

“For Such a Time as This!”

Esther 4:13-17

Intro. – Everyone remembers the Alamo. And yet a surprisingly short while ago, in April of 1914, the US once more stood on the brink of war with Mexico. President Woodrow Wilson dispatched armed forces to occupy the city of Veracruz in an effort to spare Mexico from the military dictatorship of Victoriano Huerta. Next, it was decided we needed someone to perform a reconnaissance operation to determine the enemy’s preparedness.

Such a man was selected and sent to Veracruz. He was a young captain in the US Army. Arriving May 1, 1914, this Captain took one other man and set out on the daring expedition. Penetrating all the way to Alvarado, the Captain and his assistant discovered valuable information. Now came the hard part – staying alive long enough to pass on this information.

On the return to Veracruz, the Captain and his companion were accosted on three separate occasions in one night. Each time they were out manned and out gunned, but each time the two eluded their captors and death itself. Long story short, they returned safely giving the vital information.

Now, it’s been said that when a man’s life is destined for a special purpose, he is almost invincible until that purpose is accomplished. Surely this young Captain gave this some thought as he examined his clothes after this daring mission. His clothes were riddled with bullet holes..., but, not a scratch on him. This Captain lived for more important military missions. His name? You know him as General Douglas MacArthur.

I use this to introduce our text and the idea we all living *for such a time as this!* Esther is one of the most maligned books of the Bible. The name of God is not mentioned; yet, the providence and supernatural care of God is clearly revealed throughout this book.

Queen Esther was challenged by her cousin, Mordecai to do “her part” in distressing times. The parallel is evident for us. We also live in distressing times... Will we do our part? Here then is my point: we’ve all been called AND equipped for such a time as this. As members of Christ’s Body, the Church we are called and equipped for MINISTRY!

Purpose: to answer the question of “Are we doing our part for such a time as this?”

I WE MUST LISTEN TO GOD

- as Mordecai desired Esther to listen/hearken to his words, so must we listen to our God who calls and instructs us in all matters.
 - Illus. – prominent hostess doubted anyone really listened to each other while at a party. Testing her theory, while serving horde ‘oeuvres to guests, she said, “Do try this one, I’ve flavored them with strychnine.” The guests inhaled the goodies, making mindless comments like “Delicious!” or “Very tasty!” Others mentioned the “special flavoring” while several requested the recipe.
- A. Selfishness Must Be Abandoned
 1. What Mordecai meant when said to Esther, “Don’t imagine that you in the king’s palace can escape any more than all Jews.” i.e. put aside self-interests and listen to God!...
 2. Our salvation lies not in self (interests, concerns and goals)... lies in Christ and His Church
 3. We then are *partners* in name (Christian...), we then must be partners in fact = server “one another” rather live for self!...
- B. Humility Must be Embraced
 1. V 14 makes clear that if Esther chose not to listen to God, God would find another person to get the job done!
 2. When you and I realize that God can get along without us, that you and I are NOT indispensable, we’ll be far more *inclined* to listen to our God!
 3. Luke 12:48 “...*from everyone who has been given much shall be required.*”
 - a. Esther recognized this principle well...
 - b. we are a blessed people... nation... church... opportunities for of service and worship abound right here; thus, we must serve according to our capacity for the cause of Christ/His Church.

4. If we choose not to listen, not serve and not to worship God, He will find someone else to do it – He find another nation, local church, another person...
 - Illus. – young psychiatrist, haggard/burdened with troubles of his patients, got into elevator of a NY hospital with elderly but sprightly colleague. “How do you remain so youthful, sir?” sighed the young doctor, “Listening year after year to all those fears, problems, complaints?” The older doctor shrugged his shoulder and said, “Who listens?”

Brethren – we must listen to our God and not grow weary in it!

II WE MUST THINK ABOUT OUR SITUATIONS

- Mordecai certainly wanted Esther to think/reflect on where she was and why and how she was in such circumstances *for such a time as this!*
 - we too must reflect on where we are and why:
- A. We Have Been Saved BY Grace
 1. Ephesians 2 speaks of our being “*dead in our sins*”... living in the lusts of our flesh and indulging flesh’s desires etc.
 2. BUT GOD = ...made us alive *in Christ* (“*by grace you have been saved... it is a gift...for good works*”)
 3. Consider our response to grace = proper response is *ministry* unto God’s glory!
 - B. We Have Been Brought to This Time for a Reason
 1. Our being together here and now is no more an accident than Esther becoming queen of Persia.
 2. Opportunities of service abound:
 - a. “this is the 21st century” – must confess in certain context drives me nuts... but, in the context of “what a time to be alive” believe it is valid...
 - b. Communications... transportation... etc. makes the spreading of the Gospel limited only by our own self-centeredness...
 - c. Satan is certainly alive and well and seems to be making great gains... but what a time to be living unto the glory of Christ!...
 3. Every laborer for the Lord is properly equipped:
 - a. God is not like Pharaoh, requiring us to make bricks without straw, nor go to battle without sword, or build without a trowel...
 - b. whatever the task, God equips us and provides all that is needed...
 4. Each of us have more abilities/talents that we use – when these are combined = Body healthy!!!
 5. Seize the moment/opportunities = think about our circumstances/situation right here...

III WE MUST ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION

- Esther listening and thinking set out to accomplish the mission God gave her... thrilling part of Bible!
 - are we listening and thinking, is our mission in focus?...
- A. If God be for Us...
 1. Esther understood – if God brought her “for such a time as this” there was no need to fear...
 - “if I perish, I perish” = if I die, I’ll die doing what my mission was all about...
 2. To settle this in our minds that we are given the mission of winning/building souls – we must advance without fear and questions.
 - B. To Each His Station
 1. Esther made this mission “a team effort” – she asked Mordecai to pray and fast...
 2. Why “ministries” must be coming to the forefront and why each member of the church family must grasp the Biblical concept that “each member is a minister...”
 3. O, that we would emulate the passion Christ had for His mission... O, that we would be *absorbed* by a passion for X’s glory... a passion for the lost... a passion for the spreading/defending of TRUTH!...

Conclusion: On a Fall, Sunday afternoon in 1973, in Pittsburgh, PA, leaders of a local church were meeting. The discussion focused on what should be done with \$300,000.00 in the savings account. The prevailing wind was blowing in the direction of what the local banker recommended – “reinvest it and let it become an even bigger nest egg.” Finally, after much discussion, a godly man stood and said, “Brethren, whoon the day of judgment, will be willing to take this huge sum of money to the judgment seat of God and say, ‘Here Lord, here is your money; we saved it for you.’ It’s certainly not going to be me.”

Silence fell over the room as the respected leader quietly sad down and bowed his head. His point had been well made.

Esther was in a like circumstance. She could have deferred and buried her talent(s); instead, she rose to the occasion and proved she was ready/willing “for such a time as this.”

Are we ready and willing, brethren? God desires that none would perish, but that all would come back to Him... Are we ready and willing “for such a time as this?” How we listen, think, and accomplish ministry will tell!