

Lutheran Women in Mission

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS (A Devotion for Blended Families)

By Jan Brunette

Phrase #1

"If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews (this family) will arise from another place" (Esther 4:14a)

If you knew that God had established your position and role in this family, how would it make a difference in the way you handle the tough times and challenges as they emerge?

When two individuals seek God's guidance in their decision to marry, that decision is often tested when difficulties arise. Yet they can remain confident in Christ's love as He reveals His deliverance and direction and opens the doors for growth in Him.

If you knew someone else could have filled that position or role, how would you feel about missing this unique opportunity to serve God in this family?

(Personal response)

Phrase #2

"And who knows but that you have come to royal position (to this family) for such a time as this." (Esther 4:14c)

Acknowledging God's guiding hand in your life, list ways in which you believe God prepared you for such a time as this.

(Personal response)

How can Joseph's words in Genesis 45:8 affirm your role in this blended family?

"It was not you who sent me here, but God." Even though the choice was the parents, the newly created family can grow closer to each other and to Christ by seeking God during painful times together. God's loving hand and overseeing eye continues to use these times for your good and His glory.

Self-awareness

Realize that dependence on self and selfish desires can float to the surface when choices regarding family decisions are considered. Read the following verses in Scriptures and record how God desires that we submerge the temptation to force our selfish wills on others.

Romans 12:1, 9-12 We can be living sacrifices, be sincere, be devoted to one another, honor one another, be joyful in hope, and remain patient in affliction and faithful in prayer.

1 Peter 5:6,7 Be humble and cast all our cares on Him.

Now read Philippians 2:5-11. Who is the ultimate example of sacrifice and what steps prove how far He went to submerge His will?

Christ is the ultimate example of sacrifice. He became a servant, humbled himself, and became obedient to His Father in heaven, no matter how difficult.

What was the final outcome?

The Father exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name. Every knee will bow before him in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue will confess that he is Lord.

Submerging our self-promoting desires and becoming a living sacrifice for others can be a painful process. Yet the Lord promises abundant spiritual blessings if we do so. What are some of those blessings?

Romans 12:2 **With the Holy Spirit's help, we can test and approve what God's will is - His good, pleasing and perfect will.**

1 Peter 5:10 **Through suffering—lasting only for a time—God himself will restore us and make us strong, firm and steadfast.**

Philippians 2:14-16 **We may become blameless and pure, children of God. We will shine like stars in the universe as we hold out the word of life to others.**

God's promises

God also promises to be the source of comfort and strength for those who seek His will in all relationships, including blended families. How is this affirmed in the following verses?

Psalms 36:5-10 **His love, faithfulness, righteousness and justice are granted. He preserves and hides us in the shadow of his wings. We drink from his river of delights and fountain of life. We see light in his light. His unfailing love continues forever.**

Psalms 62:5-7 **We find rest in God alone; our hope comes from him. He is our rock, our salvation, our fortress and our refuge—even in our most difficult times.**

Psalms 143:10 **He teaches us to do his will and his Spirit leads us on level ground.**

Psalms 145:13,14 **The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving to all of us. He upholds us when we fall and lifts us up when we fall.**

Unending blessings flow from God's bountiful hand. In deep humility, acknowledge your trust in Him and seek His will for you and your blended family.

It was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name (John 12:27, 28). In all these things, how can remembering these words of Jesus serve as an example regarding the purpose of God's plan for our lives?

Living in a blended family consists of many trials and difficulties not common to other families. Yet in all things, the Holy Spirit uses these occasions to strengthen the family bond. With a blended dedication to the study of God's Word, families can grow in Christ together and seek to serve other families in similar situations. As all cry, "Father, glorify your name" in all situations and circumstances, the ultimate goal will be to glory Him, not to "win" the battle.