

Monday Quotes



Grain

“For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for such a time as this.” Esther 4:14

Field

“⁷So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. ²On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, “What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.” ³Then Queen Esther answered, “If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. ⁴For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king.” ⁵Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, “Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?” ⁶Esther said, “A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!” Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.” Esther 7:1-5

Thoughts

The way power works in the world compels us to make decisions. In the Book of Esther, the kingdom under Persian King Ahasureus forced choices from within and outside the king’s home. First, the king, filled with wine, summoned Queen Vashti to reveal her beauty before his guests. She refused, and as a result, the king tossed her out. To replace his wife, he gathered young virgins to be part of his harem and serve as possible candidates for the open queen position, with no critique on the abusiveness. Esther was one of the females. She was also Jewish and living in diaspora, disjointed from her homeland. Her caretaker cousin, Mordecai, told Esther to hide her Jewish identity. She decided to keep the secret. Mordecai also made a couple of major decisions, first to help prevent the murder of the king, and then not to bow to the king’s high official, Haman. In reaction to Mordecai’s refusal to defer beyond what he felt called to, Haman decided to destroy Mordecai and all Jewish people in the land, with the king’s support.

Esther had become queen with her secret intact. Just as she learned about Haman’s destructive campaign, Mordecai asked that she try to influence the king to stop it. “For if you stay silent during this time...” And then Mordecai posed a soul searching notion: What if you are where you are for this moment? At a critical juncture, she risked approaching the king to reveal her Jewish identity with a request that he save her people. He said yes, which is why Haman is terrified in verse 7:5.

As so many stories in scripture, this one emerged out of a context of people estranged. They did their best to manage with their precarious status. They and those who had worldly power over them had to make choices that impacted more than themselves. Today, we may easily recall the struggles of refugees and immigrants. We may reflect on the vulnerability we experience in the lingering pandemic that continues to create separations. What is emerging out of our contexts? Who knows when we are where we are "for such a time as this." Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy