

Open your Mouth

Introduction

This week, our study brings us to the Book of Esther. On Sunday morning our Ladies Auxiliary President, Missionary Dixon, brought our attention to this remarkable queen and the mission she accomplished when she chose **Not to be Silent**. An orphan and a Jew, Esther was an unlikely Queen of Persia. But God had a plan for this improbable destiny changer.

Review Esther chapter 4 on your own, but basically as the story goes Haman, an advisor to the king, detested the Jews and he devised a plot to destroy them. He told the king that they do not follow the laws ([Esther 3:8](#)) and that the king shouldn't tolerate them. The king allowed Haman to take care of the situation as he thought best. Haman then devise a plan to destroy them.

Esther was informed by her Uncle Mordecai that the Jewish people were about to be faced with a huge, overwhelming injustice. If you have ever faced an overwhelming situation that seemed completely out of your control, you may be able to relate. During these times, we are required to make a choice. We can sit in overwhelmed silence. We can allow ourselves to be paralyzed by fear and choose to believe that nothing we do will make a difference. We can choose to do nothing. We can ignore the situation and hope that it will go away, or, we can choose to speak up, first to God, and then pair our faith with some action. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a famous Christian theologian once said, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."

During times of overwhelming trials, we tend to put our focus on what we are lacking. Esther must have been tempted to focus on the fact that she didn't have much power even though she was the queen; that she didn't have an invitation from the King; that there wasn't much she could do. Have you ever found yourself in the midst of an overwhelming situation contemplating all of the things that you didn't have? It is so important to learn to change your focus. No problem is solved in your life by what you don't have or by what is missing. We must choose to focus more on what we do have than on what we don't have. Esther may not have had an invitation to the King's court, but she did have incredible, unmerited favour in his sight.



In fact, when he saw her, He not only held out his sceptre to her, he also offered her whatever she wanted, as much as half his kingdom. Now that is favour! And the king's favour was a gateway for Esther to open her mouth and speak up on behalf of the Jews. To paraphrase Mordecai, she was perfectly positioned for 'such a time as this'. In Esther 7:2 the bible says *“And on the second day, as they were drinking wine after the feast, the king again said to Esther, **“What is your wish, Queen Esther? It shall be granted to you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled.”** Then Queen Esther answered, “If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be granted me for my wish, and my people for my request.”*

The scripture goes on to tell us that as Esther continues to speak King Ahasuerus is outraged at this information. Esther 7:4-5 says *“For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men, and women, I would have been silent, for our affliction is not to be compared with the loss to the king.”* Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, **“Who is he, and where is he, who has dared to do this?”**

Do you know that nobody can take care of you better than God? Esther didn't have to plot Haman's demise, she just gave the problem over to the king, and the punishment perfectly fit the crime.

Getting Started

Read Esther chapters 3-7

1. Why did Haman want to destroy the Jews? How was this desire connected with Haman's heritage? Esther 3:1-5
2. What is the significance of the sackcloth and ashes that Mordecai chose to wear when he heard about Haman's plan to destroy the Jews?
3. Why do you think Esther held two banquets for Haman and King Ahasuerus? Why didn't she just ask for what she wanted during the first banquet?

Let's Get Personal

1. What are some things God has called you to fight for? These could be a healthy marriage, your own health, a position at work, just think about how this idea applies to you
2. How can you partner with God's timing to see it through?



3. Esther did not have an invitation from the King to enter his courts, but she did have his favour. What is the thing that you need to accomplish your purpose that you feel that you are missing? What is the thing that you have?

Take The Next Step

This week try this exercise in trusting God. Start by getting your journal and following the steps laid out:

1. Write down every concern you have - Don't stop to judge or edit yourself, just take your time and be thorough.
2. Next, go over the list and circle the things that are your responsibility. Jot down a plan or goal next to each item you circled; the goal or plan should be something you can do within the day or week.
3. For all the other items, pray and cross them off your list - releasing them to God. Give yourself some time for this part of the exercise as you thoughtfully take each concern to the Lord in prayer.
4. Finally, close your prayer by affirming your trust in God.

Have a great week!