

For Such a Time as This

Esther 4

Ahasuerus Persian king **Grk** Xerxes reigned 486-465 BC succeeding father Darius grandfather Cyrus. Time of Esther 483-473 BC. Had great power & control but one thing he couldn't control was himself. He was proud, greedy, impulsive, prone to temper tantrums, easily flattered & swayed. Tradition says he was a weak king controlled by eunuchs.

Eunuchs played essential & highly trusted role in the court of Xerxes. Because they could not produce heirs, Persian kings prized them as intensely loyal administrators, bodyguards, & advisors who posed no threat to royal succession. Ahasuerus referred to himself as, "The great king, The king of kings, The king of the lands'. **Yet God's providence rules**

Persian kings were known to flaunt their wealth as Xerxes did. Kings would wear jewels in their beards. Jewels were a sign of rank among Persian men. Soldiers wore great amounts of gold & jewels into battle.

Ch 1 *Riches of his royal glory, splendor of his great majesty* - Emphasizing his wealth & prestige. Ahasuerus was incredibly wealthy! Which makes his choice of a **orphaned Jewish girl** as queen very incredible & providential.

Edict goes out by Ahasuerus to destroy the Jews driven by jealous Haman published to all 127 provinces. Mordecai hears and springs into action.

1 When Mordecai learned all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city and wailed loudly and bitterly.

Reminder of Jesus lamenting over Jerusalem Lk 19:41 And when He approached, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. Matt 23:37-39 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.38 "Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! 39 "For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

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When invested in the **spiritual wellbeing** of others especially loved ones, there is a supernatural grieving that affects us & awakens the deepest part of our being. **Danita/kids/myself**. Mordecai **wailed**—shriek, cry for help.

Bitterly—fierce, violent, convulsive.

2 And he went as far as the king's gate, for no one was to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth.

Bible says don't sing songs to a hurting heart to those grieving it's inappropriate **Pr 25:20** ***As he that takes away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon a wound, so is he that sings songs to an heavy heart..*** Ancient Law not show grief in Kings presence--it gives a negative impression of kings Rule & decrees. As king & Haman celebrating in drunken stupor.

3 And in each and every province where the command and decree of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay on sackcloth and ashes.

Decree was a death sentence to the innocent

HA Ironside makes a spiritual point...They believed the word of Ahasuerus. The proclamation was sealed with the royal signet. They knew they were under sentence of death, and their hearts were filled with grief and anguish. In this, how like the condition of awakened sinners! All unsaved men are under a far worse condemnation than that which darkened the sky of every Jew in the Persian dominions.

4 Then Esther's maidens and her eunuchs came and told her, and the queen writhed in great anguish. And she sent garments to clothe Mordecai that he might remove his sackcloth from him, but he did not accept them.

Esther imagined a personal tragedy w/ Mordecai so she tried to bring relief, to no avail. Kings wives were confined not aware of happenings outside the palace. New garments to the grieving a way of relief. **But no!**-greater issue

5 Then Esther summoned Hathach (good) from the king's eunuchs, whom the king had appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what this was and why it was.

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Trusted servants a precious commodity who will not expose or tell your business creating rumors & speculation Hathach faithful eunuch. Up to now there is no indication of the family ties between Esther & Mordecai.

6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai to the city square in front of the king's gate. 7 And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. 8 He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict which had been issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show Esther and inform her, and to order her to go in to the king to implore his favor and to plead with him for her people.

Mordecai used whatever means available to counter situation. ***'Work out your own salvation w/ fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and do His good pleasure.'*** Esther tasked to correct & set right the misinformation given King Ahasuerus ***Pr 18:17 The first to plead his case seems just, Until another comes and examines him.***

Mordecai telling Hathach to tell the queen to plead for favor w/ Ahasuerus ***"for her people,"*** divulges the fact that Esther is Jewish.

"Archaeologists have uncovered the king's gate—a large building, 131 by 92 feet, with a central room 69 feet square. The discovery that the gate opened onto a city square corroborates the accuracy of details such as that given in this verse."

9 And Hathach came back and related Mordecai's words to Esther. 10 Then Esther spoke to Hathach and ordered him to reply to Mordecai: 11 "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that for any man or woman who comes to the king to the inner court who is not summoned, he has but one law, that he be put to death, unless the king holds out to him the golden scepter so that he may live. And I have not been summoned to come to the king for these thirty days." 12 And they related Esther's words to Mordecai.

Esther relates the peril she faces to her own life if she suddenly appears before the king w/o being summoned. Ancient law stated death to anyone who appears before king w/o being called.

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Royal palace was an entity in itself, glorified prison w/ all the amenities & creature comforts, yet isolation, loneliness, untouchable—a terror to outsiders and a burden for those behind palace walls.

John MacArthur notes that "In order to protect the king's life from would-be assassins, this practice prevailed. Seemingly, the king would extend the scepter (a sign of kingly authority) only to those whom he knew and from whom he welcomed a visit

Subjects unable to approach king w/ grievances or injustices. Wives under same rules which allowed the king to be uninterrupted in his personal issues & interactions w/ his many concubines. Law designed to accommodate lusts & pride. Golden scepter extended an invitation to enter.

Thirty days could indicate neglect or being out of favor. Haman all the while keeping the king busy w/ wine & concubines.

13 Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not imagine that you in the king's palace can escape any more than all the Jews. 14 "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?"

No excuse, providence of God is working. *Mordecai did not stagger at the promises of God nor should Esther.* To not act in faith, not intercede for her people is to take her life into her own hands & out of the hand of God *for such a time as this.* **Danita/Barb.** To save yourself at the expense of others is cowardice. ***Whatever is not of faith is sin.*** Can chose your sin but can't choose your consequences.

Mordecai declares Gods providence in making Esther queen & in so doing she has an obligation to God to answer His call & put herself at risk for the sake of doing what's right.

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Wiersbe God will accomplish His sovereign purposes even if His servants refuse to obey His will! AW Tozer compared God's sovereign purposes to an ocean liner, leaving New York City, bound for Liverpool, England. The people on board the ship are free to do as they please, but they aren't free to change the course of the ship. The mighty liner of God's sovereign design keeps its steady course over the sea of history. God moves undisturbed & unhindered toward the fulfillment of those eternal purposes which He purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began

I'm impressed w/ one man Eunuch Hathach doing God's will running back & forth to Mordecai & Esther....faithful messenger small cog in plan of God.

15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, 16“Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way. And thus I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.” 17 So Mordecai went away and did just as Esther had commanded him.

Revelation that her position is not just for being Queen but to deliver her people. She takes action & gives direction. *If I perish, I perish'* Reckless Abandon to will of God. Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem & went to the cross. Bonhoeffer *When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."* **Do right fear nothing**....Mordecai takes orders from 'Esther....

Chuck Swindoll **Esther** has changed from fear to abandonment & faith, from hesitation to confidence & determination, from concern for her own safety to concern for her people's survival. She has reached her own personal hour of decision & has **not** been found wanting.

Esther had commanded Mordecai, Henceforth Esther takes the lead in seeking deliverance for the Jews.

How important is one person? Esther illustrates the impact one can make. Here is the difference one person made in historic votes

- In 1645, one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England;
- In 1649, one vote caused Charles I of England to be executed;
- In 1776, one vote gave America the English language instead of German;
- In 1839, one vote elected Marcus Morton governor of Massachusetts;
- In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union;
- In 1868, one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.
- In 1875, one vote changed France from a monarchy to a republic;
- In 1876, one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the United States presidency;
- In 1923, one vote gave Adolph Hitler control of the Nazi party;
- In 1941 one vote saved the Selective Service System just 12 wks before Pearl Harbor!