****

**WELCOME TO MOUNT HERMON**

Sunday 4th October 2020

**SCATTERED BUT UNITED**

To the saints in [Addingham], the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1 v 1-2

**Message from David**

*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 your royal position for such a time as this? Esther 4 v 14*

In the third year of king Xerxes reign a Jewish virgin, Esther, is selected to take part in a “beauty contest” for the king to find a new queen. After four years in the king’s harem, Esther is selected by the king to be his new queen. Five years later Haman the Agagite plots to have all the Jews in the empire killed. Mordecai, Esther’s cousin, asks the queen to intervene to save her people. He tells her “who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

You may like to read the full story of Esther in the book with the same name in the Old Testament - it is only a few pages long. How does Esther respond – does she save her people from genocide? The book of Esther is unusual because it does not once mention God. Was Esther aware of how God was going to use her to save the Jewish people? Was she aware that He was preparing her for something so special?

Esther’s cousin Mordecai trusted that God was in control and that He had placed Esther strategically in the king’s court for this moment. Esther had a choice whether to risk speaking up on behalf of her people even though it could have cost her life.

Although God’s name is not mentioned in Esther, we can see God working behind the scenes to bring relief and deliverance to His people.

We also have choices to make. Will I choose to trust that God is in control in the waiting time and the preparation time and when I cannot see what He is doing? Will I agree to do the thing that only I can do in the unique circumstances in which God has placed me, even if it is not easy?

**Further Bible verses for reflection**

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said ‘Here I am. Send me!’ Isaiah 6 v 8

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4 v 10

For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2 v 10

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Mission Praise857**  I, the Lord of sea and sky,  I have heard my people cry.  All who dwell in dark and sin  My hand will save.  I who made the stars of night,  I will make their darkness bright.  Who will bear my light to them?  Whom shall I send?  *Here I am, Lord.*  *Is it I, Lord?*  *I have heard You calling in the night.*  *I will go, Lord,*  *if you lead me.*  *I will hold Your people in my heart.*  I, the Lord of snow and rain,  I have borne My people’s pain.  I have wept for love of them.  They turn away.  I will break their hearts of stone,  give them hearts for love alone.  I will speak My word to them.  Whom shall I send?  *Here I am, Lord.* |  | **Mission Praise 859**  I want to serve the purpose of God  in my generation.  I want to serve the purpose of God  while I am alive.  I want to give my life  for something that’ll last forever:  Oh I delight, I delight  to do Your will.  *What is on Your heart?*  *Show me what to do.*  *Let me know Your will*  *and I will follow You.*  I want to see the kingdom of God  in my generation.  I want to see the kingdom of God  while I am alive.  I want to give my life  for something that’ll last forever:  Oh I delight, I delight  to do Your will.  *What is on Your heart?*  *Show me what to do.*  *Let me know Your will*  *and I will follow You.* | |

**Our vision: to help people find their way back to God**