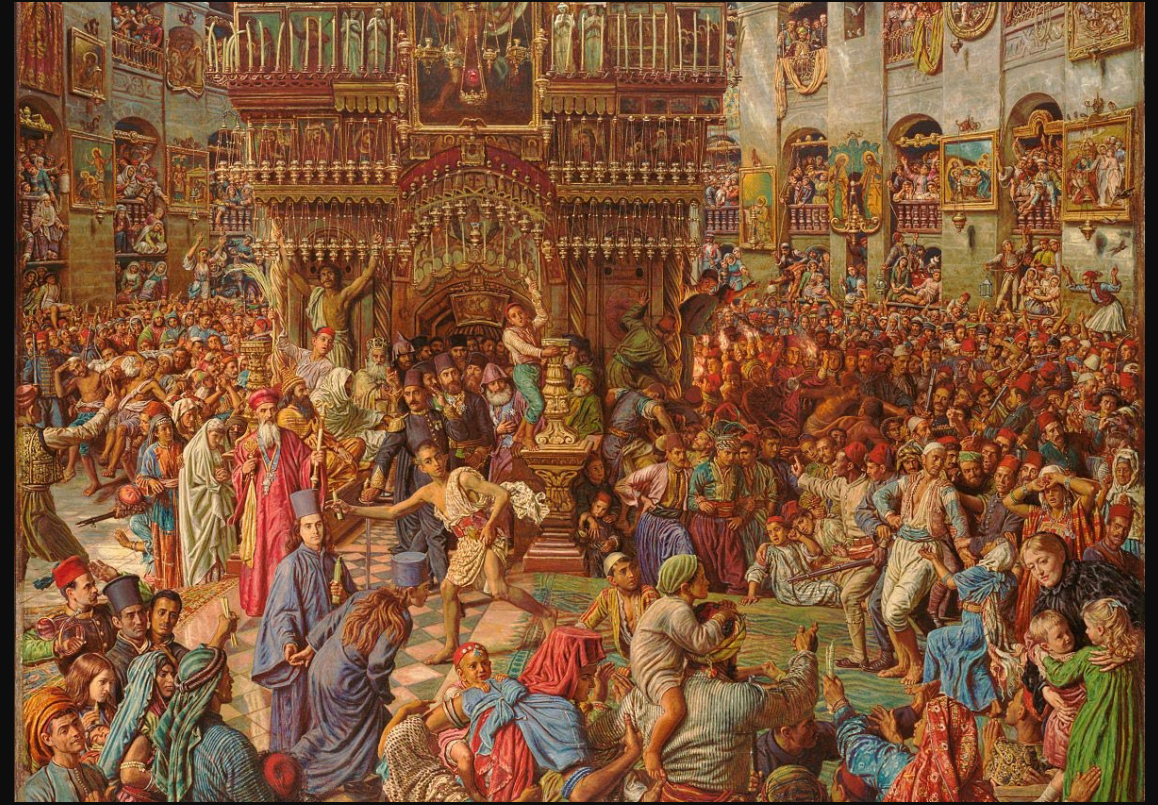


All Who Joined



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- ❖ We read in the book of Esther:
- ❖ “The Jews undertook and irrevocably obligated themselves and their descendants, and *all* who might *join* them, to observe these two days in the manner prescribed and at the proper time each year” (Esther 9:27).



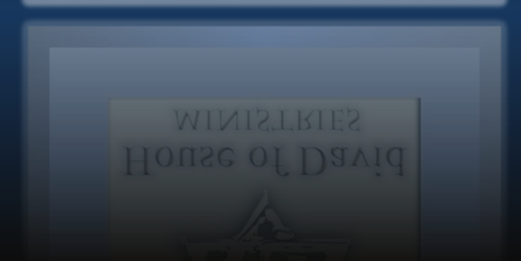
Celebrated by Christians



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- ❖ Pastor Trey Graham, senior pastor at First Melissa Church in Texas, recently said:
- ❖ Here you and I are called out in chapter nine as “those who allied themselves” with the people of Israel.
- ❖ This means that Purim is a Jewish holiday that can and should be celebrated by non-Jews.

Questions?



Contact Information

House of David Ministries

Eric Michael Teitelman

Pastor · Teacher · Worship Leader

P.O. Box 473

Haymarket, VA 20168

703.655.8182

info@thehouseofdavid.org

www.thehouseofdavid.org

