

Daily Meditation Guide to 3-Day Fasting and Prayer

For

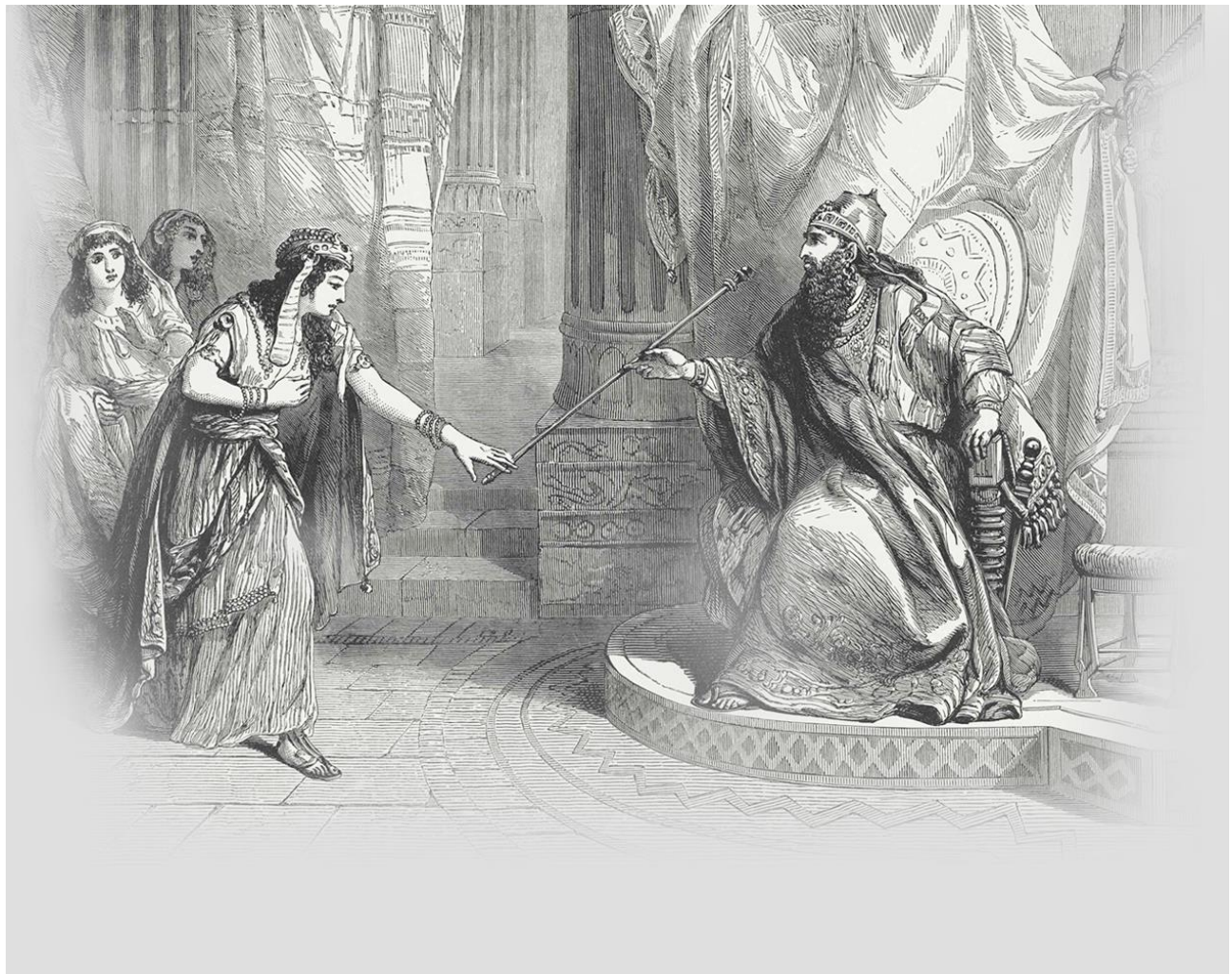
FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

An International Call to Fasting, Worship & Prayer

Thursday, May 28, 6 pm EDT through Sunday, May 31, 6 pm EDT

culminating in

A SPIRIT-FILLED WORSHIP & PRAYER GATHERING: Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 6 pm EDT



Wesleyan Covenant Association International Intercessory Prayer Network

INTRODUCTION

The leadership team of the WCA International Intercessory Prayer Network has been seeking the Lord's guidance for our next steps in these current circumstances. These are the words He has given us, each one confirmed through scripture and received by multiple intercessors:

(1) The Lord calls us to a time of preparation, waiting expectantly for His Spirit to be poured out.

After His Resurrection and before He ascended to His Father, Jesus instructed His disciples to *"wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.... But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses...."* Acts 1:4-5, 7a (NIV)

We sense in our spirits that there is a call from the Lord for His Bride to spend 3 days in preparation, just as Esther fasted and called her Jewish people to fast and pray before she went to the king. After these 3 days, we are to put on the royal robes of our identity in Him, to boldly enter His throne room and to call on His justice and power for His people.

*"On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, opposite the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne inside the palace opposite the entrance to the palace. As soon as the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, **she won his favor and he held out to her the golden scepter that was in his hand.** Esther approached and touched the top of the scepter."* Esther 5:1-2 (NRSV)

(2) The Holy Spirit will be poured out as new wine for the world. There is an increasing hunger among the followers of Jesus for Spirit-filled living, for greater power, freedom and authority. We strongly sense that the Lord wants to pour out new wine for the world through the new expression of the Methodist Church. A new wineskin has to be prepared first: new leadership raised up, and revival in the hearts of Jesus' followers. For the preparation of this new wineskin, the WCA International Intercessory Prayer Network plays a significant role. The Lord is bringing intercessors around the world together for such a time as this.

The **FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS** prayer event is our corporate response to these words from the Lord. What better day for the culmination of this event than the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit fell on the disciples and the Church was born in power and authority?

FOOD FAST OPTIONS

Thank you so much for your willingness to join the fast. Individuals who participate are encouraged to fast three days, from 6:00 p.m. EDT on Thursday, May 28 to 6:00 p.m. EDT on Sunday, May 31. We recommend a water fast; however, individuals should be wise and consider their own health conditions in choosing a fasting option.

Below is the five different kinds of food fast you can choose from. Based on your current health, you can also choose to do one day fast instead of three days. I hope this helps. Please be wise. Fasting is not about just abstaining from food...it is about a heart hungry for more of God. Your heart is what the Lord is more interested in. I pray that the Lord pours out His love into your heart overflowing as you do the fast.

Five Different Types of Food Fasts

There are five common categories of fasting food. **First, a regular fast** is one in which we go without food, drinking only water or liquids that have no calories. Common lengths for this fast are one day, three days, or one week. It occasionally is longer, sometimes twenty-one days or even forty days.

Second, a liquid fast is one in which we go without solid foods and drink only light liquids, such as fruit juices. Most people do not include milk shakes in this type of fast.

Third, an absolute fast, sometimes called an Esther fast, is one in which we abstain from all food and water. This fast lasts for one to three days. I encourage people to be cautious when going on an absolute fast and to never extend it beyond three days.

The fourth type of fast, a partial fast, sometimes called a Daniel fast, is one in which we abstain from tasty foods and eat only certain things, like vegetables or nuts. John Wesley often fasted on bread and water. Those with hypoglycemia or other medical conditions can engage in a partial fast by being creative. We also encourage people to embrace a media fast in which they abstain from media entertainment, excluding news.

Fifth, a Benedict Fast, established by Saint Benedict of Nursia, Italy (525 ad), is one in which we eat only one meal a day. Many monks in the monasteries of Europe lived this way for years and had strong bodies and even stronger spirits.

(Excerpt from "The Rewards of Fasting" by Mike Bickle, pp.78-79)

DAY ONE, Thursday, May 28, 6 pm EDT

Title: The Tale of Two Queens

Scripture Reading: Esther Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

Devotions: There are 4 figures, in the book of Esther, whom I want us to consider in our minds as we prepare ourselves for the 3 day fasting and prayer.

1. King Ahasuerus portrays Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom King;
2. Esther portrays us(church), the bride of Christ;
3. Hegai portrays the Holy Spirit who helps us(church) prepare to be the bride of Christ;
4. Haman portrays Devil who tries to cause us(church) not to become the bride of Christ.

As we meditate on the book of Esther, I want us to hear what the Lord is trying to speak to us, the body of Christ, for such a time as this. And as we try to listen to the voice of the Lord, I want us to ponder deeply what the Lord wants us, the body of Christ, to do for such a time as this.

I want to talk about two women, two queens. One woman, Queen Vashti, lost her queen position because she lost the king's heart. The other woman, Esther, gained her queen position because she gained the king's heart.

King Ahasuerus called for Queen Vashti but she refused the king's command. Verse 12 says, "But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. Then the king became very angry and his wrath burned within him." The Bible doesn't tell us why Queen Vashti refused the king's command, but we can easily guess that she didn't want to be shamed before the people. She had pride. She wasn't humble. She didn't think of pleasing the king; she, instead, only thought of pleasing herself. However, unfortunately, due to this incident, Vashti lost her queen position.

Esther only thought of pleasing the king. She wanted to gain the king's favor. Her only focus was what the king likes. In the movie "One Night with the King", Hegai brings all the candidates to the treasure room of the kingdom, and tells them to choose whatever they want for the one night with the king. If the king doesn't call them again then the treasure will be theirs. All the candidates rushed to the treasure. However, Esther stands still. Hegai asks Esther why she is not choosing the treasure. She says, "What jewel does the king like? With what jewel can I obtain the king's heart?" Hegai shows Esther a small jewel box, opens it, and gives a simple necklace to her. When her turn comes, she wears just the necklace and goes to the king. That night Esther obtained the king's heart and became Queen.

Chapter 2, verses 15 to 17 says, "15. Now when the turn of Esther.... came to go in to the king, she did not request anything except what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the women, advised. And Esther found favor in the eyes of all who saw her.... 17. The king loved Esther more than all the women, and she found favor and kindness, with him more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti."

As the king was looking for a new queen, the Lord is looking for someone like Esther—one who only thinks of pleasing the Lord, one who only thinks of gaining the Lord's heart, one who asks the Holy Spirit how to find the king's favor. The Lord is not looking for one who just works for Him; instead He is looking for one who wants Him. The Lord is looking for someone who will be His bride.

We have a choice. I pray that we choose to find the favor of our Bridegroom King, Jesus! Even though we become a fool before the people.

Scripture to Meditate: Esther 2:17 "The king loved Esther more than all the women, and she found favor and kindness with him more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti."

DAY TWO, Friday, May 29, 6 pm EDT

Title: Bridal Intercessor

Scripture Reading: Esther Chapter 3 and Chapter 4

Devotions: Haman was promoted by the king Ahasuerus to be the second in position in the kingdom. The people of the land were commanded to bow down and pay homage to Haman. However, Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage. Haman was filled with rage and decided to kill not only Mordecai but also his people, Jews. Chapter 3, verse 6 says, "But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him who the people of Mordecai were; therefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus."

Mordecai found out this plotting. Mordecai sent the words to Queen Esther. Chapter 4:8 says, “He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict which had been issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show Esther and inform her, and to order her to go in to the king to implore his favor and to plead with him for her people.” What Mordecai asked Esther was to become an intercessor and go to the king and intercede for the Jews to save their lives. However, there was a problem. The king hasn’t summoned Esther to come to the king for thirty days. The law was that if anyone comes to the king to the inner court who is not summoned, the person will be put to death, unless the king holds out to the person the golden scepter.

Mordecai told Esther in verse 13 and 14, “13....Do not imagine that you in the king’s palace can escape any more than all the Jews. 14. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?” Esther responded in verse 16, “Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.”

Intercessory prayer is not just about praying for others, for church, or for nation. Intercessory prayer is the prayer an intercessor prays. Let me say again, “Intercessory prayer is the prayer an intercessor prays.” In intercession, what is most important is not about intercessory prayers, instead, it is about the intercessor. The most powerful intercession is the Bridal Intercession. True intercession is not a warfare, instead, it is a bridal banquet for the Bridegroom King. “Inter” means “between.” “Cede” means “to go.” So, intercede means “to go between.” An intercessor is the one who goes between God and people, between heaven and earth. The dictionary definition of intercede is “to intervene between parties with a view to reconciling differences.”

I believe that Esther is the best biblical type or model for an intercessor because she is the type of the bride of Christ. The reason that the king wanted to give her anything she asked for was because she was a beautiful bride of the king and the king was so pleased with what she did for him.

The Lord is looking for an intercessor for the Wesleyan Covenant Association. Who knows whether you have not attained the call for such a time as this? As Esther prepared herself in fasting before she approached the king, we will prepare ourselves in fasting before we approach the Bridegroom King Jesus.

Scripture to Meditate: Esther 4:14 “For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?”

DAY THREE, Saturday, May 30, 6 pm EDT

Title: The Call of the Scepter

Scripture Reading: Esther Chapter 5, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7

Devotions: Esther's original Hebrew name is Hadassah. Esther is the new name given by Mordecai. New name means new identity, new mission and new authority. The Lord is giving a new name to us(church), for such a time as this, with new identity, new mission and new authority. Esther, in Persian origin, means "star". Revelation 1:16-20 says, "16.In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. 17.When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18.and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. 19.Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things 20.As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands; the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

Esther portrays the new body of Christ, new church, the new type of the bride of Christ. The Holy Spirit is preparing a new bride of Christ, out of The United Methodist Church, to present her before the Bridegroom King, Jesus Christ. This new traditional Methodist denomination is the new bride to whom the Lord wants to stretch out His golden scepter. The golden scepter means the favor of the King. The new bride will win the favor of the King Jesus.

The Lord is looking for His bride to whom He stretches out His golden scepter. The new bride has to be ready to go into the inner court room and touch the scepter. This is our new identity—the beautiful and pure bride of Christ. Our new mission is to win the favor of the Bridegroom King to make a petition to save the church. Esther is not an ordinary queen. Esther is a queen with authority. She is beautiful and pure and yet she is not weak; she is like a general of the army of the bride of Christ. The king has given her the authority. It is the king's authority. If someone tries to harm her the king will not allow it. Haman made a mistake. He thought he could destroy Esther, he could win over Esther. But He didn't know that behind her there is the king standing. He forgot that Esther is not an ordinary woman, but the Queen!

Chapter 7:7-10 says, "7.The king arose in his anger from drinking wine and went into the palace garden; but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that harm had been determined against him by the king 8.Now when the king returned from the palace garden into the place where they were drinking wine, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, "Will he even assault the queen with me in the house?" As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face...10.So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the king's anger subsided."

We sense in our spirits that there is a call from the Lord, the Bridegroom King! That is the call of the golden scepter! The Lord has stretched out His golden scepter. The Lord is looking for His bride who will boldly enter into His inner court and touch the scepter to win His favor. There is the call from the heavenly throne room, "Who wants to win My favor?" "For Such A Time As This" gathering is our corporate response to His call saying, "We do!"

Scripture to Meditate: Esther 5:1-2 "1.Now it came about on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace in front of the king's rooms, and the king was sitting on his royal throne in the throne room, opposite the entrance to the palace 2.When the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, she obtained favor in his sight; and the king extended to Esther the golden scepter which was in his hand. So Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter."