

*YOUR WORST DAY*

Esther: God's Influencer, part 4

What do you do when it's the worst day of your life? Your greatest crisis or challenge? Part four of our study of Esther shows how she and her people faced the greatest crisis, and guides us to depend on God in our darkest days.

*OPENING: O JESUS, KING OF GLORY*

sts. 1, 3–4

- 1 O Jesus, King of glory, Both David's Lord and Son!  
Your rule endures forever; In heaven is Your throne.  
Help that in earth's dominions, From pole to farthest pole,  
Your reign may spread salvation To each enlightened soul.
- 3 You are a mighty monarch, As by Your Word is told,  
And yet You care but little For earthly goods or gold.  
You do not come displaying Your power and renown.  
You dwell in no high castle; You wear no jeweled crown.
- 4 Oh, look on me with pity Though I am weak and poor;  
Admit me to Your kingdom To dwell there, blest and sure.  
I pray, Lord, guide and keep me Safe from my bitter foes,  
From sin and death and Satan; Free me from all my woes.

Text: Martin Behm

Text: Public domain

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**+ CONFESSIO AND ABSOLUTIO +**

**P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**C** **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

*(Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.)*

**P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

**P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

*THIS IS THE FEAST*

LSB 155

**C** **This is the feast of victory for our God.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are His.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:**

**Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

*SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY*

**P** The Lord be with you.

**G** And also with you.

**P** Let us pray.

Almighty God, You know we live in the midst of so many dangers that we struggle to stand firm in faith and in life. Grant strength and protection to support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

### **+ GOD'S WORD FOR US +**

#### *OLD TESTAMENT READING*

Esther 4:1—5:8 NIV

<sup>4:1</sup> When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly. <sup>2</sup> But he went only as far as the king's gate, because no one clothed in sackcloth was allowed to enter it. <sup>3</sup> In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

<sup>4</sup> When Esther's eunuchs and female attendants came and told her about Mordecai, she was in great distress. She sent clothes for him to put on instead of his sackcloth, but he would not accept them. <sup>5</sup> Then Esther summoned Hathak, one of the king's eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why.

<sup>6</sup> So Hathak went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate. <sup>7</sup> Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. <sup>8</sup> He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to instruct her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.

<sup>9</sup> Hathak went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said. <sup>10</sup> Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai, <sup>11</sup> “All the king’s officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that they be put to death unless the king extends the gold scepter to them and spares their lives. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king.”

<sup>12</sup> When Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai, <sup>13</sup> he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. <sup>14</sup> For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

<sup>15</sup> Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: <sup>16</sup> “Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

<sup>17</sup> So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther’s instructions.

<sup>5:1</sup> On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king’s hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance. <sup>2</sup> When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold scepter that was in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.

<sup>3</sup> Then the king asked, “What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you.”

<sup>4</sup> “If it pleases the king,” replied Esther, “let the king, together with Haman, come today to a banquet I have prepared for him.”

<sup>5</sup> “Bring Haman at once,” the king said, “so that we may do what Esther asks.”

So the king and Haman went to the banquet Esther had prepared. <sup>6</sup> As they were drinking wine, the king again asked Esther, “Now what is your petition? It will be given you. And what is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted.”

<sup>7</sup> Esther replied, “My petition and my request is this: <sup>8</sup> If the king regards me with favor and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for them. Then I will answer the king’s question.”

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

*HOLY GOSPEL*

Luke 18:1–8 NIV

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the eighteenth chapter.

**C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>18:1</sup> Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. <sup>2</sup> He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. <sup>3</sup> And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’

<sup>4</sup> “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care what people think, <sup>5</sup> yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won’t eventually come and attack me!’”

<sup>6</sup> And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. <sup>7</sup> And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? <sup>8</sup> I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

*LSB 507 HOLY, HOLY, HOLY*

sts. 1, 3–4

1 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;

Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!

God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

3 Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,

Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,

Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,

Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

4 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.

Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!

God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Text: Reginald Heber, 1783–1826

Text: Public domain

*MESSAGE: YOUR WORST DAY* (Esther: God's Influencer, part 4)

*APOSTLES' CREED*

**C** **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,**

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

**born of the virgin Mary,**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the  
dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.**

## *OFFERING*

## *OFFERTORY*

LSB 159

**☐ What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?  
I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the  
name of the Lord.  
I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of  
the Lord.  
I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all  
His people,  
in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O  
Jerusalem.**

## *PRAYER OF THE CHURCH*

## + THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION +

### Introduction to Communion

#### *LORD'S PRAYER*

**C** Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

**For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

#### *THE WORDS OF OUR LORD*

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** Amen.

**C** Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

*DISTRIBUTION*

*LSB 779 COME, MY SOUL, WITH EVERY CARE*

- 1 Come, my soul, with ev'ry care, Jesus loves to answer prayer;  
He Himself has bid thee pray, Therefore will not turn away.
- 2 Thou art coming to a King, Large petitions with thee bring;  
For His grace and pow'r are such None can ever ask too much.
- 3 With my burden I begin: Lord, remove this load of sin;  
Let Thy blood, for sinners spilt, Set my conscience free from guilt.
- 4 Lord, Thy rest to me impart, Take possession of my heart;  
There Thy blood-bought right maintain And without a rival reign.

5 While I am a pilgrim here, Let Thy love my spirit cheer;  
As my guide, my guard, my friend, Lead me to my journey's end.

6 Show me what is mine to do; Ev'ry hour my strength renew.  
Let me live a life of faith; Let me die Thy people's death.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt.

Text: Public domain

### *LSB 427 IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST I GLORY*

1 In the cross of Christ I glory, Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.  
All the light of sacred story Gathers round its head sublime.

2 When the woes of life o'ertake me, Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,  
Never shall the cross forsake me; Lo, it glows with peace and joy.

3 When the sun of bliss is beaming Light and love upon my way,  
From the cross the radiance streaming Adds more luster to the day.

4 Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure By the cross are sanctified;  
Peace is there that knows no measure, Joys that through all time abide.

Text: John Bowring, 1792–1872

Text: Public domain

### *BENEDICTION*

LSB 166

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**C** Amen.

## *LSB 770 WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS*

- 1 What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!  
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear  
All because we do not carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!
  
- 2 Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged— Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful Who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness— Take it to the Lord in prayer.
  
- 3 Are we weak and heavy laden, Cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our refuge— Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In His arms He'll take and shield thee; Thou wilt find a solace there.

Text: Joseph M. Scriven, 1819–86

Text: Public domain

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