

40. Esther and Compassion

There is no mention of God in the book of Esther; neither do any New Testament writers quote from it. Esther is “E/Aster,” that is, the name of a pagan goddess.

It is a book by which the Pharisees draw their formulas for rule in a “Gentile” world, along with everything else in the Old Testament applied in a carnal way contrary to Christ. Some have argued that, for these reasons, the book of Esther should not be in the Bible.

Except – for those who seek only Christ in the Old Testament, wonderful truths of the gospel are written so clearly all through this story.

The Law of the Feast. The book of Esther belongs to us, to sons of God who know Christ alone and upon whom the completion of the age has come. We begin with the law of the feast.

The king made a feast lasting seven days for all the people... from great to small, in the **court of the garden of the king’s palace... And they served drinks in golden vessels, each vessel** being different from the other, with royal wine in abundance, according to the generosity of the king. In accordance with the law, the drinking was not compulsory; for so the king had **ordered all the officers of his household, that they should do according to each man’s** pleasure.

Drawing Much Truth. Sam Fife preached a long word on Esther, which I heard in my early twenties. I do not remember anything from that word that does not ring true to the present word of Christ.

Through my thirties, I pondered the truths of Christ that are made clear in this story, and during the season of Times of Refreshing, in-between the move and Lakewood Church, I drew much from these truths. I have drawn from these principles in all my writing since, except I have not taken the teaching directly out from the book of Esther.

The “law of the Medes and the Persians” gives us a number of absolutes inside the law of Christ.

Eat as much as You Wish. The first law of Christ is the law of eating and drinking – eat and drink as much or as little of Christ as you wish, and eat of any particular truth that is Christ entirely by your own desire and interest. The one thing that is not allowed is the attempt to control what another person partakes of inside of Christ.

I have chosen ten “verses” of the gospel that are Christ, and I have spent the last fourteen years eating of those verses to no end. This is my right, to eat of these verses that I have chosen as much as I wish.

When I say, “I have the right to speak Christ and no one can prevent me,” I draw that from John 1 AND Esther 1.

The Wrong Refusal. Then the king called his wife, Vashti, to come into the feast, that he might display her beauty to all. She refused.

Vashti typifies both the natural Jew who refuses Christ and the church of Nicene Christianity that refuses to be the Salvation of God in the earth.

Paul drew his analogy from Abraham’s life – “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman” (Galatians 4). This story of Esther 1 is an identical picture.

For Her Sake. It is also the same word as Abel and Jacob, that God bypasses the first and chooses the second.

In the move, this truth produced a sense of “elitism” and superiority, just as it did with the Pharisees. “*Those Babylonian Christians out there.*”

From the moment I made an agreement with God in that prayer hut on the Oregon hillside in 1994, I have rejected any thought that does not include all who long to know Jesus, regardless. And this is what we saw in Ruth, that her son was not for her, but for her mother-in-law. A son has been born to Naomi.

The Right Woman. And so both the king of Persia and the King of heaven-earth turned from that woman who would not be h/His glory and sought for a woman who would.

So the king set up a search program, hoping to find the right woman. Jesus has done the same. – When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith in the earth?

Many beautiful young women were found, and all of them were put through the same program of essential oils, lasting an entire twelve months. These oils and perfumes were for health and vitality as much as for becoming a sweet aroma.

Many Not Chosen. God has the same program. – Walk inside of love in just the same way that Christ also loved us and gave Himself to us for our sakes, an offering and a sacrifice to God, into a sweet-smelling aroma (Ephesians 5:2).

One after the other of those many women spent their one night with the king, but were not chosen. That meant they would never know a man again, but spend the rest of their lives in the king's harem, untouched.

What was different about Esther? First – Each young woman went to the king, and she was given whatever she desired to take with her.

The Difference with Esther. Here is the difference with Esther. – When the turn came for **Esther... to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised.**

Just as Ebenezer, Abraham's servant who sought out Rebekah, pictures to us the task of the Holy Spirit, so also does Hegai, the king's eunuch. Here is the law of the Holy Spirit as a eunuch – He will not speak of Himself, but He will take of what is Mine and show it to you (John 16).

Why did Esther choose Hegai's advice?

What Does Father Want? All the other girls thought only of themselves, "What will make me beautiful? What will make me stand out?"

Esther was the only one who thought of the king of Persia as a man. "What does he want? What does he call beautiful?" She did not know and she did not try to know of herself. She asked the only one of her acquaintance who would know.

Almost all Christians I have known try to make themselves "beautiful" to God through their outward performance, through "Hear and obey." But when I consider their words, I see that it's all about themselves. Few consider the heart of the Father.

Consider This Fearsome Man. All who reject the in-filling of the Holy Spirit and the gifts which He brings are like all those young women. – *"I know how to be beautiful myself. I don't need Your gifts."* Yet even many who receive the gifts make it all about themselves. Few consider the Heart of this mighty and fearsome Man who has offered to marry us.

This is a quality that my dear wife possesses, and the very thing I saw in the dream when God showed her to me, that she has always had compassion on me. Why, I have never figured out. It is a gift of incredible value.

You see, this is a question I have pondered for years – What does God want?

The Cry of My Heart. It was in the fall of 1987, when I was thirty years old, that I listened to Buddy Cobb teach his "Plan of God," and I thought, "There is nothing in any of this that sounds appealing to God (or to me)."

And so, in the pondering of my heart's cry, I went back to the beginning – God is love.

And I chose very carefully, out from the cry of my heart, and out from years of searching out what God actually says in my Bible, what verse would answer that question for me. The verse I chose at thirty years of age was Romans 8:29, “God wants me to be just like the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Setting Forth Our Souls. Yet I did not really know what that meant until June of 2019 when I wrote “Setting Forth Our Souls” in *The River of Life*. Everything I am writing in *Symmetry VI: Mankind* comes out from that choice I made regarding what God wants of me as I stand inside His presence. God wants only Christ.

Christ is not performance; Christ is confidence in God. Christ is that willingness to set forth our souls for the sake of our brothers and sisters. Christ is that Heart poured out over all who belong to Him all across the earth in their time of greatest need.

And that is the **primary** essence of Esther's story.

Haman. Haman embodies all that is the enemy. Haman is whatever opposes Christ, whether in our own minds, words that speak against, or in others, even other Christians who are hostile to our speaking of Christ as our only life.

Haman is that opposition to the revelation of Christ whether found in Nicene Christianity or in the world. Haman is the Pharisees of our day who would remove the name of Jesus from human memory.

The Haman of Esther's day wanted all Jews killed; the Haman of our day wants all Christians eliminated. This is the motivation behind so many things happening.

She Does Not Understand. I just read of a woman in Tennessee who ran a store and who appears to be Christian. She had the idea of taking a stand for liberty by using the emblems of the Pharisees.

She has NO understanding of the world in which she lives; she did not know that NO ONE is allowed to use those emblems except for J- supremacy. All her suppliers cut off her business, “Nazi” is written on her store, and no one will come into it again.

Her life is destroyed by today’s Haman, and she has no idea why. Her pastors have not told her the truth about this world. And she represents to me all Christians today.

If I Perish; I Perish. As I pondered this woman and her time of great trouble, I thought, “This is what it’s all about. It is for these that we are entering into the presence of God. It is for her sake.”

And so Mordecai said to Esther – **“Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”** And after prayer and fasting, Esther replied – **“I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!”**

These words were part of three in God’s summons to me when I was in my early thirties. I knew God was speaking to me, but I had no idea how I could ever be such as this.

The **King’s Dilemma**. Those three words were – to be a Joseph, storing up Word for God’s people during the time of famine. To be of “they” who prepare a place for God’s people as they flee for their lives. To be as Esther, to stand before God for the sake of His people in their hour of greatest need. It is only now that I know with all certainty that God has done and will yet do what I asked of Him forty years ago.

And that brings us to the great dilemma of the king. The law of the Medes and the Persians cannot be changed.

When God speaks a word, that word cannot be changed; it continues forever. – The soul that sins shall die!

The Law of Liberty. You see, this law was why people who lived under the Persian empire **were among the most “free”** of the ancient world. The king could make any decree he wanted, but once he made that decree, it stood.

This meant that once people knew where things stood, they could build their lives around that certainty, knowing that it would never change.

This is what happened at Runnymede in 1215. The nobles and bishops of England brought **King John’s words to King John and ordered him to sign his own word.** And then they expected him to keep his word.

The Soul That Sins Shall Die. Haman had tricked the king into decreeing that, on a certain day, all Jews in the empire should be killed. The king did not know that this included his beautiful wife and all her family. And so when Esther revealed the truth to him, the king was in a BIND.

The soul that sins shall die. **Once that word left God’s mouth, it cannot ever be changed.** It is absolute; it is forever.

The king could want Esther to live all he wanted to, but he was powerless to change the law. Esther would have to die. Unless –.

Decree Another Law. **And this is where Mordecai’s wisdom came into play.** – Listen, O king, you cannot change the law. It is set and unmovable. On the appointed day, the enemies of the Jews have your license to kill them and to plunder their wealth.

But you can decree another law that will stand alongside the first as an equal. You can decree that all Jews have your permission to fight back, to defend themselves, to kill all who would try to kill them and to plunder all their stuff.

The king did what Mordecai suggested. – By these letters the king permitted the Jews who were in every city to gather together and protect their lives...

Victory. Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, the **time came for the king's command and his decree to be executed. On the day that the enemies** of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, the opposite occurred, in that the Jews themselves overpowered those who hated them. The Jews gathered together in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm. And no one could withstand them, because fear of them fell upon all people.

And thus began the Feast of Purim, when the Jews celebrated their victory over all their enemies.

Two Laws Against Each Other. You can see how awful this story would be if God were actually speaking in favor of the Pharisees of today. But God is speaking only of Christ and of those who are the revelation of His glory, that is, the Church.

Here are the two laws set against each other in the gospel. For the law of the Spirit of life inside of Christ Jesus has made you free far away from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).

Except we still die. And because of death, all Christians have made death their hope and will not have the Salvation of God here and now.

Unless You Fight Back. We see, then, that Romans 8:2 must be understood out from the story of Esther. God cannot change the law of sin and death – you sin, you die. And those who try to approach God through keeping the law are just stupid.

When you took into your mouth the first time that little sip of clam chowder. When you put upon your skin the first time that shirt of cotton and polyester weave. BANG! – You're dead. There is no second chance. You don't get to try again. You sinned – you DIE.

Unless – you fight back out from a different law.

Fight, Fight, Fight! The law where we live, then, is the law of the Spirit of life inside of Christ Jesus.

Yet I did not begin to fight until I sat down in Joel Osteen's church and began to write *The Jesus Secret*. But fight I have, out from the decree of God – inside of Jesus I LIVE – Jesus is my only life. And I have taught you to fight, precisely, with great skill, to fight in the way that leads only to victory.

Purim, the feast of victory, is in the ninth month. In the gestation of the womb, it is the month of birthing. And she brought forth a male child who was seized into God and into His throne. This is where we live.

Reading for Next Time. The next chapter is titled "Two Leaders and a City." This is about Ezra and Nehemiah in their task to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and to preserve a people for the coming of the Lord. For the next lesson, read Ezra Chapters 8 & 9, Psalm 119:1-24, and Nehemiah Chapters 1, 2, 4, 6 & 8.

Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon.

This is our calling, to restore the walls of Jerusalem, the protection for God's people, to build with one hand and to fight with the other.

Let's Pray Together. Esther is a story of devotion to God, of compassion for His Heart and the fulfillment of His Desire. Yet it begins with the truth of our eating of Christ all that we wish.

You can see how big my dreams go. Many choose little verses and eat just a bit of them from time to time. I choose the BIG verses, and I eat them ravenously and constantly. Yet I also choose those verses that take me into sharing Hheart with my Father, regardless of what I “feel.”

“Father, we are mesmerized, not by Your Fierceness nor by Your great power, but by the tender mercies of Your Heart. Father, we want to share Your Heart.

So Also You Give Us. “And so, Father, we live here in Your presence, by Esther’s example, wanting to know what truly pleases You. And we know that You are pleased with our confident faith in Christ Jesus, that You would hear only Him from us.

“Yet we also know that You so love the world, and especially Your Church in the world, that, just as You give Your Son, so also You give us for their sakes.

“Father, we know that here inside Your presence, all the life that is Jesus belongs to us. Yet we do not regard that life as something to keep to ourselves, but something poured out from the many, that they also would live with us.

We Require Life. “Father, if we perish, we perish. Yet we stand here inside the life of Your Son for the sake of all Your people across the earth, all who love Jesus and long for His appearing. And in this hour of greatest need, we require of You LIFE for our fellow Christians, the same life You have so generously given to us.

“And Father we also know that Your great Desire is to have a dwelling place inside Your creation, a House where You can be known. We would be part of Your House, O Father.

“Be the strength in our arms, then, as we fight for all Victory for Your people to the elimination of all that Haman represents. Let it be so; it is so.”