

Scripture for Sunday, November 20, 2022

Introduction: The Book of Esther is the story of a young Jewish girl that becomes the Queen of Persia under King Xerxes.

Esther 4:6-17 (Common English Bible)

⁶ Hathach went out to Mordecai, to the city square in front of the King's Gate. ⁷ Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him. He spelled out the exact amount of silver that Haman promised to pay into the royal treasury. It was in exchange for the destruction of the Jews. ⁸ He also gave Hathach a copy of the law made public in Susa concerning the Jews' destruction so that Hathach could show it to Esther and report it to her. Through him Mordecai ordered her to go to the king to seek his kindness and his help for her people. ⁹ Hathach came back and told Esther what Mordecai had said.

¹⁰ In reply Esther ordered Hathach to tell Mordecai: ¹¹ "All the king's officials and the people in his provinces know that there's a single law in a case like this. Any man or woman who comes to the king in the inner courtyard without being called is to be put to death. Only the person to whom the king holds out the gold scepter may live. In my case, I haven't been called to come to the king for the past thirty days."

¹² When they told Mordecai Esther's words, ¹³ he had them respond to Esther: "Don't think for one minute that, unlike all the other Jews, you'll come out of this alive simply because you are in the palace. ¹⁴ In fact, if you don't speak up at this very important time, relief and rescue will appear for the Jews from another place, but you and your family will die. But who knows? Maybe it was for a moment like this that you came to be part of the royal family."

¹⁵ Esther sent back this word to Mordecai: ¹⁶ "Go, gather all the Jews who are in Susa and tell them to give up eating to help me be brave. They aren't to eat or drink anything for three whole days, and I myself will do the same, along with my female servants. Then, even though it's against the law, I will go to the king; and if I am to die, then die I will." ¹⁷ So Mordecai left where he was and did exactly what Esther had ordered him.