

YOU WERE MADE FOR THIS MOMENT

How The Story Of Esther Inspires Us To
Step Up and Stand Out for God

LESSON 5 – REMEMBERING GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

*“Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far, ²¹ to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar ²² as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor.” **Esther 9:20-22 (NIV)***

As we look back, we see that Esther found courage to approach the king. And Mordecai stood up for what he believed. Both embraced their true identities as God’s chosen people. But these changes were a product of suffering, of literally facing a death sentence. While no one enjoys suffering, some of the greatest changes we undergo in life happen because of it. We would not be as strong, confident, loving, or secure without having gone through dark and tough times.

A CALL TO REMEMBER

1. Seasons of **struggle** can be treacherous for the human heart.
 - A. When times are tough, we are an easy victim for discouragement and defeat. **Despair** can be a dangerous season.
 - B. It can also be a **developing** time. Tough times can make us bitter or make us better.
2. Where God is small in your life, **problems** are large.
 - A. A weak God makes for a weak **heart**. But a great God makes for a solid saint. So let God be big and believe that he is big!

MAGNIFY THE LORD AND NOT THE PAIN

1. To **magnify** is to expand and enlarge. Our tendency is to magnify our fears.

*“O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.” **Psalms 34:3 (KJV)***

One way to ensure that our suffering will lead to character building and perseverance is to focus on God rather than on our pain. So often we think our problems are bigger than God’s power, but if we learned anything from Esther’s story, we know this is never the case.

*“Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” **Romans 5:3-4 (NIV)***

2. We suffer from spiritual **amnesia**. We forget that God can make beauty out of ashes, joy out of mourning, and army out of a valley of dead bones, and rejoicing out of sorrow.

*“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them **beauty for ashes**, the oil of joy **for mourning**, the garment of praise **for the spirit of heaviness**; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.” **Isaiah 61:3 (KJV)***

3. The Christian version of the Persian miracle involves not Esther in Susa, but God’s Son **buried** in a tomb.

- A. Just as Haman declared a **death** sentence on the Jews, so Satan declared a death sentence on the Source of life himself.

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE

- We live in a culture of **remembrance**.
- We celebrate certain holidays to commemorate momentous events. Culturally, it is important for us to remember our history and from where we came, as it helps us understand who we are and where we are going. We are called to remember, not only who we are but **who God is**.

*“When the LORD your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you—a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, ¹¹ houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant—then when you eat and are satisfied, ¹² be careful that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.” **Deuteronomy 6:10-12***

- The God of the great turnaround performed his **greatest** work on Easter Sunday.
- A. And just so we would never forget this moment, Jesus gave us a **covenant** to remember.

*“And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.” **Luke 22:19-20***

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

- **Never forget** that the God of great turnarounds is the God who holds the future in his hands.

For followers of Christ, the future is filled with victory from horizon to horizon. The world is in desperate need for people of God who will stay unshakeable in the world of chaos. You have a good God who has a good plan. And that plan is revealed in the word of God.