

ROYAL PROTECTION

Week 1 - Esther CCCWL – 9th August 2020

During the month of August, we will be talking about Royal Protection. We all know that those who are royalty command protection, and as Gods precious Children so do we. This series is based on real Biblical characters and events.

You will see week by week how God guarded and protected His people as they carried out their God given assignments. The message is really clear, God was watching out for them and He is watching out for us today, while we carry out our God given mission.

So, in this season we need not be afraid because God's Royal Protection is always with us. I hope you will enjoy this message today, and plan to join with us throughout August, and be encouraged by messages that bring this important teaching into the reality of our lives.

There are several themes in the Book of Esther.

I. God's presence.

- God is in control of life, every part of it, even when it isn't obvious to us.

II. God's people.

- During this Biblical period, the Jews became scattered. This ultimately led to the spread of Judaism, and ultimately, to the spread of Christianity.

III. God's protection.

- We will focus on 2 main areas.
 - God never slumbers or sleeps.
 - God's purpose was to protect His people, through Esther.

IV. God's parallels.

- There are remarkable parallels throughout The Bible, as God repeats the things He has done in the past.
- I.e. parallels between Esther's life and the life of Joseph (see Genesis 37-50)
 - Both grew up in royal courts
 - Both rose up to a significant position
 - God used them both for the miraculous deliverance of His people.

The protection God gave Esther, ultimately led to the protection and deliverance of the Jews.

- Esther was a Jewish orphan, who was raised by her cousin Mordecai.
- The previous Queen, Vashti was deposed for her disloyalty to the king.
- This made way for Esther was selected as the new queen.
- Haman, who at the time was the king's chief courtier, plotted to destroy the Jews.
- Esther's cousin Mordecai asked Esther to help him prevent the destruction of the Jews.
- She did this through good planning and wisdom.
- Finally, the king honoured Mordecai, Haman hung on his own gallows and the king gave the Jews religious freedom and privileges.
- This led to the feast of Purim which is still celebrated today.

This story showed a complete reversal of the previously bleak prospects of the Jews, and we can see this unfold as we look at God's protection upon Esther's life.

1. God never slumbers or sleeps.

*"He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.
Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."
Psalm 121:3-4 (ESV)*

- We are so very precious in God's eyes. We are part of God's Royal Family.
- The royal couple Kate and William and their three children, the royal family would spare no expense to protect them, at all costs.
- That is how it is with us. God is always with us, at all times, in every area of our lives.

Dictionary definition of protection.

'The action of protecting, or the state of being protected', or 'a person or thing that protects someone or something.'

'He who keeps (protects) Israel, He will never slumber or sleep.' Psalm 121:4 (ESV)

i. Esther would have questioned God's purpose for her life, because -

- Esther was a young virgin, an orphan raised by her cousin. She would probably only have been in her early teens. *Esther 2:7 (ESV)*
- Esther found herself in a world of palace extravagance, harems, and endless beauty treatments. *Esther 2:8-12 (ESV)*
- Esther would have been out of her comfort zone, as she became one of many women who lived in the palace purely for the pleasure of the king.

*"In the evening she would go in, and in the morning, she would return to the second harem in custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines. She would not go into the king again, unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name."
Esther 2:14 (ESV)*

Do you think that Esther would have questioned God's plan for her life at this point?

I certainly would have done!

Esther had a realisation of -

ii. God's purpose for her life.

There is this constant theme - God never slumbers or sleeps!

- Esther became very wise, very quickly. She didn't tell the King straight away, that she was Jewish. *Esther 2: 10 (ESV)*
- Then we see that the Jews became threatened by Haman, the king's chief courtier. *Esther 3:13 (ESV)*
- Mordecai reminded Esther that she was sent to the palace 'For such a time as this'. *Esther 4:14 (ESV)*
- God wanted Esther to align her life with Him and His purposes. *Esther 4:15-17 (ESV)*

2. God's purpose was to protect His people, through Esther.

"For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"
Esther 4:14 (ESV)

Before God was able to use Esther, to ultimately protect the Jews, she had to come to a realisation and understanding of God's purpose for her own life.

i. Belief in God's purpose for her life.

There is another constant theme - God's purpose was to protect His people, through Esther.

- Esther combined courage with careful planning. *Esther 5:2 (ESV)*

ii. Carrying out of God's purpose for her life.

God's purpose was to protect His people, through Esther!

- Esther organises a banquet for Haman and Xerxes. *Esther 5:1-8 (ESV)*
- Esther chooses her moment to reveal the plot to king Xerxes. *Esther 7:1-6 (ESV)*
- Esther was prepared to stand and be counted for God.

“... But even the hairs of your head are all numbered Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows. So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.”
Matthew 10:26-33 (ESV)

- We are of such huge value to God, and He will always protect us.
- But we have something to do.

Are we prepared to stand up and be counted, as Esther was?

Esther's legacy.

- The institution of the feast of Purim, *Esther 9: 18-31 (ESV)*

What's your legacy?

- God will protect us, spare us and guide us, but not just for our own benefit.
- He will do this, so that through us He can bless someone else.
- He will do this, so that through us, He can protect someone else.
- He will protect us, so that through us He can fulfil His purpose in someone else's life.

Further Study

Scriptures.

“He was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, the daughter of his uncle, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman had a beautiful figure and was lovely to look at, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.”
Esther 2:7 (ESV)

“So when the king's order and his edict were proclaimed, and when many young women were gathered in Susa the citadel in custody of Hegai, Esther also was taken into the king's palace and put in custody of Hegai, who had charge of the women. Now when the turn came for each young woman to go into King Ahasuerus, after being twelve months under the regulations for the women, since this was the regular period of their beautifying, six months with oil of myrrh and six months with spices and ointments for women.”
Esther 2:8-12 (ESV)

“In the evening she would go in, and in the morning, she would return to the second harem in custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines. She would not go into the king again, unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.”
Esther 2:14 (ESV)

“Esther had not made known her people or kindred, for Mordecai had commanded her not to make it known.”
Esther 2: 10 (ESV)

“Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with instruction to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods.”
Esther 3:13 (ESV)

"For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Esther 4:14 (ESV)

"Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish. Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him."

Esther 4:15-17 (ESV)

"And when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won favor in his sight, and he held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter."

Esther 5:2 (ESV)

"On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, in front of the king's quarters, while the king was sitting on his royal throne inside the throne room opposite the entrance to the palace. And when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won favor in his sight, and he held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter. And the king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom." And Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come today to a feast that I have prepared for the king." Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly, so that we may do as Esther has asked." So the king and Haman came to the feast that Esther had prepared. And as they were drinking wine after the feast, the king said to Esther, "What is your wish? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled. Then Esther answered, "My wish and my request is: If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my wish and fulfil my request, let the king and Haman come to the feast that I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king has said."

Esther 5:1-8 (ESV)

"So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. And on the second day, as they were drinking wine after the feast, the king again said to Esther, "What is your wish, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be granted me for my wish, and my people for my request. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have been silent, for our affliction is not to be compared with the loss to the king." Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has dared^[e] to do this?" And Esther said, "A foe and enemy! This wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen."

Esther 7:1-6 (ESV)

"So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?^f And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 10:26-33 (ESV)

“But the Jews who were in Susa gathered on the thirteenth day and on the fourteenth, and rested on the fifteenth day, making that a day of feasting and gladness. Therefore the Jews of the villages, who live in the rural towns, hold the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day for gladness and feasting, as a holiday, and as a day on which they send gifts of food to one another.

The Feast of Purim Inaugurated

And Mordecai recorded these things and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, obliging them to keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same, year by year, as the days on which the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and gifts to the poor.”

Esther 9: 18-31 (ESV)

Brief Synopsis of the Book of Esther

Queen

- Esther a Jewish orphan was raised by her cousin Mordecai (1:13-22)
- Esther was chosen to replace Xerxes queen (2:18)
- Did not reveal her nationality (2:10, 19-20)
- Uncovered assassination plot (2:21-33)

Problem

- Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman (3:1-4)
- Haman manipulated the king; Xerxes issues a decree (3:7-15)
- Mordecai encouraged Esther to intervene (4:14)
- *‘For such a time as this’* (4:14)

Deliverance

- Esther organises a banquet for Haman and Xerxes (5:1-8)
- Haman builds gallows (5:9-14)
- Xerxes chooses to honour Mordecai (6:1-3 / 6:10-14)
- Esther chooses her moment to reveal the plot (7:1-6)
- Mordecai was honoured and given a new position (7:7-10)
- Mordecai decreed that Jews could defend themselves (8:1-17)
- Jews dealt with their enemies (9:1-17)
- Festival of Purim (celebrate deliverance of the Jews) (9:18-32)
- Mordecai served under authority but worked for the good of his people (10:3)

My Notes

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