

You could be where you are in life “for such a time as this” — because God wants you there to accomplish a specific purpose! Ask God to help you have the courage to speak and act for what’s right, even when you don’t feel like it — and to help you remember that you may be in your position for “such a time as this.”

Friday

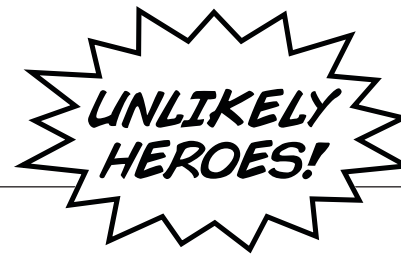
Read Esther chapters 5–7. In this section we see ostensible coincidences — the king’s sleeplessness, Haman’s arrogance, his rush to build the gallows — all coming together as God works, namelessly and silently, to save the Jews. In what way have you seen God at work — at first unnoticed and behind the scenes — in your own life? (Give a different example than you used Monday)

How can this story — which never even mentions the name of God — encourage your faith in God’s plan for your life?

Thank God today that He is working quietly in history — including in your life — to accomplish His will, even when all seems bleak, as it did for Esther. Praise Him for His control. Put your life in His hands today, perhaps for the first time!

Saturday

Please pray for the weekend services and polish your memory verse for the week. Enjoy your day with the Lord today! Pray for the kids this weekend as they bring the “sermon” in our services — that they would have a great experience, and reach people for God!



Five main characters

- KING XERXES:** Powerful, erratic Persian ruler — focused on money, sex and power
- VASHTI:** First queen, deposed because she dares to take a stand
- ESTHER:** Raised by uncle Mordecai; rises from obscurity to become queen
- MORDECAI:** Raised orphan Esther; foils plot against King, then challenges Esther to use her influence to save her people
- HAMAN:** The villain — second in command to King; influential Persian official angered by a Jew’s refusal to grovel before him — determines to exterminate them all!

What does it take to thrive in tough times?

1. _____
 - Courage to live with _____

VASHTI: But when the attendants delivered the king’s command, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger. *Esther 1:12*

- Courage to live with _____

MORDECAI: Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah (Esther), whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. . . . Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter when her father and mother died. *Esther 2:7*

- Courage to live with _____

ESTHER: I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish. *Esther 4:16*
2. _____

. . . Mordecai, sent back this answer: “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 for the Jews 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 4:12–14*
3. _____

Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three 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. . . .” *Esther 4:15–16a*

4. Realize _____ ...
...even when it _____.

[Screwtape the demon says] "Our cause is never in more danger than when a human, no longer desiring but still intending to do our enemy's will, looks round upon a universe from which every trace of Him seems to have vanished, and asks why he has been forsaken... and still obeys." —C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*

Bottom line:

God works _____ but _____

Resources

- Wishful Thinking: A Theological Lexicon* Frederick Buechner
- Esther (sermon)* Ray Johnston
- Esther (sermon)* John Ortberg
- Esther, For Such a Time As This* Charles Swindoll
- God's Masterwork: The Book of Esther* Charles Swindoll
- Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* Warren Wiersbe

Daily Meditations

Here's a chance to spend some time each day this week meditating on today's topic!

Monday

Review the notes from this weekend's message. Which points of Esther's story hit home for you? Why?

Which of the four points is the biggest struggle for you? Why?

How do you now see, looking back, God's hand at work behind the scenes in your life? Give one specific example:

What does this teach you about how God is at work in your current triumphs and setbacks?

Thank God that He is always at work, even when we can't see His hand! Ask Him to help you remember that in all the events of your life this week.

Tuesday

Read Esther 1:10–2:19. The story of how Esther became Queen of Persia is fascinating, and holds an important lesson. In life, all of us are given things we do not choose (talents, appearance, opportunities, etc.) and all of us choose to do certain

continued 

things with our lives (we choose our attitudes, our demeanor, etc.). Did Esther become Queen of Persia because of something she was given, or something she chose — or both?

What does this tell you about the interplay between your natural gifts and your responsibility to use them?

How have you seen this to be true in your own life?

What does this story tell you about how to respond to opportunity?

Ask God to remind you to use your natural gifts from God in ways that are wise, God-honoring and productive.

Wednesday

Read Esther chapter 3. Why do you suppose God's people are so brutally persecuted throughout history — specifically, from the Bible's perspective, why would Satan want to eliminate the Jews?

What did Jesus promise the disciples about persecution in John 16:33?

Why is this important to know?

Ask God to help you remain calm and focused on Him in times of trouble! Take some time today to pray for your brothers and sisters undergoing persecution right now around the globe.

Thursday

Read Esther chapter 4. What did Mordecai (Esther's uncle) do when he heard of the decree? What was Esther's initial response?

Like Esther, do you ever feel pressured — and initially afraid — to speak up for what's right?

How was Esther apparently able to overcome her fear? What was the crucial first part of her plan?

What can you learn from Esther's response?

How can you tell from Mordecai's answer to Esther that he was completely confident the Lord would provide?

over 



"Who knows but that you have come to this position for such a time as this?"
Esther 4:14