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Allusion, Images, Symbols: How to Study Bible Prophecy

Lesson #11 - For Such a Time as This

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Risë Rafferty 2025 Q2 L11 Such a Time as This

Esther -

The Bible is a book that you can read throughout your life and every time get something new out of it, definitely the case with the book of Esther. **"I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman."** Looking at the story through prophetic lens, we see **The comely delicate** Esther as not just a historical, Biblical figure but representation of God's people.

I wonder if Esther had known what her future life as Queen would be like if she would have followed through with entering the King's beauty contest. Yes, she becomes Queen, eats the best food Media Persia, wears, finest home, has servants, but there are difficult hard times.

The author of the lesson states: There is an unfortunate tendency among some Christians to dwell on the hard things of Bible prophecy. That our portrayal of future events can focus on doom and gloom- fear-based. Undoubtedly, the closing moments will not be easy ones for God's people.

Difficult and hard typically describe experiences we try to avoid at all costs. *But who says easy is the way to go?*

I lead out in a weight loss class - night one I told them weight loss is hard, difficult, challenging. Was I trying to discourage them? Not at all. My goal was to reframe those words, make them something that we embrace when necessary and that the purpose of the class was to learn tools of how to tackle, obtain resources and be reinforced by going through it together.

I showed the class a Ted talk of another woman who shared her 10 yr experience as a sailor. She described herself as sea sick almost every day. Catching typhoid in Indonesia, staph infection

on her face in Madagascar that made her look like the elephant man, but she kept sailing. Why? Because she said, adversity is always worth it. The Comfort zone is what we want to avoid. We may argue against her point in some situations She ended up swimming with humpback whales and frolicking with elephants.

as a kid -I read a book entitled: I love the word impossible. Perhaps Esther read a similar book or found the similar theme in Scriptures she was brought up with.

difficult is not a 4-letter word - easy is.

Because Esther let up her sails, she becomes queen. 5 years in she hears from her maids and eunuchs that her uncle Mordecai is clothed in sackcloth and ashes crying. She sends him new clothes, but he does not accept them. Instead, he tells her servant about the decree the government has issued - that Haman who is the 2nd in command next to the king has convinced the king to sign a Genocide decree - we read about this in

Esther 3:8 - **"And Hamaan said unto King Ahaseurus 'There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all of your kingdom,' [the 127 provinces which stretched from India to Ethiopia] 'their laws are different from all other people's and they do not keep the king's law. Therefore, it is not for the king's profit to let them remain. Let a decree be written that they shall be destroyed.**

Hamaan represents a spirit and movement that has existed in the past and will manifest in the future and influence national leaders to make national laws against God's people. Why? **because their laws are different than all other people's and it is for the king's profit.**

10 stages of genocide- some of those stages include:

Discrimination.

Dehumanization - "demonization" Genocides do not start with gas chambers, bullets, or machetes, they begin with hate speech/propaganda

Organization - Hamaan's plot is well thought through.

Polarization

Preparation
Persecution

Esther must've been aware that her people were experiencing some of these stages in Media Persia - there was a reason that she had not disclosed her nationality but had kept it a secret.

The author of the lesson asks:

1. How does a believer prepare himself or herself for any potential hardship that may come with loyalty to Christ?

Who are you on the daily? How do you face Daily opportunities to do the right thing whatever the cost?

Speak up for others and for truth?

Do you see people discriminated against or marginalized and just sit there or do you come alongside them?

When you see something that is wrong, do you take a stand?

Willing to suffer or focused on pleasure and consumerism and the path of ease?

Honest questions -

Mordecai reveals his understanding of the weakness of human nature, of **the bystander effect** - a social psychological phenomenon where people are less likely to help a victim when others are present. And he says to her,

v. 13, 14 **"Don't think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet, who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"**

- You may have heard the saying, "For evil men to accomplish their purpose, it is only necessary that good men do nothing,"
- MLK said, "The greatest tragedy is not the brutality of the evil people, but rather the silence of the good people. "
- Dietrich Boenhoffer said "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. ...Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."
- Evil succeeds when good men do nothing.

- Scripture says in **Ezekiel 33:6**: ***"But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes someone's life, that person's life will be taken because of their sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood."***

God holds us accountable to speak up. Esther spoke. But before she speaks, she fasts and prays for 3 days -all of her people join her

Through prayer and fasting she gains courage and the wisdom to know what to do- invite him to dinner. Maybe that's where the saying comes, Way to a man's heart is through his ...

1. Where do you find hope in the midst of difficult circumstances?

Going through it with someone who loves me and who I love. not alone. And that I am not without resources. Backed up by God.

-one of favorite hobbies is wake surfing behind a boat on the lake. Safe, small. But I love watching big wave surfing! Tackle 70-90 ft waves. Vertical cliff before they crash

Why do grown men intentionally travel sometimes long distances to ride up to 90 ft waves? The Eddie in Hawaii, Jaws off Maui Nazare in Portugal, mavericks- CA, Tasmania, Chile

What drives them to face the terror, the danger, potential death?

They're big wave surfers! It's who they are - and they are not alone - have a team, and a passion. Not alone. Not without resources - jet skis, personal water crafts, who tow them to the right spot at the right time- rescue them. Move into the wave. If they have persecuted Me... we move forward - We're followers.. It's who we are.

Yes, there's a big wave coming but I hope that rather than running away - we move forward prepared, surf board under our arm, with courage, supporting eachother, depending on God to give us discernment, poise, balance, to position us at the right time right place where we need. ya the swell is huge and you could get pummeled but you could also be and experience the

power of God enabling you to ride it through and come out the
barrel standing