

**"The Autopsy of Arrogance" - Esther 5:1-14**  
**Wednesday 10/10/18 – Jeff Lyle**

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**I. The Queen's Humility (1-2)**

**A. She did not exalt herself hastily (1) - "On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, in front of the king's quarters, while the king was sitting on his royal throne inside the throne room opposite the entrance to the palace."**

Esther had just agreed to a Kingdom assignment that might very well cost her everything. She had already modeled wisdom in calling for a three-day fast wherein she would have humbled herself before the Lord and sought His guidance and favor for how to go about interceding to the king on behalf of the Jews. When the time came to put her plan in motion, she prepared and then she paused outside of the king's inner throne room. All of her actions reveal a methodical, deliberate approach to what she was to do. Clearly, Esther was being disciplined in her spirit, refusing to go about this delicate plan being fueled by her emotion. She was clear-headed and steadied in her spirit as she waited for the king to welcome her.

**B. She honored the system humbly (2) - "And when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won favor in his sight, and he held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter."**

The fact that she was on a mission from God did not cause her to act rashly or presumptuously. She understood the cultural expectations that were active in regard to how a person approached the kings of Persia. Her spiritually disciplined approach paid off as the king saw her and extended his scepter toward her, welcoming her to come into his presence. Though her heart may have been pounding, she maintained self-control and touched the tip of the scepter, fully complying with the system that was in place. Esther's example here reminds us that it is wise to understand the culture in which we live. While Christians have a citizenship in Heaven, we do well to function within the systems of the cultures in which we live. As long as the cultural expectations do not require us to violate our Kingdom allegiance, the Gospel is served better when believers honor the culture in which God has sovereignly deposited them. Esther did not view herself as being above the king's expectation and the standards of interacting with him.

## **II. The King's Authority (3-8)**

**A. The king had massive resources (3) - "And the king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom."**

Not the generosity and affection of King Xerxes. He honored his wife, the queen, by welcoming her with open arms. Recognizing that she had appeared before him without any invitation, he discerned that she must have come with a need. Before she could ask anything, he sought to reassure her that she was fully welcome in his presence and that she had no need to be hesitant in asking what she came for.

**B. The king had unquestionable command (4-5) - "And Esther said, "If it please the king, let the king and Haman come today to a feast that I have prepared for the king." 5 Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly, so that we may do as Esther has asked." So, the king and Haman came to the feast that Esther had prepared."**

Here we begin to see that Esther was not making things up as she went. There is a holy shrewdness about her as she acted in the gentleness of a dove and the cunning of a serpent. Knowing that Haman was an egomaniac, she used her influence with the king to invite Haman to a private dinner that would clearly stroke his ego. We should note here that being a person of faith does not require us to forfeit the natural faculties with which God has endowed us. Esther used her brain, to put it bluntly. Not every Kingdom endeavor is wholly supernatural. Sometimes God wants us to employ clear thinking, logic, decisive action and robust planning. Esther is moving in the will of God and exercising the good mind which God had given her.

**C. The king had a blind spot (6-8) - "And as they were drinking wine after the feast, the king said to Esther, "What is your wish? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." 7 Then Esther answered, "My wish and my request is: 8 If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it**

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**please the king to grant my wish and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come to the feast that I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king has said."**

For all intents and purposes, the king should have been in control of all that was happening - but he was not. While he had the position, the power and the resources, he did not possess the discernment to know that he had become subject to Esther's plans to overthrow Haman. This crafty wisdom from Esther was actually using the king to bring down the enemy of the Jews. Esther is seen here to be the one in charge, not the king. While Esther's plans utilized the king's position while he was unaware, she planned the king no harm or loss. It was Haman that must be brought down. The king did not see what Esther was doing but, fortunately for him, she sought nothing that would harm him.

### **III. Haman's Depravity (9-14)**

**A. He was an insecure man (9-10) - "And Haman went out that day joyful and glad of heart. But when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he neither rose nor trembled before him, he was filled with wrath against Mordecai. 10 Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself and went home, and he sent and brought his friends and his wife Zeresh.**

Haman left the private dinner feeling marvelously about himself. He had been honored! He was special! Nobody else had been invited to dine with the royal couple! Yet, all of his glee was crushed when he witnessed the one man who refused to honor him. Haman's insecurity was triggered once again when Mordecai refused to bow down. His heart sank and his angry rose. Haman was obsessed with the need to be liked, respected and honored by others. He would now need to do something about Mordecai the Jew.

**B. He was a prideful man (11-12) - "And Haman recounted to them the splendor of his riches, the number of his sons, all the promotions with which the king had honored him, and how he had advanced him above the officials and the servants of the king. 12 Then Haman said, "Even Queen Esther let no one but me come with the king to the feast she prepared. And tomorrow also I am invited by her together with the king."**

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One of the worst characteristics of prideful people is that they are blind to their own arrogance and self-worship. Haman calls together his family and friends so they could hear him recount his own glory. He spoke of his own wealth. He spoke of his impressive children. He boasted of his elevated position in the kingdom which afforded him the privilege of dining with the royal couple. He ensured they knew that the meal was no one-time event as he bragged on the same dining privilege that was scheduled for the next day. Haman was an arrogant, first-class braggart. He was soon to find out the truth that had been written by an ancient Jewish king who said, **"Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a great fall."** {Proverbs 16:18}

**C. He was a ruthless man (13-14) - "Yet all this is worth nothing to me, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." 14 Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Let a gallows fifty cubits high be made, and in the morning tell the king to have Mordecai hanged upon it. Then go joyfully with the king to the feast." This idea pleased Haman, and he had the gallows made."**

With all of Haman's inflated self-importance, he still could not escape the haunting memory of Mordecai's refusal to bow to him. When he shared his frustration with those whom he had gathered, they gave him the counsel to orchestrate a public execution of this rebel Jew. They threw fuel on the flames of Haman's pride by telling him to execute Mordecai right before the feast with the king and queen. After he disposed of the lone individual who withheld the honor due unto him, Haman would be free to enjoy the feast undistracted. So, Haman called for the gallows to be constructed and went to bed that night looking forward to ridding himself of Mordecai in the morning. Keep an eye on those gallows - they will be used by God for an astounding act of sovereign justice.