

Esther: God's Time and Place For You
2023-05-14

Esther 4:14b-16

who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, 16 "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do.

Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish."

....HAPPY MOM DAY!

- Sovereign God has put you in this time/place for His purposes/glory.

Author unknown: traditions Mordecai, Ezra, Nehemiah460-350 B.C.

Events happened between chapters 6 & 7 of Ezra.

- King selected Jewish orphan Esther to replace Vashti as queen. 2:1–18
- Mordecai (Esther's cousin) stopped a plot to murder the king and was recorded in the king's book but not rewarded. 2:19–23
- Mordecai refused to bow before Haman, the king's 2nd in command. 3:2
- Haman retaliated against Mordecai by seeking to annihilate all Jews 3:6
- Haman promised to pay into the king's treasuries 375 tons of silver for the destruction of the "disloyal" Jews. 3:9
- Persian King let Haman decree death for all Jews. 3:6–15
- Mordecai urged Esther to use her position to save the Jews. 4:1–17
- God gave the king insomnia (turning point of the story). 6:1
- The king made Haman honor Mordecai for revealing the murder plot against the king. 6:1–14
- Queen Esther reveals she is a Jew & is threatened with death by Haman's plan. 7:1-6
- Haman is hung on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai. 7:7–10
- Esther is given Haman's property as a reward. 8:1–2
- King let Mordecai decree the Jews could defend themselves. 8:9–17
- The Jews defeated all their enemies. 9:1–19
- Commemorated yearly by festival called Purim ("lots"). 9:20–32
 - Mar 7, 2023 Purim ("lots" in Persian) commemorated 356 BC recorded in Esther!

Jesus in Esther: Haman hanged same day of year as 1st Fruits & Jesus' resurrection.

- Jesus used weapon (cross) his enemy devised to destroy Him and His spiritual seed to save His people. Genesis 50:20, Colossians 2:14-15

Only book in Bible without explicit reference to God, worship, prayer or obvious miracle.

- Esther shows God's sovereignty/providence doesn't require high visibility.
 - providence: God's behind-scenes care/control over His creation

God is the ultimate cause of all (Job) but does so in a way that somehow upholds our ability to make real, voluntary choices with real/eternal results that we're responsible for.

- to say God does not cause us to make willing choices limits His power.
 - God can create a creature who makes willing, voluntary, meaningful choices and yet those choices are nonetheless ordained by God.

God even controls seemingly random/insignificant events of your life.

- In Esther: beauty contests, no reward initially for Mordecai, insomnia, dice Proverbs 16:33, Jonah 1:7
 - invisible God who may appear absent is invincible God working out His wise plans for your good/His glory. Hebrews 11:6

Like Esther, God determines when/where you are in history. Isaiah 46:10, Ephesians 1:11, Romans 13:1, Acts 17:26, Esther 4:14b

- He put you in places of influence.... Where you live, work, play, what you enjoy.
 - All callings are important whether pastor, farmer, doctor, laborer.
 - Mom is one of most influential people in all of life.
- placed in circle of influence by God because they are precious to Him.
 - God expects Christians to use influence for His glory/His people's good.
 - List circles of influence God put you in!

Influence through prayer, holiness, Spirit-filled speech, Spirit-led acts. Esther 4:15-16

- Prayer: Esther called Jews to fast for 3 days.....implied prayer.
 - Always start with prayer...but don't end there.
- Be example: live godly lives even in midst of evil. Esther/Nehemiah/Daniel/Joseph
 - Esther always remained humble/respectful of her husband-king.
 - Many times we read Esther won "favor" of those around her.
 - person of integrity is a powerful instrument in God's hand.
- Spirit-led acts: Esther risked her life 2x by going uninvited before king.
 - Esther did not know the outcome of her actions: no special revelation from God.
 - Be determined to do what is right, no matter the cost.
- Spirit-filled speech...she shared truth when it was uncomfortable.
 - Invite to church, share Gospel or Christian life experiences....Emma example

God is able to act without us but chooses to use us to impact lives around us.

- Sovereign God put you in this time/place for His purposes/glory.
 - so He is worshipped for His supremacy, grace, power, love.
- By grace become instrument of blessing in your circle of influence.

There will be three effects of nearness to Jesus-humility, happiness, and holiness. May God give them to thee, Christian!
-C.H. Spurgeon