

Faithful to Intercede

Esther 5: 1-8

These were certainly troubling times for Mordecai, Esther, and the entire Jewish population within the Persian Empire. Haman had influenced Ahasuerus to sign a decree, calling for the complete destruction of the Jews within the kingdom. Although they were shaken to the core, Mordecai and Esther knew they must act. Inaction on their part would result in the death of every Jew. They believed God had brought Esther to the position she enjoyed for such a time as this.

Our text deals with her intercession for the people in the throne room of Ahasuerus. She made preparations and entered the presence of the king on behalf of the people. Her intercession paints a picture of the blessings we enjoy in Christ. As believers, we are a royal priesthood, with each having access to the throne of grace. She also serves as a picture of the Holy Spirit, interceding on behalf of believers who lack the wisdom or means to intercede for themselves.

I want to consider the [details](#) of Esther's encounter with the king as we discuss: [Faithful to Intercede](#). Our text reveals:

I. The Reliability of Esther (1) – [Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.](#) Consider:

A. Her Persistence – [Now it came to pass on the third day.](#) What significance does this reveal? In the previous chapter we discovered that Esther and Mordecai had committed to praying and fasting for three days. Esther had been faithful to fulfill her obligation. She knew the importance of praying and fasting prior to entering the king's presence. She knew she needed the help of the Lord. She would not have dreamed of entering the throne room apart from prayer and fasting.

- This serves as a tremendous challenge for each of us. I fear we have become too casual and complacent with our prayers. We need to develop the urgency and persistence Esther possessed regarding prayer. I am convinced we need to get back to fasting and prayer!

B. Her Preparation – [Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house.](#) Esther also made the necessary preparations to enter the king's presence. She made sure to be adorned in royal apparel. If she was going to stand before the king, she wanted to be acceptable in his sight.

- I know many would focus solely on the garments she wore, and use this passage to deal with the issue of dress in the Lord's house. I truly believe we ought to wear the best we have when we come to the house of the Lord, but to focus solely on that aspect misses the greater point. Esther had prepared to meet the king. We too must ensure our hearts are right with the Lord, seeking to appear pleasing in His sight when we stand before Him in prayer! We must cast aside the garments stained by the world, and seek to be clothed in purity before the Lord.

C. Her Presence (1b) – [Esther] *stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.* Some may find this elementary, but I believe it is significant. Esther entered the palace and made her way to the throne room. She knew she needed to meet with the king and she wasn't going to waste her time with others. She stood in the presence of the king.

- Many times we seek the counsel and advice of countless others before taking our requests to the Lord. We want to see how the world and those around us perceive our need. How would others handle this situation? What advice can I obtain from those who have faced similar situations? There is nothing wrong in seeking wise, godly counsel, but it should never precede time in prayer. God alone can meet our needs, and we must take our requests directly to the Lord.

II. The Reception of Esther (2) – *And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.* Consider:

A. The Favor Extended (2a) – *And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight.* Bear in mind the possibility of being put to death for entering the king's presence unannounced. When Ahasuerus saw Esther standing in his court, he immediately extended favor. Esther was received of the king. After all, she was the queen.

- I rejoice for the favor extended to every believer. We can approach the throne of grace, knowing we will be received of Christ our Lord and King. *Heb.4:16 – Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* After all, we are the church, the bride of Christ!

B. The Honor Expressed (2b) – *and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.* To show her acceptance, Ahasuerus held out the scepter to her. She drew near to him and touched the top of the scepter. By touching

the top of the scepter, Esther recognized the king's authority and showed her gratitude for being granted an audience with him. Esther was careful to honor the king before she made a request.

- That serves as a challenging reminder for us as well. We are undeserving of any of the Lord's grace. We are blessed beyond measure to have the privilege of making our requests known unto Him. As we enter the Lord's presence in prayer, we should always spend time in reverent worship, seeking to honor Him, prior to making any request. Were it not for His mercy and grace, bearing our sin and providing for our redemption, we would not have access to the throne of grace. We should always be mindful of our King and strive to honor Him in worship!

III. The Request of Esther (3-5) – Here we discover the request Esther made before Ahasuerus. Notice:

A. The Promise (3) – *Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.* The king quickly set Esther's mind at ease, promising to grant her request. She had gained his favor and was assured of having her need met by the king. He had the power, authority, and provision to grant her request.

- I am careful not to present a "name it and claim it" doctrine, but the children of God can approach Him with confidence. We know He hears when we pray; and as long as our requests are consistent with His will, we know He will answer our prayers. *Mat.7:7-8 – Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: ^[8] For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*

B. The Proposition (4) – *And Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.* Esther proposed she was planning a banquet, and requested the presence of the king and Haman. It is likely, at this point, Esther hadn't completely figured out how to handle the situation, but she was courageous enough to confront Haman's evil plans in his presence. She wanted to have her accuser present when she presented her case to the king. She likely hoped, when the king was forced to choose between Haman and her well-being, he would side with her.

- We can rest in the provision of our Lord. The enemy continually accuses us before the Lord, but He stands as our Mediator. When we are accused, the Lord submits His righteousness being imputed to our account. He stands in our defense!

C. The Participation (5) – Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. Ahasuerus honored Esther's request and bade Haman to appear with him at the banquet Esther had prepared. As we will see, Esther used the initial banquet as an invitation for another banquet she would prepare for the next day. The key here is the influence she enjoyed with the king. There was no hesitation regarding her request. He summoned Haman to appear at the request of Esther.

IV. The Respect for Esther (6-8) – In our concluding verses we discover the great respect Ahasuerus showed unto Esther. Consider:

A. The Inquiry (6) – And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What *is* thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what *is* thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed. Similar to his previous response, Ahasuerus ensured Esther her petition would be granted. He wanted to know what the queen desired. Bear in mind, Haman is present, and he hears the king promise to grant Esther's request.

- We face a determined adversary who seeks to defeat us any way he can. However, he is aware of the provision we have in Christ. He knows he can't remove us from the hand of Christ, but he continues to seek our defeat. It is comforting to know we are in Christ, secure in Him!

B. The Information (7-8) – Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request *is*; ^[8] If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do tomorrow as the king hath said. Esther revealed that she desired to hold another banquet on the next day, and she wanted Ahasuerus and Haman to attend that one as well. She clearly defined her request unto the king.

- Prayer is the most powerful asset we have in Christ, and yet many times it is the least used. The Lord knows our hearts, and our needs, but He desires us to bring our requests before Him. He simply wants us to be open and honest with Him about the needs in our lives.

C. The Intervention (8) – If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do tomorrow as the king hath said. Esther already had an audience with the king, and Haman was present. Why did she request them to attend another banquet the next day? Esther likely felt as if she needed more time to prepare her case, but little did she know this was

all in accordance with the sovereign plan of God. The Lord will do a work to elevate Mordecai's standing with the king before the banquet is held the next day. Esther and Mordecai likely failed to understand, but God already had this situation handled according to His divine will.

- I rejoice for the sovereignty of God. I will admit, many times I have no understanding of His plan, or how things will work out, but He always meets my needs according to His divine will. We would do well to be patient, seek the Lord with our petitions, and wait for Him to meet the need according to His time and His will. We often get in trouble when we seek to get ahead of God. Praise Him for the blessings you receive and the situations you understand, while trusting Him in times of uncertainty and doubt!

Conclusion: This passage beautifully illustrates the privilege of prayer we enjoy. We can go to our Lord, at any time, with any need, knowing He will hear our prayer. He may not always answer in the timeframe we desire, or in the manner we had hoped, but He will always answer according to His divine will. We have access to the throne of grace at any time for any need. If there are needs in your life, bring them before the Lord. If you are unsaved, respond to His call for salvation in faith and repentance of sin. He is faithful to save!