

Esther - Week 10

Be Passive or Perish?

Esther 3:15 Spurred on by the king's command, the couriers went out, and the edict was issued in the citadel of Susa. The king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was bewildered. 4:1 When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly. 2 But he went only as far as the king's gate, because no one clothed in sackcloth was allowed to enter it. 3 In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes. 4 When Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her about Mordecai, she was in great distress. She sent clothes for him to put on instead of his sackcloth, but he would not accept them. 5 Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why. 6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate. 7 Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. 8 He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to urge her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people. NIV

- Mordecai's behavior symbolizes not only the Jews' poverty of spirit before the Lord, but their complete **deadness** without Him.
- We must stand firmly on God's Word, but always in love, not **arrogance**.
- Wailing is translated **mourning**.
- The book of Esther shows us the doctrine of divine **hidden-ness**, not divine absence.

Question: Could it be that they had become so thoroughly assimilated into Persian culture that they had lost their **perspective** of God and maybe now His protection?

Joel's warnings about wandering and returning must not be overlooked here.

- Joel 2:13 "Rend your hearts and not your garments" allows God to begin to break us of our **self-sufficiency** and allows His Spirit to show us just how far we have wandered.
- Three things Joel calls for us to do:
 1. **Repent**- change the way you're responding to God's conviction.
 2. **Return**- turn your heart back to needing God.
 3. **Renew**-change your minds to think the way God thinks.

Mordecai's Reaction

- God trusts us with positions and opportunities, and then **empowers** us for obedience to accomplish what He desires.
- Our obedience to the assignments God gives us are His means for accomplishing His **extraordinary** plans.

What is God's message in chapter 4 for us today?

- It is NOT: be a **hero** like Esther.
- It is NOT: be a **problem-maker** like Mordecai.
- The message IS: God is choosing to save His people through **ordinary** means, by using two Jews who are moving from concealment to **conviction**.
- You cannot **comfort** grief until you know the cause of it. Sometimes listening is better than quoting scripture to the grieved one.

Mordecai's Request

- One thing for sure is that Esther's obedience was not immediate or very **courageous**.
- Mordecai **exhorts** the Queen into action.
- "Another place" (v 14) shows Mordecai is focused on God's deliverance, not Esther's abilities or **position**.
- Is Esther avoiding the problem or is she crying out for Mordecai's **wisdom**?

Mordecai points out three things to Esther:

1. Living in the palace gave her no **guarantee** that she would miss death, since she also was a Jew.
2. Her silence would not **limit** God in His ability to use someone else.
3. Being in the palace was not an **accident**.

Final Thoughts

- God has a divine **purpose** to accomplish in this world, and you're a part of it.
- God will accomplish His purpose through **people**, and you're a part of it.
- God will accomplish His purpose even if His servants **refuse** to get involved. God will never abandon us but He can use someone else to get it done, and they will take the blessing that was meant for you.
- God, in fulfilling His plans, never gets in a **hurry**.