

Book of Esther

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon on the Book of Esther explores themes of courage, divine providence, and the importance of standing firm in faith during trials.

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Topics: "Esther", "Courage in Faith", "Sacrifice for Others"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill explores the Book of Esther, emphasizing its unique qualities, such as the absence of God's name and its lack of mention in the New Testament. He highlights the courage of Esther and Mordecai in the face of adversity, illustrating the importance of standing firm in faith and the consequences of inaction. Ravenhill draws parallels between Esther's willingness to risk her life for her people and the need for modern believers to be bold in their faith. He challenges the audience to consider their own commitment to God and the sacrifices required to fulfill His purpose. Ultimately, he calls for a deeper passion for God and a willingness to endure hardship for the sake of others.

Transcript

Just go down the book, just past Brother Ezra, and when you get past Brother Ezra, you'll get down to Esther. Ezra and Esther. Martin Luther said some wonderful things.

He said some funny things too. He said, for instance, the epistle of James is an epistle of straw. He must have read the NIV, that abomination.

But do you know what he said about the book of Esther? It's a very beautiful book. He called it a book of bloody revenge. It's a unique book in this sense that it does not mention the name of God.

It's a unique book in this sense it is not referred to in the whole of the New Testament. In many ways, it's a unique book. Remember, the historic setting is that these people are being carried away into captivity in Babylon, and then the Medes and Persians came and took over.

I'm going to skip over it just, otherwise we won't have to stay a week here. Queen Vashti was the queen. The king has a clumsy name, Ahasuerus.

And you're glad you phoned in Christian, you Ahasuerus? Dale, I like Dale better than Ahasuerus Brown. Sounds better. Maybe not as musical, but it sounds better.

Well, you know, women have always been rebels, chapter 1, verse 11. They ordered Queen Vashti, the queen, to come before the king with the crown royal to show the people, and the princess her beauty, for she was fair. She was exceedingly attractive, the Hebrew really says.

And he wanted to show her off, and she didn't want to be showed off. I said to a lady yesterday, you know, poor old Schofield, he says the church is going to be raptured, then it's going to be put into shape in heaven. That's not true, that's a lie, among many other lies that he told.

The bride hath made herself ready. And I said to the lady, did you ever see a girl come to the altar with curlers in her hair? She said, these days they come in anything. I think they would.

But I've never seen a girl at the altar with curlers in her hair. I've never seen her manicuring her fingernails. I've never seen her come in a dirty old dress, you know.

Then her mother says, darling, stand a minute, and she throws a cloak over her snow-white beautiful gown, you know. I was going to say dressed in china, that wouldn't fit her. What do you call it? Brussels lace.

No, you better get your wedding garment down here. There's no free ones up there. One man got into the wedding without a garment.

Boy, he went to outer darkness. Now you fix that up. If you don't know where it is, ask Dale after the meeting.

But he went to outer darkness. Again, as I said in my prayer, and I say it often to myself, this life is only a dressing room for eternity. That's all it is.

We're not all here to make money. We're here to make character. Again, we're born with disposition.

This is my philosophy. We're born with disposition, but we make character. We make it by our decisions.

We make it by what we accept and what we reject. Well, here's Queen Vashti. Verse 12.

The queen Vashti refused to come to the king's commandment by his chamberlains. Therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him. Verse 17.

This deed of the queen shall come abroad to all the women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported. The king Asahoras commanded Vashti the queen to be brought before him, but again she refused to come out. Jump over to chapter two, verse one.

After these things, when the wrath of king Asahoras was appeased, I think I'm going to call him Jack for the rest of this story. When king Jack was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done. You know, it's much easier.

Do you remember in Daniel it says, at what time you hear the sound of the sack butt and the dulcimer and the tumour? What does it say? And the timbrel and all those things? We had a man in England, he didn't read very well. He's a tremendous man of God, a tremendous man of prayer. But they asked him to read that one night, and he came to it and he said, and the band played.

That's the best way to get over it, isn't it? The band played. So king Jack, listen now. After these things, when the wrath of king Jack was abated, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what she was decreed against her.

And what was decreed against her. Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, let there be fair young virgins sought for the king, and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces, or states, we would say, in his kingdom. They may gather together all the fair young virgins to shushan the palace, to the house of the women, into the custody of Hege, the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women, and let their things be given to them for purification.

And let the pleased of the king be crowned queen instead of Vashti. Now there's a plot here, as you know, I guess. The bad guy, as we would say, is Mordecai, is Haman.

The good guy is Mordecai. And you find he maneuvers so that this Jewish girl can get into the court. Go to verse 10.

Esther had not shown her people nor her kindred, for Mordecai had charged her she should not show it. Why? Because she was a Jew. Now the good man in verse 5, again, is, in shushan the palace there was a certain Jew whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jeah, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish.

Now who else do you remember in the Old Testament was a Kish? Saul, the son of Kish. Well it says this man was a son of Kish, a Benjamite. Do you remember Paul holds on to that? I'm of the tribe of Benjamin.

They were a particular, peculiar, wonderful people. I'm the tribe of Benjamin and the seed of Abraham. Okay, let's go to the next chapter.

Or maybe it's on the same page. Chapter 2 and verse 15, the end of it. Esther obtained favor in the sight of all them that looked upon her.

So Esther was taken into the king, Jack, in his house in the royal, in the 10th month, which is the 10th month Teba, in the seventh year of his reign. And 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, this is important, he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen, instead of Vashti.

Chapter 3, verse 1. After these things, when all these marvelous young women had been brought from all the provinces and she'd been selected as the queen of the whole lot, she'd already had the royal crown put upon her head. After these things, did King Asahoras promote Haman? Now he's the bad guy, the son of Hamaditha, an Agagite. Well does that take you back to King Saul? An Agagite? What did God say to Saul? Say all the children of Agag, all the Agagites should all be slain.

He didn't slay them, he spared one, but that's all that mattered. He tried to commit suicide by putting his sword in the ground and falling on it, and he didn't die. And a young man came and wiped him out.

He said, who are you? He said, I'm an Agagite. You see, if God claims something in your life, you don't let it go, it'll kill you at the end anyhow. Verse 2, all the king's servants that were in the king's gate bowed and did reverence to Haman for the king had so commanded concerning him.

You see, he had exalted him, he had advanced him, it says in verse 1, above all the other people that were there, all the regents, all the rulers, all the princes, this man was exalted above them all, and it went

to his head, he became conceited. All the king's servants that were in the king's gate bowed in reverence to Haman for the king had so commanded, but Mordecai bowed not. Isn't that great? Somebody dares to be unfashionable, somebody dares to get out of step.

Like the lady in England that watched the army go past, 350 men marching, and they asked her what she thought of it. She said, wonderful, she said, but they were all out of step except my John. See, her son was the only one in step.

But you've got to step out of step sometimes. John the Baptist was out of step with a section of the church that was out of step with God, and it's got to come to that before too long. Verse 5 says, when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did in reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

And verse 8 says that Haman said to the king, Ahasuerus, that there is a certain people scattered abroad. If this isn't a company of bridegroom company, what is? If this isn't part of the bride. They're scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom, and their laws are diverse from the people.

Neither keep they the king's laws. Therefore it is not for the king's prophet to abide them or suffer them. If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver.

You see his hatred? See, this man is going to be another Hitler. He's going to liquidate the Jews. I think I reminded you the other week, that man, what was his name? Adolf Eichmann, that liquidated six million Jews.

And he said, I should be happy to jump into my grave, knowing I almost wiped out the Jewish nation. That's not his problem. The problem is when those six million jump out of the graves at the judgment scene.

He has to face them. Nobody gets by with anything. We fool ourselves.

Because God judges today, we forget that the checkout count is at the end of the line. And all people, it doesn't matter who they are, rich, poor, wise or otherwise, we're all going to stand at the judgment seat of Christ. I'm trying to write a book on that now, and it stirs me, breaks me up.

This man is prepared to pay what, ten thousand talents? That's an awful sum of money. You know, we talk about people having a talent. You say, that young lady has a lovely talent, she plays the piano.

He has a talent. No, no, no, no, no. Talents in the word of God are always money.

Talents of gold and talents of silver. The others are gifts, not talents. But he's going to pay out ten thousand talents of silver to those that have charge of the business to bring into the king's treasury.

And the king took his ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hamadithia, the Agagite, and the Jew's enemy. And the king said unto Haman, the silver is given to thee, the people also. Do with them as you will.

Now here's a man who's going to liquidate them. And he's going to pay for the joy of doing it, to have the satisfaction that all his enemies have been wiped out. But look now at chapter 4, please, verse 1. When Mordecai, the man of God, perceived, or he understood all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes.

But the scripture says don't rent your clothes, rent your hearts and not your garments. But wait a minute, they're included in the verse. Mordecai perceived all that was done and he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth with ashes and went into the midst of the city.

That's the most stupid thing he could do. But you can't hide your light under a bus, meet the devil where he is, go in the middle of the city. He's the marked man for God and he's not afraid of the enemies.

It's the valley of the shadow of death for him. But there he goes into the middle of the city and he got behind a post and whimpered. Is that what it says? It says he cried with a loud voice.

You remember Esau, when he lost that blessing, he cried with a bitter cry, ask thou but one blessing, bless me. Why is he crying with a bitter voice, with a bitter cry? And he came even before the king's gate and none might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. What does he care about kings? Come on, let it sink in your mind, you young guys.

One man with God is a majority. If the devil and all hell are against you, what does it matter? When the devil fell, he only took a third part of the heavenly host, therefore two-thirds must be on our side. With the father, the son, the Holy Ghost, two-thirds of the crowd up there and all the promises of God.

Well, in God's name, why aren't we conquering the world? Why are we sitting in a back corner whimpering as though, you know. Some people are saying, if we get some good, if Pat Robinson runs and Jerry Falwell runs at the side of it, where will they run us? They run us in the ground, that's all they'll do. They won't run us to safety.

You see, God has an issue with America and he's going to settle it. We are blessed with more than any other nation in the world, we have more Bibles than any other. Do you know there are three, there are six, what was it now? What's the population of America? 200, pardon? 230 million? Well, there are three Bibles for every person in America, not every whole, every person.

Nobody in the world has that. We have more Bible schools than any other nation in the world. We have more radio programs that at least give a bit of the gospel every day than anybody else in the world.

But to whom much is given, much is expended. Do you know how much we give to missions? Yes, I'll tell you what we give, about a tenth of what we spend on dog food and cat food. He went to the midst of the city and cried out aloud, can you imagine them saying, hey, look who he is? That man's a Jew, he should be destroyed.

He'd go down the road, he'll get mugged or killed, he doesn't care. What should I fear what man shall do to me? Doesn't the Word of God say there's going to come a day when you don't care you defy kings, you defy laws, if you're doing the will of God, and don't fear those who can destroy the body. A good Lord put me near the wall and shoot me, that's the quickest way to heaven.

If they put you in prison for 20 years like you have in Russia, it's very different to let you rot and rot and rot and rot. The quickest way, shoot me, shoot on. He came before the king's gate, where none might go, in sackcloth, and in every province, with us wherever the king had commanded.

His decree, there was great mourning among the Jews and fasting and weeping and wailing, come on. Are we going to have to, I've said too often, I'll say it again, I think our option right now is to concentrate on prayer or pray in concentration camps. So when you're in a stinking concentration camp, remember I told

you that, that's our option.

They're weeping and wailing because they've been carried away captive into Babylon, and then they've been released for a little while. Say come on, let's be honest, would you like to live in a neighborhood where everybody went in the street one day and started howling and weeping and groaning and shouting? Boy they'd lock us and put in an insane asylum. People say we want to go back to Pentecost, I don't think we do.

Do you want to go back to a service where Sunday morning, the first thing the pastor does is he said before we sing, all hail King Jesus, I've got a couple of deacons I want to kill. Wouldn't that be a sensational way to start a Sunday morning service? Old Ananias and Sapphira, stinking old hypocrites, they brung the hearts of the last six pastors and the church prayed. I went to a church where they asked me would I pray for a man, he's about 90 years of age and he's very near to death and he's our oldest deacon and he's bought so many things for the church.

Of course he's the most cantankerous man we've ever had, he broke the heart of the last three pastors. Would you pray with us? I said sure, I'll pray God will kill him tonight. And the lady said you mean that? I said sure, get the old hypocrite out of the way, he's a good chance.

You know it doesn't look as bad if he's been sick for three months. Get rid of him. Why are we such hypocrites? The worst thing is to be hypocritical in prayer.

You know when God comes with holy ghost power he's going to do some things that we'd never dreamed of. We're going to go to meetings that will be so revolutionary you'll hardly dare mention it after you get out of the sanctuary on Monday when you go to the bank. Well are you convinced? Do you think Mordecai loved his people? He has mourning and weeping, he shouts with a bitter cry, a loud and a bitter cry.

There was fasting and weeping and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. God I'd like to see that. Was it, where was it? Come on Dick will get me out of here.

Where was it? Nineveh where they put sackcloth on the animals? Dear God the animals had more sense than we have. Animals with sackcloth on them. Hmm, sounds like you're getting serious doesn't it? Of course we'd have white sackcloth.

We'd have embroidered sackcloth. We'd have a church sign on the side or a fish or something. I don't like that fish thing, it's a bit smelly to me.

I want to emphasize it here because it got to my heart when I read it. It's not mourning, it's great mourning among the Jews and fasting and weeping and wailing and many people were prostrate in sackcloth and in ashes. So Esther's maids came and the chamberlains came and told her.

Then was the queen exceedingly grieved and she sent Raymond, she sent Cloth. Oh we're still in chapter 4 here and verse 4. So Esther's maids and the chamberlains came and told it to her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved and she sent Raymond to Mordecai to take away his sackcloth from him.

He says not on your life. I'm not going to escape trouble. I'm not going to escape torment.

Leave my sackcloth on me. It's my identification. I'm willing to be considered poor and ridiculous.

I'm not taking your royal garments. Take them back to the queen. I want to be identified with the people that mourn and travel.

Blessed are they that mourn. See he gives beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning but we don't want the oil of joy for mourning. You ladies want oil of the lay, you'd rather have that.

Oil of joy for mourning but you can't escape the mourning brother Keith. If you're going to have the joy of the Lord, you can have silliness, you can have frivolity, you can have fun but what in God's name is that? I'm talking about the same joy that Jesus had and the cross was before him and it says he endured the cross. He didn't enjoy it.

He endured it. Why did he endure it? Because it was the will of his father. I love the hymn of Bonner's.

Go labor on, spend and be spent. Thy joy to do the father's will. It is the way the master went.

Come on now, why do you expect better treatment from this world than Jesus got? Are you so holy? Are you beyond him? It couldn't tolerate him. It couldn't listen to him. It spit on him.

It was mad against him. All the days of his life from the moment he left his mother's womb he had the shadow of illegitimacy over him and I think we forget that. Didn't they say when he stood in the synagogue, we know who his father and his mother, they didn't.

They knew his mother, they didn't know his father. Don't you think all his life they said he's a bastard? Of course they did. Some German theologian said that a few years ago that there was an invasion of Germans in that area at the time Jesus was born and he was fathered by a German.

Well we know that's not true because the end of verse four again, the queen sent raiment of cloth to Mordecai. Do you think she sent him some junk? She sent him some royal robes. She sent him something with distinction and he says no I'm sticking here.

This is why God wants me. I'm not going to be decorated. I'm going to stay with the humble and the meek and the lowly and the despised and rejected.

Nowadays you want to be accepted. Everybody wants to be accepted. God pity you.

Get to the place where you can open your arms and say Lord let me be rejected as you are rejected. Let me be despised as you are despised. You see he won't comfort you unless your heart is broken.

You hear people say I drew near to the Lord and Iraq met my darling daughter-in-law said a while ago an experience she'd gone through and she said I just felt the arms of Jesus around me. He so bathed me in his love. Why? Because she'd been through a kind of Gethsemane.

You see we want to wake up in the morning with some bubbly exciting experience and God says no. I counsel thee to buy of me. Oh you can't buy anything from God.

Grace is free. Sure it is but rewards are not free. We only get what we've laid up treasure in heaven for.

Buy, buy, buy of me white raiment. Buy of me gold. Gold is typical of divinity.

I buy through my willingness to walk a different road from the other guys. The other day I got a photograph of our team that used to walk. We walked the length and breadth of England.

I'm looking at all those men there. Almost all of them are dead now. Super preachers as far as I'm concerned.

I looked at some others when I was at college which I was there six months as you can tell. But you know when I was there they say well where were you on the dean's list? We didn't even have a dean at the college it was so poor. I'm glad we didn't.

I'd have never made the list. I had a very important place on the list every week when the examination test came out. I was at the bottom holding all the others up.

But you know what? The guys used to laugh at three of us because we spent more time in prayer. They played ball. We went down by the river to pray.

We'd have a night of prayer while the other fellows were fooling around. And I look at those men. Super intellectuals many of them.

And they got into an ordination which is a step downward anyhow. There's only one ordination. That's the ordination of John 15.

I have ordained you. Or as God said to Jeremiah, I ordained you when you were in the womb. That's the earliest ordination I know of.

You know one earlier than that Keith? Well you're as ignorant as I am. He doesn't know. That's good.

The ordination of God. No man can take it from you. If you walk in the light you keep that ordination or if you like unction or divine anointing as long as we're obedient.

Well I want to get on here a bit. They wanted to take his sackcloth from him but he wouldn't take it. They would have given him a chance to escape.

He didn't want to escape. Verse 11 of chapter 4 still. All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces do know that whosoever whether it be a man or a woman shall come into the court of the king into the inner court without being called.

Come on now. Or as the scriptures say many are called few are chosen. They were all legally belonging to the kingdom but unless they were called by the king they could not go into the place where the king was.

We sang that lovely hymn tonight. Jesus calls us by thy mercies savior may we hear thy call. You see there are periods in your life where you have to get to a crossroad and you hear a very distinct call and the word of God says that God will call us when we're in the way.

He won't call you sitting in a chair. He'll call you when you're doing the will of God. When you're going right ahead and suddenly you hear a voice saying not this go right or go left.

The most precious thing in the world I think is to be conscious of the voice of God which can come in that mysterious way in our spirits or it can come again through the word of the living God. But no man can or woman can go to inner court who is not called but there is one law of his that shall put him to death except such to whom the king shall hold out a golden scepter that he may live. But I have not been called to come into the king for 30 days.

Come on what happened to you when you didn't hear God's voice for 30 days? God some of us can't be lonely 30 hours. When God is driving you to your knees driving you to intense prayer and he shuts off communications it's the only way to get our attention. We're going along so blessed so happy.

Oh every morning I get up I read you know streams in the desert or squirts in the wilderness or something. Oh it's so nice I so enjoy it the Lord is so good. Come on get out of it you've been reading that thing for 30 years.

Come on he's a living God and I can only live as he pours his living life into me. I can't live on my theology. You can't love theology.

You say I'm a Baptist I love Baptist doctrine. You can't love Baptist doctrine or Pentecostal doctrine. You're going to love a person.

Boy doctrine won't help you too much. I have not been called to come into the king these 30 days. How do you think she felt? She's in a court where everybody despised her.

Every other woman in the harem that's what it was envied her and yet for 30 days she's been left outside with a crowd. Doesn't say she's wearing a crown even though she'd been given a crown in the previous chapter. But the king hadn't called her in.

Well has he gone sour? Is he going to get rid of me? Got rid of Vashti? Is he going to get rid of me? You know when the Lord stopped Saul on the road to Damascus. Have you ever noticed what he said? You know the Lord pitched him off his horse. He must have been on the horse.

He wouldn't have been going to Damascus that way. All that way walking. Take him rest of his life.

And he's down in the dust. He bites the dust. And he didn't say Lord why.

He said Lord what. What? You suddenly put a roadblock here. What is it? And the Lord sent Ananias and he said go and tell him what what he must suffer.

No he didn't say that. Tell him what great things he must suffer. Oh it's bad psychology to tell this young guy.

You know I mean he may be the best softball pitcher in the church league. Which of course gets you a special crown in heaven if it's in the church league. And you go whispering to his ear listen son I want to tell you something.

Go on and be a professional ball player if you like. But right now God is calling you. I'll tell you what he's calling you.

He's calling you to hardship and sacrifice. You're going to be hungry up the river Amazon. You're going to be bitten by a bug.

There's a precious lady. Who was that lady Martha that came from the Amazon? Sophie Muller. I'd wanted to see that woman for years and I went to a conference they said Sophie Muller's coming.

And I was sitting at the end seat and somebody says she's coming and she's at the door she's coming in. I looked past. Do you know? Wait don't throw your hymn books at me.

She got the most beautiful legs I've ever seen. She's about 55. Do you know what they look like? They looked as though down the stocking she'd golf balls all the way.

Big big bumps bitten with bugs. Bitten with all kinds of thing. Her whole body was out of shape.

And yet she goes up the Amazon where men won't go. She gets men to paddle her up the river and then she puts a screen up and teaches the youngsters and the other people to learn a language. The government I won't say which one of them.

The Catholics got so upset at the people who are being saved. You see when they get saved they quit their running around with women. They quit their drinking.

They quit their fooling and fighting. And there was such a transformation. The priest got mad because he hadn't given up his girlfriends yet.

He was living in his adultery and wickedness and drunkenness. And the news spread Sophie Muller. I looked at that precious little woman.

Where were we? Just outside of Chicago there. 60 odd years and she's back there now. You can't keep her at home.

She's taught the alphabet to so many people. So many Indians. I better where's where's Spencer? Oh Spencer you better get with her boys.

Or we bring her up to your tribes. You see what can be done? She refuses to accept the king's garments. That blessed woman hasn't anything worth five bucks.

Oh my dear wife. Oh our pastor's wife always wears designer dresses. Well if that won't get to heaven what will? You know the vanity of the world just about swallowed the church up today.

We have to dress and show off. You know I wouldn't have worn this coat years ago. I've had it about five years and I put it on the other day.

A moth has eaten dirty thing. Look it's it's bitten a big hole. And I got a new one and put it in the same closet and it ate that.

Boy if I get it it's life's finished I'll tell you. Not going to eat any more of my stuff. The king hasn't called me for 30 days.

Come on don't panic. God isn't speaking as he did. His word seems dry.

Prayer is dry. So what? Has God changed? You've changed and emotions have changed. You go up and down according to what somebody says to you.

You don't if you're stayed on God. We sing that lovely hymn. Stayed upon Jehovah hearts are fully blessed.

Hidden in the hollow of his blessed hand. Never foe can follow. Never traitor stand.

The only one who can change God's opinion of you is you. Doesn't matter if people lie about you. Say you're a cheat or a whoremonger or any or a prostitute.

It makes no difference. He shouldn't worry you that much. Oh well I have a reputation.

We'll take it to the cross. Get rid of it. Reputation will kill you.

Reputation is what men think you are. Character is what God knows you are. Now what are you going to worry about? Reputation? That doesn't mean you're going to take Playboy and sneak off to some dirty film.

No you're not going to do that. Because the more the love of God is shed abroad in your heart the more you'll love him. And the other things they cease to make magnetizers.

I said to my darling wife I think the other day. Oh somewhere we were. Well anyhow I think I know where it was but I won't tell you.

Here is a man. You talk about a lunatic. A wealthy man.

A man with a colossal intellect. The greatest brain in the world in his day. And he says I take pleasure in the Olympic games.

Remember they had Olympic games 400 years before Jesus was born. Paul refers to the running races and all the rest of it. Wrestling.

What did he say? Oh I went and I saw the championship. Heavyweight championship. It doesn't say that.

He says I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities. The very things we scream to God Almighty to keep us from. And so it doesn't keep us till we get full of all the other vain things that don't mean a hill of beans.

I take pleasure in everything this world despises. I despise those who despise the gospel in the truest sense of the word. 30 days God hasn't spoken.

Well if it's coming to you you better learn that lovely hymn that who was it now? Founder of the Chandler Inland Mission. His favorite hymn. Hudson.

Hudson Taylor. Thank you. Jesus I am resting, resting in the joy of what thou art.

You know what? The psalmist says my heart is fixed. You better be watching it. In these days we're going into the most serious trouble America's ever been in.

If your heart isn't fixed you've got pieces. You know when we get in trouble we either go to pieces or we go to praises. One of the two.

There's no middle ground. The world's going to crack up round about us. The psalmist says my heart is fixed.

My emotions aren't fixed. My circumstances aren't fixed. My financial situation isn't fixed.

Nothing. My heart is fixed. I was raised a Methodist you know.

And boy how they used to sing rollicking hymns. My heart is fixed eternal God fixed on thee, fixed on thee and my mortal choice is made Christ for me. He is my prophet priest and king who did for me salvation

bring and while I breath I mean to sing Christ for me.

He's the same. He's the unchanging. Nobody can weaken God.

He has all power. Nobody can advise God. He has all wisdom.

Nobody can make God sour. He's holy. He never changes mind about you unless you violate his laws.

And if you do that he'll whip you and he should do. And me. But all he desires I come to maturity.

It's taking me a long while but I'm getting there. They told Mordecai Esther's words. Mordecai commanded to answer Esther.

Think not with thyself that thou shall escape the king's house more than the rest of the Jews. For if, listen, for if thou altogether hold thy peace at this time then shall there be an enlargement and a deliverance arise to the Jews out of another place. Come on.

If you don't do that thing that God's done do you know what you'll do? I'll tell you what you'll do. You'll walk around the streets of eternity the rest of eternity and watch somebody who's wearing your crown. Isn't that what John says? Hold fast to that which thou hast that no man, not demon and not deacons.

No man take thy crown. God has a job for you to do and he's going to give you a special crown for doing it. And you don't do it you drop it you quit.

So somebody will walk eternity and Gabriel would say you see that crown with lustrous diadems and all the jewels in it that was made for you but you flunked. You got faint-hearted you gave up. You can't buy that crown.

Hold fast to that which thou, if you don't do it Esther somebody else is going to come up. Now talk to a devout Jew. One of the most esteemed people in the Old Testament is this woman Esther because she got the nation out of trouble.

They still have a feast of Purim and they exalt and thank God for the deliverance. Now we come to the most quoted part of this marvelous little book. If thou altogether hold thy peace at this time there shall be an enlargement or a deliverance come from another place.

But thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed. Is that severe? Do God's will be blotted out? You see are you talking about my salvation? No, I'm talking about your reward. I'm talking about the path that God has chosen for you and you deliberately turn from it.

I got a paper this week about where a fellow telling a sermon he says again this people in the New Testament in Revelation they lost their first love. The scripture doesn't say that. It says they left it.

I got this watch and it's got a strange clasp on it and time and again I lose it. I find it in the garden. I find it somewhere.

Now if I knew where it was I'd go back and find it but I lost it. But they didn't lose it they chose another love. You can choose a career that you love even in the kingdom of God so called even in the work of God but it's God's second best and you won't get the reward he has for you.

Remember basically the basic ethic is dear Duncan Campbell brother here got a brother here from Australia nice to have you tonight. Ask him if I knew Duncan. I prayed with Duncan Campbell many times between five and six in the morning.

I told him about the revival that he had. Though he shunned all you couldn't put any pin anything on him he'd say I had nothing to do with it. And being a good strong Presbyterian he said I believe in the sovereignty of God but also he has human agents through which he human agencies.

If you don't want to be the human agency get out of the way somebody else is coming in. But listen to this the most quoted part of this wonderful book I think is at the end of this verse Arise the Jews will be delivered from another place but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed or they shall perish. Who knows whether thou come to the kingdom for such a time as this.

Do you think if the saints of the age if the Apostle Paul had had the option of living in that day or living in this day do you think it would have lived today? With more heresies with more heretics? And yet God got hold of that man with all his frailty. And according to history it's only about five foot too high and he had a hunchback if you can trust tradition. But to use Kipling's words he put on his seven league boots and he strode over Asia and you get your bible and go through all the ways he went and remember he didn't travel by jet or an automobile he went walked or he went on the back of an animal.

It's incredible. You talk about Marco Polo forget Marco Polo. Here is a man inspired with a holy zeal.

He had a fire that couldn't be quenched. They couldn't whip God out of him. They tried to starve him.

They couldn't starve God out of him. They threatened him they couldn't threaten God out of him. He knew God's will and he did it come hell or high water.

In tribulation in distress in famine in peril in nakedness sword in perils of the deep in perils of my known countrymen and he goes on stacking up enough to kill a hundred men. By his own testimony he says I died daily and I believe every time I died daily I died to something I make Jesus happy. He says you should be witnesses unto me.

They'd witnessed to the world already. They'd healed the sick and cleansed the lepers and ran the dead before Pentecost. But Jesus says you'll be a witness unto me.

I'm on my throne. Every time you die to something you're witnessing to me of your love of your devotion of your sacrifice. Though that word sacrifice is not in the vocabulary of people in love.

You don't ever use that word it's an abomination. Who knows if you'll come to the kingdom for such time as this. Verse 15 and Esther bade them return to Mordecai with this answer.

What was the answer? Go gather together the Jews that are present in Shushan and fast for me and neither eat nor drink for three days and nights. Come on queens don't do this. You command them you tell them what to do.

But just find those people whose hearts are beating like my heart. Who love as I love. Who want the glory of God as I want it.

Just get that little nucleus if need be out of the nation. Let them fast for me. Eat nor drink for three days or nights.

I also will and my maidens will fast likewise. What did they think in the palace? Queen Vashti never did this stupid thing. This new young bride he's got she's nuts.

She doesn't want the best garments. She isn't always tripping around with a crown on looking in the mirror. There's something got her.

Yes God had got her. And she said nobody's going to take my crown. I'm going to do the will of God.

We will fast likewise. Which is not according to the law. I will go into the king which is not according to the law.

And if I perish I perish. Come on. Can you turn back on your creature comforts some of you young folk and say if I perish up the Amazon nobody buries me so what? The first book that Norman Grubb wrote was about a young man in the British Air Force.

Six feet four in his stocking feet. Fenton Hall. A young Irishman.

He was a champion cricketer, champion boxer, heavyweight boxer in the Royal Air Force in England. Champion tennis player, champion everything. And he went up the Amazon.

And he laid there he went there and he was only there three weeks and he died. And people said what? A handsome brilliant man what's God doing? Well he died for ignorance because there was a rotten tree. And there was some water he wanted water and he drank it.

Well the Indians used to pardon if they still do used to put poison in that water so that when the animals came they'd be paralyzed or even die. And Fenton Hall drank it. And all he had was one young Indian boy with him.

And that young Indian boy saw Christ in his master. And afterwards came to Christ and became a wonderful disciple. I'll go into the king it's not according to law.

Dear God you you live under denominational law most of you. My church says this. My church says that.

My church says all the church will be raptured. Well they don't know the bible that's all there is to it. God didn't take the whole of Adam and make a bride.

He took a part of him and made a bride. And I believe the church it comes out of the world and the and the and the bride comes out of the church. God's very particular.

Well you know what this man's going to do? He's going to get rid of this man if he can. He's going to get rid of Haman. Verse 9 of the fifth chapter says Haman went forth that day joyful with a glad heart.

But when Haman saw Mordecai you see he thought he was going to the king's banquet and he was going to be the only guest there. But boy when he saw that Jew there he was mad. Mordecai went to the king's gate and he stood not up nor moved him for he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

Verse 12 Haman said moreover yea Esther the queen did let no man come in with a king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself. You see I'm number one that's all there is to it. And tomorrow I'm to invited her also with the king.

But he had a bit of trouble look at chapter 6 verse 1. That night could not the king sleep. Isn't that great? You thought there's no fun in the bible? What's this man the lording on a rope? Come on would you allow to be loud? Here is his here's the rope and here's a man dangling on the end of it. There's some very gorgeous lions all hungry.

And he's going down on the rope and one of them is going to eat him. And they decide not to. So he goes around and feels which one has the softest belly because he didn't like a hard pillow.

So he found the softest belly of the lion and laid his head there. And the kings walked pacing the room upstairs. He thought somebody filled his pillow with broken glass.

I can't sleep. Hey Daniel how are you doing? Oh great I'm having a great time down here. You're having a great time? Yeah yes.

The god of the universe has shut the mouths of the lions. What do we will do when we say the lions are coming? We call the pastors and elders and deacons and say please help me I'm in a tough spot. And we get out and we're as weak as when we went in it.

But as a little boy said the lions couldn't eat Daniel. He was all backbone and grit. He was all faith and determination.

Chapter 8 verse 1. On that day did king Asaurus ask king Jack give the house of Haman the Jews enemy unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king and Esther told him what he was unto her. The king took off his ring which he had taken from Haman and gave it to Mordecai.

Now look Esther set Mordecai. There's her influence. She's been crowned.

She has royal authority. And she sets this man up in the right way not in the wrong way. She set up Mordecai so she had authority.

Or if you like she had influence and she had affluence because she was a queen. Verse 3. Esther spake yet before the king and fell down at his feet and besought him with tears. Come on you get booted out you don't do that.

I mean this man isn't used to this kind of thing. You may have heard about your ancestors doing that. Oh yes she prayed and she besought him with tears to put away the mischief.

You know we want to pray without tears don't we? And yet Jesus Hebrew says with strong crying and with tears. I've turned that over and over in my mind this week so much. Jesus being in an agony.

Why was he in an agony? He knew he was coming out victorious. He knew he was going to shatter the tomb. He knew he was going to rise and lead captivity captive.

That what did he do? He had strong crying and tears gaining strength before he went into the issue of Gethsemane. Now this woman requests people to fast and weep and sustain her because she's the solitary figure in a foreign heathen court. She fell at his feet.

Queens don't do that. A lot of things you don't do till you're up against the wall. Lots of things God can't get enough because we're so comfortable and padded and we've already fixed our schedule for the next year.

I'm doing this that that that that that and the Lord says well God do it. Be as stupid as you were last year. Finish the year as dry as you finished last year.

I was reading that prayer again here. What we say exceptional situations demand except exceptional deliverance. Exceptional problems demand exceptional menace.

Something I can't get the right quote just there. You know I keep telling you and it's as bad for England as it is for America. You know God has delivered us over and over and over and over again.

Do you remember when we got a man on the moon and Mr. poor soul that he was, Nixon. Do you know 18 different preachers preached to Nixon in the White House. Not one of them got through to him.

God helped them on the judgment day. Why didn't some man pull the bolt and say listen I'll give you both bullets here. We've been delivered again and again again and what do we do? Are we more divorces? With more immorality? With more venereal disease? What did they say yesterday? A million girls under 16 years of age.

In fact they said on the news this morning girls at 11 and 12 who are still children are bearing children. Yes you say there's no fear of God amongst the people. I've got news for you there's no fear of God in his house never mind in the street.

Do you tiptoe into the sanctuary? Do you tiptoe out of it? You've had a confrontation with deity. A confrontation with eternity. You've been snatched out of time and the smelly stinky things that belong to it and you've seen God in his holiness and his majesty and your soul says God I want to come there.

But it'll glorify you more if I stay here and you make me a holy man a holy daddy a holy mummy. The fault isn't in the courts the fault is in the homes. With people parading put the bible back in school they don't have to have the bible back in the homes.

Put prayer back in school they don't have prayer in their own homes. To use a phrase of dear old Jimmy Swaggart America's going to hell in a basket and so are the other so-called christian nations. So anyhow God has delivered these people he opened heaven he sent the manna from heaven every day the clothes didn't wear out shoes didn't wear out for 40 years split the rock and the water came out.

Every conceivable blessing they had and what did they do? When the man of God went to thank God on the mountain they made them gathered all the rarings and junk and the man of God who'd been anointed to wear a plate across his forehead with holiness unto the Lord he throws all the stuff into a cauldron there and he says a calf jumped out. You see when you do some stupid thing you lie about it anyhow. And they began to throw off their clothes and dance around.

These were the people have been delivered they screamed to God because the enemy was following them. God delivered them and now God's done the other thing. Let me just read it quickly Exodus 32 and verse 11 or verse 10.

There's an old method I've got to find that old Methodist hymn it's a paraphrase of this scripture. You know the most amazing people said to Billy Graham a thousand times why did God choose you? He said I don't know that's the first thing I'll ask him when I get there. It's a wonderful thing when God in heaven reaches down and takes hold of a man there's only one thing more wonderful that's when a man on earth reaches up and takes hold of God.

Now what does it say there in the 32nd chapter verse 10? God is talking to Moses says let me alone the paraphrase in the Methodist hymn book says let Moses in the spirit groan and God cries out let me alone. That's not Moses crying because God has a grip on him it's God crying because Moses has a grip on him. Ever been in a prayer meeting like that? You felt somebody was praying they had a grip on God you said oh I hope the prayer meeting won't finish.

That's the language we've got to learn. We've got to get to the place where we say God almighty I don't care if I perish I perish if my friends cut me off if my people won't own me if my church don't want me so what? Again do you expect better treatment than Jesus God? What happened this man Moses got so near to the heart of God he felt the heat of God's heart he felt the anger of God's heart and it came on him. You say why does it come on me? Because you don't get near enough to God that's why.

We're so earthbound we've already got a plan to go shopping half an hour we get up from our knees and a shop to go a place to go somewhere else. Let Moses in the spirit go and God cries out let me and then he says listen in verse 12 he says turn from thy fierce wrath and repent of this evil against thy people. God has a wrath and a fierce wrath.

You see the poor stupid world doesn't know tonight it has an option it can accept the blood of the lamb or the wrath of the lamb and the blood isn't going to hold its virtue much longer and when God cuts off the blood or the virtue the virtue it's going to be the wrath of the lamb. So God is angry turn from thy fierce wrath. Now go down to verse 22 Aaron said let not the anger of the Lord my Lord wax hot.

Who's he talking to? He's talking to Moses. Moses has got a measure of God's heart he's been up on the mountain there alone he's left everybody he's left us two million Jews he's left the seventies left the other select group and he's up there by himself. Go back and read a bit previously don't read it just now.

God says I have called I have called Moses alone. Well hasn't he done that always with men? Let me go back again and read this quickly now time's gone. Esther chapter 8 and verse 3 Esther said she spake yet down before the king and fell at his feet.

She didn't care about the royal robes she didn't care about the servants saying hey what's she groveling down there for? That's not dignified that's not the right thing to do that's not according to royal protocol. Oh this will be so make the king so unhappy she's not caring who's unhappy as long as she gets her people delivered. She came in tears put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite and his device that is devised against the Jews.

Now look at verse 6 if this hasn't got passion in it in God's name tell me what has. For how can I endure to see this evil that shall come upon my people? That reminds me of Spencer when he prays for the Indians here two and a quarter million Indians in America we don't do a thing for them let them go to hell anyhow. Sure they're superstitious sure they don't have our culture.

We would have been savages but for the grace of God. If Paul and obeyed God and come where he came to Macedonia if he'd gone the other way to India, India would be evangelized now we'd be in heathen darkness. But he obeyed God against all the odds.

Listen how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? How can I endure to see the destruction? Come on she doesn't say well I'm a princess and it's really beneath my dignity of course. I just feel like letting my husband know so instead of falling I'll sit on his knee and say darling you know I've

won a two petitions I want to ask you another two questions. She doesn't care a hill of beans for devils or kings or anybody.

She doesn't care about the criticism of the royal court or the soldiers that are there to guard him. I can't endure this. I can't endure to see the I'm not satisfied with the royal palace.

I'm not satisfied with royal robes. I'm not satisfied with a crown. There's something more than that.

Those things have no life. I'm concerned only with life. I'm concerned with the people who are going to be liquidated.

My people. And so she prays and God in his infinite mercy answers. You know what happens? Haman made what? Gallows.

Made them for in the ninth verse of the previous chapter. Harbonah one of the chamberlains said before the king behold also the gallows are 50 cubits high which Haman has made for Mordecai. And verse 6, 10 says so they hanged Haman on the gallows.

Isn't that great? He made his own gallows. He made them so they wouldn't break and they didn't. You know you do something evil to somebody.

This brother's from Australia. I was asking him in the house tonight. You know I've heard them talk about a boomerang.

You know they throw a boomerang. He said you throw it and it comes back to it. It only comes back to you if you miss your target.

And if you slander and scorn and blast some Christian and they're in prayer you'll miss your target it'll come back on you. And the thing you're miserable about now is something you throw out at somebody else. That misery will come back to you compounded.

I wonder what he felt like when they put around it no rope around his neck hanging on the gallows in himself. That must have been fun. At least I would have thought so.

As long as it wasn't around my neck of course. But don't you see all through the story of this woman there's passion. I think it's in the old version of that hymn lest I forget that Gethsemane says fill me oh God with thy desire for all who know not thee.

Then touch my lips with holy fire to speak of Calvary. This woman makes a petition with wet eyes. Let me tell you what I told the preachers the other week.

I'd tell all the preachers now. A wet eyed preacher can never preach dry sermons. It's not possible.

Whether he weeps publicly or weeps secretly he weeps. This isn't he's not playing games. If I perish I perish.

So what isn't it better for me to perish than my old generation perish. Doesn't it come down to that. Accept a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die and it's a hard business.

I've told you before let me say it again the perpetual challenge in my judgment the perpetual challenge to the Christian is come down from the cross and save yourself. Other people don't fast like you. Other

people don't weep like you.

Other people don't live as cautiously. They don't give most of their money away. Why don't you be like them.

God knows because I don't want to be like them in heaven that's why. I'm not going to serve God to the ultimate so I can get the best reward from him. But I want him to say well done thou good and faithful servant.

That while I were on this stretch this mortality is soon going to put an immortality. This corruption soon going to put on incorruption. Well whose will these things be.

If you die the richest man in Texas does it matter. It'll give you no priority in heaven. If you die the wisest man if you die the most brilliant politician so what.

You know the devil's a I'll tell you what he is a devil. But he's so deceived he's so tricks people. And the people are getting most deceived today are in the so-called church of Jesus Christ.

No passion no vision. You talk to your pastor about having a half night of prayer. Say you heard a crazy Englishman talking about a woman who as a queen would crumble herself at the feet.

And it didn't matter about her royal robes. It didn't matter about the crown. She put that on one side.

She's here heartbroken. She's got everything life can give her but she's not concerned about life on that level. She's concerned on the life of others.

You know when you'll get victory you'll get victory when you get rid of yourself. You get tired out carrying yourself around your self-will your self-interest your self-concern. Forget it.

As I say as soon as you're willing to be thought the off scouring to be thought a fool. As I thought of this again I thought of the royal people looking on. Oh Queen Vashti was so different.

This woman's so erratic. She goes in a room and locks herself up and I hear her calling God father of Abraham here we are we're in captivity again send us a deliverer. Why doesn't she enjoy the royal carriage and go riding around? Why doesn't she enjoy all her clothes? Why doesn't she enjoy all the privileges? She can't because the people God loves are being hurt and she loves and she wants to hurt with them.

And that's something when you want to hurt with God. God is hurting. Our dear son Paul said to me the other day daddy we forget.

People forget God is hurting. He is. And Blair Paschal may be the most brilliant man that ever lived.

He said Jesus Christ when he died he died of a broken heart and he said he still suffers for his church and I believe he does. I believe he doesn't have to weep in one sense over the world isn't everything he can for them. He weeps over a broken church a paralyzed church an ineffective church.

A church that loves materialism like the rest of people. A church that's afraid and to be humiliated to be considered ridiculous. A church that won't wear sackcloth and ashes therefore it gets no glory.

A church of people that won't get out of the way so God can come in on the way. If I perish I perish so what? What a wonderful way to die doing the will of God. You're better to die on an unknown shore with animals tearing your flesh up.

But marked in the calendar of God there lies a man. You know the shortest biography in the bible? What's the shortest biography in the bible? I've never found a clue about him. It just says Antipas my faithful martyr.

How did he die? There was a time when they pulled people's fingernails off and chopped the fingers off one at a time and dismembered their bodies. How did Antipas die? I don't know but he was a faithful martyr and there are five crowns at least we're going to get in eternity and one of them is the crown of the martyr. That doesn't mean you have to be burned at stake and be a martyr in your own home.

You can be rejected in your own home by your own wife or your own husband. You can be a martyr in your own church. He's eccentric.

He's a holy joy. He thinks he's holy and everybody else. I'll tell you what it may be a bit embarrassing when somebody says that here.

It won't be embarrassing when you're around his throne and God says this precious man took all the scorn and ridicule he was thought the most out of step ridiculous man too sacrificial prayed too much even wept when he was praying. So what in God's name? We're so like this rotten old world in which we live that they'll go to a movie and weep and sob over some stupid story and they pay to do it and you can come here tonight and cry for nothing. Well have I said enough? I think I have.

Well I guess we usually spend about an hour in prayer. If you can't stay we'll understand that. Oh let's sing one day.

Somebody wanted Days Dying in the West. Sing a couple of stanzas of it. What number is it? Anybody remember? 29?

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