**Link FM Esther**

**Chapter 1**

This is a new short series on the book of Esther, and the study by Tommy Tenney, called, *“Finding Favour with the King”.*  This is Woman’s month, and we trust that the life of Esther will inspire many through this study.

This story is of a common woman who was elevated to royalty at the bid of a king, and it ignites the dreams of the potential to becoming a princess, in every one of us. Esther was a Jewish peasant girl, who is herded through the back door of a Persian king’s palace and she wins his heart to become queen against all odds and in the end she saves her nation.

Before Esther, Vashti, was queen to king Xerxes, who called for her at a celebration one day, in order to show her beauty to the people and officials. But she refused to come at the king’s command and the king because furious. We don’t know why she challenged and publicly scorned his authority in front of the top officials and leading citizens of Persia. The decision was made that she be demoted and banished from Xerxes’ sight.

It was on this dangerous stage that Esther’s story began and we see how God used her in the end, to save her people from total annihilation by another incredibly powerful leader. The king called for all the beautiful virgins of the land to be brought to the citadel of Susa and to be given beauty treatments, and he would choose one to be queen instead of Vashti. But how did this peasant, Esther, transform into a royal bride? Her story has a spiritual parallel for us, and we learn how to be changed from rags to riches through the favour of the King of Kings, and to enter his throne room. Esther gazed into the king’s eyes, captured his heart and found his favour. Then she was transported from the hall of women to the house of the king as his queen.

Why was a peasant girl from a nation in exile, chosen as queen by a powerful Persian king? Why did he pass over 1459 other candidates from other nations to select Esther? Was it just because of her outward beauty or sensual appeal, or did she know a secret to captivate king Xerxes? Something about her enticed commitment from him. Esther was an outsider, a captive, and did not have nobility on her side, so how did she win his heart in spite of all that?

Esther spent a full year in intense preparation for that one night with destiny - one year preparing for one night. Even today, the value of a wedding day necessitates weeks of preparation, because it is the single most significant day and night of your life. But that one night would change her into a princess. It was preparation and transformation that led to her elevated position and her divine purpose. The first important issue for Esther – and the first issue for any of us who want intimacy with the King of Heaven – is our understanding of our human earthly incompatibility with the glory of the King. Esther had grown up with her uncle, Mordecai, in captivity, and was not acceptable as she was. Her best was not good enough for the wealth and power of the king, as was the same for every other candidate. Our peasant best is also not suitable for the palace of God’s presence. Our garments of self-righteousness can never compare to God’s clothing of righteousness in Christ.

Esther then spent 6 months with preparations of myrrh and six months with perfumes (or sweet spices) for beautifying herself. Myrrh was a bitter herb, and the purpose of myrrh was for skin and system cleansing - it was even eaten for purification purposes. We could call it, *detoxing* today. Esther used it to remove defiling agents, both within and without. The spiritual parallel of myrrh is repentance and sanctification, and death, or being set apart unto God. So when we also want to come into the presence of the King, we first need to be soaked in repentance, to soften our hardened attitudes and ingest it to cleanse our inward parts. Repentance is a complete change of mind, the purging and turning away from old practices, habits, mind-sets and limitations. It speaks of change, cleansing and sanctification in preparation for an appearance before the King of Kings. But it is only the blood of Jesus, through his death, that can cleanse and remove the smell of our humanness and sin.

Then Esther followed that cleansing with another intensive 6 month period of saturation with sweet spices, which certainly included frankincense. Frankincense is a picture of worship, and is what will allow us to stand in the same room as the King of Heaven. Frankincense is said to only release its fragrance in the heat of a fire, and was used as burned incense in sacrifice. And when worship is offered from the fires of trials and adversity, its sweetness is released as a fragrant offering to God. The sacrifice of praise offered in times of trouble is especially sweet and pleasant to our great King. This is worship from a place of trust and faith, instead of doubt and offense. Just as the blood of Jesus covers our sinfulness through the bitter death of myrrh, now the sweet smelling frankincense of worship draws us into God’s presence as a sacrifice to him.

Don’t short-circuit the preparation process. Soak in the oil of myrrh of repentance and the cleansing blood of Jesus. Then immerse yourself in the sweet odour of worship, adoration, and lingering ministry to God. Therein we will find favour with the King of Heaven, and one night with the King changes everything! It can change your future.

If you have never yet come into the presence of the heavenly King, turn away from your old life, and be soaked in the cleansing blood of Jesus, to cover your sinful flesh odour, and then drench yourself in the frankincense of worship, no matter what your circumstances may be. You will find favour with Him and you will be changed from being a captive foreigner, to becoming a princess in the palace of the King of Glory.

Pray this prayer of repentance with me today, “King of Heaven, *I come to you as a sinner today. I turn away from my sinful ways, and come to receive the cleansing blood of Jesus that will take away the very smell of my sin. I come to soak myself in worshipping you as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. I worship you as my Lord and Saviour, my Lover and my God. You are worthy of all praise and glory and honour and worship. Amen.”*

God bless you till next week when we continue this study of Esther, who found favour with the king.

**Link FM Esther**

**Chapter 2**

Last week we started a short series on Esther and discussed the preparations she went through for one night with the king. The 6 months of cleansing with myrrh, we likened spiritually to our repentance and cleansing from sin, before we are acceptable to enter the King’s presence. The second 6 months of sweet spices compares to the sweet-smelling sacrifice of praise and worship that ushers us into the presence of God. That is how we will find favour with our King, and which will change our future.

There are many who reject the book of Esther, asking “*Why would God cause Esther to lose her virginity in the bed of an uncircumcised Gentile?*” A Greek historian, Herodotus, characterised King Xerxes an ambitious and ruthless ruler, a brilliant warrior and a jealous lover. We don’t know the answer fully, because we are not God, so we seek the answer from something we do know from God’s Word. We ask a similar question with even higher stakes, “*Why would God cause His own Son to die on the cross of uncircumcised Gentile soldiers at the demand of circumcised Jewish priests?*” We do know the answer to that question. *“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”* God certainly works in strange and mysterious ways for his plans.

Today we look more into the secrets of how Esther won the king’s heart. In chapter 1 we read a detailed account of the courtyard in the palace garden, which was decorated with beautifully woven white and blue linen hangings, fastened by purple ribbons to silver rings imbedded in marble pillars. Gold and silver couches stood on a mosaic pavement of red marble, mother-of-pearl and other costly stones. Drinks were served in gold goblets, and there was an abundance of royal wine …. If this was a description of the king’s backyard patio, can you imagine how his throne room and palace looked?

It stands to reason that most of the young maidens in this beauty contest, would be enamoured with the king’s palace. Often people are drawn to the prestige of a leader in power, and devote their energies toward receiving every gift possible from that person. The palace was the place where these women cultivated their charm to get what they wanted – the highest office in the kingdom. This was the place where they had available to them all the jewellery, perfume, cosmetics, clothing to make themselves attractive.

But the king must have wondered who would fall in love with him rather than with his regal power and his palace. Why did he fall for Esther out of all the rest? Esther must have looked past the finery, the luxury and glamour, and must have seen something different and worthy of love in the king. She had every reason **not** to fall in love with king Xerxes – as she was Jewish, and her parents had most likely died under the domination of Persia. While all the other young girls fell in love with the prestige and luxury of the palace, Esther found the secret of what would please the king.

Esther’s secret of success was a God-given desire to seek the heart of the king rather than the splendour of his kingdom. It was her destiny in God. It seems that she saw something that activated her heart to win his heart. Even if King Xerxes had married Esther for her beauty, he kept her because of her heart; her commitment to love.

She was willing to learn what would please him. First she won the favour of Hegai, the king’s eunuch in charge of the harem. *“When it was Esther’s turn to go to the king, she asked for nothing other than what Hegai suggested. And Esther won the favour of everyone who saw her … she won (the king’s) favour and approval more than any of the other virgins.*” (Esth 2:15–17)

How do we win the favour of the heavenly King? Well, we can learn from Esther. She had learned to take advice from those who lived there. She had learned that the king was more important than the palace. She learned to focus on what the king would want, not on what she chose or what she wanted.

Sadly, we are also often taken with the earthly benefits of God’s kingdom rather than with God Himself. The heavenly King also longs for more followers who, like Esther, will fall in love with Him rather than His blessings. God’s heart desires those who would love the Giver more than the gift!

Have we learned from the Word of God what the most important thing is that our King wants, what releases his favour, what touches God’s heart? We know God is not a respecter of persons, but He does seem to have wants. It was Jesus who told us that His Father constantly searches for certain people in the earth – those who will worship Him in spirit and truth.

As we approach God, Psalm 100:4 tells us to enter his gates with **thanksgiving,** and then to enter this courts with **praise**. Thanksgiving is the lowest form of worship, as it relates to what has been done for us. Then praise takes it further as we praise Him for who He is, and His attributes, that not dependent on our good or bad days. Then **worship** takes us into the throne room of intimacy. It transports us into the Holy of Holies, the sacred place of God’s glory.
Tommy Tenney explains that praise is with our breath, but worship is with our whole self, our bodies and our spirit. The Greek word for worship (*proskuneo*) means, *“to kiss, to fawn, to prostrate oneself in reverence, submission and adoration”.* The 24 Elders before the throne of God worship him day and night, by falling down before Him, and laying down their crowns before the throne and saying, *“Holy, Holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty – the one who always was and is and who is still to come ….. You are worthy O Lord our God, to receive glory and honour and power. For you created everything, and it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created.*” (Rev 4:8-11)

So as the true Bride of Christ, let us fall in love with the King of heaven, and not love him for his blessings and his love gifts, his power and provision, but let us focus on Him and love Him. Let us not settle for the palace lifestyle of pleasing self, but go for the princess lifestyle and seek to please the King. Let us learn to worship him in spirit and truth. That will release His favour upon our lives.

God bless you till next week when we continue this study of Esther, who found favour with the king.

**Link FM Esther**

**Chapter 3**

Last week we spoke about how Esther won the heart of the king, by asking and taking advice from Hegai, the eunuch, who lived there. She learned that the king was more important than the palace, and she learned what he preferred. We looked at the parallel of what God wanted from us. We said God searches for those who will worship him in spirit and truth. Thanksgiving is the first step into the gates, then praise takes us into the courts, and worship takes us into the Holy of Holies, the place of intimacy where his glory dwells. That releases favour upon our lives.

Today we look further at the result of the favour that Esther had received. Esther had found favour with the eunuch in charge of the harem, and “of everyone who saw her.” She found favour with the king and became queen of the empire, who publicly crowned Esther queen himself. Chapter 2:18 says, *“And the king gave a great banquet, Esther’s banquet, for all his nobles and officials. He proclaimed a holiday throughout the provinces and distributed gifts with royal liberality.”* That is favour!

This is a picture of us with God, the King of Heaven. When we come into a love relationship with God (through Jesus’ salvation) we receive favour from him. We read that “God so loved (us) …. that He gave ….” We don’t have to nag God to meet our needs, but learn to love him. 1 Corinthians 12 also says, *“Earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way*” (which is the way of love). Intimacy with God is a better way and more powerful than petitions legally presented to him. For example, as our children love us, we favour their needs and wants. We can claim God’s promises, which is right and legal, but we can come and whisper to God, “*Abba, Daddy*” as a child to our father, whose heart is tender and moved by our love. We can move beyond the formal petitions of the court and in the privacy and intimacy of our love relationship with God, have access to everything in His house, and receive his divine favour.

The more intimate our relationship with God, the closer we come to his heart. Tenny says, *“If you know what the King favours, you become a favourite with the King*.” Anyone can become his favourite – if you learn what He likes! And we already specified in the previous teaching that our heavenly King loves worship – worship in spirit and truth. When we learn to worship him with all our hearts, we touch his heart and He will also touch our hearts.

But with favour comes purpose and influence. Esther learned quickly that favour came to her because she was born for a greater purpose. She understood that her privilege of access meant that the purpose was much bigger and more important than her own comfort and satisfaction. She knew that she could not spend all the favour on herself.

Chapt 3 tells us that one day, as Mordecai (Esther’s former guardian and cousin) was on duty at the palace, 2 of the king’s eunuchs, who were guards at the door of the king’s private quarters – became angry at King Xerxes and plotted to assassinate him. But Mordecai heard about the plot and passed the information on the Queen Esther. She then told the king about it and gave Mordecai credit for the report. When an investigation was made and the story was found to be true, the 2 men were executed. And it was all recorded in a book of history of King Xerxes’ reign.

The fact is that because Esther was intimately close to the king, she had favour that lead to influence that actually protected the king’s life, and also later, protected Mordecai’s life when Haman plotted to kill him. Her influence even resulted in favour on Mordecai’s life, who was later promoted to a place of honour, and even ultimately resulted in the protection and favour on the lives of all her fellow Jewish people. This favour and influence had nothing to do with her ability, but her relationship with the king. It was not the other girls in the harem who would bring that message about the planned assassination to the king. They had no intimacy with him or concern for him, and therefore they had no access to his ear and his heart. Esther had his ear and his heart.

Tommy Tenney says, *“When you seek His face, your heavenly Father sees your face and interrupts the business of heaven to bend down and inquire about your needs!”* and “*If you move the heart of God, you move the hand of God.”*

We can put it this way: the only way to gain access to the things of God’s kingdom is through relationship with the King. And with relationship and intimacy come favour and influence. So let’s draw near to God in the intimate place of worship, and we will have the chance to change destiny. Prioritise his presence. Tenny says, “*Whispered words form the place of intimacy can be more powerful than shouted petitions from the court. One well-placed whisper can change your life – it could even save a nation!”*

As Esther learned that favour leads to purpose, we too, need to understand that. As we walk in intimacy with God, he showers his favour upon us; and we need to understand that we have been blessed to be a blessing. God’s favour to us is given for a purpose. We must allow his favour to project us into the great plans God has for our lives – plans that may influence or save a nation. Later when the nation was in danger, Mordecai said to Esther, “*Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”*

Esther could have focussed on her new privileges and queenly rank to keep the palace in a constant stir while gathering for herself more power, pleasure and personal security. But she chose instead to move on to the bigger issues of living! She would eventually even risk her favour and her life to accomplish that purpose.

Remember, nothing we possess, and no gift in our lives, has been given for us alone. Like Esther, we were created for something much bigger and more important than our own comfort and satisfaction. We often get bogged down in the trivialities of life, and our greatest hope seems to be that “*people will like us*”. But our goal and burning desire must be to fulfil our life purpose in God. The favour we have received, must lead to purpose and influence to further the Kingdom of God, and to save the lives of others from destruction.

God bless you till next week when we continue this study of Esther, who found favour with the king.

**Link FM Esther**

**Chapter 4**

Last week we spoke about the result of the favour that Esther received. The king’s generosity and favour was very evident. So also, in the intimacy of our love relationship with God, we have access to everything in His house, and receive his divine favour. But with favour come purpose and influence. Esther’s influence saved the king’s life, eventually Mordecai’s life, and also the Jewish nation. So also, the favour we have received from God, must lead to purpose and influence to further the Kingdom of God, and to save the lives of others from destruction.

Today we want to look at the fact that opposition often accompanies favour. After Esther became queen, an enemy arose that seemed to threaten her position. Chapter 3 tells us, *“Some time later, King Xerxes promoted Haman … the Agagite, to prime minister, making him the most powerful official in the empire next to the king himself. All the king’s officials would bow down before Haman to show him respect whenever he passed by, for so the king had commanded. But Mordecai (Esther’s cousin) refused to bow down or show him respect*.” Haman had a lust for power and he had more than a bruised ego-encounter with Mordecai. Something about this new enemy caused Mordecai to stand when everyone else around him bowed down – even though he risked death to defy the king’s command to bow! Previously king Agag had been a great enemy of Israel, and God had told Israel to put him to death. Because Haman was a descendent of Agag, Mordecai was doing the will of God not to bow down to worship this evil enemy, but was risking his life in doing so.

The royal officials daily warned Mordecai about disobeying the command, but he refused to comply. They told Haman about it and Haman flew into a rage, wanting to kill Mordecai, and all his people, the Jews, who were exiled in this kingdom of Persia. Haman then got the king to decree this evil plan and a die was cast for the date of annihilation, the 13th of the 12th month. (the eve of the Jewish Passover). Haman sent an edict to all the provinces, telling them that on a single day, all the Jews would be annihilated.

What Haman did not know, however, was that he had just plotted against the king’s bride! At this point, neither Haman, nor the king knew that Esther was Jewish. As we can imagine, sorrow and confusion spread over the Jews. The Jews were in exile and had no king, no land, no prophet, no temple, no priesthood, and no leader – a small defenceless minority at the mercy of a powerful pagan monarchy. The only weapon was a secret connection to the king – Esther.

Mordecai went into mourning, as did all the Jews, “*with fasting, weeping and wailing.”* (4:3) Mordecai gave Esther a copy of the edict of annihilation, and urged her to go into the king’s presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people. She expressed her dismay, because anyone who appeared before the king in his inner court without being invited was doomed to die, unless the king held out his gold sceptre. But Mordecai replied, “*Do not think that because you are in the king’s house, you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this!”*

Esther’s life was threatened by a highly placed enemy, as well as the wrong side of the king’s favour. Mordecai asked Esther to openly defy court protocol. This was risk! Just as the precious queen Vashti had been removed for refusing an invitation to come before the king, Esther could be removed for coming before the king without an invitation. She hadn’t been called into the king’s presence for 30 days. How would he react to an uninvited intrusion? She was faced with an impossible choice. Haman was power-hungry, and most likely had his eyes on the throne, and would also want to undercut her influence; and this law of the king that could cost her life. But she decided to risk everything, to save her people. She sent a message to Mordecai, “*Go, and gather together all the Jews who are in Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for 3 days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”*

Now perhaps the Lord has spoken to you about a great destiny in your life. However, with that great purpose, usually comes an opponent or enemy. But hold on! Think of David. If it had not been for an enemy called Goliath, David would always have been just a shepherd. And David defeated his enemy, because he trusted in God. Remember, battles are not won on the basis of your strength, but on the basis of your relationship with God. Don’t fear your enemies – no matter what size they appear. Just love your God – He is bigger! “*Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world”*.

Mordecai risked his life to do the will of God by not bowing down to an enemy of God; and Esther risked her life to do the will of God. We may have to risk something to do God’s will. Your life may be all someone ever sees of God. If people begin to criticize you for sharing the Gospel, you may risk your popularity with some. Or if you are expected by your boss to be dishonest and you refuse to compromise your integrity, you may risk your job. When God gets ready to promote you, He will always reveal an enemy. Tenny says, “*The size of your enemy is the measure of the size of God’s confidence in your ability to overcome*.” You can never become who you are supposed to be without a victory, and there is no victory without a battle. The bigger the battle, the greater the victory!

Esther had to take a life-and-death leap of faith, with a deadly enemy on one side, and a powerful Persian king on the other side. She prepared for that battle with prayer and humility, and asked others to pray with her. Sometimes you must risk everything to fulfil your destiny and call “*for such a time as this*.” Take risks in the face of an enemy, to do the will of God. We can learn from Esther to approach our battles with prayer and fasting, asking others to carry us in prayer, too. Our enemy, the devil, has already been defeated by the cross of Jesus. And as we believe in the power of Jesus, and take the risk of faith, the victory will be won and our purpose will be fulfilled, and many will be saved from death.

God bless you till next week when we continue this study of Esther, who found favour with the king.

**Link FM Esther**

**Chapter 5**

Last week we spoke about Esther and Mordecai who both risked their lives to fulfil God’s purposes in the face of a deadly enemy, Haman. Esther approached her battle with prayer and fasting, asking others to carry her in prayer, too. We, too, can take risks of faith, with prayer and intercession; and see our victories won, in fulfilling our calling, and ultimately seeing many people saved from destruction.

The word “*Esther*” means “*hidden*”, and in this book are many hidden truths we want to uncover. We said that Esther came into the court room uninvited, risking her life, but the king extended his golden sceptre of favour to her and said, “*What is your request? I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!”* Now, instead of jumping in with her desperate request to save her people, the Jews, she invited the king and Haman to come to a banquet she prepared for the king that day. What was she thinking? Why would she invite the enemy home for dinner? Most of us would have blurted out our request, and would perhaps have been denied, but she understood that she would need to fight the battle in the right battlefield. She had a plan of attack, to make her enemy the King’s enemy, and then her battle would become the king’s battle. She moved the battlefield out of Haman’s political court into her court of intimate favour. She chose the intimate place of feasting with the king, knowing what he preferred, and bringing him into her battle. And she indulged in lavish preparation for him.

At the banquet, the king again offered her up to half his kingdom, and instead of accepting it, she again asked for his presence at another banquet that she would prepare for him and Haman the next day. Again the king accepted without hesitation, because she pleased him with her extravagance.

But why did Esther choose to eat with her enemy? She was showing the king that while bringing in this problem “*enemy*” into his presence, she could still focus entirely on the King himself. She did not let the size of the problem hurry the process of petition, but she moved from the posture of love and giving, while she ignored the enemy in his presence.

We can relate this to our lives. When we are facing a battle, we should move into the intimate place of indulgent worship, because we know that is what our King seeks and desires.

But most of us approach God’s throne of prayer with our urgent petitions and problems, and begin describing all the injustices against us. The focus becomes us and our lives, instead of making the King our focus, praising and worshipping him, and bringing our issues in later. Our passionate petition should be for the King’s presence. Do we please Him with our extravagant worship and adoration? Tenny says, *“Nothing attracts God’s presence and His intervening power like focused and single-minded worship*.” The point is that we actually have a focus problem when it comes to worship. We want to cling to our problems and the past with one hand, while offering God a small handful of measured worship with the other. By focussing on the wrong thing, we are actually worshiping it! We know worship becomes difficult when we are faced with a huge financial crisis, or a serious health problem. We need to learn to worship with the enemy at our table! We must believe that worship remains our most important ministry and spiritual weapon on any given day. But we often want to get in there and get involved in fighting this fight with God, instead of letting him fight the battle for us. Psalm 23 says, “*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.*”

So what happened? After the first feast, 2 things happened on the same night. Haman plotted Mordecai’s death, (whom he hated), and built a gallows for him; and the king plotted Mordecai’s honour and reward. It says, *“That night the king could not sleep.*” So he asked for the book of records to be read to him. He discovered Mordecai was never rewarded for exposing the 2 men who wanted to assassinate him some time back. So when Haman entered the court room the next day to speak to the king about hanging Mordecai, instead, the king asked him what should be done for the man the king wanted to honour. Thinking the king was speaking about Haman himself, he suggested an elaborate way. A noble prince should lead him through the streets of the city on a horse that the king has ridden, and clothed in a robe the king has worn, with the royal crest placed on his head, proclaiming before him, “*This is what is done for the man the king delights to honour.”* The king then told Haman to immediately honour Mordecai in that exact way, and to clothe him and lead him through the city, shouting it out to the people. Haman’s wife and advisors told him that his ruin had begun and he could never stand against Mordecai, the Jew, as planned.

At the 2nd generous feast, with the humiliated Haman there again, the king offered Queen Esther half his kingdom for the 3rd time, and Esther put her petition to him. “*If I have found favour with you, O king, and it pleases his majesty, grant me my life – this is my petition. And spare my people – this is my request.”* She went on to explain the plot of the evil Haman, to destroy, slaughter and annihilate her people, and admitting that she also was a Jew. This caused terror in Haman’s heart before the king and queen. Favour causes your enemies to fear you. The king departed into the garden in a rage and Haman fell upon Esther, begging for mercy. When the king returned and saw him on the couch where Esther was reclining, he shouted, “*Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?”* Then Haman’s face was covered as a sign that his end was decided – and the same day he was hanged on the very gallows he’d built for Mordecai; and then the king’s anger subsided.

So also, once our own petition is brought to the heavenly King, out of that place of intimate worship, even though our enemy is planning our demise, the King will be planning our breakthrough and reward. Let us remember to bring our petition from a position of intimate relationship and indulgent worship. That will result in a day of divine reversals. Tenney says, *“The plot of the enemy becomes the opportunity of God.”* God is looking for a chance to humiliate the enemy of our destiny. God will rage against our enemy until he faces the judgement planned for him. Satan, who wants to destroy, slaughter and annihilate God’s people, will be confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord! So let us start by worshipping the King and let Him deal with our enemy for us. God bless you until next week when we finish this study of Esther, who found favour with the king.

**Link FM Esther**

**Chapter 6**

Last week we spoke about Esther’s plan to overcome the enemy. She invited the king and Haman to 2 banquets instead of appealing for the Jews immediately. She ate with her enemy while focussing on her king. So we should come from a place of intimacy and worship and let the king fight our enemy for us. And like in Esther’s case, the day of divine reversals will come and our enemy will be trapped with the same trap he set us.

We want to look at how one day changed things from despair to dancing. Let’s just recap on the changes in this story. Esther was a peasant and crowned queen; Mordecai condemned to face the gallows, was promoted to honour by his hated enemy and eventually promoted to prime minister; Haman, the once prime minister, was demoted and then sentenced to death; and the plot of the enemy to annihilate the Jews became a day of victory and celebration for them. We saw how (as Tenney put it), *“Demonic demotion gave way to heavenly promotion.*”

Mordecai’s death sentence was turned against his enemy, Haman, and everyone witnessed his destruction. The spiritual picture of our death sentence was reversed when Jesus “*disarmed principalities and powers and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them on the cross.”*

King Xerxes then gave Haman’s estate to queen Esther and it says, “*The king took off his signet ring – which he had taken back from Haman – and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther appointed Mordecai to be in charge of Haman’s property.”* (8:1). In Ephesians 4:8 we read that Jesus also “*led captivity captive and gave gifts to men*.” The plunder of hell was used to provide for God’s people. Proverbs 13:22 also says that the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.

But the decree of death was still in effect in all the provinces to destroy the Jews. So once again, Esther approached the king’s throne announced, and begged him with tears to stop the evil plot against her people. Again he held out the gold sceptre. He said that he had given Haman’s estate to Esther, and the signet ring to Mordecai. They could now use the king’s authority to tell the Jews to defend themselves and attack their enemies. We see the parallel of this when Jesus said, “*I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

So on that day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to destroy them, the opposite happened. The Jews gathered in all the cities to defend themselves against anyone who might try to harm them. But no one could make a stand against them, for everyone was afraid of them. And all the commanders of the provinces, the princes, the governors, and the royal officials helped the Jews for fear of Mordecai. In fact on that day the Jews struck down their enemies with the sword. The ten sons of Haman were also killed.

At this point King Xerxes again asked Queen Esther what more she wanted. She asked for another day like the one before to continue destroying the enemy and for the bodies of the sons of Haman to be hanged from the gallows. She wanted an extra day to complete the victory. The king granted her request. Esther had a deep resolve to finish off any presence of evil. Not only did she want to make sure they survived, but that the enemy did not survive, nor any of his offspring. She understood that what you do not eradicate when you are strong, will come back to attack you when you are weak. She set out to put her heel on the head of illegitimate authority. The Jews gained relief from all their enemies, killing 75 000 of those who hated them.

So we should view sin and evil. It is up to us in our day to destroy the lingering works of the enemy. We must use the signet ring in the King’s name, and take up the weapons of our warfare. Remember 2 Cor 10:4, *“the weapons of our warfare are nor carnal but mighty through God to pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ …”* Is there perhaps an Agagite line in your life that needs to be destroyed?

Mordecai wrote down these things and told the Jews to celebrate these days every year with feasting and gladness and by giving gifts to the poor. Their sorrow was turned into gladness and their mourning into joy. This annual 2 day celebration came to be known as Purim. This is still celebrated today in Israel. Esther found incredible favour with the King, who gave all she asked for and more – the end of Haman, his estate, full authority to Mordecai who acted in the king’s name and full deliverance and complete victory of any remaining offspring of the enemy.

So we can finish the fight and future generations can celebrate. Favour can restore in a day what the enemy had stolen in a lifetime.

Let’s recap the lessons from Esther. Never underestimate the value and worth of one worship encounter. Fall in love with the heavenly King, not the splendour of his palace. Worship is the way to his heart, to release favour to us and it will give us influence in His kingdom. Prepare with fasting and prayer when you face a battle. Let your enemy become the King’s enemy, then your battle will become the King’s battle. When the enemy is preparing your demise, the King will be planning your reward. We do not announce our requests from the outer courts, but whisper them from the place of intimate worship. The King’s heart will be moved and kingdoms will be shifted like pawns on a chessboard. We also have the King’s signet ring to finish off the power of the enemy in our lives. Favour can restore in a day what the enemy had stolen in a lifetime.

Prophecy is showing that this season in the history of the world is significant in the light of God’s eternal plans. In these last days we as believers will be facing challenging times, and even attack from God’s enemies. God is calling us to be Esthers in our royal position in the Kingdom of God, “*for such a time as this*.” Let us prepare our hearts and prioritise God’s presence and find His favour, and use our influence and authority to save many people from eternal destruction.

God bless you till next week, when we will begin another series.