

Before God intervened, Israel had a dismal future at best. God changed that destiny (Ex. 3:8). Paul has no doubt where his road leads (2 Tim. 4:8). The future holds the same for all of God's people. We will surely be with Him. "Happy are you, O people of God... a people saved by the Lord!"

Consider, like Israel we have been recipients of God's mercy. His abundant mercy! "The mercy of the Lord endures forever." All of God's people have been forgiven of sins! All wiped away! Jesus' blood cleanses so we stand before Him without a single charge against us. We shout with joy! "The mercy of the Lord endures forever." We stand in an invitation of praise. "Happy are you, O people of God... a people saved by the Lord!"

Written by: Rickie Jenkins (Campbell Road church of Christ Facebook Page)



For Such a Time as This

"For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4.14 ESV)

Something interesting about the book of Esther is there is no mention of God, yet His providence and protection are clearly seen in the book. Regardless of how you feel about Esther the person up to this point in the book, chapter 4.11-17 serve as the turning point both for Esther and the book. The Jewish people, because of Haman's plot, were bound for slaughter. In this moment Mordecai motivates Esther to risk going before the king, an action that could lead to her death, to begin to save the Jews from being killed. While some might see this as a coincidence, in reality it is the providence of God at work. Esther was in the position as queen within the kingdom for a reason. She ended up rising to the occasion and devising a plot that would end up saving the Jewish people with help from God from mass slaughter. But Mordecai is right in saying "relief and deliverance" would come from another source if Esther remained quiet. Esther's position within the kingdom allowed her to be able to save her kindred.

What does this mean for us? We too are living in this present moment for a reason. As with Esther some attribute it to coincidence, but the faithful will say it is the providence of God. So, what are we going to do about it? What actions are we going to take to make a difference for God's kingdom.

Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.
Jacksonville, FL 32220

Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Study / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

www.mariettacoc.com

Being a Christian requires boldness. Proverbs 28.1 calls the righteous “bold as a lion.” Esther took a risk going before the king. While the fear of death may have caused initial hesitation, Mordecai’s words motivated her to action. We can’t allow ourselves to sit idly by. We must take action to speak, and to live God’s word to this generation we live among. Taking action will mean facing certain “risks.” Being well pleasing to God far outweighs any “risks” we face for obedience to His will. This is a cost we needed to count before becoming a Christian. We should have known what we were signing up for (Luke 14.28). Taking up the cross of Jesus (Matthew 16.24), means taking it up at all times, not just when it is convenient, easy, or when we have nothing better to do. Taking up the cross will mean we have to give things up, take risk, and get our hands dirty. Bill Bynum wrote, “If there is not a cost, it’s not a cross.”

We don’t know just how far our influence can reach. Esther, with the help of God, was able to save the Jewish people from being killed. We with the help of God can save people from hell. One of our motivations to teach others about Jesus is to save them from their sins, leading them to a better life. This was God’s plan for man from the beginning. This new life free from sin comes with a new hope. A hope that can only be found in Jesus. Esther 8.15-17 details how happy the Jews were to hear Haman’s plot was foiled. The text says “the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. The Jews had light and gladness, joy and honor and in every providence wherever the king’s command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a holiday.” They likely felt as if they had been given a new hope, and a new look on life. This is what the gospel does to a person, it gives them a new life with a new hope. There is great rejoicing both in heaven and among the faithful when one person turns from the world to God. God is the only way we can truly have hope because He is only one who can promise the hope of a home in heaven for the faithful. Without God, there is no hope. A life lived in faith is a life of hope, not just in this life but the one to come.

Let’s take advantage of every opportunity given to us in the time we have been placed. First by taking action to spread the gospel, and then by living a life in faith, and encouraging others to do the same. That way we can live for the hope only found in Jesus.

Written by: Derek Steen

Happy are The People of God

"Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of your help and the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, and you shall tread down their high places" (Dt. 33:29). Where would Israel be without the Lord? They were no match for the armies of Egypt. Their escape from Egypt was hopeless. But for the Lord, they would have remained slaves in Egypt. As they stood on the banks of the Red Sea, they had no defense against Pharaoh and his army. The only thing that stood between Israel and Pharaoh was the Lord in a cloudy pillar. In the Red Sea Pharaoh and his armies died. Israel was free! "Happy are you, O Israel... a people saved by the Lord."

Where would we be without the Lord? We would still be dead in our sins (Eph. 2:1-2). We were powerless to escape the dominion of Satan, but we have been delivered from darkness and conveyed into the kingdom of Christ. "Happy are you, O people of God... a people saved by the Lord!"

Without God’s deliverance Israel would have been making bricks in Egypt. Every Jew knew it. They bore the scars in their hands of a year of making bricks. We, too, know what we would be doing without Jesus. We must never forget who we were and what we were doing before God called us. Paul will say, “I was the chiefest of sinners.” The Corinthians needed to remember their former life before they were washed...justified in the name of the Lord. Today each saint has an ugly past. All saints are people delivered from a life of sin. But for Jesus, we would remain. "Happy are you, O people of God... a people saved by the Lord!"