

Loyal Heart MINISTRIES

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If it Pleases the King...An Eight Week Study of Esther

A Study for Women by *Stephanie Little*

Key Verse: "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 4:14

Esther, chapter four is probably one of the most familiar of the whole book. We'll see Esther presented with the greatest challenge of her life. God's purpose for her position in His plan is revealed as Mordecai instructs her to make a bold move of courage on behalf of her people. As you study this week, think about the bold move God may be asking you to make on behalf of His people. Just how willing are you?

- 1) Read chapter 4 straight through to get the big picture. Then go back to verses 1-2 to examine Mordecai's reaction to the king's decree. Describe his emotions and actions after hearing what Haman had planned for the Jews:**

Take a look at where Mordecai went. Why do you think he went to the middle of the city and to the king's gate? Who would have seen him as he made his way through the city and right up to the gate?

Sackcloth and ashes were worn as outward signs of inner grief and turmoil. Mordecai was devastated over the condition and possible destruction of his people. Stop and think about the condition of your "people" right now. Are you this least bit moved about God's future judgment in their lives? If so, spend a few minutes in prayer pleading with the Lord for the salvation of others.

- 2) How did Esther find out about Mordecai? What action did she take? Why?**
- 3) Verses 5-16 give a fascinating account of the interchange between Esther and Mordecai through a trusted eunuch. What does Mordecai say to Esther? How does he let her know the seriousness of the decree? What is her initial response?**

- 4) Verse 14 ends with the most familiar phrase of the book. What does Mordecai point out to Esther? As Mordecai explains the significance of Esther's position, I'm sure many thoughts and emotions flooded her mind. One colossal roadblock stood in the way of going to the king. She could only enter the king's presence if called by him; and after 30 days of disregard, it seems as if she was but a faint memory in the king's mind and heart. How do you think the emotions of being overlooked by her husband the king played into her fear of approaching him?**
- 5) Verses 15-16 indicate Esther's decision to go to the king. There is great fear of death in this decision; but she prepares herself by doing what? Why do you think it's important to give yourself time for focused prayer before making a bold move for God?**

God calls each one of us to make bold moves for Him. Many times these moves are ongoing responsibilities, such as being a godly wife and raising godly children in the midst of a wicked world. Yet, if we will prepare our hearts and minds through prayer and Bible study, He will strengthen us to accomplish the task for which He has called us. Is there something in your life right now that seems like an "Esther" moment, dangerous and frightening, but shouting clearly that you were called "for such a time as this"? Go before the Lord, asking for courage and boldness, seeking direction for the very next step. Search out Scriptures that address the very concerns of your heart. Pray those Scripture passages to the Lord. Next week, we'll examine what it truly means to take a bold stand and step forward in faith when fear threatens to hold you back.