



# Shepherd's Path

## A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

### Good Kings – Bad Kings Series, Lesson 15

**Lesson Title:** Queen Esther

**Take Home Point:** God rescues his people.

#### **Warm-Up:**

By 1860, the Nez Percé tribe of central Idaho was being pushed out of their ancestral tribal lands by incoming white people seeking gold that had been discovered on their land. For years before that time, the Nez Percé lived there as a generally peaceful tribe, fishing, hunting, and raising fine horses for trade. Although even prior to 1860, settlers wanting land were slowly squeezing them, they had been able to maintain some sense of tribal freedom. By 1879, the situation was so desperate that the leader of the Nez Percé, Chief Joseph, decided to take the remainder of his tribe and retreat to Canada. He did not want to do such a thing, forcing his people to leave their homeland, but he knew as their leader it was his responsibility to do all he could to rescue them from their hopeless situation. His courage and ingenuity were almost enough to bring success, but they were captured just a few miles from the border.

**Read:** Esther 1 – 10; Psalm 18:17

#### **Observation (What happened?):**

What was the cause of Haman's rage?

What were Mordecai's words to Esther when he told her of Haman's plan?

#### **Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

Why do you think Mordecai told Esther to keep her Jewish heritage a secret?

Why do you think Esther held a second banquet before making her request of the king?

#### **Insight:**

Isn't it interesting that one of Israel's greatest heroes was the queen of another kingdom? By the time of this Bible account, the kings of Israel and Judah had so dishonored God and turned from him that God allowed the land to be invaded and all the Jews taken into captivity. Esther was not a descendant of any royal Jewish family, but by her own courage and the guidance of her uncle, Mordecai, she displayed far more acuity and courage than many of Israel's kings. The courage she demonstrated was not a natural bravado or the logical steps of a highly trained leader. She displayed a humble courage based on her trust in the God of her people. Esther knew she might be killed if she went to the king, but she also understood Mordecai's wisdom that she was uniquely positioned to act on behalf of her people. She did not know the outcome, but she knew she had a responsibility to use her influence with the king and leave the rest to God. And still today, one of the great celebrations of Jews all over the world is Purim, founded when Esther, queen of an enemy land, saved her people.

#### **Application (What does it mean to me?):**

In what situation has God put you "for such a time as this" to help others in some way?

What situations are you facing that require extensive prayer and fasting to overcome?

## Lesson 15