

Week SIX

YOU ARE MINE

DAY FIVE

I Am More Than a Pretty Face

1 When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry. 2 He went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one was allowed to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. 3 And in every province, wherever the king's command and his decree reached, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes. 4 When Esther's young women and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed. She sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them. 5 Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what this was and why it was. 6 Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, 7 and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. 8 Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her and command her to go to the king to beg his favor and plead with him on behalf of her people. 9 And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. 10 Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say, 11 "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to

death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days.” 12 And they told Mordecai what Esther had said. 13 Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. 14 For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” 15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, 16 “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.” 17 Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

Esther 4:1-17

The Book of Esther is a powerful story of courage, faith, and divine providence. It unfolds during a time when the Jewish people were exiled in Persia, and a plot to annihilate them had been set in motion by Haman, the king's advisor. Esther, a young Jewish woman, unexpectedly rose to a position of great influence as the queen of Persia, though her Jewish identity was initially hidden. Esther's beauty was second to none in the kingdom. Yet, she carried herself with dignity and grace. She let her God speak for her and was not led by her beauty, pride, or self-image.

When Mordecai, her cousin and guardian, learns of Haman's plan to destroy the Jews, he urges Esther to use her position to intercede for her people. At first, Esther hesitates, knowing that approaching the king without an invitation could result in her death. But Mordecai challenges her, saying the famous words in Esther 4:14: "Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther seeks divine guidance in this time of difficulty. She calls for the Jewish people to hold a fast in her name—essentially, she asked they intercede on her behalf to God in prayer—boldly

and courageously proclaiming that she would do what Mordecai has asked; and if she dies, she dies.

Esther's story reminds us that God places us where we are, at the moment we are, for a purpose. Even when circumstances seem random or unfair, God is at work behind the scenes, orchestrating His plan for our lives. Esther's courage to act, despite the risks, shows us what it means to trust God's timing and take bold steps of faith. True courage is not the absence of fear, but the willingness to move forward—trusting the Lord—despite it. Esther was dutiful to both her foster father and her heavenly Father. She served God to the limit of her ability, risking her own life and facing death to plead for the lives of her people. She had unbounded confidence in God's providence, acknowledging Him as the Author of all mercies.

Although God's name is never explicitly mentioned in the book of Esther, His hand is evident throughout the story. From Esther's rise to the throne to the turning of events that save the Jews, God was working behind the scenes. Similarly, **we are often unaware of God's hidden work in our lives, but we can trust that He is always at work for our good.**

Follow the SHINE Time devotional tool to dive deeper into today's scripture!

S

Seek the Lord in prayer.

H

Highlight a characteristic of God.

I

Identify a truth about yourself or people.

N

Notice what the Holy Spirit is communicating to you.

E

Engage in the next action step. Think of a way to respond in obedience to what God has revealed to you today.