

# God's got this Part 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] Chapter 4, Esther chapter 4. Chapter 4, Esther chapter 4.

So, Esther is just before Job. Esther chapter 4, verse 14.

We looked at this beginning last week. I'm going to do a quick review and then we'll get into it for today. Verse 14 says, For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall their enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place.

But thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed. And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Mordecai is talking to Esther.

He says, look, you can hold your peace. You can be quiet. You cannot say anything. But if you do, let me tell you something.

[ 1 : 30 ] God is still going to rescue the Jews. God is still going to take care of them. God is still going to meet their need. And God will do what he has to to rescue his people.

He wants to use you. But if you don't want to, that's okay. But he will use somebody else. And you and your father's house will just kind of fade off into the distance. And he says, look, Esther, who knows whether God has put you here right now for such a time as this?

We talked last week about how much God wants to use us. We think sometimes he's forgotten all about us.

He doesn't know where we live. He's just, you know, God, why aren't you doing anything? Why aren't you answering my prayers? Why aren't you? We have to remember that God is working in the background. God has always got something going on.

And there's nothing that we're going to do that's ever going to stop him. Esther, you may not want to do this, but that's okay. God's going to do it anyway. So he says, look, you can do it as God wants you to, or he'll use somebody else.

[ 2 : 36 ] But it's going to happen. Now, Isaiah 40, verse 17, it says, all nations before him are as nothing. And they counted to him less than nothing. We talked about the fact that this whole story of Esther is a story of redemption.

God is going to redeem his people. We talked about the fact that it is his story. His story. We used Revelation 1.8 last week.

It said, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending. Said the Lord, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty.

He says he's the beginning from the ending. He's got everything covered. He has been there. He will be there. He will come in the future. He is always going to be around. And even though Esther is the title character of this book, we said the book is about God's story and what God is doing.

And even though God's name is not mentioned once in the book, we can see him at work behind the scenes and everything that takes place. Esther reminds us that, you know what, you can be living in an ungodly culture.

[ 3 : 49 ] We do that now. But in an ungodly culture, God can still use his people and God's will will still be done. Nobody is going to take his power away from him.

We said it's a story of providence. And we define providence as pro, beforehand, video, deceit. He sees beforehand. He knows what's coming.

He's prepared for whatever shows up in our life. Sometimes we forget that. But whatever happens, God knows all about it. Go back to chapter 1, verse 1.

Chapter 1, verse 1, we talked about the fact that who is in charge here. It says in Esther 1.1, Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus. This is Ahasuerus that reigned from India, even unto Ethiopia, over 107 and 20 provinces.

He reigned over 127 provinces. He reigned from India to Ethiopia. That is a chunk of land. That is a big area. And Ahasuerus ruled over it.

[ 4 : 55 ] And he said, how come I never heard of Ahasuerus? How come I've never seen his name? Ahasuerus was his Persian name. He had a Greek name, Xerxes. You've seen that one in the history books.

That was his Greek name. This man was powerful. This man had a kingdom. This man was someone you did not want to mess with. And here he is.

He's in charge here. He's ruling in Persia at this moment. But as we go through the rest of the book, we said, we're going to find out that God is in charge. He may think he rules, but God is in charge.

God is so much in charge that there's going to come a time when there's going to be a new ruler, a Persian ruler by the name of Cyrus.

And we talked about Cyrus and the fact that Isaiah 44, 28 says, Thus saith of Cyrus, he is a shepherd and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built into the temple, thy foundation shall be laid.

[ 6 : 00 ] And that prophecy by Isaiah was 150 years before Cyrus ever showed up. God says, I got it. I've got it under control. I know what's going on. I know what's happening.

Just trust me. And we read from 2 Chronicles and found out all the different things that Cyrus did to answer, fulfill that prophecy.

And we said that God's presence and intervention in our life may at times seem invisible, but he is always invincible. We said it was second of all, it was a story of grace. God's grace being shown to people.

God's grace being shown to those of his people, the Jews and Mordecai and Esther.

We said grace was shown through God's remembrance. God did not forget them. He said they were going to be there 70 years on the Babylon, and then Persia was going to take over, and Cyrus was going to send them home.

[ 7 : 02 ] 70 years happened, boom. Cyrus shows up, and away they go. The Jews are allowed to go back to their homeland. God remembered them. And we talked about grace and God's purpose.

God said, look, trust me. My will will be done. It will be fulfilled. We use Romans 8, 28, verse everybody knows. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

He says, everything may not be great. Everything may not be what you think it should be. But he says, trust me. It's all going to work out for good to them that love God.

So God, it's his story. And you know the neat thing about God's story? Second thing, he uses his saints. He uses his saints to accomplish his work.

Let's have a word of prayer. Father, as we continue on here, Lord, today, talking about this introduction to the book of Esther, Lord, help us to understand just how faithful you are, that you do lead us, you do guide us, and your way is perfect.

- [ 8 : 17 ] And, Lord, we just need to trust in what you're doing. Watch your hand at work. We may not see it all the time, but the times we can't see your hand, we talked about we need to trust your heart.
- We know the heart of God. Know that he loves us. Lord, thank you for that love that you have for us. Lord, I pray that you would just bless our time here today.
- Help us to learn. Help us to grow. Help us to have a closer walk with you when we leave here. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. God's going to use his saints to accomplish it. You know, it's humbling to think that God has a plan.
- God has a purpose. God is working. And he's using sinful people like us to accomplish it. Think about that. A holy God is using us to accomplish his purpose.
- A holy God is using a Cyrus to accomplish his purpose. And just to watch what he does to those who know him, those that love him, those who are saved, it's just an amazing thing.
- [ 9 : 26 ] His saints. His saints. First of all, he's going to use the captive of Israel. These people are in captivity. They've been under Babylon. Now they're under Persia. These people are in captivity.
- And God's going to use them to accomplish what he wants. God's going to use Babylon. God's going to use Persia. He's going to use all these people who do not know him or love him, but he's going to use them to accomplish what he wants.
- Jeremiah 20, verse 4 says this. For thus saith the Lord, behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself and to all thy friends.
- And they shall fall by the sword of their enemies. And thine eye shall behold it. And I will give all Judah unto the hand of the king of Babylon. And he shall carry them captive into Babylon and shall slay them with a sword.
- God says, look, this is what's coming. He tells Judah, tells Israel, here's what's coming through Jeremiah. But then he says he's going to raise up somebody against Babylon.
- [ 10 : 33 ] Jeremiah 25, verse 11 and 12. And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment. And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years.
- And it shall come to pass when 70 years are accomplished that I will punish the king of Babylon. And that nation saith the Lord for their iniquity.
- And the land of the Chaldeans, they will make it perpetual desolations. He says, I'm going to punish Babylon as well. I'm using them to help Israel learn that they've done wrong. What was Israel doing?
- They were following other gods. They were following Baal. They were following all the other gods of the nations around them. They were following everybody but God. He says, you need to learn some lessons.
- And so he used Babylon to teach them. But then Babylon's an ungodly nation. And so God's going to use Persia to teach Babylon. You know, and then after Persia, the Jews finally are going to see the fact that, you know what?
- [ 11 : 40 ] We are limited in what we can do. We are dependent upon God. We need him in our life. We need to be worshipping him.
- We need to have him. Because life does not go well without him. And as God's using this refining process to help them see that they need him, there are some of the Jews who are truly committed to him.
- You know, there are some who are just along for the ride. Oh, yeah, God's doing this. We're going this way now. And he's doing that. We're going that way. But there are some who are truly committed.

And that's the second thing. The committed of Israel. The saints that he uses are the committed ones. If you were to back up two more books from Esra, you'd find the book of Ezra. Ezra's at this time as well.

He lives at this same time. Ezra's in Israel. He's in Jerusalem. He's helping there. He's a priest and a leader in the city. And Israel is in the process of rebuilding the temple.

[ 12 : 44 ] Oh, man, what a time. We're back in Israel after being in Babylon. We're building the temple. Oh, can it get any better than this? But there are people who are doing it who are not committed to God.

They're committed to the culture. They're committed to the lifestyle. They're committed to, you know, the history. They're committed. But they're not committed to God. But God is going to show us here in the book of Esther two people who are totally committed to him.

A man by the name of Mordecai and a lady by the name of Esther. And God in his providence, remember his foreseeing, his foreseeing things that need to be done.

God is going to put Mordecai in a strategic position. Look at Esther chapter two, verse five. Esther two, verse five, it says this.

Now in Shushan, the palace, there was a certain Jew whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jer, the son of Shemai, son of Kish, a Benjamite.

[ 13 : 49 ] Now, this will let you know a little bit about Mordecai. Mordecai, you follow that lineage back there that they just gave you. You go look up the lineage of King Saul. He's related to King Saul.

But here he is because they take all the leaders and all the royals and everything. They take them to the country. And I talked about that last week. They take them to the country to try to indoctrinate them into their way of thinking, into their lifestyle, into their gods, their language.

And so Mordecai has been taken there. Look at verse seven. And he brought forth Hadassah, that is Esther, his uncle's daughter.

For she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful, whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.

So here's Mordecai, very godly man. He has taken Esther into his home, raised her as his own. It's his cousin. And he has trained her the same way he was trained.

[ 14 : 57 ] He taught her what it means to follow God in everything you do. See, Mordecai, God said he would put him in a place of special strategic location.

Mordecai worked at the king's gate. The king would go in and out of this gate. He was a doorkeeper there, basically. Not a high job, nothing.

But in that position, he got to see the king and the important people of that day. He got to hear the conversations that were taking place. He got to know pretty much everything that was going on.

And in this position, God is going to use him to unfold his plan. The thing about Mordecai, he understood that he did not serve the king of Persia.

He did not serve Ahasuerus. He served the Lord God Almighty. You know, we get that perspective in our life. We serve the Lord God Almighty.

[ 16 : 03 ] We don't serve our bosses. We don't serve the government. We don't serve whatever. We serve the Lord. You know, sometimes Christians get too wrapped up in where they're going to serve.

You know, I need to be in this place to serve God. I need to have this position to serve God. I need to have this job title to serve God. I need to have... Don't get wrapped up in the location and all that other stuff.

Concentrate on who you are serving. That makes all the difference. Who am I serving? Am I serving myself? Am I serving this person?

Or am I serving the Lord? Wherever I am, I can serve the Lord. You know, God may have placed you in a position or a location that doesn't seem ideal.

I know there are people in here who's... But it doesn't matter whether you work at Hinkley, you work at the jail, you work at fire department, wherever you work.

[17:10] Who are you serving? Why you're there? And that's Mordecai. Mordecai. Then there's Esther. Look at verse 7 again.

And he brought up Hadassah. That is Esther. His uncle's daughter. For she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful, whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.

Her Jewish name is Hadassah. Her Persian name is Esther. Which means star. She's about to be a star. But, as I mentioned last week, as we're setting this whole thing up to start studying the book, Esther is the most unlikely person to do the work that God has called her to do.

She's young. She's an orphan. She's Jewish. And what was the other thing? Anyway, there was another thing.

She's unlikely to do this job. There's nothing about her that says that she's going to be able to accomplish what God wants her to do. Here's an orphan girl.

[18:29] Foreign girl. Oh, yeah, that was the other one. She's a girl. She's a girl in a man's world. How's she going to do all this? But God's going to use her in a phenomenal way.

And Mordecai raised his cousin to love God. He raised her to trust God in everything in her life. He gave her guidance.

He gave her wisdom. He gave her everything she needed. And he even gave her advice that we would say, hmm, that's an interesting piece of advice. He told her not to reveal that she was Jewish.

It's going to make a difference in this whole story. Do not reveal the fact that you're Jewish. Look at chapter 2, verses 10 and 11. And Esther had not showed her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had charged her that she should not show it.

And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house to know how Esther did and what should become of her. As she got older, she was taken into the king's harem.

[19:37] She was there just to, whatever was needed, she was going to do. And as she's there, she did not reveal she was Jewish. And Mordecai went by on his way to his work, on his way to the king's gate.

He could go by that house every day. So every day he could check on her. Every day he could ask about her. Every day he might be able to see her and talk to her. She's going to demonstrate that trusting God, placing herself in danger and possibly death, that God would come through and meet the needs that she had.

I had you read chapter 4, verse 14. Look at verse 16. Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan.

Mordecai has just told her, you may be here for just such a time as this. So Esther says to Mordecai, go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me.

Neither eat nor drink three days, night or day. I also and my maidens will fast likewise. And shall go, and so will go I in unto the king, which is not according to the law.

- [ 20 : 55 ] And if I perish, I perish. Catch that phrase. Not according to the law. The law was nobody could go in before the king unless he asked them to, unless he bid them to.
- Somebody might show up at the door, and if he raised his staff, they could come in. And if he did not, go away, leave him alone. He doesn't want anything to do with you. She says, I'm going to go to the door.
- I'm going to open the door. I'm going to go in, whether he raises his staff or not. She says, I'm going not according to the law. And if I perish, I perish.
- Because the real rule was, if you come in to him, and he didn't bid you, they'd take you out and kill you. They were trying to protect the king. They didn't want anybody going in that shouldn't.
- God says, look, trust me no matter what. You know what happens when we trust God? Let me give you an illustration of what happens when we trust God. Lady that you know well, we sang one of her hymns this morning, All the Way My Savior Leads Me, Fanny Crosby.
- [ 22 : 06 ] Fanny Crosby wrote over 9,000 hymns. Just stop and think about that for a minute. 9,000 hymns. Add to that, Fanny Crosby was blind.
- 9,000 hymns, and here she is blind. And that's part of what makes her such an incredible person. She was blind from the time she was an infant. At the age of six weeks, she got an eye infection.
- And a man pretending to be a doctor prescribed that they put hot mustard packs on her eyes in order to heal the infection.
- Well, as you might surmise, it made her blind permanently. From the age of six weeks old, she was blind.
- But her attitude toward that blindness, years later she said this, Do you know that if at birth I had been able to make one petition? Yeah, you would ask not to be blind, right?
- [ 23 : 10 ] Nope. She said, It would have been that I was born blind. Because when I get to heaven, the first face I shall ever glad my sight will be that of my Savior.
- The song we sang this morning, All the way my Savior leads me, remember there's a line in there that says, For I know whate'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well.
- Can you imagine being blind because of somebody's mistake? And then writing, For I know whate'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well.
- Do we trust him? God says, Trust me with your life. Watch me and watch what I will do. You know, perhaps you find yourself wondering, What is God doing?
- Why is he doing this? Why is he allowing this? Why are we going this direction? How do I fit into his story? Because it is his story. Well, how do I fit into it?
- [ 24 : 22 ] No matter what your story's been up to this point, God is at work. God loves you. He has a plan for you. He is at work. He knows what is going on.
- So it's his story, his saints, And what is his story and his saints trying to accomplish? His salvation. His salvation.
- There's a redemptive thread that goes throughout the scripture. Somebody has said there's a scarlet thread that goes all the way from Genesis to Revelation. Jesus Christ, life, all the way through the Bible, and the fact that he's going to go to the cross and shed his blood.
- God's story is a redemptive story. Esther's story is a redemptive story. God is going to redeem his people. And here he is talking about the salvation that is going to come, first of all, for the children of Israel.
- Man, excuse me, I don't know what's got in my throat, but something. His salvation for the children of Israel. Mordecai took a stand for God.

[ 25 : 29 ] He refused to bow to other men or other gods. He's going to stand for God and God alone. And there was a man there by the name of Haman. Look at Esther chapter 3, verse 1.

Esther 3, 1. After these things, did King Ahasuerus promote Haman, the son of Hamadathah, the Agite, and advance him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

And all the king's servants that were in the king's gate bowed and revered Haman. For the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

Mordecai said, uh-uh. I bow only to God. I don't bow to other men. I don't bow to people. That's not going to happen.

And that so infuriated Haman. Haman was finding a way to get rid of Mordecai. He was looking for a way. And you kind of know the story. We'll talk about it more as we go along.

[ 26 : 36 ] But because of his refusal, Haman's going after him. He wants him out of there. And he's going to find a way to publicly humiliate Mordecai. And he starts building a gallows.

That gallows, he says, is like, actually look at Esther 7, verse 9. Esther 7, 9. And Harbona, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good of the king, standeth in the house of Haman.

Then the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

Dana? Dana? Verses 1 and 2. On that day, the king Ahasuerus gave the house of Haman, the Jews' enemy, unto Esther the queen.

And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told him what he was unto her. And the king took a ring off his finger, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai.

[ 27 : 55 ] And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman. Here's a man who wants to destroy Mordecai. He wants to see him dead. He wants to see him humiliated because he would not bow down before him.

God turns everything around. Mordecai winds up getting Haman's position. Haman winds up being the one hung on the gallows. Did you notice how high that thing was?

50 cubits. Cubits about a foot and a half. 75 feet up in the air. He wanted to put and make a public spectacle of Mordecai being killed.

Haman winds up being killed on it himself. Mordecai and Esther, they even gave a plan to the king to save all the Jews.

At first, you know, Haman had kind of get things going so that they could wind up killing them all. They saved them all. God protected Mordecai. He promoted Esther to be queen. He takes everything that they do and uses it to save the Jews and to bring salvation to them.

[ 28 : 58 ] Now, God also wants to bring salvation to the entire world. To the entire world. The Jews were set to be destroyed, but God provided.

God gave them away. Mankind is heading toward hell, but God gave a way of salvation for them. 2 Peter, I think I mentioned this earlier, but 2 Peter 3.9, The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Just as God physically saved Israel, had had a plan in place before Persia ever got to be a kingdom and an empire.

150 years before Cyrus came along, God had a plan for mankind from the foundations of the world, from the foundations of the world. God had a plan on how we would be saved, how he could send Jesus Christ to die on the cross, and Jesus would take our sins upon him, and as he took our sins upon him, he made a way for us to have salvation, where that we would be saved for all eternity, not have to go to hell, not have to spend an eternity without Christ and without God, but we could spend eternity in heaven.

God had a plan in place. 1 Peter 1, 18 and 19. For as much as ye know that ye are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot.

[ 30 : 46 ] You don't have to rely on corruptible things. You don't have to rely on silver and gold. You don't have to rely on the conversation of your father's brothers. You don't have to rely on the law. You don't have to rely on keeping rules.

You don't have to rely on circumcision. You don't have to rely on... He says, by the precious blood of Christ. By the precious blood of Christ.

You know, he offers us salvation. He offers us, you know, a way to have a free gift that God has given to us.

The free gift of salvation. As we continue looking through this book of Esther, we're going to see God's providence, his foreknowledge, and we're going to see his sovereignty, his sovereignty in full display.

See, God knew his children were going to go into captivity. He knew that the Persians were going to rise to power. He knew that Haman was going to try to attempt to kill all the Jews. He knew it all.

[ 31 : 54 ] But he also knew that he had prepared Mordecai and Esther to be at the right place at the right time to do the right thing. See, this isn't a story just about Israel.

This is a story about how God deals with men. God knew that mankind was going to sin. So God had a plan in place. And Jesus came. God knew that we're going to need redemption still from this world.

We may be saved, but we're still living in a sinful world. God knows that someday a trumpet's going to sound. And we're going to rise up. And we're going to be gone from this world.

God knows right now, today, what your needs are. Everybody in here has needs. Everybody in here has things that are weighing them down.

Things that they're facing. God knows. Do you trust him? See, when you feel discouraged and when you feel like, you know, things aren't going your way and you think, you know, my best days are gone by and everything, remember that God is sovereign.

[ 33 : 09 ] Remember that God is in control. Remember that God's work may be invisible, but God is invincible.

Remember to trust him. What did they need? They needed God. They kept trying to put other things in his place, but they needed God.

This morning, I'm going to have us close with a hymn. Go with me over to hymn number 430. 430.