

Bibliology

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[0 : 00] Go to Esther, chapter 5, Esther, chapter 5.! Esther, chapter 5. Esther, chapter 5.

Last week we were talking about the decree has been issued. All the Jews, 13th day of the twelfth month, they're going to be killed all across the entire empire.

127 provinces from India all the way to Ethiopia. They're all going to be killed. They're a little nervous, a little wondering what's going to go on, what's going to happen, how are they going to avoid all of this?

Remember, Mordecai gets a message to Esther, Esther, you're the queen. God allowed you to be put in this position for such a time as this.

Esther thinks about it for a while, and then she says, okay, I'm going to do it. I'm going to go see him, and if I perish, I perish. But before she does that, she wants the people to pray for three days.

[1 : 18] Pray and fast. She and her maidens are going to. She wants all of the Jews and Shusan to pray and fast for the next three days. Look with me at chapter 5, beginning at verse 1.

Now it came to pass on the third day that Esther put on her royal apparel and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house, and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

And it was so, when the king saw Esther, the queen, standing in the court, that she obtained favor in his sight, and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand.

So Esther drew near and touched the top of the scepter. Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther, and what is thy request? It shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.

Think about that one for a second. Half of the kingdom. He goes on in verse 4. Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.

[2 : 28] Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that we may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition?

And it shall be granted thee. And what is thy request? Even to half of the kingdom shall it be performed. Then answered Esther and said, My petition and my request is, If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleased the king to grant my petition, to perform my request, then let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them.

And it shall do tomorrow as the king has said. Then went Haman forth from that day joyful and with a glad heart.

But when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

Nevertheless, Haman refrained himself. And when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh, his wife. And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above all the princes and the servants of the king.

[3 : 53] Haman said, Moreover, hath Esther the queen, yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself.

And tomorrow, I'm invited unto her also with the king. And let's stop there. Have you ever had time when you had to make a decision that was dramatically going to change your life?

Most of you sitting here are married. That was a decision that probably changed your life in a whole lot of ways. You change your life by maybe moving.

You change your life by getting used to having another person around with you that you're not familiar with, and you have to get used to each other. Children came in to the equation, and you have to get used to that.

There's a whole lot of things that change when you get married. And it takes some getting used to and some working out. How about moves? How many of you have moved at different times in your life, and you just, those moves were, I grew up in Maine.

[5 : 05] I lived here until I went to college. Then I spent five years in South Carolina. Then I came back to Maine. After about four or five years, six years, I went back to, I went down to Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Lived there for seven years. Came back to Maine. Was here for a while, and went down to Alabama for a couple years and came back to Maine. Those moves have all had an impact on my life.

Two of my best friends in the ministry, I met in Fort Lauderdale and then spent time with them again in Alabama. We've been friends ever since we've met in Florida. We are still friends today.

When we go on vacation and we head down the East Coast, we usually wind up visiting one or both of them along the way. One is still in Alabama. One is in Maryland now.

They were lifelong friends that I never would have met otherwise. Bonnie, she's the queen of moving. She's the one over here that was playing the piano for those of you visiting. She was a military brat.

[6 : 08] Emphasis on the military. She moved over 50 times in her life. She knows about moving. Those are big decisions.

In the Bible, there are some big decisions and things that happen that change people's lives forever. Adam, when he ate of the fruit, changed his life and changed all of our lives forever.

Noah, when he decided that he would build the ark, God said, I want you to build an ark. and Moses said, okay, changed his life forever. How about Abraham?

You want to talk about, oh, change Abraham. When he decided, with Sarah's encouragement, to have a child with Hagar.

Lost his back? I can see, I see all the eyes are up there somewhere. I'm over here. He won't bother you if he's up there. What was I talking about?

[7 : 14] Oh yeah, Abraham. Abraham, when he's, when Sarah's encouragement, had a child with Hagar. Ishmael. And then he had a child with Sarah. Isaac. Say, okay, no big deal.

You know. There's a whole lot of people that have different children with different children these days. Yeah, but these two, you know, the conflict going on between Israel and the Arabs.

You know where it started? Abraham. Ishmael and Isaac. And it's still going on today. Those type of decisions, those things that are done, make a huge impact.

When Moses decided to take the children of Israel, or God told him to, to take the children of Israel from Egypt to the promised land. Are we still fighting about that land today? See, all of these decisions made huge impacts on things.

Ahasuerus and Haman made a decision about the Jews. Look back in chapter 4. Verse 3. And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews and fasting and weeping and wailing and many lay in sack cloth and ashes.

[8 : 32] 13th day, 12th month, we're going to kill all the Jews. That's a huge decision. That affects a whole lot of people's lives. For many of the Jews, they thought, it's over.

All hope is lost. We're done for. There's no way out of this. But Mordecai said, no, no, no. I trust God. Mordecai said, I believe God's going to answer for this.

I believe God's going to do something about this. And Esther, I believe, we're wondering why you're, where you are and where I'm at, where I'm at, where I, why I'm here.

He says, there's a reason. In chapter 4, verse 14, at the end of the verse, he says, and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this.

You are here, Esther, for this exact purpose, for this exact time. God has something for you to do. So, Esther says, okay, you need to go in and talk to him.

[9 : 39] I can't go in and talk to him. If I go in and he doesn't put the scepter out, I'm dead. He'll have me killed. Such a time as this, Esther.

Okay, I will go and I will do it. So, what does she do? She makes a petition of the king. Esther's petition of the king. Remember, she's prohibited from going in there and the penalty for doing that, if he doesn't call you, summon you, is death.

You get killed. And Mordecai asks Esther, go in and talk to him. And she's like, he hasn't called for me in 30 days. Why do I think he's going to do it now?

Because we're going to ask God. Proverbs 21.1, The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord. As the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will.

He says, Ahazer's heart is in my hand. Trust me and watch and see what happens. I'm going to make sure that he gives you.

[10 : 42] So, here we are. She's going in. She's going to see the king. But when she gets ready to go in, there's one thing very smartly. She may have been young, but Mordecai had taught her right.

Before I go in to see the king, her approach to this was a prayerful approach. She was prayerful about what was going to happen. She receives the message from Mordecai, but she says, okay, if I'm going to do this, Mordecai, here's what you guys are going to do.

I want the people of Israel, the Jews, who are living here in Shushan, I want them to go to prayer for the next three days. Prayer and fasting for the next three days.

Me and my maidens, prayer and fasting for the next three days. I'm not going in there without people praying for me and people praying about what's about to happen. verses 16 and 17 of chapter 4.

Go gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan. Fast ye for me, neither eat nor drink three days, night or day. I also in my maidens will fast likewise.

[11 : 52] And so will I go into the king, not according to the law. I'm going against the law to go do this. And if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

Remember who raised Esther? Mordecai did. Now he's accepting commands from her. That's kind of interesting, isn't it? He's taking her commands. But he understands the importance of this.

He understands what's about to happen and he understands the importance of prayer. Nothing's recorded in what happened during the next three days until we get to chapter 5 and verse 1 and it says, after three days, God had given favor.

to her. You know, again, Proverbs 16, 1 and 3. Proverbs 16, 1 and 3 say this, the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.

The preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. We spend time in prayer. We get to know God. We get to be on his same wavelength. We understand the way he's thinking by going to prayer and studying his word and doing those things.

[13 : 06] And he says, and he's going to prepare your heart. He's going to give you the answers. Verse 3 says, Commit thy works unto the Lord and thy thoughts shall be established. You go to God.

You spend time with him. You commit to do what he wants you to do and let him do his work. Do you trust him? Reminds you of Daniel.

Do you remember Daniel when this all started out? He was in Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar built this huge idol and everybody, when the music sounds, everybody's going to bow down to it and everybody's going to give worship to it for the next 30 days.

And part of all of that, one of those things that he was having these dreams and things about was a dream that he had and he tested his wise men and said, tell me the dream and the interpretation of it.

And so Daniel goes to his friends and he says, we need to pray. The only way we're going to be able to do this and the only way we're going to stay alive and not be killed like he's killing off some of these other guys is if we go to God and let him work.

[14 : 22] Daniel chapter 2 verses 17 to 21. I usually don't read longer passages but Daniel 2, 17 to 21 says, then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions.

Mishak, Shadrach, and Abednego, Babylonian names. That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret. That Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision and Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God forever and ever for wisdom and might are his and he changeth the times and the season.

He removeth kings. He setteth up kings. He giveth wisdom unto the wise and knowledge to them that are, that know understanding.

You know what we learn from looking at Esther and looking at Daniel? Prayer is the key to moving the heart of God.

[15 : 31] Prayer is the key to moving the heart of God. How much time do we spend in prayer? You know, sometimes God allows things to come into our life to get us back to, God, I need your help.

God, I need to see you work. God, I need to know that you care. Someone has said, if Christians spend as much time praying as grumbling, they would soon have nothing to grumble about.

And I've said that over, you think, about our country right now. How much time do we spend complaining about the way the country is going? We talk about it all the time.

This is happening and that's happening. Oh, I can't believe they made this decision. Can't believe they're doing it. How about if we spend all of that time praying about it? And see what God does.

And how God changes things. But we'd rather grumble than complain and find people who agree with us. I'd rather go to God and say, God, whatever you want, whatever you need, whatever your direction is, that's the way we're going to go.

[16 : 37] And Esther recognized that if she was going to go before the king, she needed prayer. She needed to pray for herself. She needed to pray to others about what she was going to do.

She needed people to be committed to talking to God about it. Second thing, besides being prayerful, she was deferential. Deferential.

What does that mean? Follow along and I'll explain it to you. After three days of praying and fasting, she finally says, okay, now's the time. Now I need to go in before the king.

I said in three days and it's been three days people have been praying. So what does she do? Look at chapter 5, verse 1. Now it came to pass on the third day that Esther put on her royal apparel.

Stop there. Esther put on her royal apparel. She didn't know how the king was going to act. She didn't know how he was going to respond to her being there. She didn't know if he was going to put his scepter out and welcome her in or give her thumbs down and she was about to be taken out and be killed.

[17 : 41] She didn't know. But, she put on her royal apparel. You know, putting on those gowns, putting on that purple and gold that was the colors of royalty.

She would have gone and shown the king that she respected his position, honored him. She was trying to show that you are the king.

I am coming and I am subject to whatever you want. You know, she wants him to acknowledge her presence.

She wants him to grant her an audience. She wants him to say, come. She wants him to put that scepter out and welcome her in. She prepared herself to meet the king.

If you were going to meet the president of the United States, any president of the United States, would you not prepare yourself for it?

[18 : 45] If you're going to meet the president in the White House, I'm probably not wearing the jeans that I mow the lawn in and the shirt that I wear when I'm mowing the lawn.

Probably not going to wear those things when I go to meet the president. She's doing the same thing. I'm showing him honor and respect. You know, she could have said, he's my husband, I'm his wife.

I'm showing up in a bathrobe and bunny slippers. She didn't do that, did she? She wore the very best to honor his position. You know, she didn't know what he was going to do.

He's unpredictable. So she wore the very best. Then, when she gets there, she comes with a calm demeanor.

A calm demeanor. She's out there, standing in the doorway where he can see her. She's not pacing back and forth.

[19 : 48] She's not going, oh, what am I going to do? What if he doesn't do? She's standing there in her royal peril, calm, not upset. Whatever happens is going to happen.

If I perish, I perish. I'm ready for whatever. Can you imagine? What if more people did that? Instead of getting all nervous and getting all upset and doing all these different things, she was ready.

She had prepared herself. She had gone before the throne of heaven. And she had prepared herself for what was about to take place. She had prepared herself to be there with quiet strength to show him that she was coming before him, honoring his position, coming before him with something important apparently, coming before him with a calm assurance of what she was about to do.

How did she do all that? Because people were praying for her. You know, you look at our world today, how much is accomplished, or at least noticed, by angry protests?

How much is accomplished by violence that's being done against people? How much is being accomplished by people making the worst possible image they possibly can of themselves and others?

[21 : 18] when you do those things, you do get attention. But are you getting the attention you want? Are you getting the attention that's needed?

Are you getting the attention that's actually going to accomplish something? Esther came dressed in her royal apparel, standing confidently before the king, because she knew the king of kings.

she knew the God of heaven. She knew that this king, no matter what he decides to do, can never match that king and what he decides to do.

Think about that, the confidence that you can go into, trusting God with everything you have. In spite of the unknowns that she faced, she went in calmly, ready.

How could she do that? How could she go so calmly, knowing that he could just go, no, and she'd be dead? Well, four reasons that Esther could do that.

[22 : 26] Four reasons that she could be calm in the face of danger. Number one, the Jews had been fasting and praying for three days, asking God to intervene and to save them from annihilation.

For three days, they had been coming before the throne of heaven. For three days, they've been talking to the God of the universe. For three days, they've been talking to the king of kings.

No worries. He is in control. Hazard thinks he's in control, but he is not. Second thing, Esther knew that God had made a covenant with the Jews.

They're talking about wiping all the Jews out. You remember a couple weeks ago, we looked back at Genesis chapter 12? Those that bless you, I will bless.

Those that curse you, I will curse. God had made a covenant with them, that he was going to take care of them, that he was going to watch over them. They were going to be as the sands of the sea and the stars in the sky.

[23 : 28] God's made a covenant with us. We are not going to be wiped out. Third thing, Esther knew that God of Israel was a forgiving God. he would hear his people when they humbled themselves and came for those three days of prayer.

What does 2 Corinthians 7, 14 say? If my people, which are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

Esther wisely had said, Mordecai, get the people praying. Get the people ready. Have them praying so that when I go in there, God is in control and we have God's favor on us.

It's one thing to get the favor of the king, which he did, but to have God's favor, so much better, so much more important. Which brings me to the fourth thing. Esther saw God's favor in the fact that he had already sent Jews from there to Israel.

There were already Jews that had left there who were in Israel rebuilding his temple. God is always going to finish what he starts. They weren't going to be wiped out.

[24 : 44] The temple wasn't going to be halfway done. They were there doing what God had called them to do. So Esther gets ready to go and she says, look, as I go to this king, I can stand there calmly, I can stand there confidently, because whatever happens, happens, but I do know that I have this, this, this, and this on my side.

God has taken care of these things. God has done what he wants done. We need God's peace when we face things. Do we spend the time in prayer and do we trust him?

Philippians 4, 6, and 7, probably all of you have these memorized. Philippians 4, 6, and 7, be careful for nothing, be anxious for nothing. Don't be upset about things. Why?

But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passes understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

You have peace, you have understanding, you have thanksgiving. As you do those things, come to God with them. And let him know what is necessary.

[26 : 03] Warren Wiersbe, many of you are familiar with his writings and commentaries and things. Wiersbe said this, one of the greatest needs of the church today is for intercessors!

who will pray faithfully for a lost world and for a church that desperately needs revival. He says the greatest need the church has is people who will pray.

are we praying? Are we spending time in prayer? Are we asking God for his help? Are we going before him, getting his courage, getting his strength, trusting in him to give us what we need for the things that we are about to face?

And he says they're praying for a lost world. Are you praying for the people around you? People are out there that need to know Jesus Christ. Do you have family members who need to know Jesus? Are you praying for them?

Do you have friends who need to know Jesus? Are you praying for them? He says and then for a church that desperately needs revival. Does a church in America need revival?

[27 : 08] Oh yeah. We have gone too much of the way of the world. We have gone too much of letting the world come into our churches. He says you need revival. You need to have God at the center of everything that you're doing in your church.

Are you allowing him to do his work? Then the third thing she got. She was prayerful. She was deferential.

And she wound up being favored. Favored because look at verse two again of chapter five. So it was so and it was so when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court that she obtained favor in his sight.

She obtained favor in his sight. She found favor in God's sight as she went to prayer. As she spent all that time in prayer getting to know God asking for his help getting him to be on her side and help her.

She found favor with God now she finds favor with the king. She was accepted. Her grace her elegance he could not turn her away.

[28 : 24] God had heard the prayers of his people. He had heard the prayers of her and he had turned the heart again Proverbs 21.1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water.

He turned it with us however he will. She's standing there. He's got a decision to make. What is he going to do? God says here's what you're going to do. You're going to welcome her in.

You're going to let her come in and talk to you. Upon coming in she gets the signal he holds the scepter out to her. She walks in she puts her hand on the scepter showing again respect for who he was and for the power that he had.

Look at verse 2 and 3 of chapter 5. And it was so when the king saw Esther the queen standing in court she obtained favor in his sight and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand so Esther drew near and touched the top of the scepter then said the king unto her what wilt thou queen Esther and what is thy request it shall be even given thee to half the kingdom whoa half the kingdom I want half the money I want half the power so the next time I come in here I don't have to worry about whether I'm going to be killed or not I'll just walk in anytime I want to because I own half the kingdom could you picture doing that would have been one of my first thought I don't like this idea when is he going to go I'll just walk in anytime I do no she doesn't do that she approaches him with that hope that he has just given to her and she comes in and basically the king says we'll put in

English our English what would you like sky's the limit what would you ask for what I like about Esther here and what happens about this time as he says all that but she doesn't immediately tell him what she wants she intrigues him she says here's what I want for now I want you to come to lunch bring him in with you and once they get there she's going to ask him to come for lunch another time and she says and after that I'll tell you what I really want but she's got this curiosity peak now she's got new which you know what next Sunday I'll tell you what she did because I'm not going to tell you now because we're out of time I'll tell you what you those of you old enough you remember

[31 : 18] Batman they'd always come to the end you got to come back next week same channel same bat you know all that stuff next week come back we'll tell you what Esther is going to do and what's going to happen but what do I want you to take away today first of all if you're here and you've never asked Jesus Christ to be your savior come talk to me I would love to show you how you can know the God that we're talking about here in Esther how you can know Jesus Christ how you can know you're on your way to heaven to spend eternity there come talk to me and I'd be glad to show you for those of you who are saved what do you take away from this today how important is prayer and yet we spend so little time doing it how important is prayer we need to spend more time in prayer asking God to bless and take care of us do you trust God you know a lot of times I think the reason we don't pray is because we don't trust him she said

I trust God enough that I'm going to have people praying for three days and then I'm going to walk into there to see that king and if I perish I perish that's trust that's knowing that God has got you and he's going to take care of it remember the title of this whole thing we've been using the book God's got this God's got it I trust him I'm going to follow him no matter what I don't often end with a chorus but take your hymn book this morning if you need it page you