The Book of Esther

**Wednesday Night Bible Study**

**Wednesday 14 July 2021**

**Queens Chapel UMC \* 7410 Muirkirk Road \* Beltsville, MD 20705**

**Instructor: Rev. Dr. Will Butler**

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**Theme:** **“A Woman for Such a Time as This”** **(Esther 4:14)**

"…Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

**Esther Chapter 4**

**(Part 3)**

**Esther 4:10-11**

 10 Again Esther spake unto Hatach [ha-tok], and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;

 11 “All the king’s officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that they be put to death unless the king extends the gold scepter to them and spares their lives. But thirty days have passed since I was called to

* Esther explains that she has not been called into the King’s presence for 30 days—This could be for several reasons:
* 1) This could indicate that Esther may have displeased the King in the past
* 2) King Xerxes was also known for his fits of anger that sometimes went on for days
* Depending on his mental and/or emotional state will determine rather he would extend his scepter or have Esther killed
* In order to protect the King’s life from would-be assassins, this practice was put into place. Extending his scepter was a sign only for those he knew and/or welcomed

**Esther 4:12-14**

 12 When Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai,

 13 he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape.

 14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. **And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”**

**Amplified**

 *12 So they told Mordecai what Esther had said.*

 *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, liberation and rescue will arise for the Jews from another place, and you and your father’s house will perish [since you did not help when you had the chance]. And who knows whether you have attained royalty for such a time as this [and for this very purpose]?”*

* Mordecai gives Queen Esther a reality check.
* Don’t forget that you’re a Jew and your position as Queen will not save your life
* He reminded her that if she remains quiet, you’re just as much a part of the problem as the solution

**Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King**

 "The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people but the silence over that by the good people."

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

* Mordecai reminded Esther that God will raise someone else up if she refuses to stand up.
* Mordecai was acquainted with the promise God made to Abraham—Genesis 12:1-3
* Mordecai says to Esther in verse 14 “ *And who knows whether you have attained royalty for such a time as this”*
* In other words, God always presents us with opportunities to fulfill our purpose upon earth
* God, by His providence, was working behind the scene in the affairs of the nation
* Esther’s winning of the beauty contest and becoming queen was no accident—God has been arranging this all the time

**Esther 4:15-17**

 15 Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai:

 16 “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

 17 So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther’s instructions

* Queen Esther instructs Mordecai to gather all the Jews in the city together for a fast.
* Esther also called her personal staff together to fast with her.
* Even though the Scripture does not mention prayer, for Jews it was part of the practice of fasting

Q = Why did Queen Esther call a fast?

* Queen Esther was about to enter a spiritual battle

* Satan was seeking to destroy God’s covenant people and Haman was Satan’s willing vessel and partner in this endeavor
* Queen Esther had an attitude of fasting and prayer to overcome the wiles of Satan

 *Believer’s Bible Commentary, edited by Art Farstad* makes this comment about the Believer’s attitude in difficult times

 “ The Christian’s attitude in difficult and trying circumstances should not be one of fatalism but optimism, especially when it comes to approaching the heavenly throne for grace to help in time of need. We have bold and confident access; the scepter of God’s forgiveness has been stretched out to us at Calvary.

 ‘Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and fine grace to help in time of need’” (Hebrews 4:16)

* Prayer and fasting are always coupled together in the New Testament
* **Matthew 6:17-18**

 17 But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face.

 18 Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

* **Mark 9:29**

 28 Afterward, when Jesus was alone in the house with his disciples, they asked him, “Why couldn’t we cast out that evil spirit?”

 29 This kind can be cast out only by prayer and fasting

* **Luke 2:37**

  Then she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, **worshiping God with fasting and prayer**.

* **Acts 13:2**

 One day as these men were **worshiping the Lord and fasting**, the Holy Spirit said, “Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.”

* **Acts 13:3**

 So **after more** **fasting and prayer**, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way.

* Prayer and fasting are the normal practices of the Christian life. Here are some points to remember when fasting and praying for a breakthrough:
* **1)** Determine your prayer request—**1 Peter 4:7**

 The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers.

 i We must have clarity of thought and no distractions. Write

 your request(s) on a sheet of paper so you can be

 absolutely clear on what you’re asking God for. This is not

 for God it’s for you—Ask yourself “What do I want from

 God?”

* **2)** We need to prepare ourselves physically

 i Fasting has many benefits but it will affect our physical

 body if we do not prepare our selves correctly. It will impact

 your blood sugar levels and physical energy. Always check

 with your doctor first if you have a compromised system.

 Even if you’re healthy you must prepare your body with the

 right foods, liquids and rest. Check with your doctor on the

 right diet when preparing to fast.

* **3)** Prepare yourself spiritually—**Isaiah 58:3-4**

 3 We have fasted before you!’ they say. ‘Why aren’t you impressed? We have been very hard on ourselves, and you don’t even notice it!’ “I will tell you why! I responded. “It’s because you are fasting to please yourselves.
Even while you fast, you keep oppressing your workers.
 4 What good is fasting when you keep on fighting and quarreling? This kind of fasting will never get you anywhere with me.”

 i There are certain attitudes and unacceptable spirits that we

 allow to control our minds and behaviors. We must search

 ourselves by confessing our sins and if we have an

 unresolved disagreement with someone we must resolve it

 before coming before the Lord with fasting and prayer.

 **Psalms 66:18** says “If I had not confessed the sin in my

 heart, the Lord would not have listened.”

Next week we’ll talk about putting on the whole Armor of God. Read **Ephesians 6:10-18** and **Esther 5**