

4Ws REAL PEOPLE, REAL IMPACT

ESTHER: HOW TO MULTIPLY

GOD'S FAVOR



APRIL 6, 2025

WORSHIP

Suggested worship songs: Everlasting God, Battle Belong, Firm Foundation, How Great Thou Art

WELCOME

Who is the person, outside your immediate family, who has made the most positive impact in your life?

WORD

ESTHER 2:7-17 (READ THE ENTIRE BOOK OF ESTHER)

7 Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This young woman, who was also known as Esther, had a lovely figure and was beautiful. Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter when her father and mother died.

8 When the king's order and edict had been proclaimed, many young women were brought to the citadel of Susa and put under the care of Hegai. Esther also was taken to the king's palace and entrusted to Hegai, who had charge of the harem. 9 She pleased him and won his favor. Immediately he provided her with her beauty treatments and special food. He assigned to her seven female attendants selected from the king's palace and moved her and her attendants into the best place in the harem.

10 Esther had not revealed her nationality and family background, because Mordecai had forbidden her to do so. 11 Every day he walked back and forth near the courtyard of the harem to find out how Esther was and what was happening to her. 12 Before a young woman's turn came to go in to King Xerxes, she had to complete twelve months of beauty treatments prescribed for the women, six months with oil of myrrh and six with perfumes and cosmetics. 13 And this is how she would go to the king: Anything she wanted was given her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace. 14 In the evening she would go there and in the morning return to another part of the harem to the care of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the concubines. She would not return to the king unless he was pleased with her and summoned her by name.

15 When the turn came for Esther (the young woman Mordecai had adopted, the daughter of his uncle Abihail) to go to the king, she asked for nothing other than what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the harem, suggested. And Esther won the favor of everyone who saw her. 16 She was taken to King Xerxes in the royal residence in the tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. 17 Now the king was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, and she won his favor and approval more than any of the other virgins. So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

You may not see the name of God mentioned in the Book of Esther, but His work is all over it. It talks about the importance of "favor" (**Proverbs 22:1**). In a crucial moment in history, God used an orphan who rose to a position of influence, to prevent the annihilation of the Jews. "Favor" is approval or support from someone superior. It's preferential treatment, kindness, generosity, grace, and blessing. Jesus "increased" in grace and favor (**Luke 2:52**), and Peter encouraged us to "grow in the grace" of God (**2 Peter 3:18**), for God is able to give a greater (*more*) grace (**James 4:6**). However, this undeserved grace can also be wasted (**2 Corinthians 6:1**). How do we multiply God's favor in our lives?

The story happens in the city of Susa, the capital of the Medo-Persian empire (**Esther 1:1-2**). King Xerxes held a banquet that lasted 180 days, to show how rich and powerful the kingdom was (**Esther 1:3-4**). The king called for the queen, but Queen Vashti refused to follow the order which angered the king (**Esther 1:12**). She did not respect her husband and embarrassed him in front of all the other leaders. She was banished and removed from her royal position. This led to the search for a new queen.

Mordecai, a Benjamite, exiled by Babylon was taking care of Hadassah (Esther), an orphan (**Esther 2:5-6**). In the search for a new queen, Esther found favor with the official in charge (**Esther 2:9**). To multiply God's favor, follow Esther's example in:

1) OBEDIENCE

Esther found favor and kindness in everything she did because she was obedient to Mordecai's instruction to keep her Jewish descent a secret for the time being (**Esther 2:10,15, 17**). Mordecai also was essential in the entire story—he was witness to a plot to assassinate the king (**Esther 2:21-23**). Mordecai intervened, which saved the king, and was recorded in their history books.

Obedience brings blessings. It implies that we show humility, honor, respect, and trust. We are to obey our parents because there's blessing in obedience (**Ephesians 6:1-3**). Servants must obey (be submissive to) their masters, even if the masters are unreasonable, "*for this finds favor*" (**1 Peter 2:18-19**). Sometimes, by obeying, we suffer unjustly, but God is the one to reward. Wives are also commanded to submit to husbands and win them even without a word (**1 Peter 3:1-2**)! Many times, it's not easy to submit to authorities, but we are to honor and respect them.

2) FAITH

Without faith, it is impossible to please God (**Hebrews 11:6**). We must have the faith that God is there, and that He is good – He is a "rewarder" for those who seek Him. Faith comes from "hearing" the word of God (**Romans**

10:17). To walk by faith, we must remember:

- *The object of true faith is God and His Word*
- *Faith is not the absence of fear*
- *Faith is doing what you know is right and leaving the outcome to God*
- *Faith is dependence on God*
- *Faith is positive expectation*
- *Faith will be tested*

This is exactly what happened in the story of Esther. Haman, the enemy in the story who came to power and influence, was offended that Mordecai would not bow down to him (**Esther 3:6**). He was so angry and schemed to kill the entire Jewish race!

When Mordecai heard of the edict, he asked Esther to use her influence to save her people (**Esther 4:8**). Esther could lose her life if she went to the king without being summoned (**v.11**). But Mordecai challenged Esther – if she kept silent, God will save His people, but she and her family will perish. What if she was put there in that position for "*such a time as this*" (**v.14**)? Esther responds in faith – asking Mordecai to have everyone pray and fast for her. We are to trust in the Lord in times when we are afraid (**Psalms 56:3-4**). By faith, Esther stepped forth to talk to the king – as faith is courage in action – and the king graciously listened (**Esther 5**)!

3) WISDOM

How do you have wisdom? Ask from God, who gives it abundantly (**James 1:5**)! Wisdom is from God; it comes from the Word of God, our true source of wisdom (**Psalms 119:97-100**). Through life experiences and problems, God teaches us wisdom (**Psalms 119:66-67**). Esther showed wisdom in the rest of the events in **chapter 5** – she first invited the king and Haman to a banquet. She depended on God for the "**right timing**". On that night, the king could not sleep and asked for the Book of Records to be read before him (**Esther 6:1 onwards**). In the process, he finds out about what Mordecai has done, but nothing is done for him. The king called for an official – and in God's timing, Haman was in the court, initially to ask permission to hang Mordecai. It turns out that while Haman thought honor would be given him, the king wanted to honor Mordecai instead! In all these, we see GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND TIMING! Esther took the opportunity to ask the king to preserve her life and revealed Haman's wickedness and edict to kill all the Jews, leading to his death (**Esther 7**). Mordecai was honored by the king. Even the edict to kill all the Jews was reversed. The Jewish people were victorious, and they established "Purim" – a festival to commemorate God's goodness in saving them.

God gives us favor to bless others. His purpose will be accomplished with or without us. The cost of obedience may be costly, but it is more costly not to follow Him. We will never know what blessings we would have missed if we did not obey Him in faith!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Are there areas in your life where God is asking you to obey? How can you grow in trusting God's direction, especially in unseen or uncomfortable situations?
2. What is one situation in your life right now that requires faith and godly courage? What's holding you back from stepping out in faith, and what can you do to move forward with boldness?
3. How can you grow in making wise decisions?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for the Lord to send His witnesses to people whose lives are in “danger” from an eternity without Christ. Step out in faith and godly courage to use your God-given influence to share the gospel with them!

- For elders, pastors, deacons, and families to become holy, humble, harmonious, happy, and heart-working)
- For ministries and church expansions worldwide.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God’s Word.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.
- For the rest of the Israeli hostages to be restored to their families safely. For Israel’s war with terrorists to end according to God’s purpose and for His glory.
- For the civil war in Syria to end peacefully, protection for Christians and other minorities, and freedom from oppression for Syrians. Pray for the gospel to spread rapidly throughout the country.
- Pray for Sudan and persecuted Christians there; earnestly seek God’s intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God’s word and His people bring them comfort and hope.
- Earthquake victims in Burma, Thailand, other countries.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God, and make disciples

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain (MMRC)

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper and intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

Esther 4:14

14 “For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?”