

## ***Fasting***

### ***Part 8***

More Scripture in The bible speaks about fasting: as we read and meditate on the word of God in these Scripture we can apply that in our lives.

Fasting is a powerful weapon in facing persecution. The people of God along time who lived their life to worship God and to serve Him they were persecuted by the devil who used people to do that. They faced that persecution with prayer and fasting, presenting their requests and petition unto God, whom ultimately delivered them and saved them.

The Jewish that God sent into exile to Babylon and later on they became under the Persian Empire, they face persecution and the enemy wanted to annihilate them. That happened during the reign of the king Xerxes. One of their enemies was Haman who was elevated by the king and had given a seat of honour higher than that of all the other nobles. <sup>“2</sup>*All the royal officials at the king’s gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor.”* (Esther 3:2) Mordecai would not kneel down because he was a true worshipper of God who would bow down to God and serve Him only.

<sup>“5</sup>*When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was enraged.* <sup>6</sup>*Yet having learned who Mordecai’s people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai’s people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.”* (Esther 3:5-6) Haman truly worked out to annihilate the whole Jewish. He set a day and a month to do that, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and was able to convince King Xerxes to issue a decree to do that as we can read here: <sup>“12</sup>*Then on the thirteenth day of the first month the royal secretaries were summoned. They wrote out in the script of each province and in the language of each people all Haman’s orders to the king’s satraps, the governors of the various provinces and the nobles of the various peoples. These were written in the name of King Xerxes himself and sealed with his own ring.* <sup>13</sup>*Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king’s provinces with the order to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews—young and old, women and little children—on a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods.* <sup>14</sup>*A copy of the text of the edict was to be issued as law in every province and made known to the people of every nationality so they would be ready for that day.”* (Esther 3:12-14)

<sup>“1</sup>*When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly.* <sup>2</sup>*But he went only as far as the king’s gate, because no one clothed in sackcloth was allowed to enter it.* <sup>3</sup>*In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes.”* (Esther 4:1-3)

Hadassah who was also called Esther was Mordecai cousin. He adopted her as his daughter after the death of her parents, and later on she became the wife queen of king Xerxes. When she was brought to the citadel of Susa <sup>“10</sup>*Esther had not revealed her nationality and family background, because Mordecai had forbidden her to do so.”* (Esther 2:10) She hid her Jewish origin from the king and the people of the citadel so that God’s purpose in her life would be fulfilled.

The news of what had happened about the evil plan of Haman reached Esther in this way <sup>“4</sup>*When Esther’s maids and eunuchs came and told her about Mordecai, she was in great distress. She sent clothes for him to put on instead of his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.* <sup>5</sup>*Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king’s eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why.* <sup>6</sup>*So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king’s gate.* <sup>7</sup>*Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews.* <sup>8</sup>*He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to urge her to go into the king’s presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.”* (Esther 4:4-8) Now Esther she needs to act in faith and serve God to save His people. The Devil was using Haman to persecute and annihilate the people of God in exile; therefore the people of God should act in faith. They already started as we read, *great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing*, petitioned their requests to God to act and to intervene to save them.

<sup>“9</sup>*Hathach went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said.* <sup>10</sup>*Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai,* <sup>11</sup>*“All the king’s officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king.”* (Esther 4:9-11) It seems here that Esther was showing fear to face the situation, she was trying to justify shrinking back in contradict to the word of God, *“But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.”* (Hebrews 10:38)

<sup>“12</sup>*When Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai,* <sup>13</sup>*he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape.* <sup>14</sup>*For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”* (Esther 4:12-14) Mordecai rebuked her and reminded her about God’s calling in her life and how she needs to serve Him wholeheartedly. The message is also for you, don’t be afraid and do not shrink back to serve God and do your part as Christian. If you are blessed now and others in trouble, you need to do something to help them and to help yourself; don’t think that you are safe and spared troubles if you fail to do your part as Christian toward God and toward His people.

That rebuke was effective to mobilize Esther and I believe it is effective for you to mobilize you to do God’s will. <sup>“15</sup>*Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai:* <sup>16</sup>*“Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”* <sup>17</sup>*So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther’s instructions.”* (Esther 4:15-17) Three days prayer and fasting without food and drink was the only solution for the people of God to face that devastating threat. Adopt that in your life, when you are faced with hazardous condition. It may require the whole church to pray and fast in facing the threat of persecution.

***My Dear and Beloved:*** We will continue that important event in the next issue, but as if now take heed and commit yourself to do your part as you obey God and do His will and agree to pray.

***My Prayer:*** *Father God in heaven I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord I repent from my irresponsible and careless attitude toward you and toward your work and your will. Lord, I commit myself from this day to go forward and do the things that you want me to do for your sake and the welfare of your people. Lord give me more faith and give me the courage to do that, protect me and grant me the favour from you and from the people as I pray and fast and commit my request to you. This all what I ask and pray in Jesus name Amen.*