

**Articles and Sermons :: If I perish I perish!****If I perish I perish!, on: 2016/5/8 14:37**

The story of Esther is a fascinating story. From the book of Esther we can see that she was an orphan, no mother and no father. Now, this would be difficult enough in any generation but it must have been very difficult in the ancient world. To add to Esther's trouble she lived in a time when the king of all the land was looking for a new wife. The king was Ahasuerus and he was very powerful and his dominion was vast. It is reported in history that he had a bridge built near the ocean and it was destroyed by a storm. He had all the builders killed and he ordered that the sea be "whipped and chained." They literally flogged the sea carrying out the orders of this man who had the power of life and death.

Now the reason he was looking for a new Queen was because his current wife and queen refused to appear before him and the royal court naked, wearing only a crown. Apparently he had been boasting to other men just how beautiful she was and he wanted to show her off. She refused him and she would be replaced and banished and never be seen by him again. So, people were sent out into every corner of the vast empire to collect the most beautiful young woman who could be found and assemble them back in the capital city for preparation. Esther was chosen from her region, there would be 400 young women on all. Now you might think that this would be an incredible opportunity for Esther, but it was a truly horrifying prospect. Each young woman would be prepared for a year for their "encounter," with the king, meaning they would have to sleep with him. Out of these 400 he would choose a queen. The other 399 women would be, effectively, slaves for the rest of their lives. They would not get married or have children nor have a family. They would be kept in separate quarters and, unless they had somehow pleased this wicked old man, they would quite probably not be called upon again.

And so Esther's life was one of many difficulties and she faced many trials. It is reckoned she would only be about 14 when she was taken. You can imagine the trauma. What really interests me is what happens after she is indeed chosen and becomes queen. She obviously has to make the best of it being married to a man famed for his hedonistic ways. Yet then comes the crisis that we know about from the book. The Jewish people face being wiped out and Esther is called upon by her uncle Mordecai, an honorable man, to make an appeal to the king. Esther has to break convention and enter into his presence without invitation, a crime whose punishment was death. So, she makes up her mind to do it and make this statement in regard to it "If I perish I perish."

Although there is no mention of God at all in the book of Esther, I see her actions and her statement as an act of faith that can be found all throughout the Bible. In Revelation 12:11 it says "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." This loving God and following the truth more than loving one's own life is fundamental in the examples of faith throughout the Bible. It is supernatural and can only be achieved by the power and the unction of the Holy Spirit operating in the depths of the children of God. I think of Job when he says in Job 13:15 "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him." Now we know the life that Job had lived and the circumstances that had befallen him.

It seems to be that those who can come to the point of making such statements are those who have been deeply tried by life's circumstances. As they walk through the fires and through the floods they come to the point where they understand what is really important and what is not. In the most famous psalm of all, Psalm 23 we see that even when one is walking through the valley of the shadow of death then they fear no evil. For they know that their lord walks with them and they are comforted by Him. He makes them lie down and rest. He leads them by the waters of life from which they can partake and He restores them and renews them daily. Is this your testimony brothers and sisters Even in the midst of the darkest valleys can you sense His comfort? Do you know in the depths of who you are that He is leading you on? Can you say with the psalmist that in some of your darkest moments in this life that God has anointed you with His oil and that you were overwhelmed by His grace even in the midst of your trials and in the presence of your enemies? Do you sense that goodness and mercy shall follow all the days of your life? Do you understand that the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases and that His mercies are new every morning? Does the knowledge of His great faithfulness flood your soul with living waters?

Brothers and sisters we know that even although the outward man is perishing, whether by trial or by illness or by persecution, the inner man is being renewed day by day. That Scripture comes from 2 Cor 4 where we also see that despite the fact that the saints have trouble on every side, they are not given to despair. Despite the fact that the saints are persecuted they are not forsaken. Despite the fact that they are often down cast they get back up and are not destroyed. Yes t

he world may look at us and see death working in us, but that is only so that the life of Christ may be manifest to them through our troubles. It is no longer we that live for many could not live with the burden of our numerous trials but it is the supernatural life of Jesus living in us and through us. And this supernatural life is the treasure that we have in us, the glory of God manifested by the life of Christ in us. This is, saints, most excellent power. Do you desire such power? Only the crucified life can manifest such power. The power of life, true eternal life, shines out magnificently into the darkness and the darkness comprehends it not.

Now brothers and sisters, our light afflictions, which do not seem pleasant as they come against us, is truly the door that opens up into the glories of our eternal God and Father. How could Esther have known when she was dragged away from her home that God was working in it? That her persecutions and trials would result in such a great deliverance. How can you know saints the true purpose of your life? I want to tell you this, there is glory in it, there is an eternal weight of glory in it. If your head is low today I want you to lift it up right now. Lift up your head and shut your eyes and see that you are surrounded by such a cloud of witnesses that have gone on before you. You are part of that heavenly throng dear saint. There is a purpose in your life and God knows all these things. Our Father sees you and He knows. Let us glorify Him today and let our praises join with all the saints around the world and in the Kingdom that is and is yet to come. Let us make a glorious noise in the eternal Kingdom of our God and Father today. Let your voice be added to the eternal weight of glory that holds us and keeps us, in the mighty name of Jesus let all the saints shout out today and know that this shout is heard in the eternal Kingdom and will resonate for all eternity to His glory.....bro Frank