

Esther's Journey of Faith

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In the book of Esther, here was a young woman, who was a very untraditional Persian queen. Esther's original name was Haddasah. She was a Jewish orphan, who had been raised by her fatherly cousin Mordecai (Esther 2:7). We can learn much from Esther's journey of faith!

How did Esther, a Hebrew woman from Persia become a Persian queen in such an untraditional manner? The king issued a decree that all beautiful virgins were to be taken to his palace for the ultimate beauty pageant, with the goal of finding his new queen (Esther 2:1-8). "Lovely and beautiful," Esther was taken to the palace with the other women, and she quickly "obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her." In the end, the king selected her as his queen (Esther 2:17).

Now, as a queen, Esther learned from Mordecai, of a plot that the king's most trusted advisor, Haman, had cleverly devised; he had gained the king's support for his plot, though the king was not fully aware of the full dismay of what his adviser was doing (Esther 3).

Esther knew that if Haman's plan was successful that her people, the Jews would not survive! After hearing and considering Mordecai's reply, Esther had faith in God. She requested all of her people in the capital city fast with her for three days and nights (Esther 4:10-11).

Next, Esther believed God would give her favor in the eyes of the king, her husband. She prepared to go before the king and dressed in her royal garments. Esther had made a decision to be prepared to die, if she was to approach the king, on behalf of her people, the Jews.

According to the law of the empire, if she approached the king without an invitation, she could face death or favor! The only way Esther would know if the king would grant her favor would be if he extended the golden scepter to her (Esther 4:11).

"Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:13-14).

While Esther knew the consequences of her action, she was willing to risk her own life on behalf of saving her people, the Jews. When Esther approached, the king extended the scepter, permitting her to come before him. Walking forward, she laid her hand on the top of the scepter (Esther 5:2).

Esther's faith was rewarded. Not only did the king extend the scepter and spare her life, but he asked her, "What do you wish, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given to you—up to half the kingdom!" (Esther 5:3). God had saved the Jews through the faith of the queen, and the great national Jewish festival (Esther 4:16, Esther 9:26-27, 28).

Esther's faith provides us with some valuable lessons. Sometimes, our faith may not be as strong as it should be, but it is so important that we take that first step even when our faith is weak. Sometimes we may need some gentle, loving guidance and advice, as Esther received. Just as Esther gave us an excellent example of having faith in God; fasting and prayer can also help us grow in faith.

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