

## **Fasting for Others, Pt. 4**

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We are now in a window of time over three days in which the Church will be fasting during one of those periods of time. And that is the title of this particular sermon series, *Fasting for Others*, in that respect, because that's what it's all about. This is *Part 4* today.

Last Sabbath, we finished a story about Elijah and how God worked with him, mightily through him, in that respect, to bring a window of time or through a window of time in which some in Israel were brought to a point of repentance in the sense of acknowledging that God Almighty, the Eternal God Yahweh, was God.

Now, knowing human nature and that there wasn't anywhere to proceed after that, that obviously, probably, didn't last very long. But at least for a time, for the northern nations there where Israel was scattered in Samaria, they did repent at that particular point in time when they saw all the priests that he killed, had killed, did kill, and all the things that God did when He took up that sacrifice that was placed there. Not just the sacrifice, but everything on the ground – the water and the rock that was piled up there, all gone.

And anyway, quite an incredible story. But it moved people. It moved people to think differently. Human nature is like that. You see something that profound, contrast side by side, and it shouldn't be a hard decision to make: Who is God? So anyway, quite a story. But they weren't being worked with. It wasn't a process where they could be brought to repentance and then return to being with Judah again and worshipping with Judah again in the way that they had done throughout time there.

So, again, things that God does from time to time. We see a period of time that this world is going to be experiencing, but this is quite different, and it reminds me very much about things that God did in preparation for Christ's first coming and all the things that John the Baptist did, all the things that took place, and then all the preaching that took place when the disciples went with Christ from area to area for the period of time that they were together.

A lot of those people that John baptized, they were brought to a point of change, of wanting to change, of wanting to see the Messiah. They were suffering mightily under Roman rule, and they desired to see the Messiah return. They felt a great need. They had quite a bit of history before that of a lot of death and a lot of suffering that they had already gone through. And so that desire that has been there for so long, from time to time, of wanting to be delivered, of wanting to see the Messiah come, of wanting to see "a city whose builder and maker is God" is something that's been in the hearts of people for a long, long time at different times.

And the worse the society is, the worse that the world has been, the worse the governments have been, the more oppressive, the more that people have wanted that, primarily the Jewish people. Because Israel, they were long gone by that time.

So, again here, profound history and some of the things taking place here. But when you think about what took place with John, there were thousands of people being worked by the time that Christ and the disciples had gone throughout the land doing what Christ was doing and the teaching that He was giving, and most of the things written there that didn't happen until about the last three weeks. There was a lot done in those last three weeks, and a lot of the scriptures were written. So there's a long period of time there where there was a lot of teaching, but as far as some of the miracles that took place, those didn't happen until toward the end. And then finally, you know, a desire to, as they came into Jerusalem and they saw Christ and all the things were being said, they were already primed and ready and desirous of seeing the Messiah come. They believed that He was the Messiah.

And it's quite an incredible story when you go through and see how they were moved in the manner that they were, and this was accomplished by God's spirit. Events, yes, but by God's spirit and the excitement of seeing certain things come to pass, miraculous things that can't take place. You know, Lazarus toward the very end there, being resurrected from the dead, and this spreading rapidly. Things like that that happened. The blind receiving their sight, the lame being healed. These things weren't small. They were incredible.

All that went out in a very short period of time, especially toward the end of Christ's ministry. And they were ready. By the time Pentecost came, God had prepared people to repent. They had already been repenting. They wanted the Messiah. And then when it all came together for them on Pentecost, several thousand were baptized on that one day alone. Then the Church began to grow as a matter of things that took place after that. Then all those who had come from all the different regions, who spoke in the different languages, as it points out, they went back into their regions after a time. They stayed together for a time, they became stronger, and then they went back, and these things began to be spread even more so.

How much more important is a time in front of us? It's so far above and beyond that because that was to accomplish something in a unique way on a physical scale, as far as the things that had to take place in the sense of physically dying and then being resurrected. All the things that they saw that were, to them, physical – healing, being resurrected from the dead – things that had no explanation as far as something that could happen as far as mankind is concerned at that time. What an awesome thing to have witnessed all that.

Yet those things were great. They were physical. But we're getting ready for something far, far greater. He had to come and die. He had come as our Passover. Things that people didn't understand. Even the

disciples didn't understand it until they finally had that day of Pentecost and God's spirit was given to them. And finally, they began to understand the things that Christ had been teaching them.

They didn't even understand what He told them on Passover night. Incredible! So much of the teaching that He gave that is so powerful was given on that particular night, and they didn't understand it. They couldn't comprehend it. When He died, they thought, "It's over with. What are we going to do? Go back to fishing. Go back to 'this'. Go back to what we did before, to what we knew?" That's where their minds were.

He told them quickly to stay there in Jerusalem. Then, after forty days, He left, and they had ten more days there. And there they were on Pentecost, and then incredible things that God did.

We're going to witness, as we live on and see things happen because of His second coming, things that are going to be far grander, far greater. Because this isn't just in one little place in the world. That was Jerusalem, the things that happened there, and it was very small in comparison to the world. What God is getting ready to do now has to do with the entirety of the world when Christ returns.

It's profound. It's almost unbelievable as it were. It is unbelievable for the world as a whole, though many talk about His second coming. But they don't grasp and understand much about it, and His coming is going to be very powerful. What the world sees is going to humble a lot powerfully so.

We're blessed to be a part of it. That's how God works. He works with people. He works, has worked with people from the very beginning of time, and He's worked with the Church for 2,000 years, small as it is, and has always been. And yet profound things are going to be accomplished because God's making it clear He's the one that's doing it. And if we're able to share in that, we're blessed by it because we're being molded and fashioned for other things. Awesome to understand these things.

So anyway, we are in this time of fasting. We have been focusing on the importance of the right and true kind of fasting as it talks about in Isaiah. And candidly, that goes along with prayer as well, because prayer is a part of fasting. Most of the world doesn't think about fasting, and they don't comprehend what it's all about. But if you look at prayer, people talk about prayer and people pray to a point for what they grasp and comprehend.

But again here, Isaiah explains the right kind, if you will, even of prayer. It's not just a matter of fasting because prayer is coupled with that. And if the mind isn't right and praying about the right things for the right purpose, it's meaningless. So God would say, "Is this the..." not the fast, "...is this the prayer that I have chosen, that you repeat, that you continually repeat the same thing day in and day out, that after a time has no meaning?" Anyway, it has to come from in us. It has to be about things that are happening in one's life. It has to do with a desire to repent and change. Something that sadly is so lacking.

So, we've been focusing on that and the need to work to be active in our prayers as we are seeking to affect change. I'm repeating that because that's what one of the scriptures talks about that we've looked

at, the desire to affect change, to be a part of that. That's what we want to see. We want to see a change in self first and foremost, in ourselves, because we know that we have selfish human nature dwelling within us.

I love how Paul explained it all. He saw those things in him, and it was a battle. But as chapter 8 of Romans goes on, it talks about, but he thanks God through Joshua the Christ; He is the answer, of God living in us, dwelling in us, and that relationship we can have. Awesome.

So, we have to work on self. We know we have a battle. It's a constant battle in physical carnal human life because we'll have this human nature until we no longer are human. It's the way it's meant to be because it's a matter of always making choices, and it's by those choices we are judged. And it's through those choices that we can grow spiritually and draw closer to God, and continually making, consistently making the right choices to live God's way of life, choose it, yes, have chosen it, and to strive to live it, and asking God for the help to accomplish that because we can't do it on our own. We need God's spirit every day of our life if we grasp it.

So again, that we're seeking to affect change in our lives but also in the lives of others. And that's what a lot of this has been about. It's about praying for others, praying for others within the Church, as we're going to talk about as we go along here, praying about this world around us, praying about those who were scattered, still.

I'm kind of dumbfounded of where we are in time. Seventeen years later, and we're finishing up a process with one more day of fasting. We didn't do it back then, the three days, we did two. All connected with the story of Esther. All connected with a desire of not taking away from that in any fashion or form because that's what is honored in the book of Esther, very powerfully so by God Almighty. And then for us to be blessed to come back to this point in time and to realize, is this it? Well, we have to be on our toes, be on guard. It could very well be that third day in that respect spiritually. Awesome.

So, we desire to see far more moved in the world around us, in the scattered Church. A lot that I've known through time are dead and gone because it started in that journey back in 1969, and then the Apostasy in '94. And those who would be out there now in that regard that might be able to be reached are those who were pretty young or younger back at that point in time. Because we're talking about thirty-one years ago, plus.

So again, we desire to see people, in that respect, moved by awe. Just as in times past, whether it be the time of Elijah here that we were talking about, or whether it be the time of John the Baptist, or whatever period of time you want to look at when people were moved to repentance in a massive way. So, to be in awe and also fear. Human beings relate to that.

What they saw when Elijah did, or God did through him at that moment in time, they were fearful. When they saw all those priests, several hundred put to death because of their beliefs and what they had done with the name of God and their beliefs in changing things, whether it had to do with the seventh day to Sunday, the worship of the sun, which they did, changing God's Holy Days to other times of worship so that the northern tribes wouldn't go back down to Judah and worship at the temple any longer on those Holy Days, they were scared.

And that's healthy for human beings to come to that point in time where they're fearful because you see something that is greater than you, or you see something that if God doesn't intervene, what do we have? What do we have? And that's what mankind's going to be brought to. People are going to go through a lot. And there's really no other way to usher in the Kingdom of God on earth but to humble this world and for God to do what He says He's going to do, primarily, especially in the Seventh Trumpet. Awesome. Even after Christ returns, it's not over with. There's a lot to be done.

What Elijah did was on a very small scale. What Christ and the 144,000 do is going to be massive into the millions upon millions upon millions around this earth, to destroy those who are destroying the earth. Some people would hear that and say, "That's sick!" No, it's preparing the world to receive God Almighty, to receive the Kingdom of God, to receive Joshua the Christ as King of kings.

And even then, God makes it clear that it's going to take a period of time there. And if people don't come down to the Feast of Tabernacles and start observing it, God says what's going to happen to them. He's going to give them time, and if they still won't repent, He said they're going to be destroyed.

So, even after the Millennium is established in the beginning, it's hard, because human nature is hard, hard-hearted, stubborn, doesn't want to change, wants to hold on to the past, wants to hold on to its own beliefs and ideas that are even contrary to God. Incredible. So, our prayers involve these kinds of things – to desire to see people moved with awe and fear to the end that people be humbled and can begin to be worked with ahead of time. What an awesome and a beautiful thing if they can be. And they will be. It's just a matter of whether we're a part of it or not because that's what we're being offered. Awesome.

So again here, we're going to continue on here and go into the book of Esther now as we've been preparing to head into this anyway. Quite a story here when you start going through some of this and see what happened during the time of Esther, what they experienced, what they went through on a physical plane.

**Esther 1:1—Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus...** This was Xerxes I. Ahasuerus is a term like Caesar; it's a title in that respect. But it was actually Xerxes I, if you go back and look in history. It says, ... **this is Ahasuerus who reigned from India even to Ethiopia.**

So, if you look at the Medo-Persian Empire, all that area that they had taken over from the Babylonians, all that area that was already theirs and then the Babylonian Empire that swept down into the regions of Israel and so forth and beyond, and then all the way over through Ethiopia and all the way over to India and all the way back up. It was massive, incredibly massive. The second great empire, if you will, in that statue that is in the book of Daniel. That was the second great empire in the world.

So, it says **...even [this area] one hundred twenty-seven provinces**. Now, his reign, just to get a time frame here so we can kind of understand where we are in the book of Esther, his reign began 120 years after Judah had been conquered by the Babylonians. So, we know how that the Babylonians went down there, conquered that area, took people prisoner, and then right after that, Cyrus of the Medo-Persian Empire came in and was able to conquer, then, Babylon. So it passed right away quickly over to the Medo-Persian Empire, as the Babylonians were destroyed, in that respect, as far as their power and might.

And so, that was the Persian king Cyrus, who did that at that particular point in time. Well, we know the period of time there, there were 70 years. Finally, they began to be sent back, allowed to come back to begin to rebuild areas around the temple, the city itself, the walls, and then the foundation for the temple. I'll just read it here: **...his reign was 120 years after Judah had been conquered by the Babylonians. In 538 BC, Babylon surrendered to the Persian king Cyrus. So, that happened quickly. And then a few from Judah began, we know about the story here, nearly 70 years later, began to come down and do some of this rebuilding.**

Then it was in 516 that the temple was finished and rededicated. (If I have my days right here. That doesn't sound right.) Then it was 30 years later, in 486, that Xerxes, King Xerxes I, began to reign in Persia. Again, known as Ahasuerus here.

So, I'm going through some of this because when you get to the story about Mordecai, it becomes a little dumbfounding. He had to be a pretty old man. It's kind of a marvel at what he did and how things went for him as you go through Esther here, and to see his age, what it had to be in the vicinity of. Because he was a child when he was taken away, in essence.

So again here: **Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus (this is the Ahasuerus who reigned from India even to Ethiopia, even one hundred twenty-seven provinces) that in those days when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which is in Shushan the palace, in the third year of his reign he made a feast unto all the princes and his servants, the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes and provinces being before him.** So, he's settled here, he has this great power, this vastness of territory, and now he wants to have a great feast for all these different princes that are in these different regions, bringing them together.

**In this, he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honor of his excellent majesty many days, one hundred and eighty days.** Kind of mindboggling. A lot of expense, a lot of work went into all

this. A lot of travel that had to go into this in bringing everyone together. And yet this is his desire and what he fulfilled to start things off in his reign.

**Then, when these days were over, the king made a feast to all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days in the court of the garden of the king's palace.** So everyone there in essence being invited to be able to feast and enjoy some of that of that seven days that had been spread around to all these princes.

**There were white and blue linen curtains fastened with cords of fine linen, and purple of silver rings and pillars of marble; the couches were of gold and silver upon a pavement of alabaster, turquoise, and white and black marble. They gave drinks and vessels of gold with each vessel being different from the other, and royal wine in abundance according to the generosity of the king. Drinking was according to the law, and no one was required to drink. For so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house that they should do according to every man's pleasure.** Whether they wanted to or not, or how much. So, it's each person's choice.

**Also, Vashti, the queen, made a feast for the women in the royal house who belonged to King Ahasuerus. On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, to bring Vashi the queen before the king with the crown royal.** Now, there's debate back and forth of what all this was about, and it may be very true that that's all he wanted her to have, was the crown. As it goes on to say... **to show the people and the princes her beauty, for she was good to look upon.**

**But the queen Vashi refused to come at the king's commandment by his eunuchs.** This was not a small thing. For her to make that kind of a choice against the king, she had to know that this was not good. But she stood on a principle that she believed in, that she thought was right, and she wasn't going to, in essence, lower herself to this if this is what it was, and it sounds like it was probably.

So again here, to refuse the king is something in some of these kinds of reigns that you would never do, would never dream of doing. But she did it. Hence, part of the story about Esther and why they fasted in the first place.

So again, **Therefore, was the king very angry.** His wife, the queen? How did this make him look? That's all he could think about. He became very angry as a result of that. **...and his anger burned in him. Then the king said to the wise men who knew the times, for so was the king's manner, or, in essence, was all that knew the law and the judgment.** So again here, running it by them. **He knew exactly what was coming.**

But verse 14, it goes on to say, **Those near unto him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, the seven princes of the Persian and Media who saw the king's face.** So, they saw that

displeasure because it was all over him. He couldn't hold it back. He couldn't hide it. He didn't try to hide it. **...who set in the first and the kingdom.** So, these are individuals who were high up in that regard as far as the government was concerned.

And then stated here, **What should we do unto Queen Vashti according to the law, because she has not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the eunuchs. And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen has not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes and to all the people who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.** This example, her refusal, about as bad as you could get as far as they were concerned. **For this deed of the queen will come abroad unto all women so that they will have contempt toward their husbands in their eyes when it is reported.**

So, in other words, "This can spread; something like this of what she was doing might spread into others as well, and they see this example, and if something isn't done, that is what is going to happen, that is what's going to take place. So do we want that to happen?" That is what they're dealing with.

It's amazing what people have lived through through the ages. To me, it's amazing what women have had to live through through the ages. Because it hasn't been easy. And well, it doesn't even need explanation. But you look through time and see how things have taken place, some of the worst atrocities among human beings have been how women have been treated by men, generation after generation after generation. It's been a sick world in that regard.

"So, they will have contempt." In other words, they're going to do the same thing as she did.

**The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti, the queen, to be brought in before him, but she did not come. So shall the ladies of Persia and Media say of this day to all the king's princes who hear of the deed of the queen, to be enough for contempt and anger.** So it gives them right, in essence. It's what they're saying.

**If it please the king, let there go out a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and of the Medes that it be not altered, that Vashti not come before King Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal estate to another that is better than her.** So, "Strip her clean of being queen. She can never come into your presence again."

**And when the king's decree, which he shall make, is published throughout all his empire, for it is great, all the wives shall give to their husbands honor, both to great and small.** So, in other words, they will see how she is dealt with in a very strong way, and so they won't do it. The idea is this won't happen then in other places because they're going to be dealt with in the same manner, in a strong manner.

**So, the saying pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to the word of Memucan, for he sent letters unto all the king's provinces, and to every province according to the writing thereof, and to the people after their language.** All kinds of languages spread that far apart. **...that every man**

**should bear rule in his own house, and that it should be published according to the language of all people.**

And knowing human nature, we know what happens when you take that which is physically stronger, just in the way God created mankind, and women are of a weaker vessel, as it talks about in scripture, strength-wise, and then you put laws in place to give more power to men, what do men do? They abuse it. They misuse it. That's been the history of mankind. Not everyone, but so many did. Horrible, hideous through time.

And that kind of mentality has been passed down from generation to generation to generation. That's what I hate about this one religion, where people have to wear this garb and be hidden and not even be able to be seen except in the home, and some of the lies and things that go along with all of that, the perversions that go along with that, and the young children when they're such a young age, some of the perversions that go along with that. It's perversion, and the one they follow was perverted. Sick.

But that's the truth. That's the way it was, and those kinds of things are hideous and sick. And you think about the minds of human beings in the past 6,000 years, and then resurrected then in the Great White Throne? It's not going to be an easy thing for them to change that kind of mentality. And yet everybody is either going to have to change or not. That's the great battle during the Great White Throne. A hundred years, billions resurrected to make choices as to what they're going to live. It's not going to be that easy and some won't want anything different.

I have known of people who have come into God's Church, going way, way back, seeing them come in, and especially a strong, overly strong husband figure, authoritarian in nature. It's basically the way much of the world is in the first place, especially you go back in time even more so. And that battle is not conquered quickly. Sometimes it's not even addressed. People will blend in and go through the motions of everything being okay, but at home, it's different.

The oppressiveness that sometimes takes place in this world is really, really sick, that authoritarian abuse. And rather than seeing one another as a team and working with one another in mutual respect, loving one another the way God says, well, this world hasn't done a very good job of that. That's all going to be changed. But it isn't easy.

So, here they are, and these letters are sent out.

**Esther 2:1—After these things, when the wrath of the king, Ahasuerus, was appeased, he remembered Vashti.** So, period of time has gone by, they've dealt with this, the letters were sent out, as it says here in chapter one, and so he's thinking, and his wrath, his anger has been appeased. **He remembered Vashti and what she had done and what was decreed against her. Then the king's servants that ministered to him said, Let there be fair young virgins searched out for the king.** So, he needs a replacement because, yes, that was dealt with, but he's not happy, he's not fulfilled; there is no queen.

**And let the king appoint officers to all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all fair young virgins unto Shushan, the palace, to the house of the women, under the custody of Hegai, the king's eunuch, and of the keeper of the women. And let their things of purification be given. Then let the maiden which pleases the king be queen or become queen instead of Vashti. And this plan pleased the king, and so he did so.** In essence, here, he followed up on it, said go ahead.

So in verse 8—**Now, in Shushan, the palace, there was a Jew whose name was Mordecai, the son of Zer, the son of Shem, the son of Kish, a Benjamite who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity.** Now, he came to power 120 years after some of these things had taken place. And if he were a baby, he's that old. Today we think of 120, and that's like 90.

It's like today someone was reminding me, seventeen years ago when we went through this and went through and talking about some of this, and I made some kind of comment that, in essence, that I was 59 at the time and really didn't want to see my 70s. Well, I've upped that a little bit now. I really don't want to necessarily go into the 80s, but I may have to. So, sometimes you have to eat some of your words.

But to think to live that long? Back then, times, obviously, their lifespan that was a lot longer for different people. But not always. So God had a great purpose for him, for what was being done. Please understand in this story, too, all molded and fashioned by God. This didn't just happen. It was planned. God puts things in place when He works with various things in a plan to bring about things in His purpose as time goes on, and even for now, of things that happened at different times in history, for the Church through time, as well, to learn from, to grow from.

So these different stories. Just like the Exodus, it wasn't an accident. It wasn't just something that happened in a point of time. It was something that was purposed by God long, long ago, long before Abraham, long before his children.

Sometimes it's hard for us to grasp and comprehend the power of Almighty God and how He molds and fashions environments and so forth. And for people then who live in those periods of time to be plugged into various areas. Just like He does for the 144,000. He chooses out of mankind people that He's going to use, to mold in fashion throughout different ages to fit into a certain place within His building, the construction of a spiritual Temple. Awesome.

So again here, it goes on to say **...who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah, king of Judah.** So, it gets very specific. It lets you know that, yeah, this is the time, this is when he was carried away. And we're talking about all this time later. Incredible.

**...whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had carried away.** So well over 100. **And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. And the maid was fair and beautiful.** So, we're going through time here and have this lineage within Judaism.

And so, the child, she wasn't very old this particular time, Esther. And so, she had this relationship, and here her parents had died. So, he's living a long time, and he's able to take on the role, the responsibility of caring for her. Incredible. Awesome. Keep it within the family, in that respect, as far as his treating her as his own daughter.

**...she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful, whom Mordechai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter. So it came to pass when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and many maidens had been gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought into the king's house to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.** So, given to the eunuchs. He was over them. They worked with all the ones who were brought in to prepare and go through this long ritual of preparation to be presented to the king.

**Verse 9—Now, the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him, and he speedily gave her things for purification, with such things as belong to her, and seven maidens from the king's house given to look after her. Now, he prepared her and her maidens unto the best of the house of the women.** So, they decided then, when they were all brought in, who was going to help and who was going to be the main ones to be used to be presented to the king. Then others were assigned to them to help take care of them, and this is the process they're going through.

**Esther had not shown her people, nor her kindred, for Mordecai had charged her that she should not tell it.** She was one of the women brought in. So, no one knew of it, and this was according to what Mordecai told her. **Now, Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house to know how Esther was doing and what should become of her.** So, he had to have known of some of the people there, the eunuchs and so forth, and this is what it's talking about.

**So, when every maid's turn was come to go into King Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months according to the manner of the women, for so were the days of their purification accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, six months with sweet odors, and with other things for the purifying of the women.** So, don't know what all that is, but it was a long process.

**Then came every maiden unto the king.** So, finally the time would come when they would be presented before the king. **Whatever she desired was given to her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house. In the evening, she went, and on the next day she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, which kept the concubines. She came in unto the king no more except the king delighted in her, and only if she was called by name.**

So again, they're showing here a process of what they had to go through, and no one could ever come back unless the king called upon them. And so this is the process: the king has to stipulate.

**Now, when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abahel, the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, had come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai, the king's eunuch, the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who looked after her.** So, this is kind of giving a contrast here compared to some of the others who tended to be more physically inclined as far as things that they could wear, whether it be jewelry, outfit, whatever it was, and how they were to be presented. She just accepted what he gave because she trusted in him and wasn't desirous of overdoing it in that respect, of putting on more to please the king.

This drew respect then from the others. That's what it's showing here. It's talking about a different attitude that she had. Not haughty, not proud, as sometimes happens. You can look at Miss Universe, and they talk a nice talk, but there's a lot of cutthroat stuff that goes on. And to earn the respect of a lot of people happens, but not so often.

So it goes on to say **verse 16—So Esther was taken unto King Ahasuerus into the house royal in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. Now, the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins so that he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.** So, what an incredible process. It goes through the entire process. She was given the favor.

Again, God prepared her for this. She had a humble spirit. It was something that was seen by others. She was respected because of this. As you go through some of the story here and read these things, that just continues to come out. She was respected by others around her because she didn't have a haughty spirit. You know, human beings tend to raise themselves up, look down upon others, have competition. This wasn't a part of her nature. And most likely as a result of many of the things that Mordecai worked with, taught her, and so forth. And she listened. She had respect.

Going on in **verse 18—Then the king made a great feast unto all the princes of his servants, even Esther's feast. And he made a day of rest to the provinces,** meaning time off work. This is a day of rest, in essence, a time to celebrate, a time to feast. **...and gave gifts according to the state of the king. When the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate. Esther had not yet told her kindred nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her. For Esther did as instructed by Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.** So again, she respected him; she did what he said.

**Verse 21—In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh...** Now, this is an entrance way. Sometimes it's thought of that there was maybe a certain judgment, things that they were able to talk to others, and so forth. Whatever it was, he was given a place of honor and respected in that respect.

So, it talks about here that these **two eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door...** So, people who could enter in, people who wouldn't, and so forth, people who could go in, further into

whatever it might be within the palace. ...**and seeking out how to lay hands on King Ahasareus.** So these two eunuchs were not satisfied; they weren't happy, and they wanted to kill him. That's the bottom line. Something upset them; whatever it was, they ganged up. Mordecai became aware of this.

So, it goes on to say, **And the matter became known to Mordecai, who told it to Esther the queen. Then Esther revealed the matter to the king in Mordecai's name.** So we can look at this and say, "All by chance." I hope we're learning, as time has gone on here, that there are events and things that take place that God has prepared for a purpose and for a reason. It's just like the Apostasy – there was one who was prepared to fulfill that role. One who had a certain spirit within him anyway, a certain mindset, and one that wasn't drawn to God.

God knows everything that's in our minds. And so if there is treachery, if there are things that are happening within the mind that aren't right, that are that far out, God knows what a person will do under certain circumstances. And so it is here. He knew these two would respond in a certain way. They were there by design, not by accident. Because this all fits together, the entire story fits together.

**Then, when inquisition was made in the matter, it was found out.** So in other words, they investigated, found out it was true. **Therefore, they were both hanged on a tree, as it is written in the book of the Chronicles before the king.**

**Esther 3:1—After this matter did King Ahasuerus promote Hamon, the son of Hammedatha the Agagit, and advanced him and set his seat above all the princes who were with him.** Now, this is kind of like Tkach being placed in a certain position. And here it was Hamon who was placed in a certain position. He knew his mind, knew his thinking, and he was given favor before the king, to be brought in, to be put in this position, to be put in this place of power.

It goes on to say, **And all the king's servants who were in the king's gate bowed and gave reverence to Hamon.** Because that's what was charged. **For the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow nor show him reverence.** And why? Because of his belief in Almighty God that you don't bow to a man like that and show that kind of reverence. And so, he wasn't going to do it. That frame of mind, that thinking of Judaism, was deep inside of him.

**Then the king's servants, which were at the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why do you bypass the king's commandment? Now, it came to pass when they spoke daily of him, and he did not listen to them...** So, Mordecai wouldn't even give him the time of day, in essence, but they wanted to keep pushing this, "Why aren't you doing this, what you're supposed to be doing?"

**Then they went, it says, and they told Hamon to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand, for he had told them that he was a Jew.** So basically, it did come out at some point here because of what he believes. So, he wasn't going to do it, and that's all that needed to be said.

**So when Hamon saw that Mordecai did not bow and did not show him reverence, then Hamon, it says, he became filled with anger. He so despised him, he determined to not only lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him of the people of Mordecai. Therefore, Hamon sought out how to destroy all the Jews.** And I think of someone who wanted to destroy all the truth that had been given to the Church because those things had been in his mind, different things had been in his mind at different times, incredibly. The treachery.

And so, he had a certain mindset, if you will, and this environment here brought it to the surface. You know how certain trials, they just bring things to the surface. Even within the Church, there are trials that take place where difficult things to go through in people's lives that bring things to the surface that we have to address. Just like the Apostasy did. People had to make choices at a particular time. What are you going to choose? And so it is with so many things in life. What are we going to choose when we're tried, when the fire, a trial comes upon us? And that's what life boils down to, especially within the Church.

So, same sort of thing here. Certain things are going to be brought to the surface in Hamon, in his mind and his life, of what he was really like. And these are the kinds of things that show what already exists there. So hopefully, we can relate to that kind of thing, to understand how the various kinds of trials or things you go through. Here was one that was a matter of his pride was so great that he couldn't take this.

There are people in the church who have seen people ordained, and they can't take it. They have left because of it. This has happened over and over and over and over again through time because of human nature. Certain trials will come along to try people as to what's really inside them. God gives people in the Church opportunity to make the right choices, to do, to ask for help if an individual will, to fight against their wrong thinking. Because that's where it begins. And if one knows that something's wrong in their thinking and that they have maybe a jealousy or an envy or something then that needs to be prayed about and ask for help to conquer it. But if a person doesn't, and they let it go, it just gets bigger and bigger and bigger. But God gives people opportunity, especially within the Church, to change. Incredible.

And yet, I could sit down, and I could start going through, and I might ask, need help from my wife for different names, but different areas, give you person after person after person, that that's what destroyed them. Jealousy, envy of something they thought they should have when they became angry, then, and upset, that "Life isn't fair," that "You don't know them." It's like, "Hmm." I won't even go there; it'd take too much time off from the sermon.

But human nature is really, really ugly sometimes, even once we're called. But again here, certain trials, certain hardships bring things to the surface, and here it was with him. This came so fast. It just took Mordecai not bowing down to where he must have had some other experiences with the Jews,

something that was already planted in him that he wasn't fond of them for whatever it might be. Which is a typical thing throughout history because of their life and what they live, and what they practice.

And anyway, here we go again. Here's a time, and it hit him so hard he hated Mordecai with all of his being. But it wasn't enough to see Mordecai brought down; he wanted to destroy the Jews in the kingdom. Because he had been given power now, and he wanted to begin exercising that power to that end. That's exactly what's taking place here. Incredible.

All by accident? No. Right person in the right place at the right time. Circumstances being right, human beings will give in to it because of their nature because of their choices. God doesn't make anyone do it. It's already what's inside of us as human beings.

**Verse 7—In the first month, that is the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur.** Now, this is like rock. It's like what we think of as dice today or rock, rocks fashioned in a certain way, and whatever came up, whatever happened there would help them in making their decisions. That's how they use them, in making choices and decisions, that somehow the gods were in this. Not just by chance, but they're asking for favor. Well, where from? From rocks. Well, that's pretty intelligent. But that's what people did. This is a custom throughout time.

So, it was called, "They cast Pur." That's where the word Purim comes from then, the feast of Purim later on. Because they cast the lot, it's what it's about. So again, a small stone cast in making decisions, and in this case, **to determine what the best time was for action to be taken against the Jews.** This is what it came down to. They were casting these to find the best time to take an action against the destruction of the Jewish people. That's what it was. So, "When is the best time to do this?" That's what this casting of Pur was all about.

**In the first month, that is the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur before Hamon from day to day and from month to month to the twelfth month.** This lasted for twelve months till they came to the month Adar.

**Then Hamon said unto King Ahasuerus...** So, now it must have come up then, "This is the time," because this is when they started pursuing this. Twelve months. **Then Hamon said unto King Ahazareus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom, and their laws are diverse from all people.** So, they're diverse. It was put in a very negative way, "They're totally different and diverse from everything else that's out there in all your kingdom, of all your people." **They do not keep the king's laws.** You know, you trust in information they give to you, someone close to you, and they lead you in the wrong direction.

It was one of Herbert Armstrong's greatest battles. Evangelists who gave him false information, tainted information. Just like what happens in government when they want certain leaders or whatever, and they want certain information brought before them, certain statistics and stuff. And so, do they ever

fudge and play with them? Everybody does. Everybody does. They change certain things, certain rules of how they come about all this so they can bring what they think the other, the main person, wants to hear.

And so it was with Herbert Armstrong. Even to his own son, of things that should have been brought out, that should have been told, that should have been said instead of lies and falsehoods. Anyway, I can't imagine being in a position like that because you're relying on people. He got to a point where he couldn't even trust anyone.

That's why we talk about this from time to time, what can happen even amongst God's own people. That's why so few come through all this. That's why it says, "Many are called, and few are chosen." Choices, choices, choices.

"They're scattered abroad. Their laws are diverse. They do not keep the king's laws. Therefore, it is not to the king's profit or to your interests to allow them, or to allow this in them. Something needs to be done..." **...if it please the king.** You know, someone like this, it just makes my blood kind of boil, curdle thinking about this kind of spirit, this kind of attitude. **Let it be written that they may be destroyed. And I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those who have the charge of the business to bring it into the king's treasuries.** He is paying money to be put into the king's treasury in order to take care of all this pursuit, to go out and kill and destroy all the Jews. "It won't be a cost to the kingdom; it won't take anything away. On the contrary, it's going to put a lot in there." So, he was wanting to look like a hero. You talk about the deception of human beings.

Anyway, **verse 10—Then the king took his ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.** It makes it very clear what he was. **And the king said unto Hamon, The silver is given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you.** So, "Yes, you've given it to the king's house, but now we're going to use it. You can use it all for that." **Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month.** That's Nisan. You know what's the next day.

**And there it was written according to all that Hamon had instructed the king's lieutenants and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to all the people after their language. In the name of the king Ahazareus, it was written and sealed with the king's ring. So the letters were sent by post into all the king's provinces to kill or to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even until the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar.**

So here it is, Nisan, and this decree goes out. They have twelve months to prepare, to get ready to have this action to do in one day, to kill and destroy every Jew that lives in the kingdom. Incredible.

**...and to take the spoil of them for a prey.** So you're not only going to be able to go in and do it, but you can go take their wealth. Now, there's one thing the Jewish people are known for through time. It's shrewdness. They've been given, they have an ability, a knack for things having to do with wealth. Just the way it's been. A lot of people don't like that, and through time have not liked that, and have been against them because of that certain trait they have. It's just a part of their nature. And people get jealous of that, and they want it.

So, they want it. In other words, this is the incentive. "You go in there, and whatever is there is yours. So even if you don't hate them, this is your chance to get rich." You know, you think sick, sick, sick minds.

**Verse 14—The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people that they should be ready against that day. The post went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Hamon sat down to drink, but the city Shushan was perplexed.** They couldn't understand what was happening because there were a lot of Jews in Shushan, and they were known by people, by others, and they were looked up to. So they couldn't grasp "Why is the king doing this?" Well, it's Hamon.

**Esther 4:1—When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth with ashes and went out into the midst of the city and cried with a loud voice in a bitter cry.** All this part is the sign of fasting. That's inevitably what he was doing as a part of this. That's the beginning of that custom, was tearing, ripping of the clothes, and then the rest that follows.

**He went up to the king's gate, for no one may enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.** So, he went up to that far and no further. **In every province where the king's commandment and his decree went, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, crying, wailing, and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.** So, there's already very early on, as soon as this went out, a lot of this going on. This is their Holy Day season. What a way to enter Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. And to have this knowledge of these Holy Days, that they had still, because they still had their knowledge that they took with them. And here this is happening to them, that they're going to be destroyed in a few months up the road, that they're going to be given free rein to be killed and destroyed.

**So Esther's maids and her eunuchs came and told her what was happening. Then the queen was exceedingly grieved, and she sent clothes to clothe Mordecai and to take away his sackcloth from him, but he wouldn't receive them.** He's going to keep it on.

**Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, whom he had appointed to attend unto her, and gave him instruction to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was. So Hathach went forth to Mordecai, to the street of the city, which was before the king's gate. Then Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and the sum of money that Hamon had promised to pay the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.**

**And he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given in Shushan to destroy them, to show it to Esther, and to tell it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in in to the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make requests before him for her people.**

**So Hathach went and told Esther the words of Mordecai. Again, Esther spoke unto Hathach and gave him commandment unto Mordecai. All the king's servants and the people of the king's province do know that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come in unto the king, into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law, to put them to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden scepter.** So, he had to hold out the golden scepter to say it was okay, otherwise they were to be put to death. ...**that they may live.** So again holding it out, the scepter.

**But I have not been called to come into the king these thirty days. So they told to Mordecai Esther's words.** It's hard sometimes to put yourself in a person's place in trying to think how they do. We try to do that sometimes in things especially that we've gone through, whether it be stories in the New Testament or the Old Testament in some of the series we have about Paul. To try to think about what it is they're actually going through, what it is they're experiencing. Here is another example of some of that.

It says, **Then Mordecai gave instruction to Esther.** It's hard to grasp and imagine what her thinking is. She knows that if she goes in there and he doesn't hold out the scepter, she's dead. Now, we might think, "Well, yeah, she's had a lot of, you know, respect before this, and he's been kind to her." But it's not a small thing, and she was fearful of doing this. She was fearful of taking that kind of stand.

**So he said to her, Don't think to yourself that you will escape the king's house more than any other of all the Jews.** So, "Now is the time to be very sober about all this. This is going to be you, too. And in a few months, we're all going to face this in one day." **For if you altogether hold your peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place. But you and your father's house will be destroyed.** So Mordecai is making it clear here, everyone is going to suffer, and everyone will be destroyed before it's over with.

**And who knows—to me, this is an awesome verse—And who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?** That gives me goosebumps, chills up and down my spine. Awesome! Now, sometimes it's hard for us as small, and as we would look at ourselves and as others would look at us in the world, as puny and little as we are, and what we've gone through since the Apostasy, and some of the smallest of the groups that are out there of the six hundred and some that split up. How much more does that mean? We've come to a point, and God's Kingdom is about to come. Christ is about to return.

Things are happening in this world so fast. Things that are happening in Europe right now. They're having a struggle to hold together. We know what the prophecies say about them. It's becoming very clear they're going through that struggle. Clay mixed with iron; incredible strength, but they can't hold things together. They're so disorganized. Right now, they are having meetings to try to get a core group of the

twenty-seven who can make decisions to act upon right away, rather than having all twenty-seven come into agreement. Because in so many respects, it's just not happening anymore. They can't get all twenty-seven to agree about things all the time.

And so, if you can't function that way in order to move forward on certain matters that are so important, especially when it comes to military things, and on and on it goes, to their own well-being and their protection, and they don't believe they can trust in this country anymore, and NATO is going to pot, and they see it going down the drain, what do you do?

We're watching some incredible things take place in the world, we really are, in time of history and what's happening over there. Continually turning more and more in attitude against this country. All prophetic. All has to come to pass. And more and more trying to stay together, trying to get a core group who can make these choices and decisions. This goes all the way up until the Fifth Trumpet. It's only then that they finally come together. They can argue about this, they can try to get ready for it, but they really don't come to that point until they are forced into the corner and they have to do it. They have to make a choice, that they feel that there's no other way to address it. That's where it's going. They will make that choice when the time comes. Incredible. We're able to watch all this and see it. Incredible.

To think that we have opportunity to be a part of something in a certain period of time. It's hard for us to even begin to grasp where we are and even who we are, truly, and that we live at a particular time after 6,000 years, just before Joshua returns, to be given all the insight and understanding that we've been given, truth that we've been given.

This book that's being written, I tell you, I am so excited about it. I can't help but see Herbert Armstrong sitting up there talking about that when he came out with *Mystery of the Ages*. And he was so excited because of everything that had come together to be able to write that book and put it out in the world. To be able to tell things about God that people had never heard in 6,000 years. Not even the apostles had heard all the things that had come together that were in that book, that are in that book.

I think of all the more that's been given since that time. To be able to write about them now in a manner of telling a history that tells why certain things were done in a certain way so that people can better understand when they come to the actual Holy Days, that begins to make some sense, it fits into place. Awesome. Awesome. Awesome.

So, the same thing could be said about us about things about what we're going to do because it comes down to a point of people taking a stand in a stronger way. I've been asked many times over the years, "Is it now the time to push this? Should we push this book?" "No. Just let it go by a natural flow here of advertising. And if somebody wants it, if God moves them, they'll be moved to it. But the time isn't now."

The time is now in this book to push with all of our being, to share, to stand, who you are, that God give you favor, that God give you help to do it. Because that's what she had to do. She came to that point,

and she knew what was involved. She understood what was taking place. God has prepared us for this moment in time.

So, "Who knows whether you've come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" To participate or no, to be a part of or no, to be accounted... Anyway.

I'm going to repeat some of what was said about seventeen years ago there that we've been referring back to. "This would be a good place to speak of such things and how this applies to us. We have been brought to a unique time in all earth's history, far more unique and important than what was happening to the Jewish people in the Medo-Persian Empire." This is far, far, far beyond that. This is about an age for all mankind, and what mankind is getting ready to go through. Far more massive around the world.

Going on: "It is God who has brought us to this time. And we're going to fast for events to be such in this world through the Thunders first, then the beginning of the Trumpets, and whatever other means that might be able to be used," paraphrasing some of this, "so that the scattered from the Church of God might begin to be brought to humility with the potential to repent and accept God's truth."

So, this is where we are. This is the timing we're in. This is our desire. Still a desire, but it wasn't time. Now we're at a time. So again, here, what an incredible thing to fast about, to pray about, to finish and complete this fast that was started back then, and to ask for help, to ask for a favor, and that people be moved with whatever it takes, whatever it takes, as a matter of awe or fear. Things in their own personal lives or things in this world to bring people to a point, even to be drawn by God's spirit. Because there's going to be a point in time where God begins pouring out His spirit to draw to Him, just like He did, starting with John the Baptist. They started to be drawn to Him already. They were prepared for Pentecost.

Well, what's getting ready to take place now is far, far, far beyond that because of Joshua the Christ returning a second time. So, we fast for humility, and we ask that people be brought to humility. Whatever it takes. Whatever it takes. And that people will be stirred up, moved, and motivated, an ability to be brought to repentance or given that. Whatever it takes, whether it's God's spirit drawing them, whether it's calamity in life, whether... Whatever it is. Trumpets, Thunders, it doesn't matter. Whatever it is that can humble someone to be sober-minded and to begin this process of a desire for help, of a desire to learn truth, or to apply truth, or whatever it might be. But to come to that point in time where they're able to be of a spirit and mind that's pliable that God can work with, humbled.

I'm going to read some of those last few verses again. They're, to me, they're exciting. **Then Mordecai gave instruction to Esther, Don't think yourself that you will escape the king's house more than any other of all the Jews. For if you altogether hold your peace at this time...**

And what if we did? What if we hold our peace at a time when God says, "Don't hold your peace anymore." Is it embarrassing? Maybe. That's what you're going to have to fight. Different things that

come into the mind that we try as human beings to talk ourselves out of something? Well, this isn't the time for that. And the thing about it all is, is that God will give you help and God will give you strength.

The whole story here is the kind of strength, intervention, power, and help He gave unto Esther, that He gave unto Mordecai, that He gave to all the Jewish people at that time. Written for our time? Hmm.

Wouldn't that be awesome to one day find out it was?

**For if you altogether hold your peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will be destroyed. And who knows whether you've come to the kingdom for such a time as this?** Something we all have to look at on a spiritual plane. This was all, in a respect, physical in every way. It's about standing. It's about doing a job. Not worrying about embarrassment, not a matter of fear. Because they were fearful, but they did what they had to do.

**Verse 15—Then Esther told them to return to Mordecai with her answer: Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast for me.** As we need to fast for one another. You know, we should have been fasting for, and this is a part of the process, and still our prayers should be that, for one another in the Church, that strength be given, that help be given, that we see ourselves more and more as one Body, one mind, to love each other, to have everything else that might stand in the way to be gotten rid of because of where we are and what we need to do even more so, to be more at one with God.

**And so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law.** What obstacles are there? What prevents us? Well, most of the time it's just self. We put up our own walls. We put up our own safety net, our own thinking, our own way of working around an issue in a way that we really shouldn't. We should just charge right into it.

**And she said, And if I perish, I perish.** Our lives are in God's hands. And even if it came down to something like that. Because you know what? You're going to see some pretty bad things happen later on, too, some nasty things take place. And some of it will inevitably be directed towards God's people, towards God's Church. But if we understand who we are, if we understand the great God and His Son, our Passover and High Priest, we're going to be strong and be able to address those things as we should.

Please understand, we're going to go through and see some horrific things, and we may be right on the doorstep. If this nation invades Iran, the ball could start rolling faster and faster, if you will, things could begin toppling faster and faster. At some point, someone is going to do something. It's called the First Trumpet. It doesn't necessarily even have to happen on the shorelines of this nation. It could happen to a fleet.

There are a lot of possibilities. The things that have been written before are a scenario of the potential of what can happen and what will happen in the sense of it being fulfilled spiritually before God, and

physically as well, obviously, in many things. So, we have to be prepared for whatever might come our way. We don't know the timing, but at some point here things are going to bust loose, and they're going to be scary as all get out.

“And if I perish, I perish.” And that's the bottom line. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what anyone says to us. It doesn't matter what anyone does to us as human beings. I think of the disciples and what they lived through. And most of the Church in the early years, they suffered on a physical plane in ways we don't really grasp. So many of them were put in prisons. So many of them were locked up for good. So many of them had everything taken away. So many of them were killed. Not just the apostles. Everyone but John. Isn't that amazing? Everyone but John, as far as history is concerned, was murdered, was killed...by their government, of all things. Incredible.

This was their attitude. It has to be everyone's attitude, no matter what you go through, “If I perish, I perish.” The next waking moment, pretty powerful. Nothing compared to this physical body we have.

**So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther had instructed him.** So now he got his message through. He got the answer of what was to be given to him, that she's going to do it. She's going to go in before the king. She's going to go do what needs to be done. And his job was done, as far as he's concerned; no need at that point in time to continue in his sackcloth. Because something was fulfilled, something was accomplished that's written for all of us.

We'll continue on next Sabbath with the rest of the story.