

# EXTRAORDINARY

## ESTHER THE QUEEN

### Esther 4:4-5:3

1. Esther is Aware of an Injustice (4:4-8)
2. Esther takes Action to make Mordecai Aware (4:9-11)
3. Mordecai makes sure Esther is Aware and Inspires her for this moment (4:12-14)
4. Esther takes Action and Initiative (4:15-5:1)
5. Esther is Awarded and Inspires (5:2-3)

#### So, what now?

6. Awareness: Do you know what people in your life are going through?
7. Action: When something is not as God desires it to be you doing something to change that?
8. Awarded: Better than an award but a blessing. When you are on mission and become aware of the world around you and you take action to make it a better place, God will bless your efforts.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Read Esther 4:11-5:2. Esther risked her life by coming before the king. Her courageous act gives us a model to follow in approaching a difficult or dangerous task. Like Esther we can:

- (a) Calculate the cost - Her life was at stake,
- (b) Set priorities - The safety of the Jewish race was more important than her life,
- (c) Prepare - She gathered support and fasted,
- (d) Determine a course of action and move ahead boldly - she didn't think too long about it.

Do you have to face a hostile audience, confront a friend on a delicate subject, or talk to your family about changes to be made? Discuss how the story of Esther can guide you through that process. (Life App. SB)

2. Reflect on Esther 4:13-14 specifically. After the decree to kill the Jews was given, Mordecai and Esther could have despaired, decided to save only themselves, or just waited for God's intervention. Instead, they recognized that they were in their positions for a purpose. So, they seized the moment and acted. When it is within our reach to save others, we must do so. In a life-threatening situation, don't withdraw, behave selfishly, wallow in despair, be stifled by fear, or even wait for God to fix everything. Instead, ask God for his direction, and act! God may have you placed you where you are "for such a time as this." (Life App. SB) What circumstances can you see in your life, whether in the past or in the future, where you may (have) respond(ed) to opposition different than how Esther responded to her circumstance?

3. Pray God's will over your life. Make it clear to Him that His will is what you want, more than anything else, more than the air in your lungs. Pray in reflection of Proverbs 16:9, "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps." And 1 John 4:18, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love." If you are not ready to pray a prayer like this (and that's ok), pray that God will lavish his love upon you and that you will learn to trust Him above all else.

Esther 4:4-17 When Esther's young women and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed. She sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.<sup>5</sup> Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what this was and why it was.<sup>6</sup> Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate,<sup>7</sup> and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews.<sup>8</sup> Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her and command her to go to the king to beg his favor and plead with him on behalf of her people.<sup>9</sup> And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said.<sup>10</sup> Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say,<sup>11</sup> "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days."

<sup>12</sup> And they told Mordecai what Esther had said.<sup>13</sup> Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews.<sup>14</sup> For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"<sup>15</sup> Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai,<sup>16</sup> "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish."<sup>17</sup> Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

Esther 5:1-3 On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, in front of the king's quarters, while the king was sitting on his royal throne inside the throne room opposite the entrance to the palace.<sup>2</sup> And when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won favor in his sight, and he held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.<sup>3</sup> And the king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom."