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**For Such A Time As This**  
"Setting The Stage"  
Esther 1

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01-09-22

Introduction: This morning we begin a series where we will work through the book of Esther.

1. Esther is an unusual book.
  - God is not mentioned.
  - Scripture, prayer, or worship are not mentioned.
  - The only spiritual/religious activity mentioned is fasting.
2. It's setting is in Persia after the Jews have been allowed to return to the Promised Land under the leadership of Ezra, Nehemiah & Zerubbabel.
3. It's one of only two books in the bible named for a woman (Ruth being the other).
4. The key verse is found in Esther 4:14.
5. Despite its uniqueness, the book carries a powerful message & is filled with many practical applications that are as viable today as in Esther's day.
6. They remind us, history is "His story" & demonstrates how God can take care of us when we trust Him.
7. As we begin our study, we see how God moved in the Persian Empire to make Esther's future as the queen possible.

I. Getting Familiar With Persian Culture

- A. Extravagance
- B. Image Is Everything
- C. Big Egos

D. Zero Tolerance

II. A Royal Scandal

- A. Disobedience
- B. Fear
- C. Removal
- D. Order

Conclusion: At this point in the narrative, it's difficult to see how this story is so important that it's included in scripture.

1. This is especially true today where the roles of husbands & wives and how they relate to each other is vastly different than in Esther's day.
2. To some extent, that's why the story is so important.
3. It shows the extent of God's sovereignty.
  - He sees the trouble ahead before it's visible.
  - He sets in motion His plans in advance.
  - There are no limits to His powers.
4. By controlling these events in the royal court of Persia, He is setting the stage to protect His people in the future.
5. As you look at the events unfolding around you, be encouraged. Jesus is the same yesterday, today & forever!