

“Lord, I Need You!”
Esther 4:1-9

Introduction:

1. Please Go With Me In Your Bibles Once Again:
 - To The Old Testament Book Of Esther:
 - Esther 4!
 - Where We Will Begin To See The Response:
 - Of God’s People - The Jews:
 - When They Discover For The First Time:
 - The Plot To Destroy Them & Exterminate Them!
2. In The Previous Chapter - And In Our Previous Message:
 - We Saw How The Haman The Agagite - The “Jews Enemy”:
 - Was Able To Manipulate & Convince The King:
 - To Pass A Law - 3:13 - “To destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day!”
 - And That Day - “The 13th Day Of The 12th Month” - Was Fast Approaching!
3. And As The Law Was Circulated:
 - All Throughout The Persian Empire:
 - We Find 3 Responses!
 - The First Response - Is The Response:
 - Of The King & Of Haman!
 - In 3:15 - “And the king and Haman sat down to drink!”
 - They Had A Party! A Celebration! Because Through This Law - They Would Both Get What Their Hearts Desired Most!
 - The King’s Heart Was On The Money!
 - Haman’s Heart Was On Revenge!
 - The Second Response - Is The Response:
 - Of The People Of Shushan!
 - In 3:15 - “But the city Shushan was perplexed!”
 - They Were Perplexed! There Was Confusion! Why Would Such A Law Be Passed?
 - But In Shushan:
 - There Was One Man Who Was Not Perplexed / Confused About What Was Going On! And In 4:1 - We Find:
 - The Third Response - The Response:
 - Of Mordecai!
 - 4:1 - “When Mordecai perceived all that was done!”
 - Mordecai “Perceived” - That Is - When He Heard The News Like Everyone Else - He Knew / He Understood What Was Happening - And Especially - Why!
 - Mordecai’s World - For Himself & For All His People - Was Turned Upside Down!
 - 4. See - Up Until This Time - Mordecai & Most Of The Other Jews:
 - Who Remained In The Lands Of Their Captivity:
 - Were Probably Living Pretty Comfortable Lives!
 - Some Of Them - Some 50 Years Earlier - Had The Opportunity To Return To Their Homeland - To The Land Of Israel - But Instead:
 - They Chose To Stay Behind - And Continue To Live & Work & Raise Their Families - Where They Grew Up!
 - And Like Many Times In Our Own Lives:
 - We Don’t Experience Too Many Troubles!
 - What Was Your Biggest “Trial” This Week?
 - When Your Internet Was Down?
 - When Your Car Wouldn’t Start?
 - When The Water Of Your Shower Turned Cold?
 - These Are What You Might Describe As “First-World Problems!”
 - But How Many Times To We Complain & Gripe & Whine About These Things?
 - And What Often Happens When The Only Problems We Have Are These “First-World Problems?”
 - As The Song Goes - “Sometimes when life seems gentle and blessings flood my way, / I turn my

- gaze away from You and soon forget to pray!”
- And This Happens Even To Christians Whom You Might Even Consider To Be Strong In The Faith!
- But - “When the sky grows darker and courage turns to fear”:
- What Do You Do?
- What Should You Do?
- What Will Be **Your** Response?
- In The Verses We Will Look At This Morning - We Will See The Response Of The Jews There In Persia!
- And Consider What Our Response Needs To Be As Well!

* The First Response - To The News Of Haman’s Plot Was:

1. A Response Of Sorrow!

- Great Sorrow - 4:1-3 - “When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; / And came even before the king’s gate: for none might enter into the king’s gate clothed with sackcloth. / And in every province, whithersoever the king’s commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes!”
- When Mordecai Heard The News Of Haman’s Plan To Destroy Him & All His People:
- He Responded With Great Sorrow!
- Which Was An Appropriate Response!
- And It Was:
- A Passionate Sorrow!
- From The Bottom Of His Heart:
- He Took Upon Himself The Apparel Of Mourning & Sorrow!
- He - 4:1 - “Rent His Clothes, And Put On Sackcloth With Ashes, And Went Out Into The Midst Of The City, And Cried With A Loud And A Bitter Cry!”
- Mordecai Wasn’t Just Going Through The Motions!
- He Wasn’t Just Doing All Of This For A Show!
- He Was Truly Heart-Broken & In Distress!
- Perhaps He Was Thinking Of Jeremiah - That Old Weeping Prophet - When He Wrote - Jeremiah 9:1 - “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!”
- We Also See That It Was:
- A Public Sorrow!
- 4:2 - Mordecai - “Came Even Before The King’s Gate!”
- He Didn’t Care Who Saw Or Heard Him & His Grief!
- He Was Not Ashamed To Be Identified With His People - The Jews!
- But Even In This - Even In His Humiliation - He Displays Humility - For He Still Would Not Go “Into” The King’s Gate!
- But As The News Spread - So Did The Sorrow!
- Until All The Jews Were In “Mourning!”
- And - 4:3 - Were “Fasting & Weeping & Wailing!”
- But - This Was Also:
- A Personal Sorrow!
- See - In 4:1 - When We Are Told That “Mordecai Perceived All That Was Done!”
- He Didn’t Just Know What Was Going To Happen To Him & To His People!
- He - Alone - Knew Why!
- What A Burden He Must Have Borne!
- He “Perceived” & Understood Clearly That:
- He Was The Reason Why This Law Was Passed!
- He Was The Reason Why All Of The Jews Were To Be Destroyed!
- And - I’m Sure - He Felt The Weight Of Responsibility - Even Though He Had Acted Properly Before Haman!
- Paul Tells Us In 2 Timothy 2:12-13 - “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. / But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived!”
- And This Is What We See Going On In The Life Of Mordecai!
- And Though He Needn’t Feel Shame / He Still Felt Sorrow - Deep Sorrow!

- It Was A Passionate Sorrow!
- It Was A Public Sorrow!
- It Was A Personal Sorrow!
- There Are Times In Our Lives:
 - When We Too Need To Have This Kind Of Sorrow!
 - Because There Is Still Much For Us:
 - To Grieve & Mourn & Weep Over In Our Lives!
 - Do You Still Sorrow:
 - Over Tragedies?
 - Not Just In Your Life / But In Others?
 - Over Sin?
 - The Result Of Sin?
 - Your Own Responsibility Of Sin?
 - When Was The Last Time:
 - Your Own Heart Was Truly Crushed:
 - And You Could Not Stop The Tears From Flowing!
 - Many Times - "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting!" (Ecclesiastes 7:2)
- But - Something Is Missing In All Of This Sorrow!
 - What's Missing? Did You Notice In Esther?
 - At No Point In These Verses:
 - Do We Read Of Mordecai Or Of The Jews Crying Out To The Lord With Their Sorrow!
 - Just As The Name Of God Is Missing In The Book Of Esther - So Is Prayer To God Missing!
 - And Even Though There Was Great:
 - Sorrow & Crying & Mourning & Fasting & Weeping & Wailing & Laying & Sackcloth & Ashes:
 - We Do Not Read Of Any Prayer!
 - Can A Child Of God Forget To Pray In A Time Like This?
 - Can A Christian Forget To Pray In Time Like This?
 - I Think - If We Are Honest With Ourselves:
 - It Is Quite Easy For Us To Forget To Pray:
 - Even When "Your Heart Is Overwhelmed!" (Psalm 61:2)
 - And It Seems Like The Inspired Writer Of The Book Of Esther Wants Us To See:
 - That Sometimes We Forget What We Must Do With Our Sorrow!
- Remember The Words Of Joel 2:12-13 - "Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: / And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil!"
 - When You Sorrow:
 - Do Not Forget To "Turn Unto The Lord Your God!"
 - So - "When the sky grows darker and courage turns to fear, My anxious voice cries upward with words You long to hear!"

* The Second Response:

2. ***A Response Of Sympathy!***

- Great Sympathy - 4:4-6 - "So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told it her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: but he received it not. / Then called Esther for Hatach, one of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was. / So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which was before the king's gate!"
 - In These Verses - When Esther Hears About Mordecai:
 - She Responded With Great Sympathy!
 - Which Was Also An Appropriate Response!
- Esther Wanted To Help:
 - Mordecai - With His Sorrow & His Grief!
 - In The City Of Shushan:
 - There Was Confusion!

- But In The Palace Of Shushan:
 - It Seems Like There Was Curiosity!
- The “Water-Cooler Talk” Of The Palace Seems To Have Been:
 - The Spectacle Of Mordecai:
 - Right In Front Of The King’s Gate!
 - His Clothes! His Cries!
- But How Did Esther Respond?
 - “The Queen Was Exceedingly Grieved!”
 - Now - I Don’t Believe This Was Shame / But Sorrow - Even Though Her Relationship With Him Was Still A Secret - She Loved Her Adoptive Father!
 - And She Didn’t Want Him To Have Such A Heavy Heart!
 - So She Wanted To Help! But:
- Esther (Also) Wanted To Heal:
 - Mordecai - With His Sorrow & His Grief!
 - She Was “Weeping With Those Who Weep!” (Romans 12:14)
 - And So - With The Best Intentions:
 - She “Sent Raiment To Clothe Mordecai!”
 - To Encourage Him!
 - To Console Him!
 - But - He Could Not Be Consoled In His Grief!
 - So - “He Received It Not!”
 - Now - Imagine The Shock Of Esther’s Attendants:
 - When Mordecai Refused The Gift From The Queen!
 - But Esther - Living In Isolation There In The Palace - Did Not Yet Know The Full Extent Of Mordecai’s Grief! So:
- Esther Wanted To Hear:
 - Mordecai - About His Sorrow & His Grief!
 - And Sent A Very Trustworthy Servant - Hatach - 4:5 - “To know what it was, and why it was!”
 - She Cared So Deeply For Mordecai, And This Was So Out Of Character For Him - She Wanted To Know “What & Why!”
 - **IE:** Like A Doctor - Finally Get To The Root Cause - Not Just Dealing With The Symptoms!
- There Are Times In Our Own Lives:
 - When We Too Need To Have This Kind Of Sympathy!
 - For The Pain & Grievs Of Others!
 - Do You Still Have Sympathy:
 - For The Needs Of Others?
 - Do You Still Feel What Others Feel?
 - So Often - We Live Our Own Lives - Looking After Our Own Needs & Ignoring The Needs Of Others!
 - Yet - We Are Told In Philippians 2:4 - To Follow After The Mind & Example Of Christ - And To “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others!”
 - But Even When We Do This:
- Something Can Still Be Missing In This Sympathy!
 - What’s Missing? Did You Notice In Esther?
 - Once Again - Even Though She Tried To Help:
 - She Did Not Understand The Reality & The Full Reason For His Grief!
 - And There Was Only One Person Who Could Help!
 - The Lord Alone!
 - Instead - She Did What We Often Try To Do:
 - We Try To Deal With The Deep Sorrows & Symptoms Of A Person’s Heart:
 - With “Band-Aids!”
 - Don’t Want Them To Feel Bad / To Cry / To Sorrow!
 - Yet - Often Don’t Fully Understand The Reality & The Full Reason For Their Sorrow!
 - There Is Only One Who Can Help!
 - Jesus Himself Is The “Great Physician!”
 - He Alone Can Diagnose Our Greatest Needs! With His Word!
 - He Alone Can Treat Our Deepest Wounds!
 - He Alone Can Clothe Our Torn Hearts!

- And Unlike Esther:
 - He Is A High Priest Who CAN “Be touched with the feeling of our infirmities!”
 - He Is Never Out Of Touch!
 - He Came “**Out** Of The Ivory Palaces, Into A World Of Woe, Only His Great Eternal Love, Made My Savior Go!”
 - And He Already Knows:
 - The Whats & The Whys Of All Your Needs!
- So - Why Don’t You Turn To Him?
 - Why Don’t You Point Others To Him?
 - Why Do We Keep Settling For Bandages When An Appointment With Our Great Physician Is Necessary?
- So - When You Sorrow - Or When Others Sorrow:
 - Remember Hebrews 4:15-16 - “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. / Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need!”

* The Third Response:

3. A Response Of Seeking!

- 4:7-9 - “And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king’s treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them. / Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people. / And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai!”
 - In These Verses - Mordecai Is Able To Finally Share With Esther Everything On His Heavy Heart!
 - And He Responds - First By:
 - Seeking From Misery:
 - 4:7 - “Mordecai Told Him Of All That Happened Unto Him!”
 - All Of The “Whats” & “Whys” Of His Sorrow & His Grief!
 - He Didn’t Hold Anything Back!
 - All Of The Nitty Gritty Details!
 - And Then He Responds By:
 - Seeking After Mercy:
 - For Him & For All Of His People!
 - 4:8 - He Even “Charged” Esther:
 - “That she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people!”
 - It Was Now Time For Esther:
 - To Make Her Full Identity Known To The King:
 - And To The Kingdom!
 - That She Was A Jew! As Well As The Daughter Of Mordecai!
 - It Was Time For Her Cover To Be Blown!
 - And To Seek The Grace & Goodness Of That:
 - Erratic Persian King:
 - To Spare The Lives Of All Her People!
 - Yet - Once Again Something Is Missing In This Seeking!
 - Of Both Mordecai & Esther!
 - What’s Missing?
 - The “Supplication” Of Esther:
 - Was To Be Directed To Who?
 - The King!
 - Compare This With The Words Of David:
 - In Psalm 30:8 - “I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication!”
 - Yet - How Many Times In Our Own Lives:
 - Do We Try To Relieve Our Burdens:
 - By Ourselves!
 - Ian Duguid - “In Times Of Crisis, For All Our Orthodox Theology, Our Own First Response Is Frequently The Wimper Of Resignation Or Human Strategy!”
 - What Help Do You Seek First?

- Whose Help Do You Seek First?
- Isaiah 55:6-7 Tells Us Whom We Are To Seek:
 - “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: / Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon!”

Conclusion:

1. How Will You Respond:
 - To The Burdens On Your Heart Today?
 - What Will You Do With Your Sorrow?
 - How Will You Show Your Sympathy?
 - Who Will You First Seek?
2. May My Prayer / Your Prayer Be This:
 - Lord help me to remember I'm weak but You are strong.
I cannot sing apart from You, for Lord, You are my song.
Though I'm prone to wander and boast in all I do.
Lord, keep my eyes turned upward so I depend on You.
 - Lord, I need You when the sea of life is calm.
O Lord, I need You when the wind is blowing strong.
Whether trials come or cease, keep me always on my knees.
Lord, I need You. Lord I need You!

* “Tell It To Jesus!”

*Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
4245 North 200 West
Greenfield, Indiana 46140
317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com*