

God given fame (Quality: Good, quiet)

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [0 : 0 0] Blessed, where our text is found in the ninth chapter and the fourth verse.
- For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces, for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.
- We still have something that we ought to consider in regard to the greatness of Mordecai.
- And this greatness is something that the Lord lays great emphasis upon here in his holy word.
- As I pointed out this morning, it is not many that are accredited with such qualities and powers as this man Mordecai.
- [1 : 1 9] And that has led me to think that there is something here in this part of the word of God that needs to be delved into and elaborated more fully and seen perhaps in its whole complete context.
- Because, to just repeat very briefly, it is my consideration that this portion of the word of God presents to us really a portrait, a portrait of the innermost soul of the believing people of God.
- What travail there is within. What consequences of that travail brings about.
- What are the chief protagonists in this scene and this episode in the word of God?
- Well, now, they all seem to my mind to relate to the principal things that exist in the soul of the people of God.
- [2 : 5 5] As I mentioned this morning, we looked upon the king as being the mind controlling power which the mind is, of course, in a person until that mind is swayed and subdued and humbled by the greater power of God.
- But until that takes place, the mind is supreme. it is the king and holds authority and sway over all the dominion. And then again, as we looked at Esther, the queen who was most wonderfully, miraculously brought into being and into a position of a relationship, close relationship to the king.
- Brought up by this Mordecai Mordecai, of whom our text speaks, is no doubt what we would term, for want of a better terminology, we should say, is the desire of the soul.
- The soul's greatest longing and desiring when under the good hand of God and the work of the divine spirit, the soul begins to seek after life, safety, peace, and salvation.
- Then we have that Haman who wrought such havoc in this city of Shushan, caused the perplexity to appear among the people and inhabitants, would have done great damage to the whole province over which the king reigned, but was most amazingly and marvelously prevented by what is undoubtedly the hand of God, the turn of providence, the decree that came from heaven and not from earth.
- [5 : 2 1] That decree is always decisive in the affairs of man. And it is unalterable and unchangeable.
- Well now, we will return our thought and meditation this evening just for a little further to the consideration of the greatness of Mordecai.

You can say this with truth that he was always a great man. He did not become a great man simply because things changed so remarkably in his favor because unexpectedly and surprisingly the whole thing changed right round from an opposite direction into a situation that was so highly favorable to him and to his people.

That was not the cause of his greatness. He was ever great. He was great in the conception that he had in his mind to introduce Esther into the royal house and the royal palace.

that was an example of his greatness and his constant attention to her and his interest in her and his daily watchfulness over her and over her interest declare him to be a great man and show that his greatness was not incidental with success but it was something that was there in the man himself and had no apparent origin or beginning.

[7 : 23] Now, he was great then in the time of adversity. This is where people's greatness really comes and stands and is brought out to light when under terrible circumstances of adversity a person retains their integrity, holds up their head, maintains their cause, will not yield in any way to situations that seem to be totally against them.

That is real greatness. That is where God's greatness comes to light in the hearts of his people where men cannot be bought, where they cannot yield and do not yield, where they endure hardship as good soldiers and where they are prepared to face all kinds of difficulties and temptations and maintain their way and fight their battles.

Now that is the example of true greatness. And this was the case with Mordecai. when he comes and hears of the decree that has come forth, been issued forth by the king to destroy all his people throughout the whole province, he puts on sackcloth and goes out into the midst of the city and cries with a loud and bitter cry.

You see, I see in this Mordecai's watchfulness over the interests of his people and over the interests of Esther among them, his watchfulness in the time of great adversity, distress and danger.

He never removed himself for one moment from his post of watchfulness which he felt himself to be appointed to.

[9 : 58] It was a kind of inactive watchfulness, vocal protestation against the evil that he saw in his time as a result of this terrible decree that all the Jews on a certain day were to be destroyed and the messages have been sent out to all the provinces to take steps to do this to destroy all the Jews.

Now you see, here we see the man inactive, yes, but watchful and in the very forefront of protestation he did not give way, he stood out in the midst of the city of Shushan surrounded by all the inhabitants thereof and cried with a loud and bitter cry, lamentation, protestation, against the king, against his decree, his judgment, his procedure to destroy the people of the Jews.

Now there we see a greatness of the man in that incident and that situation. And again we look at this time, at this stage, at Esther, whom we have designated as the soul's desire.

Now what is Esther doing? She is there, silent, inactive. She receives a message from Mordecai, or rather she sees Mordecai, or intelligence comes to her, that her uncle, Mordecai, is in the street outside the palace, clothed in sackcloth and ashes, and he is lamenting with a bitter cry.

And quite naturally she sends the chamberlains out to inquire of him, why and for what reason he is in this state and performing this act of protestation and lamentation in the midst of the city of Shushan.

[12 : 45] So you see, Esther is beginning to stir herself. She's concerned now, she's anxious, she wants to know the cause of things.

Why Mordecai, who has meant so much to her in the past, who has nurtured her right from a very earlier stage in memory, and brought her forward and cared for her so tenderly and lovingly, why he now is in this condition, which is a dangerous condition indeed to be in that place, in Shushan, with that garb and in that way and manner.

She could see very well that his life was in danger, so she sends a message. Why is this, and what cause brings you to perform this kind of thing in the midst of the city of Shushan?

and of course, as we know by the record, that Mordecai sends back by the same messengers a copy of the decree, and also with that he sends her a message.

I want you to think of all this in the sense of what I have tried to set before you, a portrait of the inner working of the soul.

[14:17] There's a message that comes to Esther, and that message is this, that she must take some step.

She's in a position to take a step. No one else can take that step, but she herself. And she is in that position and therefore should, out of all necessity, take the step.

The step was, as the narrative tells us, to go into the king and appeal for clemency and reversal of his terrible decree.

That in itself seemed to, on the face of it, to be an impossibility, because the laws of the Medes and the Persians, once they were enacted, could never be reversed.

No doubt Esther could realize all this, but Mordecai impressed upon her that she had most likely come to the kingdom for such a time as this, and she must use the time and do all that was in her power to do, to reverse this terrible thing that had been brought about by Haman and by the king Ahasuerus, which would mean the destruction of herself and of all her people.

[16:00] And you know how she sent back a message to say that it was impossible. Have you not in your own heart sent out a message sometimes not to others but to the Lord and said it is impossible.

I cannot do this thing. It's beyond my strength, beyond my power to do it. Everything is against me.

I cannot make an attempt even to undertake this thing that may be lying heavily upon my heart. Esther says this in indeed, in fact, and in truth.

She says, I have not been called. There is a law that no one must come into the presence of the king unbidden without the fear of death.

Some people make this part of Esther to be the approach of the believing soul, the seeking soul to the throne of grace and to the footstool of mercy.

[17:17] But you know it doesn't stand. There was a law against this approach, a law that could not be altered except by one thing, and that was the extension of the golden scepter to anyone that violated that law and approached the majesty of the throne of Shushan, not unwelcome but unbidden.

There was a law that demanded death unless that golden scepter was extended to that approaching person. Now she sends back to Mordecai all this information, but it doesn't deter Mordecai one iota.

He says, go in, go in. This may be the very time that thou hast been brought to this high exalted position as queen to share the throne with the king.

Go in, she says, he says. And she returns answer to him and appeals to him to gather all the earnest people in Shushan together.

though it doesn't say pray for them. The intention is undoubtedly that in the word of God.

[18 : 59] She says, go and command all the people to gather together and fast for three days. And I and my maidens will fast likewise.

and then I will go into the king. If I perish, I perish. And you see, here the soul's desire is prevalent.

Here we see the soul's desire under an awakened, under re-energized condition. Here we see the soul's desire rising to the surface, asserting itself, determined to do so.

Here we see the mighty change in Esther, from a subservient character to a forceful, determined soul, who will have and do what she feels to be right to be done, whether it entails her life, her death, her death, or not.

So, she returns this message to Mordecai, and he does, fulfills her request, and she and her maidens do likewise.

[20 : 34] And then, she goes in to the king, and he holds out the golden scepter, and receives her, and asks her at the same time what her request is.

You see, a very approach to him at that particular time entails a request. He realizes this.

He says, what is thy request, O Esther? It shall be done to thee to half of my kingdom. So, there was a wonderful opportunity. The soul was now in the ascendancy.

The mind was under the control, and there would be great things as an outcome of this situation, as there always is when the soul of God's people is stirred by the touch of the hand of God, where the Holy Spirit is at work in a believer's heart.

That all-prevailing monarch, the mind that has its own way hitherto, now subverts and humbles itself, becomes subversive to the influences that demand what they will.

[22 : 09] So, it was here in the city of Shushan, and it was the turning point in this great and wonderful narrative, because Haman, as you know, as I said this morning, was the example of the flesh, had had the sway and the ascendancy, and all the time Haman had been in the ascendancy, poor Mordecai had been in the state of dejection and misery, and under great stress and strain.

You see, when the flesh prevails, the spirit is weak. When fleshly things take over the mind and the control of the person, where fleshly interests come in and take the uppermost seat in the counsels of the heart and mind, then faith is in a very low condition, very weak, it's damp, and although it is damp, it will never die, but it's in a very sad condition and very sad place when faith is under a cloud, so to speak, and not where it ought to be in the rightful position as it will be under

God's goodness and under his grace, but all the time we find Haman being condoned and being exalted, promoted by the king, there was no real cause for his promotion, and yet he was given the very highest honor and the greatest place, the king took off his ring from his finger and placed it upon the hand of Haman, which signified that he was transferring his powers to Haman, to his will and his whim and his fancy.

Now that's a sad thing, when the mind gives over to the flesh, do you know something about this? When you let the brains loose upon the necks of your lusts, and when you allow things to go headlong in your life and in your experience, that you know is contrary to your best interest and to the salvation of your souls, those are sad days, they're dire things, they're straits that we ought to seek to avoid and to be delivered from, but that is a truth, and here the word of God brings it out.

Haman was in the ascendancy, and Mordecai was in the place of low dejection and lamentation, but then there is this turning point.

[25 : 40] Esther sees her great, seizes her great opportunity, and she comes and makes her request to the king, and first of you notice this, the first thing is this, she requests that Haman and the king should come to a banquet, and again a repetition of this same thing, the following day, and Haman goes out of the king of the king's palace, triumphant, vindictive, he passes Mordecai at the gate, who rises not up to acknowledge even his passing, heart, and he despises him from the very bottom of his heart.

When he gets home, he tells his friends, his wife, and all his relatives of the great honor that has been bestowed upon him, but he said all the while this great honor is bestowed upon him, there's one great thing that distresses my mind and disturbs me deeply in my heart, and that is this Mordecai refuses to rise up and honor me as he ought to do.

And the answer that was given to them, you know, if this man is of the Jews, and you've begun to fall before him, that fall will eventually be complete.

Well, now, we come to the second point that I want to make tonight, and that is his fame went out throughout all the provinces, his fame.

We were reading tonight, were we not, in the Thessalonians, how Paul speaks about those Christians in Thessalonica, and you know they were the out on the perimeter of the then known civilized world, and of the Christian church.

[28 : 04] And he says of them, he says, I pray for you night and day, and your faith, he said, has gone out, not only into Macedonia and into Achaia, but he's gone out throughout the whole of the provinces.

It's spread abroad wherever there were people to understand and hear and learn. The faith of those Christian people in Thessalonica was talked about, spread about, recognized as being a mighty influence for good in that part of the world and indeed in the church of God.

In other words, there was a fame in the mighty work of faith in the hearts of these people in Thessalonica. And that fame was not confined to a small boundary, it was extended widely and wonderfully to the encouragement of people in all places and all parts.

The fame of it had gone out into all the world. And you know, what is this fame?

Well, I would think if you remember when Ruth bore her son or before she did that, when the people came around Naomi and Ruth to congratulate them on the marriage with Boaz, they said something very remarkable.

[30 : 00] they said to Ruth and Naomi, may this young woman build up the house of Israel.

And they said this, be thou famous in Ephratah and be thou famous in Bethlehem.

Now, my dear friends, that gives us a key, doesn't it, to the real fame. It comes from Bethlehem. It comes from Jesus.

It's not fame of self. It's not the fame of our own prowess. It's the fame of Christ. If Christ is in you, it will be a mighty testimony and have a great widespread influence far beyond the limitations of your own life or sphere.

there's no limitation to the sphere of faith. It can ride over all boundaries. It can accomplish all things.

[31 : 13] Do thou famously in Bethlehem Bethlehem? Oh, how that was fulfilled when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. And the glorious fame of him and his worth and his wonder spread about throughout the whole world.

Yes, he was famous throughout the whole, all the provinces. So, my dear friends, we have here then in the second illustration, we have this, the fame of faith.

Now, there are people in the world who get fame for various reasons. Some get fame by the accumulation of wealth.

Others get fame by remarkable achievements. some get fame by their skills and their overpowering and overriding prowess over their fellow men.

But faith lives beneath the throne, as we were singing this morning, derives all its power and strength from Christ, the throne of God and the throne of grace.

[32 : 46] It lives and labors under load, it is damp but never dies. It's a mighty weapon and a glorious instrument. It comes from heaven, it is heavenly in its nature and it is glorious in its consequences.

Fame. Mordecai, the fame of him went out and if you notice, he did nothing. You read this book of Esther at your leisure very carefully.

Mordecai never did anything or said anything to cause fame, but the very fact of what he was, what he was, and what he was and what he meant to Esther and to the Jewish people made him famous throughout the whole of the provinces of Ahasuerus.

Then, finally, he waxed greater and greater. Now, faith is the only element of which this can be said to be true.

I think I said this morning, it is contrary to nature, to the natural element. We do not get stronger and stronger.

[34 : 16] On the contrary, we get weaker and weaker. And that's a truth. We know that full well. Left to ourselves, we begin to die, become extinct.

where then is the secret of this glorious description that is given here of Mordecai, he waxed greater and greater.

The reason is this, because the source of his greatness was not in himself, it was in God. That was the first great reason that he waxed greater and greater.

The source of his greatness was in God. Where is the source of your greatness? This is what you have to look to very carefully and prayerfully.

what keeps me alive? Is there anything that keeps me alive? Am I alive? And if I am alive, what keeps me alive? What is it that keeps me when everything seems to be against me, still buoyant and hopeful and confident?

[35 : 39] Where does that secret strength come from? Does it come from myself? self? No, my friend, you will never find self a source of strength or greatness.

It comes from God, from contact with God and with his truth and with his grace.

Secondly, because the sphere of his greatness greatness, and the operation of it was a great operation.

You see, he was defiant against Haman. He had no respect for Haman. He had no regard for the king.

When he saw truth was in jeopardy, there was no one that could stand in the way of Mordecai. and he had a wider sphere than Shushan.

[36 : 46] Mordecai, the influence of Mordecai, rather than anything else, extended throughout the whole of the provinces of this king. Because he reversed the decree that had gone forth and turned that decree into something totally different.

it turned it, instead of being a destruction of the Jewish people, it turned it into the destruction of their enemies.

Into the destruction of their enemies. And therefore the sphere itself was a great sphere. Then, because it is kept alive, faith is kept alive, and it must be kept alive.

We cannot keep it alive. You cannot keep your faith alive, but Christ will keep it.

Christ will revive faith. Christ is the source of it, and he will secure it, and nourish it, strengthen it.

[38 : 05] How sweet it is when faith is strengthened by Christ. My dear friends, this is what you will need, this is what you will want. Christ to come and visit your soul, and then you will find faith leaps up, faith triumphs, rejoices.

Your sadness disappears, your doubts are dismissed, your harps no longer lie, hang on the willows, you are playing the sounds of notes of praise and glory to the God you love.

God. Oh yes, faith is a wonderful instrument when it's in the hands of God, and especially when it is in the hands of Christ.

Remember what Christ said to Peter? He said, Peter, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, and what was the prayer?

That thy faith fail not. So you see who it is that keeps faith alive in us, and he that keeps alive that faith is a living, glorious person himself.

[39 : 35] He dies no more. He lives to reign, and to reign to triumph over his people, and to conquer in them all their enemies.

I haven't the time to go into the conquest of these people over all their enemies. We may have turned from the book of Esther because it seems bloodthirsty in one part of it, but my friends, this is what the believer has to do.

This is the task that faith sets before them, to eliminate all that is in opposition to God and truth and righteousness and holiness.

Wherever it be, whether it's in Shushan, near to the very heart of things, or in some distant province, it must be eliminated, exterminated by faith from the life and soul and experience.

yes, and when faith has its great reward, it will see Jesus crowned at home.

[40 : 49] We might well say again this evening, Lord, give us that faith. Amen. food in this food in The End

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The End The End Thank you.

Thank you.

[45 : 12] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with us now and evermore.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[47 : 16] Amen. Amen.