

Called for such a Time

Esther 4: 10-17

The entire fourth chapter of Esther deals with her reaction to the decree signed by Ahasuerus regarding the Jews and the conversation she had with Mordecai concerning this disturbing plan. Our text today is a continuation of that conversation. One can only imagine the great distress and sorrow this created within their hearts.

As I read these verses I was reminded of the many obstacles we face in our Christian journey. Satan, like Haman of old, seeks to defeat the believer and remove us from effective service. Our lives are filled with hardship and adversity. Many dream of fairy tale story lines and happy endings, but in reality, life is hard. We must lean upon the Lord for strength and wisdom as we navigate this perilous journey called life.

As we continue in the text, I want to consider the [challenges](#) it reveals as we contemplate: [Called for such a Time](#).

I. The Dilemma for Esther (10-11) – As we continue to examine this rapidly unfolding situation, we discover the great dilemma Esther faced. Consider:

A. The Proclamation (11a) – [All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live.](#) Earlier in the conversation, Mordecai had instructed Esther to go in before the king and intercede for the Jews. Now, it seems apparent that Mordecai would have been aware of this ordinance, but Esther reminds him. No one in the kingdom was allowed to come before the king uninvited, not even the queen. An unannounced appearance could result in death for the one brazen enough to make entrance uninvited. Esther faced great concern through this dilemma.

- Again I want to emphasize that Ahasuerus is not a picture or type of the Lord, but this brings to mind an important spiritual truth. Only those who have come to Christ by faith, being saved by His grace, have access to the throne of grace. The lost and undone do not enjoy such a privilege. All will stand before the righteous judge one day and only those who are part of the body of Christ will be accepted in His presence. Those who do not know Christ through salvation will be removed from His presence and cast into outer darkness and eternal torment.

B. The Provision (11a) – [except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live](#). Esther knew there was one exception, one provision for those who entered the king's presence uninvited. If the king was pleased with the individual, and extended his scepter, that person would not be put to death, and would be granted an audience with the king. This would be Esther's only hope if she approached Ahasuerus uninvited.

- This too reveals a great spiritual truth. Long before Christ was born in Bethlehem and offered Himself the atoning sacrifice for sin, His coming to redeem mankind was prophesied. [Num.24:17 – I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth](#). This actually speaks of the Millennial Reign where Christ will rule and reign as the righteous King, but it also reveals His sovereign authority. The Scepter that rose out of Israel stands as man's only hope for redemption and the One all will stand before in judgment. Apart from a relationship with Him, judgment is sure.

C. The Problem (11b) – [but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days](#). Esther had not been invited to stand before the king for the past thirty days. There was no formal request at this time. If she were to approach him uninvited, she could be put to death. Esther understood the grave implications of being in the king's presence uninvited and the very real possibility that the scepter would not be extended, showing acceptance. She respected the king's authority and feared his wrath.

- I wish all people were like Esther in this regard. If only they understood the certainty of standing before Christ when this life is over. If only they would accept the truth of judgment for sin, and the means of salvation. Our only hope to gain eternal life and escape eternal judgment is to receive favor from the King of kings.

II. The Discernment of Mordecai (12-14) – Mordecai understood Esther's dilemma, but he also was well aware of the implications of this decree for every Jew. Consider:

A. The Inclusion (13) – [Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews](#). Mordecai wanted Esther to understand the seriousness of the situation. She had been crowned queen of Persia, but even that would not ensure her safety. She was a Jew, and she would be included in this genocide. Once a decree was signed, it could not be altered easily. Indecision and inactivity were not options. She must act if she and all the Jews were to survive. She had to get to the king and obtain his favor.

- Satan seeks to destroy all who serve the Lord, and sin is universal in the human race. We are all guilty before God apart from Christ. Our positions and status in life cannot prevent accountability before the Lord. Our only hope is to have the King's favor. We must be saved by His grace and placed within the body of Christ if we are to escape death due to sin.

B. The Annihilation (14a) – *For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed.* If Esther refused to act, death would be certain for her, her father's house, and every Jew within the kingdom. None would escape this plan to annihilate the Jews in Persia. She feared the king's judgment in the inner court, but judgment was certain if she failed to act.

- Again this serves as a reminder of the death sentence for humanity brought about by sin. There is no hope for escape or reprieve. Those who meet the Lord after death, apart from salvation, will face eternal judgment and torment in the lake of fire. There is no hope apart from salvation in Christ. This is not an issue that people can be neutral about. All must come before the King of glory, in order to find grace in His sight through repentance and salvation. (Thankfully our Lord knew this and He provided the means of our salvation through His death on the cross.)

C. The Perception (14b) – *and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?* Mordecai believed that God had sovereignly placed Esther in her position for this very purpose. He was convinced God would use her to save His people. He wanted her to sense the urgency and realize the hand of God at work among them. She must rise to the challenge to stand for the Lord and her people.

- Esther had a personal obligation to go before the king. This would not only benefit her, but it would also benefit the entire Jewish race. We must view our lives in light of God's eternal plan. He has a work for each of us as we walk through life. First we must ensure our own salvation; and then we must strive to reach others before it is too late for them. We cannot afford to be complacent or inactive in service to Christ. The lost are perishing around us stand in need of someone to intercede for them.

III. The Devotion of Esther (15-17) – Our closing verses reveal the devoted commitment of Esther. Consider:

A. The Request (16a) – *Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day.* She was committed to going before the king on

behalf of the Jews, but she wanted Mordecai and all the Jews in Shushan to fast and pray for her prior to her intercession. Esther well understood the power of God, and she knew she needed as many as possible pleading for the Lord's grace and provision.

- Fasting is something the modern church is largely unfamiliar with. I know many have dietary needs that cannot be neglected, but we need to develop a sense of urgency in our day. We must realize our utter dependence on the Lord and seek Him earnestly to provide for our needs. Truthfully, that ought to include serious fasting and prayer.

B. The Resolve (16b) – [I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.](#) Esther shared her commitment to fasting and prayer, while revealing her commitment to the cause, even if it resulted in her death. She knew she must act, and she was determined to do so by the help of the Lord. Her life was in the Lord's hands, and she decided to remain committed by faith in Him.

- We desperately need that type of resolve in our day. Most are unwilling to inconvenience themselves for the cause of Christ. We need to surrender our lives to Him in obedience, fully trusting in His provision and grace. The stakes are too high for us to continue in complacency and apathy. We need those who will rise to the occasion for such a time as this!

C. The Reaction (17) – [So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.](#) Mordecai joined Esther in fasting and prayer, seeking the Lord on her behalf. He urged others to join in this pursuit as well. He did not have an audience with the king, but he prayed earnestly for Esther as she prepared to go before him.

- This reminds me of our obligation to pray for one another, supporting each other in the work we are engaged. We all have different platforms and opportunities. God places us within the kingdom work as it pleases Him. We may not have an audience with those who are very powerful and influential, but we can pray for those who do. We are in this together, and the eternal destiny of men's souls are at stake. I pray we will develop a sense of urgency and committed devotion.

Conclusion: These were unsettling times for Esther and Mordecai. They had no way of knowing what the outcome would be, but they knew they had to act. They depended solely on the Lord and decided to trust Him in the face of uncertainty. We too must follow this example. We can't see our future, or the future of others. One thing is certain: all will stand before the Lord when life is over. We must do all we can to ensure our friends and neighbors hear the Gospel. Seek the Lord for strength to serve in the face of uncertainty. Look to Him for salvation if you are yet unsaved.