

GROWING IN GOD PODCAST



GIG290 – Purim - Anticipating Instant Change

Hi everyone, and welcome to this podcast. We are going to talk today about the feast of Purim, since it is quickly coming upon us, and I am very excited about it and celebrating it. I feel very much in my heart this message to give to us surrounding the feast of Purim. I am titling this *Anticipate Instant Change*. In the beginning, I want to read the takeaways for this podcast. I did this recently on another podcast, and I have had so much feedback from those who really like this idea of reading the ending before the beginning that I am going to try it again.

Number one, Purim is an example, which is repeated many times in the Scriptures, that teaches us that things can change 180 degrees in just one moment. Number two, we must live in this knowledge and faith that at any second, God can move and everything can be changed. Lastly, we must never lose the reality in God that in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, everything can be different.

I want to go back now to the beginning and read a few notes that I have about this idea and this concept, as we will begin to apply it towards the feast of Purim. What the Lord was making real to me is the concern that as the iniquity begins and continues to abound on the earth, and darkness seems to encompass the earth and its people, God's people, and our intercession, not lose the awareness that in the Scriptures things changed 180 degrees in a moment. Purim is a prime example, and in fact, it is a celebration of this reality.

There are other examples that we find in the Scriptures: Passover, for instance; Elisha during the famine of Samaria; actually, the resurrection of Yeshua was an instant change to the whole earth; as was the day of Pentecost, when the disciples received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. If you begin to think about it, following this teaching, you yourself will begin to remember event after event that transpires in the Scriptures showing us that as God's people, as believers, one of the things we need to believe in is this instant change and transformation that can take place at any moment.

Isaiah chapter 60, verses 1 through 3, talks about this in a unique way.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

This is talking about this reality that things will seem very dark. And as we move more and more towards the day of the Lord, things do appear to be dark; they seem to increase in darkness, and the deep darkness seems to encompass the peoples of the earth. But we are not to be conditioned by that. That is the concern of this podcast, that we as believers not be conditioned to this idea of the negative, that things are getting worse and things are going wrong and it is problematic – there are not going to be changes, and we cannot change it by our prayer or intercession. So we almost get into this negative anticipation, which we have to be careful about, because anticipation is a part of faith. We do not want to be having faith in the negative. All these things may transpire; however, for us, our focus and anticipation are upon that which God is going to do, the miraculous that He is going to do, the change

that He is going to bring. And so, as we enter in to celebrate this great feast of Purim, we do it with this encouragement in mind and this focus in our hearts.

As you know, the feast of Purim is celebrating the book of Esther. If you have never celebrated the feast of Purim before, I would encourage you to read the book of Esther. Read all of it, it is not very long, and get the story deep into your heart. If you have celebrated the feast of Purim, then you recognize that it is traditional during the feast of Purim to read Esther from beginning to end, and to recount the story that is contained in it. This is such a beautiful way to celebrate this idea of instant change, and the story is also set in a time when the enemies of Israel are set for their destruction. As we celebrate Purim in this year, we are really in a time such as they were in the book of Esther; we understand the war that is happening right now between Israel and Hamas is very much like the times of the book of Esther, when Haman had made a proclamation that would see the genocide of the Jewish people in the known world. When you look at the heart of the conflict that is transpiring now and you hear this cry, "From the river to the sea," even in the United States in college campus protests, it is exactly that same cry that there be a global annihilation of the Jewish people as well as the demolition of the State of Israel. And at the end of this determination by Hamas and other Islamic jihadists, there will be no Jews left on the planet, and there will be no State of Israel. That is basically what was happening during this book of Esther, as it was initiated by Haman in his hatred for Mordecai and the Jewish people. So I want to read some verses out of this to kind of get the heart of the celebration.

As I talked about in the beginning, my encouragement is for you to go read the book of Esther, so I am not going to recount the whole story to you. But I am going to jump to the celebration of Purim and have us recognize that this celebration is all about our remembering that in a moment, everything was changed. By one proclamation of the king, everything was changed from a look of disaster and a direction of disaster, and really Holocaust, to a time of celebration and victory for the Jewish people.

I am going to begin in Esther chapter 9, starting with verses 20-22.

Then Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, obliging them to celebrate the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same month, annually, because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and it was a month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and rejoicing and sending portions of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

Here we have the idea of this podcast, which is focusing on the idea that something can have an instant change. During this book of Esther, there is an instant change from mourning and sorrow and fear of destruction into a celebration of gladness and holiday, of feasting and rejoicing. So as we talk about the feast of Purim, we are literally talking about a celebration of this idea that no matter how bad things appear – I mean, they were days away from the annihilation of the Jewish people – instantaneously, with a proclamation of the king, all of that changed.

We are to remember. That is one reason we celebrate Purim, to remember in our hearts that no matter how it seems right now at the moment, no matter how bad it gets, no matter how close we seem to a destructive end to all things in the earth – as the Scriptures recount, that if the wicked one has his way, there will be no flesh saved alive; and that is what the story was about, no Jews saved alive. And when we approach the time of the end, we see this plot of satan not only against the Jewish people, as we are seeing today with Hamas in Israel, but we see it as satan's plan against the whole earth, expanding from the Jewish people into humanity itself, so that no flesh will be saved alive. That is the way it seems, and

will seem, that things are moving as we progress in the last days. We do not want to be tainted by that, and be oppressed by that, to the place where we see no hope. We must retain a hope, and that hope is for an instantaneous change. You can look and say, "How could this ever change? How could things ever really be restored to the Kingdom of God from the direction that they are going? How could good come out of such evil?" But we must know and understand that it can, and it will. That is what Purim is about – it is about remembering. It is about remembering the fact that in a moment, everything changed from sorrow into gladness, from mourning into a holiday; and therefore, these days are to be celebrated annually, without end. I believe we will probably be celebrating Purim in the days of the Kingdom, to remember just these facts.

So it says in verses 23-25,

Thus the Jews undertook what they had started to do, and what Mordecai had written to them. For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews [and when you read that word adversary in Hebrew, it is the word satan], had schemed against the Jews to destroy them and had cast Pur [which is like dice], that is the lot, to disturb them and destroy them. But when it came to the king's attention, he commanded by letter that his wicked scheme which he had devised against the Jews, should return on his own head and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

These are the gallows that they had built in order to hang Mordecai. So, what happens is that it comes to the attention of the king; and again, we must remember, this is the drive of our intercession, that as it comes to the attention of the King, things can change instantaneously. They can move 180 degrees on a dime, and the King's edict can change everything from mourning and sorrow to gladness and holiday. This is what it is all about.

Verses 26-27 go on to say,

Therefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur [which is the dice that they cast, the lots that they cast]. And because of the instructions in this letter, both what they had seen in this regard and what had happened to them, the Jews established and made a custom for themselves and for their descendants [now get this next part of the verse] and for all those who allied themselves with them....

That is where it comes that we, as Christians, celebrate the feast of Purim; because we have allied ourselves to the Jewish people, to Israel, to stand with them, to be a force of faith to see the prophecies and the promises over them fulfilled. Therefore, this feast was consecrated by Mordecai for us as those who are allies with the Jewish people and with Israel. So I proudly celebrate Purim, and I am thankful for my inclusion in its celebration.

I am going to read verses 27-28 again:

The Jews established and made a custom for themselves and for their descendants and for all those who allied themselves with them, so that they would not fail to celebrate these two days according to their regulation and according to their appointed time annually. So these days were to be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, every family, every province and every city; and these days of Purim were not to fail from among the Jews, or their memory fade from their descendants.

What is it a memory of? It is a memory that everything can change in a moment; that no matter how bleak things may become, do not lose faith in God. Do not lose faith that if you appear before the King,

if we enter into His Presence and if we lay before the King what we are facing and what is beginning to transpire, what is about to happen; if we lay all of this before Him and make Him aware of it, then once it comes to the attention of the King, He has the ability and will command a change, and these things that are about to happen will not transpire, according to His Word. So these days of Purim are established as a time of memory, as a time to remember. And I think that this time we are in calls for such a celebration.

I believe in the blessing of Purim to Israel in this year, in all that they are facing. Let there be a knowledge in them that as they seek the King and they lay their need before Him, things can change 180 degrees in a moment. And it seems impossible. On a human level it seems that what Israel is facing at this time, that honestly what the world is facing at this time, is impossible to change, impossible to have another outcome than the disastrous outcome that seems to be in motion. But when we come to the days of Purim, they are days for us to remember – not only the story of Esther, but the story of the Passover, the story of the Resurrection, the story of Elisha and the famine in Samaria – that literally overnight, everything can change. And so we celebrate before we see. We have a time of celebration as an expression of not only our faith, but of our knowing that God can bring about deliverance and change, and bring about another purpose and will. And I believe that is what is to happen.

In Isaiah 29, it talks about a situation and the enemies of God that are coming against His people. In verse 5 it says, “But the multitude of your enemies will become like fine dust, and the multitude of the ruthless ones like the chaff which blows away; and it will happen instantly, suddenly.”

Going down to verse 7, “And the multitude of all the nations who wage war against Ariel [which is another name for Jerusalem], even all who wage war against her and her stronghold, and who distress her, will be like a dream, a vision of the night.” In other words, dreams that disappear in the morning when you awake.

I want to read another few verses out of Isaiah 17, starting with verse 12, because I think this kind of paints a picture of the way things seem and feel right now in the time that we are in. Isaiah 17:12, “Alas, the uproar of many peoples.” And when you look at the news, when you look around the world at what is happening, it seems like there is just this uproar against Israel and the Jewish people. Antisemitism is blooming on a level that has not happened since World War 2. There is this uproar among the peoples.

Verses 12-14:

Alas, the uproar of many peoples who roar like the roaring of the seas, and the rumbling of nations who rush on like the rumbling of mighty waters! The nations rumble on like the rumbling of many waters, but He will rebuke them and they will flee far away, and be chased like chaff in the mountains before the wind, or like whirling dust before a gale. At evening time, behold, there is terror! Before morning they are no more. Such will be the portion of those who plunder us and the lot of those who pillage us.

It is not good to come up against God’s chosen, against His anointed. “Between evening and morning, everything will change,” and I believe for that. There is so much for us to believe in. We must not be swayed by what we see, we must not be swayed by what we hear and what we seem to be facing in this hour. Let us come together with faith and celebrate the feast. Let us celebrate this Purim with an anticipation that everything will change, and that all will come out as has been prophesied in the Scriptures about the blessings of Israel, the restoration of the land and the people, about the blessings that will come upon those who align themselves and ally themselves with Israel. So we believe for a

tremendous celebration, where fear and mourning are turned to joy and gladness. Let us celebrate this feast of Purim.

I want to read again through some of the takeaways from this podcast. Number one, Purim is an example which is repeated many times in the Scriptures, that things can change 180 degrees in a moment. Number two, we as believers must live in knowledge and faith that at any second God can move and everything can change. We cannot be tainted by the oppression of this age; we must never lose the reality in God that in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, everything will be different.

And so, we believe together for this to be our great celebration, with anticipation and faith to see that God's will over Israel, God's will over the Jewish people as a chosen covenant people with God and for us as believers in Christ, will see a tremendous breakthrough and celebration of joy and delight, as we come together and celebrate this great feast of Purim.

Amen.