

Lesson Seven: Trusting God—Turning Fear to Faith

The Story of Esther: Part II

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We are talking about how God through His sovereignty and providence turned Esther's fear into faith. She courageously stepped out by faith and was used mightily by God to save her people and change the outcome of an evil man's wicked plan.

Chapter Five: We see Esther afraid and having two options: 1. Tell the king immediately; or 2. Invite him and Haman to a banquet. When she entered the throne room, the scene scared her, and in fear, she took option number two. At the banquet of wine, she saw Haman and the king joking as friends; she looked at the circumstances, and fear overcame her: "Come to another banquet," she said. Knowing what she must do the next day, she found courage, in spite of her fear, to speak to the king. Haman, on top of the world, went home. On his way through the king's gate, he saw Mordecai not bowing to him, which made him livid. His wife and friends told him to order gallows to be built on which Mordecai would be hanged. All looks dark: Where is God?

Chapter Six: God was in the midst working behind the scenes. The king's sleepless night and learning of Mordecai's good deed with no acknowledgment of gratitude (chapter 2: 21-23) divinely bothered the king. Haman's early arrival was providential, as God worked in a manner in which no one could have planned nor dreamt. The king inquired: "What should the king do to the man he wishes to honor?" Haman described what he would like, ready to be handed the robe and royal steed. The king abruptly interrupts his prideful thoughts and says, "Do this for Mordecai right now." Mordecai must have been mystified wondering, "What has Esther been up to in the palace?" Haman's wife and friends, now referred to as "wise men," changed their tune from the day before to a warning that sends chills down Haman's spine. No time to think as God has the king's chamberlains bring Haman to the next royal banquet.

Chapter Seven: The events fall like a row of dominoes as the hand of God works. At the next banquet of wine, Esther finds courage to make her request. She points out Haman as the villain who is trying to kill her and her people. The king, in shock, as the whole scenario plays out in his mind, goes to the terrace to think this through. Haman, in sheer panic, falls on Esther's legs, and begs for his life. Ahasuerus comes from the terrace and shouts, "Will

he also assault the queen while I am in the house?" As the words come out of the king's mouth, the chamberlains covered Haman's head. As God's plan would have it, Harbonah mentioned of the gallows they had just finished for Mordecai "who saved your life." The king said, "Hang him on it."

Chapter Eight: *God's providence continued, and Esther's faith grew. Mordecai became the king's right hand man. The king gave his ring to him and permission to make a new law in which the Jews would protect themselves. There was great rejoicing, and many became Jews for what they had witnessed.*

Chapter Nine: The Dreaded Day—God's Power in Action. The tables were turned as no one could withstand the Jews for a providential fear fell upon all the people. Even the king's army helped the Jews for fear of Mordecai. God made Mordecai greatly respected and feared in the king's house and throughout the king's providences. Esther asked for a second day in Shushan and Haman's sons were hanged. On the 15th of Adar, there was rest with joy and gladness. Mordecai established a holiday every year to remind them when God gave the Jews "rest from their enemies, as the month which was turned from sorrow to joy for them, and from mourning to a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, of sending presents to one another and gifts to the poor" (verse 22). They called these days *Purim* (verse 28), which the Jews celebrate to this day.

Chapter Ten: *Through God's providence Mordecai the Jew became "second to king Ahasuerus, and was great among the Jews, and was well-received by the multitude of his brethren, seeking the good of his people and speaking peace to all his countrymen" (verse 3).*

Oh, dear friends, God knows how we feel; He knows when we are afraid. In those times, we should cling to Him. Take His Word and trust it—not your feelings. Ask the Lord to calm your heart with the Word of God. Let it cover you as a warm blanket. Allow the truths of the Word of God to wash away your fears. Pick a truth and memorize it and meditate upon it. Let it massage your stressed-out mind and wipe away the enemy's lies. Let it become one of your go-to thoughts like a life-saver when you are drowning in doubts and circumstances that bring fear: "I see this, but God says this." Remember the love of God at Calvary.

The Almighty proved His love there—an unconditional love—grace, mercy, and forgiveness. Think upon these things. Soak it in. He will not fail you. Just like Esther, as we look at the book, we see the end—God wins. *God sees our story, and He wins also.* Our job is to trust Him—He will come along side as we go through trials and make His presence known in ways we could not have planned nor figured out.

The LORD your God is in your midst; The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will quiet you with His love; He will rejoice over you with singing
~Zephaniah 3: 17.

Study Questions

1. Difficult circumstances often rob us of our peace and perspective. Admit your trouble and affirm your trust in the Lord. Be encouraged that *God gives you peace in the midst of the storm.* **Read Psalm 3 and write verses 3-4.**
2. Who gives us hope and by what means? **Write down this verse and read it slowly out loud:** *Now the God of all hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit* ~Romans 15: 13.
3. Read **Psalm 27:1.** The Lord is **my** _____; **my** _____; and the _____ of **my** _____.
4. "God's delays are not God's denials." What experience have you had of "delayed actions" from God, and you simply had to wait upon Him? Read and write **Psalm 27: 13-14.**
5. At times, our hope is in a solved problem instead of the problem solver—God Himself. God is larger than our problems. We can trust in His character and love. We are **overcomers** in Christ. Read and write **I John 4: 4.**
6. Sometimes our trial is not solved the way we had hoped. Remember: "*Your life is hidden with Christ in God.*" There are some things we don't know about our life. But the knowledge of Him brings peace when we don't know the future. **Read and write Philippians 4: 7:**
7. Look up and write **Colossians 2: 3** to see what treasures you have in Christ.

