

ESTHER "QUENCHES" MORDECAI

Esther 4.10-12: Esther resists the words of Mordecai and "quenches" him

Theme: Cleanse yourself of the filthiness of the spirit that manifests itself in bad attitudes and wrong values.

(v6-9) Esther just found out what the problem is... and what the solution to that problem is.

- (v1-2) Mordecai is grieving over Haman's decree of sin and death (decree to kill all the Jews).
- (v4) Esther is ignorant of the decree, but... (v5-9) she finds out quick enough the "what" and the "why."
- (v8) And when Mordecai let's her know about the "what" and the "why," he gives your a *charge* (a task, a mission, a duty, a responsibility). He gives her the solution to the problem.

Today we're going to see Esther's reaction and response to that solution... and it's not good.

- Esther's reaction and response is a picture of what Paul calls "quenching" the Spirit (1Thes 5.19).
- And that means that this morning, we are going to have some things to say *about* ourselves, and *to* ourselves, that are going to be uncomfortable. Why is that...?
- Because we do the same thing Esther does. She quenched Mordecai and we quench the Spirit...

I. (v10) Esther Responds to Mordecai's Charge

A. Remember what Esther now knows...

1. She knows what is happening in the kingdom.
2. She knows that all of the Jews in the whole kingdom are condemned to death.
3. She knows what she *should* do (because Mordecai just "charged" her to do it).
4. She knows she is the right person, in the right place, for the job that needs to be done.
5. But, she doesn't want to do it and she responds to Mordecai telling him she doesn't want to do it.

B. Remember that Esther is a picture of us, and the filthiness in our spirits...

1. (v 1-2 cf. Eph 4.30) Our decision to follow the flesh *grieves* the Spirit of God living in us.
2. (v6-9) And through the words of truth (Hatach) the Holy Spirit shows us in great detail what the problem is and what our part in the solution to that problem is.
3. (v10-12 cf. 1Thes 5.19) What we often do next is the same thing we see Esther doing: We *quench* the Spirit of God.
 - a) We *grieve* the Holy Spirit of God when we make decisions that are "less than the best."
 - b) We *quench* the Holy Spirit of God when we say, "No!" to something He has told us to do.
4. And this response to the Spirit's "charge" is because of filthiness in our spirits (Esther has some problems: she has her values all mixed up and because of that she has attitude problems).
 - a) In the next verse we can see this "filthiness of our spirits" in a bit more detail.
 - b) And that means that in the next verse, things are going to get uncomfortable for us because we are going to see *four* aspects of Esther's problem... *four* things we might see in our lives, too...

II. (v11) Esther Rebels against Mordecai's Charge

A. Esther's Indifference

1. Again, think about what Esther now knows...
 - a) (Est 3.13) All Jews (men, women, children) are under Haman's sentence of death. All of them!
 - b) (Est 4.7-9) She knows what she *ought* to do because Mordecai just told her: Go and intercede!

2. What does Esther do now that she knows?
 - a) She throws out excuses for not wanting to do it!
 - b) She is *indifferent* toward the plight of her people! And if you look at verse 13, you can see that Mordecai puts his finger square on the problem: She's thinking of herself!
 - c) She is not thinking about saving others; she's thinking that she can save herself!
 - d) She's "uncomfortable" with the idea of *trying* to save others... so she starts making up excuses.
3. We do the same thing today.
 - a) Apathy and indifference toward the plight of the lost are rampant in churches today!
 - b) Men, women, and children all around us are condemned by the "law of sin and death" (and they will die and suffer the "eternal death" of the lake of fire—the "second death").
 - c) Do we care?
 - (1) Most people don't. Most Christians don't. Most churches don't.
 - (2) Most churches are more interested in their comfortable, entertainment-oriented "church services" than they are in actually fulfilling the biblical charge to seek and save the lost.
 - (3) Why? Because it's uncomfortable. It's a risk. It requires that one "die to self." It might require a change (radical change!) in your weekly routine... or even... *your lifestyle!*
 - d) (2Cor 5.18-19) Our charge is clear: We are called to intercede for the lives of the lost!
 - (1) But, when that charge goes out, most will be like Esther: Apathetic and indifferent.
 - (2) And so they, like Esther, will bring out any and every excuse they can to *not* do it.
 - e) We need to recognize this for what it is: (2Cor 7.1) It is filthiness of the flesh and spirit.
 - (1) (1Thes 5.19) Our indifference is sin... and it *quenches* the Spirit who has *charged* us with the task of seeking and saving the lost.
 - (2) (Rev 3.14-17) It's the sin of the Laodicean church:
 - (a) We're not "cold" (we still come to Sunday services, we still tithe, we still get those fish stickers for the back of our cars, along with the "in God we trust" license plates).
 - (b) But, we're not "hot." We're still not "all the way in" (sold out!). We are not "zealous."
 - (3) (Rev 3.18-19) And so we need a good "wash": Cleanse ourselves of this filthiness. Repent! Repent of our indifference toward the plight of the lost and... *do something about it!*

B. Esther's Lack of Faith in God

1. (v11) What are the first words out of Esther's mouth when she responds to Mordecai?
 - a) Does she mention God? Does she mention the Lord's promises or His faithfulness? Nope.
 - b) She mentions "all the king's servants" and "the people."
 - c) Where is her "affection" set? on things above? or on things on this earth? on God or men?
 - d) Her words betray her heart: She has *no* faith in God; she is relying on what *men* say.
2. This, too, is filthiness we find in ourselves: A lack of faith in God.
 - a) Use the Bible and its principles and patterns to evaluate your own life (your own self):
 - (1) (Php 3.8) Are you like Paul who trusted God enough to suffer the loss of *all* things (job, reputation, friends, reputation...)?
 - (2) (Acts 13.13) Or are you like John Mark who, when things got a little rough (when it cost him something), he packed up his stuff and went home?

- b) Faith in God is a decision (a choice) you make to step out and trust what the Word of God says.
 - (1) It is taking the Bible as a manual for your life, and adjusting your life to live by it!
 - (2) It's not some magical, mystical walk in the clouds. It's uncomfortable and costly.
- 3. And, though a lack of faith will result in many things, there is one thing it always produces...

C. Esther's Cowardice

1. If you lack faith in God, I guarantee you be a coward when challenged to do something you don't want to (like Esther), something that requires sacrifice, something that intimidates you.
2. Esther is reacting out of cowardice:
 - a) She lacks courage; she lacks resolution.
 - b) She is fearful and afraid to attempt something for God and for the good of people around her.
3. So, again, we need to ask ourselves if this is some of the “filthiness” we see in *our* spirits:
 - a) (Dan 11.32) The people that *know God* will be *strong* (not weak, cowardly, and pusillanimous, like Esther), and they will *do exploits*.
 - (1) What's an “exploit”? It's a “bold or daring feat, especially one that is noble or heroic.”
 - (2) When was the last time you “did exploits” for God?
 - b) (2Tim 1.7-8) Fear and shame (cowardice) do not come from God. They are filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. And we need to stop it!
 - (1) Our mediocrity (“lukewarm”: not cold nor hot) is a testimony to our cowardice.
 - (2) And the way to stop it is to “know God” (that is where faith begins!).
 - (a) (Rom 10.17) We need to start with the Word of God and “hear” it (read it, pay attention to what it says).
 - (b) (Acts 4.13) But, that “time in the Word” needs to go beyond just the pages of the Book. We need to seek *God* in the Scripture. We need to *spend time with Jesus*.
 - (3) Only then will we be bold and do exploits even when our enemies try to intimidate us to the point of paralysis (like we see in the Book of Acts).
4. Let's ask ourselves a question: *Why do we fear failure?*
 - a) A lot of times I think we *don't attempt* great things for God because we fear that we'll fail.
 - (1) Sometimes, I think, we fear we'll start something and not be able to finish. “Failure.”
 - (2) More often, though, I think we fear failure in the sense that we simple can't do it right.
 - b) I think we should change the way we think: We should fear *not* attempting things for God!
 - (1) Think about it: When you get to the end of your life, do you want to have never attempted some “exploit” for God?
 - (2) If we don't *attempt* great things for God, we've already failed.
 - (3) But, if we attempt something, and can't do it... that's not a failure! If you get to the end of your having attempted 1,000 different exploits for the Lord... and none of them worked... that's not a failure! At least you took the Word of God seriously, and did something!
 - (4) Now, we're not giving ourselves a license to start things and not follow through. Don't misunderstand what I'm saying. Don't be lazy; don't be an irresponsible sluggard.
 - (5) What I'm saying is this: Don't let cowardice (fear and shame) paralyze you! Step out in faith in what the Word of God says, and do something for God to save the perishing!
 - (a) If you fall on your face, so what?!?! If you “look the fool,” so what?!?!
 - (b) Failure in the ministry is not doing anything. It's not a failure to step out in faith.

D. Esther's Selfishness

1. This last “filthiness” we see in Esther is probably the worst—it's the root of the problem.
 - a) She's selfish. She's more concerned about herself (her comfort, her life, her... whatever) than she is about the thousands of people around her that are condemned to sure death.
 - b) Esther says it herself: She may die if she goes into the king's presence not having been called.
 - c) But she may not! There is always the chance that the king will extend his scepter.
 - d) But, the Jews in the kingdom don't even have that chance. They are condemned to death. They are going to die, period, and Esther doesn't care—she doesn't want to risk herself for them.
2. (Php 2.21) Is this not another problem we see like a plague among Christians today?
 - a) Everyone is out seeking their own benefit, their own piece of the pie; no one seeks the things that are Jesus Christ's (and what are those “things” that are His? the souls He purchased!).
 - b) What characterizes churches today: “Me church.” We cater to what people want! We cater to their selfishness and self-centeredness in order to build our churches.
 - c) (Php 2.3-4) God wants us to cleanse ourselves of this filthiness of the flesh and spirit.
 - d) (John 12.24-25) And the way to do that is to “die to yourself.”
 - (1) You have to be willing to set aside your own life (your comfort, your desires, your goals, your time, your resources, your career, your hobbies...) in order to serve God in His will and plan for your life.
 - (2) Until we do that, we'll be like Esther: Contaminated with the selfishness of a life lived for “me” and “mine.”
3. People are dying all around us. They are condemned to a sure and certain death. We are complete in Christ. We lack nothing. We have everything. Let's live for them, not for ourselves.

Conclusion:

(v12) It doesn't take long for Mordecai to find out about Esther's words and her “quenching” his charge.

- And it doesn't take long for the Holy Spirit to find out about us “quenching” Him.
 - ✓ Just like Esther we're **indifferent and apathetic** toward the plight of the lost (they are condemned to a sure death, and we throw out excuses for not wanting to seek and save them).
 - ✓ Like Esther, we **lack faith in God**. She immediately runs to what man says as an excuse to not obey the charge, rather than resting on what God said and doing what she's told to by Mordecai.
 - ✓ That means we, like Esther, are acting as **cowards** rather than doing "exploits" (attempting great things) for our God in the mission He gave us.
 - ✓ And ultimately, for Esther and for us, we're simply **selfish**. We have set up the greatest idol there ever was, and we worship that idol: ME (self).
 - ✓ It's wrong. It's filthiness in us. And we need to stop it.
- Our time is short (we're at the end of the Church Age). Our task is urgent (people are dying). Our eternity is settled (we have no worries). What's holding us back? Indifference? Lack of faith? Cowardice? Selfishness?
- Stop quenching the Holy Spirit. Trust in Him. Do what He has told you to do in His Word. It will be uncomfortable. It will be intimidating. It will require sacrifice.
- (Est 4.14) But, it's why we're here: “...*who knoweth whether thou are come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*” By God's Providence, we are here (in Kansas), living today (at the end of the Church Age)...
- Don't end your life having never done exploits for God to rescue the perishing! It's why we are here!