

YOU WERE MEANT FOR

THIS

LESSON 4

REASON

You should have it memorized by now, so say it together: You weren't meant for just *any* thing. You were meant for **THIS**. God has a very specific call on your life, a role to play or a job to do or a task to accomplish that only *you* can do. It isn't just *something* or *a* thing to be done, but rather a very specific thing you are called to do in **THIS** time, **THIS** place, with **THIS** group of people, for **THIS** reason.

Let's recap. We've talked about *time*, the specific moment in history in which you were born, and those things about you that you have no control over that make you who you are. We've discussed *place*, the geographic locations where you have influence in the world around you. And last time we narrowed the focus even further and talked about the *people* we find in those places, other humans we've been called to impact. Last week, we put those three things together, and you prayed for God to open a door for you to be able to reach out to someone specific. Time to share how that went...

Question 1: Did you have an opportunity to reach out to the person for whom you were praying? If so, how did it go? If not, share the reason why. (No judgment... it just helps in overcoming the hurdle if you address it.) Share!

Read Chapters 7 and 8 from the book of Esther in the Bible.

Esther clears her first hurdle. She approaches the King, and he listens. But Esther ain't no dummy. She knows she needs to schmooze him a little before getting to the real question. So, she invites him and

Haman to a banquet, and at that party invites him to yet another banquet, one a little a more intimate, again inviting Haman to join them. A little food. A little wine. The guard is down... so, Esther gets to the crux of the matter:

² On this second occasion, while they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, “Tell me what you want, Queen Esther. What is your request? I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!”

³ Queen Esther replied, “If I have found favor with the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my request, I ask that my life and the lives of my people will be spared.” (Esther 7:2-3 NLT)

Everything has culminated in this moment. We can only imagine how anxious, nervous, and scared Esther must have been, sitting in front of the king, her nemesis at the table, and the fate of her people all riding on this moment and Xerxes’s response. And what does he do? He runs out of the room. (He’s a bit of a drama king.) Sure, he’s a little miffed at Haman for the edict, (the one Xerxes himself approved, but whatevs, he’s the king), but he’s left Esther without an answer. Haman, now scared for his life, throws himself onto her couch to plead for mercy. The king sees this after his courtyard hissy fit and puts Haman to death. (Make sure to read this chapter, there’s lots more “fun” detail in the story!) And ultimately, this is where we’re left at the end of chapter 7. Yes, the bad guy is out of the way, but Esther and Mordecai still don’t know if their people will be saved.

Question 2: How patient of a person are you? Share a time when you had to wait for something important. How did the waiting affect you?

With Haman now out of the way, Esther, Mordecai, and King Xerxes can finally address the issue: the edict for the annihilation of the Jews. The King is in a bit of a bind, though, because he can’t just say he made a mistake, (God-Kings don’t make mistakes.) So, Esther and Mordecai do the only thing they can think of and issue a counteracting edict, allowing the Jews to defend themselves. (Next week, we’ll see if it works.)

Esther’s *THIS* all came together in this moment. She was born in a *time* of peril with the fate of her entire people hanging in the balance. She was living in the right *place* to do something about it, the capital of the Persian empire, Susa, which gave her the opportunity to become Queen with access to the palace and the court. She was with the right *person*, King Xerxes, who had the power to overturn the edict. And now, it all culminates in the *reason*... to save her people.

Reasons come in two categories, and Esther experienced a bit of both. The first type is the passion that God lays on our heart for a person, a people group, or a cause, and becomes the driving force for us to act. Mother Teresa had a passion for the poor and disenfranchised of India, which led her to devote her entire life to that cause. Esther’s driving force for her *THIS* was saving her people.

Question 3: What are you passionate about? Is there a person, group, or cause that is close to your heart that God might be leading you to pursue? Why is it so important to you?

The other category of *reasons* feels a little more spontaneous, at least as it appears to us. God often acts as a cosmic symphony conductor, weaving the music of our lives together with the harmonies of others in ways we could never predict or plan. And when God orchestrates something and then points the baton at us, we can either play our part or sit the song out. Esther found herself in the right place at the right time with the right person, and God pointed the baton at her and said, “Here’s your chance.” She chose to play her part.

These opportunities often feel very spur-of-the-moment. We just happen to be in the right time at the right place with the right person, and God whispers in our ear to act. The world would call them coincidences, but that’s not the way God writes the song.

Question 4: Have you ever had something happen that was just too perfectly orchestrated to be a coincidence? What was the outcome, and how did you see God orchestrating the events?

Sometimes, the reason God has in mind for our THIS is a passion or compassion for a person, a group of people, or a cause that drives us to seek out those times and places to act. In other cases, the reason for our THIS is something God has orchestrated without our conscious effort, and we just happen to find ourselves with the right folks and in the right time and place to act. Esther’s story has both. Your life has both. So, as we wrap up this series next week, put some prayer time and thought time into both categories. Is there a passion God has placed on your heart for a specific people or cause, where your time and place are all coming together, and you are being called to act? And keep your eyes open for those “coincidental” moments where God has orchestrated the time and place with a person to whom you are called to reach out. Then... play your part.