Over the past few weeks, we have been unpacking the Book of Esther. We have seen the unseen sovereign hand of God at work through the courageous obedience of a young Jewish girl. God arranges for Esther to become queen and now she goes before the King to plead her case to rescue the Jews from destruction from the hand of Haman, the King’s second in command. Esther decides to throw a banquet for the King to which Haman is invited. Not sleeping well, the King has read to him records confirming that Mordecai, who had prevented his assassination, had not yet been honored; so now the King plans to give Mordecai a horse, royal garments, and a crown. Meanwhile, Haman, in his pride, thinks the banquet is to honor him.

Esther petitions the King to save the Jews in Haman’s presence (Esther 7:3-6\*)

Haman is hanged on the gallows that he, himself, had built for Mordecai. Mordecai is promoted; a new edict is sent out to all reaches of the kingdom to save and empower the Jews. The Jews defend themselves, with this edict in force. The Feast of Purim is instituted and all that was accomplished is still celebrated today! The End!!

 Remember, now, we said that God is the author of each of our stories, and we must be obedient not to steal the pen as He is writing it. And each of us is not the hero of the story. He is. And as author and hero of our story, God can and often does flip the script. There is a term in literature called “peripety.” Peripety is a sudden or unexpected change of fortune or reversal of circumstance. God in his Providence and Sovereignty changed the circumstances in Esther. And His providential peripety, the sacrifice of Christ, has changed our fortunes, too. Family, when God is ready to move, He can reverse the most irreversible circumstances

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\*Esther 7:3-6

3 Then Queen Esther answered, “If I have found favor with you, Your Majesty, and if it pleases you, grant me my life—this is my petition. And spare my people—this is my request. 4 For I and my people have been sold to be destroyed, killed and annihilated. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because no such distress would justify disturbing the king. ” 5 King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, “Who is he? Where is he—the man who has dared to do such a thing?” 6 Esther said, “An adversary and enemy! This vile Haman!” Then Haman was terrified before the king and queen.

1 Corinthians 15:57). The Christian walk is an intentional walk. Our job is to walk in courageous obedience as God continues to write our story. And in your story, know this: God gives His children victory through His provision. (1) There is no safer place than in the will of God, and (2) there’s no greater peace than to be in the Word of God. We are assured that He never leaves or forsakes us. And He provides what we need to get through. But our assurance is found in His presence. When we feel overcome by our situation, it’s because we aren’t being overcome by Him. (\*\*1John 5:4-5). Listen, you need to believe God’s word more than you believe our feelings. God keeps His promises! (\*\*\*Philippians 4:19). He may provide in ways different from our expectations, but our greatest need is MORE OF HIM. His ultimate provision has already been given in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

 God is a God of reversals, one who brings us out of shame and despair, out of sin, to redemption. Esther is an orphan. She becomes a queen. Mordecai wears sack cloth in the early going. At the end of the story, he wears royal garments. Your circumstances are not out of God’s reach. Many of you in your circumstances have grown weary. You are tired, frustrated, full of anxiety (\*\*\*\*Hebrews 12:2). We feel these things when we allow ourselves to identify with circumstances, instead of identifying with Christ, first by having our sins forgiven and then through obedient living, living out of tune with this world and in tune with Christ.

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\* 1 Corinthians 15:57

57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

\*\*1John 5:4-5

4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

\*\*\*Philippians 4:19

19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

\*\*\*\*Hebrew 12:2

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

 We must live as people who have been brought out of darkness into marvelous light; we must take off our sackcloths and adorn ourselves with royal garments, trusting the author for the plot twist, persistent and courageously obedient. At the end of Esther, the Jews are better off and two of them in power. Family, Christians should have a different outlook on life! God sovereignly and providentially worked out His plan. And, He knows better than you what He should do in your life.

 Family, let me ask: How is your walk? Are you drawing near to the Father? Are you overwhelmed by the things of this world? Are you trusting God? Are you living for Him? Has your faith become an additive, or is it the main ingredient in your life? Have you ever died to self, repented, and accepted Jesus as your Savior and Lord?

 Listen! God specializes in new chapters. And Family, God gets the final say, not your fear, your shame, your agenda, or your will. Things began to change when Esther identified with Mordecai, her adopted father (\*Esther 8:1). God cannot be an afterthought, a crutch, or an addition to your life. Fix your eyes on the author and perfecter of your faith. Meditate on His Word. Talk with Him. Draw perspective from Him! Trust in his providence. The God who saves us by His power empowers us to live more like Him! Fixing our eyes on Jesus causes us to grieve over our sins. And then, our attention on Him causes us to run to Him, bringing our shame, pride, disobedience—bringing it all before the King, REDEEMED.

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\*Esther 8:1

1 That same day King Xerxes gave Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came into the presence of the king, for Esther had told how he was related to her.

Bible Passages for overall sermon:

Hebrew 12:1-3

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Esther 8:1-16

1 That same day King Xerxes gave Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came into the presence of the king, for Esther had told how he was related to her. 2 The king took off his signet ring, which he had reclaimed from Haman, and presented it to Mordecai. And Esther appointed him over Haman’s estate. 3 Esther again pleaded with the king, falling at his feet and weeping. She begged him to put an end to the evil plan of Haman the Agagite, which he had devised against the Jews. 4 Then the king extended the gold scepter to Esther and she arose and stood before him. 5 “If it pleases the king,” she said, “and if he regards me with favor and thinks it the right thing to do, and if he is pleased with me, let an order be written overruling the dispatches that Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, devised and wrote to destroy the Jews in all the king’s provinces. 6 For how can I bear to see disaster fall on my people? How can I bear to see the destruction of my family?” 7 King Xerxes replied to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, “Because Haman attacked the Jews, I have given his estate to Esther, and they have impaled him on the pole he set up. 8 Now write another decree in the king’s name in behalf of the Jews as seems best to you, and seal it with the king’s signet ring—for no document written in the king’s name and sealed with his ring can be revoked.” 9 At once the royal secretaries were summoned—on the twenty-third day of the third month, the month of Sivan. They wrote out all Mordecai’s orders to the Jews, and to the satraps, governors and nobles of the 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush. These orders were written in the script of each province and the language of each people and also to the Jews in their own script and language. 10 Mordecai wrote in the name of King Xerxes, sealed the dispatches with the king’s signet ring, and sent them by mounted couriers, who rode fast horses especially bred for the king. 11 The king’s edict granted the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves; to destroy, kill and annihilate the armed men of any nationality or province who might attack them and their women and children, and to plunder the property of their enemies. 12 The day appointed for the Jews to do this in all the provinces of King Xerxes was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar. 13 A copy of the text of the edict was to be issued as law in every province and made known to the people of every nationality so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. 14 The couriers, riding the royal horses, went out, spurred on by the king’s command, and the edict was issued in the citadel of Susa. 15 When Mordecai left the king’s presence, he was wearing royal garments of blue and white, a large crown of gold and a purple robe of fine linen. And the city of Susa held a joyous celebration. 16 For the Jews it was a time of happiness and joy, gladness and honor.