

Esther 2:21-4:3 Standing Alone!

- One woman who took a great risk.

And History was forever Changed!

Sometimes when I see needs in our community or needs in the church - I find myself thinking – that is a big problem – I am ONE PERSON

A)WHAT CAN I DO!

B)I am sure that you have found yourself in situation where You have thought the same thing

1)I am just one person – what can I do? What kind of impact can I make

C)But the Bible is full of stories where one person responded to the call of God –

1)and changed the course of Human History

D)The Book of Esther is one of those kind of stories

Edward Everett Hale

“I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but I Still can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to the something that I can do. What I can do, I should do and, with the help of God, I will do.”

E)We should never underestimate the power or influence of one person.

The Power of one vote:

- In 1645, one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England;
- In 1649, one vote caused Charles I of England to be executed;
- In 1776, one vote gave America the English language instead of German;
- In 1839, one vote elected Marcus Morton governor of Massachusetts;
- In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union;
- In 1868, one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.
- In 1876, one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the United States presidency;
- In 1923, one vote gave Adolph Hitler control of the Nazi party;

As we come to Ch. 3-4 of the book of Esther we will see

- One man who was filled with great hatred
- One man who made a bold stand –

And as we go through these chapters we are going to make 6-7 observations regarding the kind of person that God uses

A)3 observations today – the rest next week

B)Today we are picking up in V.21 of Chapter 2

C)Esther is now the queen –

1)and we will see that about 5 yrs have transpired from the events we looked at last week

²¹In those days, while Mordecai sat within the king's gate, working for the King – leaders hung out in the gates – dealing with civil and judicial matters – think courthouse- /

one day he over hears two guys talking about an assignation plot - two of the king's eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, doorkeepers, became furious and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. ²²So the matter became known to Mordecai, who told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name. ²³And when an inquiry was made into the matter, it was confirmed, and both were hanged on a gallows; and it was written in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

A)It becomes a part of the official record of history – written into the books – the Persian Chronicles

B)And this little bit of information is going to serve as an important backdrop to the story –

Mordecai – helped thwart this assassination plot!

Interesting that no reward is given to Mordecai –

C)And as Ch.3 opens we are introduced to the villain in the Story

CH.3 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted (Mordecai- that is how we would expect it to read given the scene that took place in end of ch.2

A)He just saved the king - But that is not what happens

B)Reminder – **Life is not fair** – But God is still SOVGN don't forget that point as we see the story unfolds

After these things King Ahas/uerus promoted Haman, the son of Ham/medatha the Agagite, and advanced him and set his seat above all the princes who *were* with him. **{Prime Minister Role**

A)So he has his little throne and his power – Egotistical maniac

² And all the king's servants who *were* within the king's gate bowed and paid homage to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai would not bow or pay homage. ³ Then the king's servants who *were* within the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you transgress the king's command?" ⁴ Now it happened, when they spoke **to him daily** and he would not listen to them, that they told *it* to Haman, to see whether Mordecai's words would stand; for *Mordecai* had told them that he *was* a Jew.

B)Note His reason – I am Jewish – Jewish and not ashamed of it.

So Mordecai is not being defiant because this guy Haman got promoted instead of him

A)No the reason he is not bowing was because he was Jewish i.e. **a follower of Jehovah**

B)Mordecai was a devout and godly man –

1)and bowing down to any earthly person or thing was considered idolatry

C)and he was not going to do that because it ran against the deepest convictions of his faith.

So right away we see this ONE MAN – Mordecai – going against the grain.

A) Even though it was the Kings command. he wasn't **just offending Haman's Pride** – he was disobeying the King.

B)**Ist Principle** of the kind of man or woman that God uses is he/she **is one who stands for truth/**

1)They Stand on the word of God.

C)The result of that is they are not afraid to go against the grain.

D)Common thread of those that God uses –

1)They have to be those who are willing to take a stand

2)and do what is right regardless of the circumstances!

It is easy to follow the crowd and to do what everyone else is doing.

A) It takes a man or woman of faith and conviction to stand for what they believe no matter the cost

B)Living as a person of faith in a faithless world requires courage and acts of resistance. Max Lucado

C)How do you become that kind of person?

Lesson: You Decide NOW what you will do THEN!

A)You can't wait until the heat of the moment –

B)You have to decide what you are going to do a head of time.

C)There is a reason the airline attendant point out the emergency exits before the plane leaves the ground.

1)We don't think clearly during a free fall.

D)Airplane: I survey – the land – how close to the exist – who am I going to have to help. –

1)Something happens I want to be prepared

Same Principle applies in following Jesus – You have to decide NOW – what you will do then.

A)The time to determine to resist temptation is before it strikes.

B)Daniel was taken captive by King Neb and carted off to Babylon with a bunch of other bright young Jewish men.

1)Neb's goal was to indoctrinate these bright young men into the Babylonian culture

C)But we read in Daniel Chapter 1 – **Daniel purposed in his heart that he was not going to compromise his faith/ or morals**

Now it could have been easy for Daniel to argue – well everyone else is doing it

A)And we are very far from home – when in

Rome -

B)He didn't do that – He purposed in his heart – I am not going to compromise my morals or my faith –

1)So when he was thrust into that place – opportunity to compromise - **He stood his ground**

C)When we stand up for God – two things happen

➤ **1st God stands up for us – God blessed Daniel – Gave him favor.....**

➤ **The 2nd thing that happens is it is contagious - Other are empowered to stand as well**

D)Shadrach Meshach and Abed-Nego – Also made a decision that they were not going to compromise either

Came that time – Neb's statue – everyone bow – worship – or thrown into the fiery furnace –

A)These 3 were the Only one's standing

B)Neb – liked these guys – 2nd chance – NO NEED – not bowing !

1)One way or another our God is going to deliver us

C)King Neb gets so mad – heat the furnace up seven times hotter

1)So hot the guys throwing them in get killed

King goes to the viewing room – watch these 3 Hebrew men become crispy critters –

A)Not burning – walking around – and there is a 4th man in the fire who looks like the Son of God

B)Shad..Abed-Nego – Decided ahead of time what they would do when temptation came –

1)they were able to stand

C)Jesus stood with them in the fire!

Decide NOW what you will do THEN!

A)Graduating Seniors – Decide now – Know what you believe now- Design speaks of a designer - get questions answered now.

B)Professor attacks your faith – you will stand!

C)You may not know the answer to every argument he presents – but there is an answer –

1)Determine now -You will ask – you will find it

Dating couple: Decide NOW – how you are going to resist temptation to get involved Physically –

A)Decide now -0 NOT GOING THERE

B)Talk about it –how not going to be alone – not going to give your flesh an opportunity

C)Realize – Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak – need to be wise!

1)You are not as strong as you think

Business owner: Decide now how you are going to run your business – be a person of integrity –

A)work quality/ honesty / not cut corners – profit

B)Not do something that you know is not right and isn't going to honor God

1)just because everyone else in the industry does it

C)You be different and God will honor that!

You want to be a person that God uses – person that stands up and stands out –

A)a person who resist temptation ?

B)It starts with Deciding NOW – What you will do then!

C) Mordecai is true to his faith and principles – doesn't bow

5 When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow or pay him homage, Haman was filled with wrath. 6 But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, he decided it was not enough to go after Mordecai alone for they had told him of the people of Mordecai. Instead, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus — the people of Mordecai.

Wow!!!! Now we would be prone to think what an overreaction – this guy has BIG TIME PROBLEMS

A)But there are two things going on here – we need to understand –

B)The 1st this is the result of years of hatred between Israel and the Amalekites

The Agagites were the descendants of King Agag – the king of the Amalekites

A)The Amalekites were brutal barbarians – they Known for their surprise attack

B)Brutal History with the People of Israel –

C)When the children of Israel were delivered from Egypt

1)Traveling in the wilderness – Exodus 17 they were attacked by the Amalekites –

D)But the Lord gave them Victory over the Amalekites

The Amalekites did something that the Lord never forgot –

A)They attacked from the rear and killed innocent when and children.

B)As a result of that God told Moses in Deuteronomy 25:19 When you come into the land

1)Completely Destroy the Amalekites – wipe them from the face of the earth

C)It wasn't that God was being vengeful – it was more he viewed these people as a cancer

1)He had given them 400 yrs to turn from their evil ways and they only got worse and more evil

D)So God says that need to go!

But fast forward 300 years from the book of Exodus to the time of King Saul – 1 Samuel 15

A)1 Samuel 15 is 600 yrs before the events here in the book of Esther

B)God tells King Saul to go into battle against the Amalekites – completely destroy them

1)Don't even bring back any livestock

C)Saw last week – that Mordecai is a Descendant of King Saul –a Benjamite

D)King Saul goes into battle and comes out victorious – but he doesn't destroy the Amalekites

He comes back from the battle – with livestock and a special trophy – King Agag

A)Haman is a descendant of King Agag – He is an Agagite

B)The Prophet Saul meets King Saul on his way back from the battle – and says –

1)what is the deal with all these animals

C)King Saul tries to spiritualize his disobedience by saying – brought them back to sacrifice to the Lord

Then Samuel asks – who is that ? – King Agag

A)What happens next is pretty intense - Samuel asked Saul for his Swordhacked ... pieces

B) **I picture Gandalf from Lord of the rings**

C)In that act Samuel gave us a **visual description** of how to deal with the Flesh.

1)Swiftly and Decisively –

D)MAKE NO prevision for the flesh – you need to – PUT THE FLESH TO DEATH.

Because here is– another principle – you let the flesh live – you let sin live and it will grow!

A)It will seek to take over – it will seek to rule –

B)Here we are 600 years later

C)Haman is a Descendant of Agag who wants to completely wipe out all the Jews in the Kingdom

1)Just because he is offended by this one Jew who happens to be a descendant of King Saul

D)I think it is quite possible here that Haman has been nursing a grudge against the Jewish people for a long - long time

This is a good time to mention that no one is born with grudges.

A)Prejudice is not a package deal that comes with birth.

B)It's something we learn; we're trained in it. – Chuck Swindol

C)People are not born hating, they are taught to hate.

D)From his parents and grandparents and great-grandparents, from his uncles and aunts and cousins,

1)Haman the Agagite had learned to hate the Jews.

D)The first Jewish person who opposes him – he flies off the handle – and wants to kill them all

E)But there is something even more sinister here- This is Demonicly inspired

1)Haman is about to become the first Hitler

This is a page right out the play book of the Devil

A)The Fall – the curse – there is one who will come from the seed of the woman – He will crush you

B)From that moment – Satan knew his fate was sealed

C)When Satan discovered that this coming Savior would come from the Descendants of Abraham – the Jewish people –

D)He put a plan in motion to destroy the Jewish nation – No Jewish people – then no Savior –

1)A Script Mass Genocide

First attempt was to made when he put it into the heart of Pharaoh to destroy the Jewish babies in Egypt

A)Here it is Haman

B)Later a mad man by the name of Antiochus Epiphanes – 1 million Jewish people killed

C)Later – Herod -Kill the Jewish babies 2yrs old and under in Bethlehem

1)Same Script – just different actors!

D)Kill the line leading to the Messiah

E)Later it is Hitler would kill 6 million Jews during the Holocaust

And one day there will come a man called the Antichrist who will once again wreak havoc on the Jews

A)If Jesus has already came – why does Satan still want to destroy the Jewish people?

B)He knows the Jewish people are special to God He knows Jesus is coming back –

C)but he doesn't want there to be any Jewish people left for him to come back to

D)My Point is this is Demonicly inspired

Back to the story

7 In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that is, the lot), before Haman to determine the day and the month, until it fell on the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. {11 month delay

Note: What year did he have his feast? Third year. What year was Esther made queen? Seventh year.

A)Now, we are in the 12th year – so this is five years later. Isn't that interesting?

B)God has had the chief characters in position for five years now.

1)Esther's been there for five years as queen, and yet, the reason for her being there is not yet revealed.

2nd Principle of the kind of person that God uses – he/she is the kind of person who knows how to be patient and bloom where they are planted.

A)Our problem, we live on a day by day basis, and we look at today, and we look at tomorrow,

B)and we think, "Nothing's happening in my life. I've been here for two whole weeks, and nothing's happening."

C)Well, God's purposes are not always accomplished in two weeks.

1)Sometimes it's years. He puts us into a place or position to be used at a later date

D)There have been so many things in my life – where this is true: I don't understand what is happening right now

1)or what I thought was going to happen hasn't happened right now

E)Several years go by – OK NOW – I SEE IT!

Learned that the key in those in between seasons is to not get discouraged – but be faithful in where God has you.

A)Don't focus on what God isn't doing – but focus on what he is doing

B)Be faithful in the moment – Focus on the moment – and trust the future to him

C) In this story it is five years later that we are now beginning to see why God has put these people in these positions.

1) He's got them there well ahead of the time that they will be used.

D) In your life – God has you in a place right now – that is pivotal for what he is going to do – 2yrs from now – 3yrs from now

1) Be faithful in the moment – bloom where you are planted and leave the future to Him

E) Let's continue with the story

Haman is the kind of man who knows how to push the right buttons to appeal to the king.

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws. Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain. 9 If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver { 20 million dollars } into the hands of those who do the work, to bring it into the king's treasuries."

A) He brings up the issue of the king's influence – these Jews were not obeying his laws

B) Really only one Jew that we know of who wasn't bowing – and that was Mordecai

C) People with an agenda love to exaggerate – People come to me – Lots of pp are upset about this

1) Or I have talked to a lot of pp who think this way

D) I usually ask – what is a lot? Who have you talked with – usually 2 pp – {Multitudes

The Jews were scattered throughout the 127 provinces probably close to 3 million strong

A) Haman says I'll see that six million dollars comes into the king's treasuries if you'll let me carry out this eradication.

B) Ahasuerus says ok – because he is only concerned about Dollars

C) He will agree to decreasing the number of people by 3 million in the Kingdom to increase the number of dollars in his bank account

¹⁰ So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. ¹¹ And the king said to Haman, "The money and the people *are* given to you, to do with them as seems good to you."

¹² Then the king's scribes were called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and a *decree* was written according to all that Haman commanded—to the king's satraps, to the governors who *were* over each province, to the officials of all people, to every province according to its script, and to every people in their language. In the name of King Ahasuerus it was written, and sealed with the king's signet ring. ¹³ And the letters were sent by couriers into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth *month*, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their possessions.

The last part of v.13 reveals how he was going to get all this money – Plunder the Jews.

A) Exactly how Hitler financed his War – he took from the Jewish people he was destroying.

B) Throughout history – Jewish people have always been those who have prospered.

C) So the Decision was made: V 14 adds A copy of the document was to be issued as law in every province, being published for all people, that they should be ready for that day. ¹⁵ The couriers went out, hastened by the king's command; and the decree was proclaimed in Shushan the citadel. So the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Shushan was perplexed.

What a depiction of pride and arrogance and the disregard of human life.

A) They just signed into law the destruction of 3 million people and now they are going to have a beer to celebrate –

B) This is the epitome of being Callous and evil !

But notice the last line - but the city of Shushan was perplexed.

A)What this means is as that when the citizens of Persia heard about this decree they were overwhelmed – grieved

B)They said, “We love these people. They’re our neighbors, they’re our friends,
1)they’re our coworkers.

C)They are decent neighbors. They are good citizens.”

D)May we as Christians living here in North County SD live in such a way – **that if wide spread persecution came – lock us all up**

1)Our neighbors and co-workers would protest

You can’t do that – we need them – we love them!

A)This is why it is so important that we embrace our calling to be the salt of the earth –

B)Flavor enhancing people – healing agents – peacemakers –

C)Loving those around us – Serving our communities

D)We would be making such an impact – that the people around us wouldn’t say – Good Riddance
1)but NO WAY!

CH. 4 – 3 VERSES AND WRAP UP – LAST POINT

When Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry. 2 He went as far as the front of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

This sackcloth with ashes, of course, was the sign of extreme mourning.

A)Here we see 3rd trait in the lives of people that God uses to do great things -

B)#3They are touched deeply by sin and injustice.

C) Mordecai is before the gates – before the Capital building – mourning out loud

It often Starts in Private:

A)When Nehemiah heard of the reproach – mourned many days – but no one knew.

B)One day the king noticed – something wrong – asked him –

C)Starts in private but there is also a time for Public mourning as well.

D)Hearts break for sin and injustice in our culture

Mordecai wasn’t the only one 3 And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

A)Lesson: Sorrow often leads to an intensified seeking of God

B)No doubt some of these people who had grown very content and comfortable in Persia
1)are NOW crying out to God like never before.

When is the last time you really had a good cry or your heart was burdened – sin and the rebellion around you.

A)When you see The injustice and destruction taking place in lives – because of sin and rebellion.

B)DOES IT BREAK YOUR HEART?

AS I was preparing for this message: I couldn’t help but think about the #1 issue facing our nation right now.

A)The Supreme courts upcoming decision on Abortion – to un-legalize abortion in America – leave it up to the states to decide

B)I find myself thinking about the over 600,000 babies that are aborted in the US every year.

1)The 50 million babies that are aborted world wide – the 1.5 Billion babies that have been aborted World wide in the last 50 years

C)I began to weep – Then I thought – It has been a while since I have wept over the unborn

I am very pro-life – Always supported Pro-life agencies – tried to give a voice – Picketed abortion clinics

A)But how often have I wept? Really wept - NOT OFTEN ENOUGH

B)I am not trying to lay a guilt trip on anyone here – I hate that type of manipulation

C)But it made me wonder – Have I got so used to the sin and evil and injustice around me – that it doesn't move my heart any more

Have I just accepted – that is just the way it is – Evil is going to reign here on planet earth until Jesus returns –

A)Come quickly Jesus – is that the only answer ?

B)Can we do something: Yes – But I think it starts with a mourning?

C)It starts with saying: Lord break our hearts with what breaks yours

I have heard Christian people almost – down play the effect of this decision – well it is still going to be a state decision

A)Liberal states are going to still allow abortions – and people will come from other states to the liberal states

B)Wait – this is a step in the right direction – folks – this is not a political issue it is a spiritual issue – we must remember that

C)I found myself wondering – what it would be like if millions of Christians around America – instead of protesting - in front of capital buildings

D)Wept – Mourned – prayed - Maybe God would hear

¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.
2 Chronicles 7:14

How to end this message:

A)Hopeful up