

For Such A Time As This (Esther 4:14)

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Introduction

There are obituaries in the newspaper every day. Some of them are very long, and talk about all the achievements of the individual who has passed away. Those achievements may include acts of: heroism; selfless efforts in helping others, or generosity. One day our names will appear in the newspaper. Wouldn't it be nice for our obituaries to include many such accolades? More importantly, however, the goal we need to set is to give our lives to serving God; not so we will receive the praise, but that He might be glorified (Matthew 5:16).

Esther is a woman who did great things in her lifetime. Her actions came in a critical time for God's people, and because of her courage, and selflessness, God's people overcame their enemies. We are living in a critical time for God's people today, and each and everyone of us need to look for opportunities to meet the challenges that the church, and God's people are facing today. The aim of this lesson is to look at the life of Esther, and to apply the things we learn from her life to ours, so we might do great things in serving God.

You Do Not Have To Be Born With A Silver Spoon In Your Mouth To Do Great Things For God

Esther was not born with a silver spoon in her mouth. Esther was an orphan, born in exile.

Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite; who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. 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. (Esther 2:5-7)

She also seemed to be born to a people who were not popular with many people in the kingdom of Ahasuerus. For Mordecai advised her not to reveal her nationality (Esther 3:20), and later on the book speaks of the enemies of the Jews (Esther 9:1). The most notorious enemy being Haman, who sought to kill not only Mordecai, but all of the Jews (Esther 3:6).

She was not born with a silver spoon in her mouth, but we are going to see that she still did great things for God. Likewise, we do not have to be born with a silver spoon in our mouths to do great things for God.

You do not have to be born with an eloquent tongue to do great things for God. Moses was not eloquent, but slow of speech, and of a slow tongue (Exodus 4:10), but he and Aaron led God's people out of Egypt. You do not need to be eloquent to:

1. Teach someone about Christ. It is not difficult to show someone how the scriptures prove that He was the Christ, the Son of God.
 - a. Genesis 3:15 - Hebrews 2:14.

- b. Genesis 12:1-3 - Galatians 3:16.
 - c. Isaiah 7:14 - Matthew 1:23.
 - d. Matthew 1:1 - Matthew 22:42.
 - e. John 20:30-31.
2. Teach someone what they need to do to obey the gospel.
- a. Believe - Mark 16:16.
 - b. Repent - Acts 2:38.
 - c. Confess - Romans 10:10.
 - d. Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21.
3. Teach someone what sin is; what it does, and how God expects us to live.
- a. 1 John 3:4; 1 John 5:17; James 4:17; Romans 14:23.
 - b. Isaiah 59:1-2; Ephesians 2:1; Romans 6:23.
 - c. 1 Peter 1:15.

What it takes is: studying God's word, so that one can teach others (Hebrews 5:12-14; 2 Timothy 2:2); the courage to do what God has commanded us to do (Matthew 28:18-20); and the desire that others might be saved (Romans 10:1).

You do not have to be highly educated to preach God's word. Peter and John were unlearned and ignorant men (Acts 4:13). Some of the greatest preachers are men that never went to college, and never went to a preachers training school. But, they loved the Lord, and they loved their fellow men, and wanted them to hear the gospel.

You don't have to be rich to give generously. The Macedonians gave out of their poverty, because they gave themselves first to the Lord (2 Corinthians 8:1-5). Just think how much God's people could give and do, if they would give themselves first to the Lord!

What You Have To Do Is Use Your Opportunities

Esther used the opportunities that were given to her. She used the opportunity of being chosen as one of the virgins to replace Vashti as queen to find favor in the eyes of others. She found favor in the eyes of the man who was put in charge of the women (Esther 2:8-9). As a result she was given preferential treatment, which may have hastened her coming before the king, and her being chosen as queen.

So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women. And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens, which were meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he preferred her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women.

She also found favor "in the sight of all them that looked upon her" (Ester 2:15), and "she found grace and favour" in the sight of King Ahasuerus, so that he "made her queen instead of Vashti" (Ester 2:17).

The early church found favor "with all the people" (Acts 2:47).

It is not specifically explained how, but from the things that the early church did, it may be because of: "doing good unto all men" (Galatians 6:10); living godly (Matthew 5:16); being kind to one another, and to all men (John 13:34-35); and being joyful people (1 Thessalonians 5:16).

These same things may help us find favor in the eyes of our: friends; neighbors; co-workers; and family, so that we can teach them. Everyday is an opportunity for us to find favor in their eyes, so we need to be living in such a way that we will find favor in their eyes. If our minds have been transformed, as it speaks in Romans 12:1-2, we will naturally live in such a way that our lights will shine, we will find favor in the eyes of men, and God will be glorified.

Ester also used several opportunities which came her way, which led to her saving God's people from extinction.

The first opportunity came when she informed the king of a plot to kill him (Ester 2:21-23).

In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name. And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

The reward came when Haman planned to have Mordecai killed (Ester 5:14). But, the night before Haman planned on carrying out his plan, the king could not sleep, and had the book of the chronicles read to him, and it was brought to his attention that nothing was done for Mordecai, whose news saved his life (Ester 6). So, instead of killing Mordecai, Haman had to honor Mordecai.

This opportunity, however, did not come without it's dangers. When Ester informed the king of those who planned on killing him it could have cost her life. If those who planned on killing found out that she had informed on them, they may have tried to have killed her. Or, even after they had been put to death, there may have been friends of those men who may have sought revenge against her. But, she did not let that intimidate her.

- We need to have courage to speak up when opportunities arise.
- We need to have the courage to talk to someone about Christ.
- We need to have the courage to speak up in a Bible class when someone is teaching something false. Too many times, in Bible classes, something is taught that is not true, and nothing is said. If false teaching is not challenged, in such a situation, others may believe

what is falsely taught. How many congregations, that have gone off into liberalism, could have been saved if someone had only had the courage to speak up in such situations?

Another opportunity came to Esther when she learned that the king had signed a decree to kill all the Jews. Haman had tricked the king into signing this decree because he hated Mordecai, and was not happy just to kill Mordecai, but all the Jews (Esther 3:6-13). Mordecai told her to go before the king, and plead for him to spare her people, the Jews (Esther 4): and she did!

At first she was hesitant to do so, for to come before the king, without being called for, could have cost her life (Esther 4:11). But, Mordecai told her...,"who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? So, she came before the king, and plead for him to spare her people (Esther 7:3-6). God used her at a critical time for His people. But, because of her actions, God's people were spared.

God's People Are In A Critical Time Now, And We Need To Do What God Would Have Us Do To Help God's People Face The Challenges They Are Facing

God's people, in Esther's day, had their enemies (Esther 9:1), and God's people today have their enemies.

There are the denominationalists who hate the church for teaching that there is only one church, even though there is only one church (Ephesians 4:4; 1:22-23). Many a time they have made the hateful statement "You think you are the only ones going to heaven." And, they have tried to turn people against the church, calling us: legalist; unloving; and sometimes even a cult. Brethren we cannot allow such statements to shake us. We must continue to teach the truth, even if it is not popular. Paul told Timothy to preach the truth, for there would come a time when they would not endure sound doctrine (II Timothy 4:1-4). We cannot compromise the truth just so we can be popular with the masses. That is exactly what many congregations have done. They may have the praise of men in so doing, but they do not have the praise of God.

The Atheists, and evolutionists are enemies of the church. They have rejected the idea of there being a God, even though the evidence abounds that proves that there is a God. But, they are not happy with rejecting God themselves, they are working hard at keeping others from believing as well. They use our schools, the T.V, children's books, text books, and everything else they can to promote their Atheistic doctrine. They also, many times, refer to anyone who believes in God as ignorant, and uneducated. Brethren we cannot allow ourselves to be intimidated by these people. We need to be ready to give an answer to every man that asks us a reason of the hope that is in us (I Peter 3:15). We need to arm ourselves with all of the evidence that proves there is a God, so we can teach the masses they have brainwashed, and to teach our children so they will not be led astray.

The church has a host of enemies in the camp of immorality. Hollywood has seemed to have made it its goal to promote adultery, fornication, and homosexuality. Their propaganda has worked well. Our society is practicing these things with great fervor. We have seen presidents publicly exposed for committing adultery, but a majority of the people did not seem to care (as long as the economy was doing good). A higher and higher percentage of teenagers are involved in

fornication, and most of them do not even know what the word means, nor that it will keep them out of heaven (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). More and more couples are living together outside the bonds of marriage. And, according to T.V. a date is not complete unless it involves fornication. Then there is homosexuality. The Bible is clear that homosexuality is: "against nature;" unnatural; "unseemly/ shameful (NKJV);" & "error" (Romans 1:26-27). But, if anyone speaks against it they may be titled a "homophobic." They can call us names brethren, but God's word still says to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them (Ephesians 5:11).

But, not all enemies are outside the church. There are a host of false teachers inside the church. Teaching things such as: elders needing to be reconfirmed; women should have leading roles in the church; theistic evolution; and that the church should work with denominations. Brethren these men need to be marked and avoided (Romans 16:17). Elders need to stop the mouths of these false teachers (Titus 1:5-11). Preachers need to continue to teach the truth, and put the brethren in remembrance (1 Timothy 4:6), so they will not be led astray. Each and every Christian needs to be able to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3).

As Mordecai told Esther..."who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). God would have each and everyone of us to do what we can do to defend, and strengthen the church.

Conclusion

Life is short, and we need to be using every day to do great things for God. You don't have to be eloquent, highly educated, or rich to do great things for God. With God on your side, His word hidden in your heart, and the desire to serve Him, you can do great things for Him. Use the opportunities that come your way. Every day is an opportunity to let your light shine, so that you will find favor in the eyes of those around you. Take advantage of every opportunity to teach others, and defend the truth. God's people are in a critical time. We have many enemies, and difficulties facing us. So let each and everyone of us be courageous soldiers of the cross.