

Esther - Prayer Meeting

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of identifying with those who are mourning and fasting, and being willing to take a stand for what is right, even in the face of adversity.

Duration: 1:07:21

Scripture: Exodus 32:11, Exodus 32:22, Matthew 22:14, Mark 1:17, Acts 9:4

Topics: "Brokenness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a fixed heart in times of trouble. He warns that America is heading towards serious trouble and those whose hearts are not fixed will go to pieces. The preacher encourages believers to trust in God and not fear man, even in the face of persecution. He also highlights the story of Daniel and the lions, illustrating how God can shut the mouths of the lions and protect His faithful servants. The sermon concludes with a mention of a man who is prepared to pay a large sum of money, emphasizing the concept of talents as money in the biblical context.

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. It must have led to 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. I'm glad you've felt in Christian you Ahasuerus.

I like Do better than Ahasuerus Brown. Sounds better. Maybe not as musical, but it sounds better.

Well you know women have always been rebels. And see chapter 1 verse 11. The rebel queen Vashti, the queen to come before the king.

With the crown royal to show the people and the princes 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.

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

Then another says darling stand a minute and she throws a cloak over her. Snow white beautiful gown you know. I was going to say dresses in China.

That wouldn't fit her. What do you call it? Dresses lace. No you better get your wedding garment down here.

There are 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 what it is ask Dale after the meeting. Then 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 only 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 Valens. Verse 12. The Queen Vashti refused to come to the King's commandment.

By his chamberlains wherefore was the King very wrath 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 2 verse 1. After these things when the wrath of King Ahasuerus 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 timber and all those things? We had a man in England who didn't read very well.

He was 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 a king. And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces or states we would say in his kingdom.

Then they gathered together all the fair young virgins to Shushan the palace. To the house of the women into the custody of Hegi the king's chamberlain. Keeper of the women and let their things be given to them for purification.

And let the maidens which pleased with 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 Jair. The son of Shimei the son of Kish. Now who else do you remember in the Old Testament? The son of Kish.

Saul the son of Kish. But it says this man was the 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 in your place on the same page. Chapter 2 in verse 15 the end of it. Esther obtained favor in the sight of all men that looked upon her.

So Esther was taken into the king Jack in his house in the tenth month. Which is the tenth 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 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 had been selected as the queen of the whole lot. She had 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 Hamabetha.

An agagite. Well does that take you back to King Saul? An agagite. What did God say to Saul? Saul told him 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 he won't let you go to 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 and did 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. Three hundred and fifty men marching and they asked her what she thought of it.

She said it was wonderful. 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 sometime. 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. It isn't a company, a bridegroom company that is. It isn't part of the bride.

They are 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 is going to liquidate the Jews.

I think I remember the other week. That man, what was his name? Oberfeichmann 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 that the gentleman seen. He has to face them.

Nobody gets by with anything. We fool ourselves. Because God just today he forgot 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 are all going to stand at a judgment seat of Christ.

I am trying to write a book on that now. And it stirs me. It 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. Talents in the word of God are always money.

Talents of gold and talents of silver. The others are gifts. Not talents.

But he is going to pay out ten thousand talents of silver. To those that have charges of 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 Hamabethiah.

The Agag out. And the Jews enemy. And the king said unto Haman the silver is given to thee.

The people are so. Now here is a man who is going to liquidate them. And he is 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 four. Please verse one.

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 heart and not your garments. But wait a minute. They are 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 is the most stupid thing you can do.

But you can't have your life turned over to him. Meet the devil where he is. Go in the middle of the city.

He is the marked man for God. And he is not afraid of the enemies. It is 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.

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 herald against him, what does it matter? When the devil said 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. In God's name I am reconquering the world. What are we sitting in a back corner whimpering Esau? You know.

Some people think if we get some good, if Pat Robinson runs and Jerry Falwell runs at the side, where will they run us? They'll 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're blessed, we know the many of the nations in the world, we know Bibles, we know there are three, there are six. What is it now? What's the population of America? Two hundred, two hundred and thirty million? Well, there are three Bibles for every person in America, not every home, every person. Nobody in the world has that.

We've no Bible schools in any other nation in the world. We've no 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 commissions? 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 him saying, hey, look who he is? That man's a Jew, he should be destroyed.

He'll go down the road, he'll get murdered 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 show me, that's the greatest way to heaven. If they put you in prison for twenty 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 his brother, the king had commanded, it was decreed there was great mourning among the Jews and fasting and weeping and wailing. Come on.

Are we going to have to, I've said to you often, I'll say it again. I think our option right now, is to concentrate on prayer, or prone 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 neighbourhood where everybody went in the street one day and started howling and weeping and groaning and jouting? Boy, they'd lock us and put us in an insane asylum. Insane asylum.

People say, we want to go back to Pentecostal, that's something we do. Do you want to go back to a service where Sunday morning, the first thing the pastor does, 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?

All down in the Athens of Paris, stinking old hypocrites, they've broken the hearts of the last six pastors of the church priest.

I went to a church where they asked me would I pray for a moment. He's about 90 years of age and he's very near to death and he's brought so many things for the church. Of course, he's the most cantankerous man we've ever had.

He broke the hearts of the last three pastors. Would you pray with us? I said, sure, I'll pray God will kill him tonight. The lady said, you mean that? I said, sure, get the old hypocrite out of the way.

He said, 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've 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, I was convinced. Do you think nobody can love these 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. 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 of the fish or something. I don't like that fish thing.

It doesn't smell 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 prostrating in sackcloth and in ashes. So Esther's maids came and her chamberlains came and told her then was the Queen exceedingly grieved.

And she sent Raymond. She sent Cloth. Oh, well, the scene's up before here.

And what for? So Esther's maids and her 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 those that mourn. See, it 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 don't have the joy of the Lord, you can have silliness, you can have frivolity, and 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 Barnabas, Go labour 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's father and his mother, they didn't.

They knew his mother, they didn't know his father. But we think all his life they said, God didn't say 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 then we're verse 4 again. The Queen sent Romans of class to Lord Aki.

Do you think she'll send him some junk? She'll send him some royal robes, she'll send him something with distinction. And he says, no I'm sticking here, this is where 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 knock your arm and say Lord let me be rejected as you are rejected.

Let me be despised as you are despised. You see if he won't comfort you unless your heart is broken. You hear people say, I don't answer the Lord.

I mean like my darling daughter-in-law said a while ago, I just felt the arms of Jesus around me. He's so benign in his love. Why? Because she brings her 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 bow 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. Bow, bow, bow of me, bow of me gold.

Gold is typical of divinity. I bow 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 lengths and breadth of England and I'm looking at all those men there.

Almost all of them are dead now. Stupid 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.

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'd pray more, we went down by the river to pray.

We'd have a night of prayer and then we'd go back to England. And they got into an ordination which is a step downward anyhow. There's only one ordination and 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 an earlier than that case? 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'll keep that ordination or if you like unction or divine anointing as long as we're obedient. I want to get on here a bit.

I want to take his sack off from him. But he wouldn't take it. It 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 or a king, enter the inner court without being called.

Come on now. As the scripture says, many are called but 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 mercy, Savior may we hear thy call. There are periods in your life where you have to get to a crossroad 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 or woman can go to him of course where he's not called. There is one law of his that shall put him to death such to whom the king shall hold out a golden scepter that he may live.

But I have not been called to come into a king for 30 days. Come on. What happened to you when you didn't hear God's voice for 30 days? God sometimes can't be lonely 30 hours.

When God is driving you to your knees and he shuts off communication since it's the only way to get out of tension. 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 because he pours his living life into me.

I can't live on my theology. You can't love theology. If 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 tonight.

I have not been called to come into a king these 30 days. How do you think she felt? She's in a court where everybody despised her. Every other woman in the hair of that's what it was, envied her.

And yet for 30 days 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? When the Lord stopped Saul on the road to Damascus have you noticed what he said? You know, the Lord pitched him up his horse.

He must have been on a horse. He wouldn't have been going to Damascus that way or that way walking. Take him the rest of his life.

And he's down in the dust. He bouts the dust. And he didn't say, Lord why? He said, Lord what? What? You've suddenly put a roadblock here.

What is it? And the Lord sent him on a horse and he said, go and tell him what he must suffer. No, he didn't say that. Tell him what great things he must suffer.

Oh, it's about psychology. It's about the special crown in heaven if it's in the church league. And the boy whispered in his ear, listen.

Son, I want to tell you something. Go on and be a professional ball porter if you like, but right now God is calling you. I'm telling 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. And I was sitting at the end of the seat and somebody said, she's coming. She's at the door, she's coming in.

I looked past, you know. Wait, don't throw your handbooks at me. She's got the most beautiful legs I've ever seen.

She's about 55. Do you know what they look like? They look as though down their stockings she'd golf balls all the way. Big, big bumps, bitten with bugs.

Bitten with all kinds of things. Her whole body was out of shape. And yet she goes up the Amazon where men won't go.

And she's a paddler 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 were being saved. You see, when they got 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 with these adults and he looked at that precious little woman. Where were we? Just outside of Chicago there.

Sixty 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 bet her. Where's Spencer? Oh, Spencer. You'd better get with her, boys.

Or we'll bring her up to your tribe. But you see what can be done? She refuses to accept anything that's garments. That blessed woman hasn't anything worth five bucks.

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

Who have to dress and show off. You know, I went over on this coat years ago. I've had it about five years and I put it on the other day.

A moth has eaten a dirty thing. Look, it's made a, it's been 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. I don't eat any more of my stuff. The king hasn't called me for 30 days.

Come on, don't panic. God isn't speaking with me, but his word seems dry. Prayer is dry.

So what? Has God changed? You've changed, your emotions have changed. You go up and down according to what somebody says to you. You don't deserve, stayed on God.

Have you seen 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 a prostitute, it makes no difference. He shouldn't worry you that much. Oh well, I have a reputation, I'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 after some dirty film.

No, you're not going to do that. Because the more the love of God is shed of God in your heart, the more you love Him. And the other things they see seems to make magnetizers.

I said to my darling wife, I think we're great, or some of us were, well anyhow, I think you know what 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

the Olympic Games 400 years before Jesus was born.

Paul refers to the running races and all the rest of it, wrestling. What does he say? Oh, I went and I saw the championship, heavyweight championship. He 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 from all those damn things that don't mean a hill of beans. I take pleasure in everything this world disposes.

I despise those who despise the gospel and the pure sense of the world. Thirty days, God hasn't spoken. But if it's coming to you, you better learn that lovely hymn that, I'll write it now.

Founder of the China Inland Mission, his favorite hymn, Hudson. Hudson told us, thank you, Jesus I am resting, resting in the joy of what thou art. You know, the psalmist says, my heart is fixed, you better be watching it.

In these days, we're getting into the most serious trouble America's ever been in. If your heart isn't fixed, you'll go to 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. But the psalmist says, my heart is fixed, my emotions aren't fixed, my circumstances aren't fixed, my financial situation isn't fixed, my heart is fixed.

I was raised a Methodist, you know, and boy, I used to sing reliquing hymns, my heart is fixed, eternal God, fixed on thee, fixed on thee, and my immortal 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'll never change his mind about you unless you violate his laws. And if you do that, God will work 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, a rise to the Jews' Adam and of Paris. Come on. If you don't do that thing that God has done to you, I'll tell you what you'll do.

You'll walk around the streets of eternity, the rest of eternity and watch somebody is wearing your crown. Isn't that what John says? Hold fast to that which thou hast, no man, not demon, no 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're caught. So similarly walk around eternity and God will give you and God will 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 justice 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 exult and thank God for the deliverance.

Now we come to the most poetic part of this marvellous little book. If thou altogether hold thy peace at this time there shall be an enlargement or a deliverance come from another place. That 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 wants 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 Campbell 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 he couldn't put any pin anything on him he'd say I've nothing to do with it and being a good strong Christian he said I believe in the sovereignty of God but also he has human agents for which he human agency. If you don't want to believe in human agency get out of the way somebody else is coming in.

But listen to this the most poetic 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 he'd have lived today with more heresies with more heretics and yet God God's holding that man with all his cruelty and according to history he was only about 5 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 stood over H.M.M. you get your Bible and go through all the ways he went and remember he didn't travel by jet or an automobile he 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 terror in making a sword in perils of the deep in perils of man on continent and he goes on stacking up enough to kill a hundred men by his own testimony he says I believe I died daily and I believe every time I die daily I die to something I make Jesus happy he says you should be witnesses unto me they have witnessed to the world already they have healed the sick and cleansed the lepers and ran the dead before Pentecost but Jesus says you will be a witness unto me I am on my throne every time you die to something you are

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 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 of the 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 want 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 you think in the palace?

Queen Bastie 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 but something got her look 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 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 comfort 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 he went there and it was only five or three weeks and he died and people said what? a handsome brilliant man what's God doing? well he died for England because there was a rotten tree and there was some water he wanted water and he drank it well the Indians used to pardon as 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 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 comes out of the world 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 5th 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 yo Esther the queen did let no man come in with the 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 invite her also with the king but he had a bit of trouble look at chapter 6 verse 1 and that night could not the king sleep isn't that great he thought there's no fun in the Bible watch this man the lorry on a rope come on would you like to be nice here he is here's the rope and here's a man dangling on the end of it and here'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 round 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 king 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 yes yes the God of the universe has shut the mouths of the lions what do we 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 got out and we were as weak as when we went in it but as a little boy said the lions couldn't eat Daniel it was all backbone and grit it was all faith and determination so I'll tell you this one on that day did king Assurus 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 Hebrews says with strong

crying and with tears I've turned it 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 but 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 this solitary figure in a foreign heathen court she fell at his feet please don't do that there are lots of things you don't do until you're up against the wall lots of things God can't get in us 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 and the Lord says just

let God do it be as stupid as you were last year finish the year as dry as you finished last year I'll read that prayer again here what we say exceptional situations demand exceptional deliverance exceptional problems demand exceptional men there's something I can't get my right cord 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 a boulder and say listen I'll give you both bullets here we've been delivered again and again and 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 see 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 tip toe into the sanctuary do you tip toe 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 in his majesty and your soul says God I want to come there but 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 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 Saget America is 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 them manna

from heaven every day their clothes didn't wear out shoes didn't wear out for 40 years split a 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 him gathered all their earrings and junk and the man of God who'd been anointed to wear a plate across his forehead with wholeness 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 who'd 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 Methodist, 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 and what does it say there in the 32nd chapter verse 10 God is talking to Moses and 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 God crying because Moses has a grip on him ever been in a prayer meeting like that you felt somebody was praying to have 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 own me so what? again do I 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've already got a plan to go shopping half an hour we get up from our knees and we're supposed to go somewhere else let Moses in the spirit go and God cries out let me along 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 is 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 the two million Jews he's left the seventies he's left the other Syriac group and he's up there by himself go back and read it 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 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 Agarite and his devise that he has 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 there two and a quarter million Indians in America who don't do a thing for

them let them go to hell anyhow show the superstitious show they don't have our culture we would have been savages but for the grace of God if Paul and the other

way to India India would be evangelized now we would 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 Jesus will 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 want a true petition I want to ask him a true question 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 the royal robes I'm not satisfied with the

crown there's something more than that those things have no life I'm concerned only with life I'm concerned with the people going to be liquidated my people and so she prays and God has given her his infinite mercy do you know what happens Haman made what gallows made them in the ninth verse of the previous chapter Habona one of the chamberlains said before the king behold also the gallows are fifty cubits high which Haman has made from muddy kayak and verse six ten says so they hang 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 is 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 you it only comes back to you if you miss your target and if you slander and storm 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 at somebody else that misery will come back to you compounded I wonder what he felt like when they put a rope around his neck hanging on the gallows in Hainham Sir 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 about him lest I forget that Gethsemane it says fill me O God with thy desire for all who know not thee how did he die there's 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 you can 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 holier than 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? because it's 29 29

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