

A Love Letter to Esther

My Dear Esther,

How I have admired and loved your obedience from almost two and a half millennia in your future. Your story transcends the ages. Your beauty was legendary but your faith is eternal.

Yours is a story about how God uses each of us to further His purposes in this earthly kingdom. We, all of us, are two people. There is our exterior self the world judges and then our inner self, the person God meant us to be. God, dear Esther, is pure love. He gives each of us this capacity but we get so caught up in the world of desires, and judging and power that we lose God within us. We become the opposite of love with our egocentricity and narcissism. It could also be called Hamanism.

Ah Haman. Poor Haman, hung on his own gallows. One could almost feel pity were it not for his malignant, evil, and vengeful countenance. God's ways are mysterious but He has a plan. The gallows Haman erected for Mordecai became his own means of destruction. Yet the gallows were only the instrument. Haman was his own destruction. How often are we the source of our own fall from grace. When all seemed darkest, God lifted Mordecai up and smashed Haman.

Oh how wise and faithful were the ways of Mordecai. He opened himself up to receive God's instructions and pass them on to you. Both of you showed trust and obedience in the face of great peril. You allowed your beauty to be used when there was so much more to you. Although you used your beauty to embark upon God's plan it was your inner faith and vocation that rang truest about who you were. It was your faithfulness to God's plan that first made you hide your Jewish heritage and then when God's timing was perfect you revealed your ancestry so that the Jewish nation should be preserved. You are honored every year on the day of Purim.

We cannot talk about your story without talking about faith - Your's and Mordecai's, and the faithfulness of God in response to your obedience. When you hesitated to answer God's call for you, there was Mordecai with the Almighty's wisdom. I can never forget his words to you. "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this." God does not use those unwilling to follow. I love you for your God given vocation in the face of such danger. You did not just walk blindly into the King's chamber, but rather, you called upon Mordecai and all of the Jewish people to fast and pray for you as you did likewise. I harken to a verse in the New Testament, "If God is with you, who can stand against

you.” You took counsel of the Lord and then you acted. By being obedient you saved your people. Esther, here is the funny thing. Not once in your book is God ever mentioned by name but there is clarity that He was there; a heavenly solution to an earthly problem. Your lessons of faithfulness and discernment transcend the ages. Mordecai's admonition to you, “Who are you for such a time as this,” rings like a clarion bell today. We, like you, need to have faith and take a stand. Esther, we forget that prayer is the means and God is the answer.

God is faithful to those who are faithful to Him. Vocation is not something which we choose but, rather, we are born with it. It is not what we do, it is what we are and what we were created to be. Eric Liddell, the Scottish Olympian and missionary to China had a vocation to spread the Good News but he was also an Olympian. Questioned by his sister, Jenny, about his apparent lack of focus on Missions for the sake of running, he replied, “I believe God made me for a purpose, to go to China, but He also made me fast and when I run I feel God's pleasure.” He knew his God given vocation. He followed God's will and returned to China. He died in 1945 in a Japanese POW camp still following his vocation. He gave much of his minimal food supply to others and when arrangements were made for his release he had others released in his place. All of Scotland mourned his death. Many spend a lifetime searching for this inner vocation but the world gets in the way and they know neither happiness nor fulfillment. You, dear Esther, found your vocation in God. You point the path for all of us. All of these years later we are the better for your example and lessons of faith. God bless you and keep you.

Love,

Sid