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LEADERSHIP SERIES: DESIGNED FOR INFLUENCE

Esther 4:13-14

And Mordecai told them to answer to Esther: “Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king’s palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

The intent of this message is to address three Leadership challenges faced by our generation today:

CHALLENGE NUMBER ONE:

Leaders who are not cognisant of the fact that they designed for influence are likely to live outside their God-ordained purpose.

CHALLENGE NUMBER TWO:

Leaders who are unaware that they are designed for influence, more often than not, are probably confused about their assigned territory of influence. Now that is problematic in the Kingdom of God.

CHALLENGE NUMBER THREE:

Leaders who are not mindful of the revelation that they are designed for influence are more inclined to miss opportunities to cultivate, the character, the attributes, the partnerships or alliances requisite to achieve the purpose of God for their lives.

Question:

Are you the kind of leader who is convinced that you are designed for influence, to make an impact, make create a difference:

If so my next questions to you are:

- i. Do you understand your God-given purpose?
- ii. Do you comprehend, are you certain about their territory/ sphere of influence within which that God-designed purpose is to be executed. For some of you it is the 5-fold Apostle, Evangelist, Prophet, Teacher, Pastor. For other it is the power centres, the domains out there: Politics and Government, Business, Legal, Education, Health, Science & Technology, Arts, Sports, Media. Family.
- iii. Do you recognise and appreciate the qualities, traits that will be essential to effectively fulfil that influence?

Esther 4:14b

Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

Background to the story of Esther

- The setting of the story here is Babylon. At this time a number of Jews were still in Babylon under Persian rule, even though they had been free to return to Jerusalem for over 50 years.
- The Persian King Ahasuerus, requests his wife the Queen, Queen Vashti to appear at a banquet hosted by the King and she defies the King's order and was subsequently demoted.

Esther 2:1- 4, 7- 9,

1 After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what had been decreed against her.

2 Then the king's servants who attended him said: "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king;

3 and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the citadel, into the women's quarters, under the custody of Hegai the king's eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given them.

4 Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This thing pleased the king, and he did so.

7 And Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman was lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

8 So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at Shushan the citadel, under the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women.

QUALITIES OF LEADERS DESIGNED FOR INFLUENCE

1. They move from trauma to triumph.

Esther was a woman with a tragic background, her parents had died, and she was adopted and cared for by her cousin Mordecai.

Questions:

- i. Have you ever faced some traumatic, life-altering situation?
- ii. Have you ever felt as if your destiny has been taken?
- iii. Have you been some victim of some injustice and pain?
- iv. Do you feel that you carry too much baggage that you say I cannot be a leader of influence?
- v. How could my life, reputation be used to comfort others?

Leaders who understand that they destined for influence:

- Recognise that God is not limited by the same things that limit us. He operates beyond all **limitations**, past **failures**, lack of **resources** or poor **upbringing**.
- Leaders who are **resolute** on becoming movers and shakers in what their God-ordained destinies **know** that God is invisibly **at work**, making even life's **greatest disappointments and tragedies** a link in a chain of the fulfilment of His purposes for your life.
- Leaders who are determined to make a difference in the Kingdom of God **grasp** that God is present in **every act** and in the **movement of every event** in their lives, in one way or the other, until He ultimately and finally brings everything to a **marvellous climax** as He proves Himself **Lord of His people**.
- Leaders of impact recognise that just as God used the **circumstances** in Esther's life, He can also use your circumstances to **providentially work** out His **divine plans and purposes** for you.

Question:

- Are you going to continue to live as victim or are you going to take on the righteousness and salvation of Christ and live as victors?
- Everything can be taken away from you including dignity, but the power to choose what attitude you have toward unfortunate circumstances will never be taken away, it remains as your own.

2. Leaders who are designed for influence acknowledge the importance of the favour of God in fulfilling their assignment

Esther 2: 9

9 Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best place in the house of the women.

Biblical Favour

The friendly disposition, from which kind acts proceed to assist, to provide with special advantages, to receive preferential treatment.

Leaders

God takes whatever you have and applies **His favour**, He **fits into His greater purpose** for the Kingdom. **He lets it soar** causing **you to excel** in the most **unlikely of circumstances**.

- Favour **mobilises** others to help you in accomplishing your destiny plans and dreams.
- Positions you in places of influence to bring **breakthrough** to the generations.
- Favour is that which helps man to achieve God-given **assignments** with minimum effort.

- Favour **promotes** you. One day Esther was an orphaned Jew, the next year she was the Queen of Persia.
- Without favour, destiny fulfilment can suffer needless delay or **abortion**.

Psalm 5:12

For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous; with favour You will surround him as with a shield.

3. Leaders who are designed for influence have to undergo a period of preparation

Esther 2: 12

12 Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women.

- Esther's journey to influence did not happen overnight.
- God prepares us for His destiny.
- The refining of our characters is very essential to God's plan for our lives.
- Being taken through a process of preparation presses and purges our impurities in the heart and spirit such as pride, rebellion,

selfishness and bitterness so that we can be pliable in the hands of our Lord to follow His lead to fulfil our purposes.

Two stages of preparation

- i. six months with oil of myrrh (mir)

Myrrh comes the Hebrew word “mara” which means bitterness.

The process of being soaked in myrrh was a bitter process.

Myrrh is a unique ointment, not only is it used to preserve, it is also used to preserve and as embalming fluid. It was used in the making of perfume to preserve its fragrance.

Without enduring the myrrh process in our lives, our fragrance would put off a foul odour (owder).

Second stage of preparation

- ii. six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women.

Persian women kept cosmetic burners, put fragrances and heat them on a fire. As the fragrances were burnt their bodies would absorb the fragrances.

- When we succumb to the preparation process of God, He takes our scent, pairs it with the oil of the Holy Spirit and fills the atmosphere where you are.
- Your life experiences, the word of God in you, the encounters you have had with God, the obstacles you have had to overcome all make the fragrance.

4. Leaders who are designed for influence are awakened to destiny

Esther 3:

1 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and set his seat above all the princes who were with him.

2 And all the king's servants who were within the king's gate bowed and paid homage to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai would not bow or pay homage.

3 Then the king's servants who were within the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you transgress the king's command?"

4 Now it happened, when they spoke to him daily and he would not listen to them, that they told it to Haman, to see whether Mordecai's words would stand; for Mordecai had told them that he was a Jew.

5 When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow or pay him homage, Haman was filled with wrath.

6 But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him of the people of Mordecai. Instead, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus--the people of Mordecai.

7 In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that is, the lot), before Haman to determine the day and the month, until it fell on the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws. Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain.

9 If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who do the work, to bring it into the king's treasuries."

10 So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.

11 And the king said to Haman, "The money and the people are given to you, to do with them as seems good to you."

12 Then the king's scribes were called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and a decree was written according to all that Haman commanded--to the king's satraps, to the governors who were over each province, to the officials of all people, to every province according to its script, and to every people in their language. In the name of King Ahasuerus it was written, and sealed with the king's signet ring.

13 And the letters were sent by couriers into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their possessions.

14 A copy of the document was to be issued as law in every province, being published for all people, that they should be ready for that day.

15 The couriers went out, hastened by the king's command; and the decree was proclaimed in Shushan the citadel. So the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Shushan was perplexed.

This decree to exterminate the Jews was a turning point in Esther's life

Esther 4:15-16

15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai:

16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

- And if I perish, I perish! Now that is a statement of resolve and courage.
- It reflected an internal awakening to her purpose and destiny.
- She had a clear and life changing choice to make.
- The decision Esther made at this cross road became her defining moment. She had to choose between revealing the Jewish roots she had successfully hid until or stepping out and owning who she really was.
- Her real name was not even Esther, Esther was her Persian name, her real name was Hadassah.

THIS WAS HER MOMENT OF TRUTH...A MONUMENTAL DECISION

This also reveals a cross road that all leaders must face.

Question:

Are you the kind of leader who would you respond to the call of God to do something significant in history even if it meant risking your life?

- **Our destinies, many times are shaped by our choices.**
- **Like Esther, your defining moment as a leader will represent your true self.**
- **Like Esther you may a defining moment that will lead you to a breakthrough in your identity.**
- **Leaders who are designed for influence are awakened to their destiny and it may mean, that you arising from obscurity, indifference and maybe inactivity. It also means to rise up and take a stand.**

5. Leaders who are designed for influence know when to break the conspiracy of silence

Esther 4:13-14

And Mordecai told them to answer to Esther: “Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king’s palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”

Silent – here means “to conceal”

Question:

Are you the kind of leader who is prepared to break the conspiracy of silence, i.e you refuse to yield to the fear that would want to keep you silent when you should be making a stand?

6. Leaders who are designed for influence lead and reign with the scepter of prayer and fasting

Esther 4:16

16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

Matthew 17:21

However this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.

- Esther demonstrates maturity and leadership in declaring a fast. She didn't operate in presumption.

- She knew that this was beyond her control and only a breaking in the spirit and a strategy from on high would bring the deliverance her people needed.
- She commanded a fast for all within her sphere of influence.
- She knew the power of unity and agreement.

Fasting would release the manifold wisdom of God.

Fasting would usher them into the counsel of God.

7. Leaders who are designed for influence are not afraid rewrite the decree

Esther 8:8

8 You yourselves write a decree concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring no one can revoke."

- A decree is an official, order, edict or decision. It can ban, outlaw or restrict.
- The King asked Esther and Mordecai to rewrite the decree. To reverse what the enemy had decided.
- Decrees issue sudden breakthrough in all matters of situations.
- Decrees are the basis, the foundation, of breakthrough.

- They release the ability to do whatever is needed to break the power of Satan in any given situation.

Question:

- What has been decreed by the enemy in your life in your calling that you have to reverse. Reject that you have to rewrite?
- What lies of the enemy have you believed that have to be deconstructed?

Leaders of impact are not afraid to reverse the words of the enemy.

It takes understanding that:

- You have to awakened to your destiny
- You have to break the conspiracy of silence
- You have to lead and reign with the scepter of prayer and fasting
- You have to be bold and be willing to rewrite the decree.

CONCLUSION

My final question to you this morning is:

Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

Psalm 139:16

Your eyes saw my substance being yet unformed. And in your book they all were written. The days fashioned for me. When as yet there were none of them.

God has already designed and fashioned your days.

Your days were fashioned for you.

The devil is trying to insert his days into your book.

Leaders that are designed for influence press in to find out what, where and how you have been called to influence.

This message is not so that you can go on living without a clue, living outside of our purpose, making no impact on the Kingdom whatsoever. We are not in this world in this time and season by chance.

Every detour and situation in our lives have converged into this very moment.

- We have come to the kingdom for such a time as this.
- We were put here to display the glory of His kingdom in the earth.
- We are here for such a time as this to influence in the domains and power centres that we are a part of.
- Like Esther your story might not be pretty, an orphan, a Jew in a foreign land, a second class citizen.

- But just because trials and tragedies, violation and shame may have come into your life, it does not mean God has forgotten the plans He has for you. He has not changed His mind about you having dominion and authority to speak and influence the territory He has given you.
- Malachi 3:6 “For I am the Lord, I do not change.”
- God is aligning things by His Spirit so that you will have favour, boldness and courage to carry out all that He has commissioned you to do.