

8. Spreading the Word!

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Nowadays there are so many different ways and efficient ways to let people know what is going on. You can add a bunch of people's e-mail addresses and send out massive blanket e-mails or use text messages from your cell phones – to our young people, they can not have enough of this. Or you can publish web pages for people to come visit your web sites from anywhere around the world. If you can afford it, you can use radio or TV commercials let others know what you are doing or what you have. Or relying on the old fashion way, calling people or writing letters or direct mail pieces which end up in trash cans within 8 seconds after people receive them.

Even though it is amazingly easy to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, there are more people in the world who do not know anything about Jesus Christ than ever before. I am finding out that this country, the United States which was once a Christian nation, has a massive ignorant people when it comes to Christianity.

So whose fault is that? It is none other than us, all of us. It is not a necessarily so-called full-time ministry workers' problem. All of us are commanded by the Lord Jesus to spread the Gospel to the end of the earth, yet we are further behind than ever before. What is the reason for that? I believe that it is because we came up with all the silly excuses why we can not spread the Good News of Jesus Christ while people are going to hell left and right.

In chapter 7, king Ahasuerus finally executed that miserable low life lying slime ball Haman for his wicked scheme. In this chapter 8, we see Esther further interceded on behalf of the safety of her people, the Jews.

Though Haman was dead, his murderous decree was still very much alive. Long after wicked people are gone, the consequences of their evil words and deeds live on. Even today, innocent people are still suffering because of guilty people who lie in their graves. A good example is Iraq today because of Saddam Hussein.

A. SU CASA MI CASA

Esther 8:1-2 On that day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told how he was related to her. 2 So the king took off his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther appointed Mordecai over the house of Haman.

According to the ancient historians, whenever a traitor was executed, the king took over his property. Had Ahasuerus confiscated Haman's property for himself, he would have acquired a great deal of wealth. But he chose to give Haman's estate to Esther. More than an act of generosity, this gift was probably the king's way of atoning for his foolish decisions that had brought so much pain to Esther and her people.

Ahasuerus knew that both Esther and Mordecai were Jews, but now he was to learn that they were also cousins. Ahasuerus and Mordecai were in-laws. With a Jewish queen and a Jewish prime minister in the palace, the Jews in the empire were in a better political position than ever before.

Everything that Haman had acquired from the king by his scheming, Mordecai received as gifts, because Mordecai was a deserving man. But God doesn't always give this kind of a "happy ending" to everybody's story.

Today, not all faithful Christians are promoted and given special honors. Some of them get fired, or lose everything they have, or even get killed because of their stand for Christ. God hasn't promised that we'll be promoted and made rich, but He has assured us that He's in control of all circumstances and that He will write the last chapter of the story. If God doesn't promote us here on earth, He certainly will when we get to heaven.

B. ESTHER'S SECOND PLEA

Esther 8:3-6 Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme which he had devised against the Jews. 4 And the king held out the golden scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, 5 and said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in his sight and the thing seems right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to annihilate the Jews who are in all the king's provinces. 6 For how can I endure to see the evil that will come to my people? Or how can I endure to see the destruction of my countrymen?"

To Esther, her own comfort was not important. Her foremost interest was the deliverance of the Jewish people in the kingdom of Persia. Unless something intervened, within nine months the Persians would attack the Jews and wipe them off the face of the earth. She wouldn't stop her intercession for her people until they are safe.

A few days ago, I sent out an e-mail to you guys with a link from www.GodTube.com which is a counterpart of YouTube.com about the revival happening in China. I watched it and was wondering if I could do what these precious brothers and sisters have gone through. Many of the Chinese pastors have been tortured and imprisoned five to ten times for their faith in Jesus Christ. Every one of them said this, "I count being imprisoned and tortured as blessings because I can identify myself with my Savior Jesus." What a testimony, what a devotion to Christ!

While we Americans complain about everything, especially what we don't have, these believers in China count whatever they have as blessings. What's wrong with our picture? We don't know how to sacrifice ourselves for others. The only thing most of us know about sacrifice is how to spell the word.

Esther couldn't do everything, but she could do something. What she could do, she did. She approached the throne of the king and asked him to reverse the decree that Haman had devised.

How do we approach the Throne of God on behalf of this dying country U.S.A.? How about our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world? I don't know how many of you are fasting and praying on Tuesdays as I've been asking you to do. I hope that you are joining me in interceding for this country every week.

In this country people would rather listen to Oprah Winfrey than Billy Graham or Chuck Smith. She uses the language of the Bible and Christian traditions and yet includes other traditions to create a hodgepodge faith. Exclusivism of truth is out the door in America today.

It was a master stroke of the devil when he got the church and the ministry so generally to lay aside the mighty weapon of prayer. The devil is perfectly willing that the church should multiply its organizations and flourish with many different programs, if it will only give up praying and seeking the truth from the Bible.

Esther's example encourages us to come to God's throne and intercede on behalf of others, especially this country during this crucial time of presidential election. One concerned person devoted to prayer can make a great difference in this world, because prayer is the key that releases the power of God.

C. THE KING'S PROCLAMATION

Esther 8:7-14 Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Indeed, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he tried to lay his hand on the Jews. 8 You yourselves write a decree concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring no one can revoke." 9 So the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces in all, to every province in its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. 10 And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed it with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses bred from swift steeds. 11 By these letters the king permitted the Jews who were in every city to gather together and protect their lives--to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, both little children and women, and to plunder their possessions, 12 on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. 13 A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province and published for all people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. 14 The couriers who rode on royal horses went out, hastened and pressed on by the king's command. And the decree was issued in Shushan the citadel.

In modern democratic nations, the Congress and Senate can reverse decisions and revoke laws, and the supreme court of the land can even declare laws unconstitutional like the California Supreme Court did when it away with the Marriage Amendment even though two thirds of Californians voted to keep marriage between a man and a woman.

But not so in the ancient Persian Empire. The voice of the king was the law of the land, and the king could do no wrong. The problem Esther and Mordecai faced was that the king couldn't cancel the first decree since the laws of the Medes and Persians were unalterable.

The king couldn't legally revoke his decree, but he could issue a new one that would favor the Jews. The citizens didn't have to hire a lawyer to explain the new decree to them. You can be sure they got the message: "Don't attack the Jews on March 7. If you do, you will be killed." Simple enough.

I wish only the born-again Christians today were like those scribes and couriers. How we need to tell the peoples of the world and this country the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The King of kings has commanded us, and we must go, but for some reason we linger. If a group of pagan scribes and messengers, without modern capability of transportation and communication, could take Mordecai's decree to an entire empire, how much more should Christians be able to take Christ's Gospel to a lost world?

Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, mankind was destined to perish in hell because we couldn't keep our righteousness to God's standard with our sinful nature. The wage of sin is death.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God put another law into effect – the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. God obeyed the law of sin and death when He gave His Son Jesus to bear our sins and die on the cross. But then God raised Him from the dead and put a new decree into effect that makes it possible for sinners to be saved. Now He wants us to put that Good News into every tongue and take that Good News to every nation.

D. THERE IS A NEW SHERIFF IN TOWN

Esther 8:15-17 So Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. 16 The Jews had light and gladness, joy and honor. 17 And in every province and city, wherever the king's command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a holiday. Then many of the people of the land became Jews, because fear of the Jews fell upon them.

The Book of Esther opens with the Jews keeping a very low profile, so much so that Esther and Mordecai wouldn't even confess their nationality. But now the Jews are proud of their race and so happy with what God had done that they were attracting others to their faith. Even the pagan Gentiles could see that God was caring for His people in a remarkable way.

If we have no joy in our faith in Christ, there's a leak in our Christianity somewhere. If Christian believers today manifested more of the joy of the Lord, those outside the faith would be attracted to the Christianity and be willing to consider the message of the Gospel.

E. APPLICATIONS

1) One concerned person devoted to prayer can make a great difference in this world, because prayer is the key that releases the power of God.

2) Next time when the Lord prompts you to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others, DO NOT be concerned about rejection, embarrassment and any other things. But be concerned about the glory of God and that person's eternal life.