



Pastor's Pen

by Bruce Wolf, Elder

The Book of Esther is a fascinating account of how the Queen saved the Jewish race from extermination during the reign of the Persian King Ahasuerus, also known as Xerxes, who reigned from 486-465 B.C. At the end of the fourth chapter we find the queen determined to risk her life by going before the king without first being invited. Her own words demonstrate her resolve. "I will go to the king; though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish."

As Esther prepares to go before the king she requests that all the Jews in the capitol city of Susa hold a three day fast in her behalf, seeking God's blessing in what she is about to do. Esther is described as putting on her royal robes before going to stand quietly in the inner court inside the palace opposite the king's hall.

Recognized by the King and finding favor in his sight, Esther is invited in. Esther then approached the king and touched the king's scepter, an act of obedience and respect. She did not speak until spoken to, but finally answered the king humbly and forthrightly with her request beginning with these words: "If I have found favor in your sight, O King, and if it please the King," . . .

We should remember that Queen Esther was an actual person, a real historical figure, and that the events that took place during her life are well documented in history books. After familiarizing ourselves with her story we should then take a moment to ask ourselves if her example can teach us anything about how we should approach the King of Kings in our time.

We have the solemn privilege of worshiping the Almighty God every Sunday morning and we can call upon His name at other times. But how should we prepare for such a royal meeting? Esther provides a simple step-by-step protocol.

First, she demonstrates a sincere **attitude**. We see this in how she begins preparing several days in advance through prayer and fasting, including her community, gaining strength from prayer partners. In her prayers I imagine that she asked God to guide her heart, her lips, and her demeanor before approaching the King. I am sure she also asked God for confidence and courage, requesting that her plea be accepted by the King.

Second, what can we glean from Esther's **physical appearance**? Being a queen, Esther had high ranking and, thus, appropriately donned royal

robes, clothing in keeping with her station. But what about common Christians like us? How is our dress consistent with our station in life?

First Peter 2:9 explains that followers of Christ are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people." Scripture assures us of our

Approaching the King



royal status. If Peter is telling us the truth (and he is), should we not then follow Esther's lead and put on clothing that best reflects our true position in God's eyes? When going to see the King should we not, then, select clothing that best demonstrates our true character, our love, and our respect for the one with whom we have come to commune?

It is difficult to visualize Queen Esther waiting in the inner court decked out in flip-flops, cut-off

shorts or a short skirt, wearing a revealing blouse or tee-shirt as her royal ensemble. I don't think she woke up late that particular morning throwing on the first thing she grabbed from her closet. I suspect she took time to bathe, fix her hair, manicure her nails, and apply perfume.

Esther also went to great pains to present herself in a **timely** fashion, arriving on time — even a bit early — not allowing last minute minutia to spoil her plans. Esther not only presented herself well, but she also represented her people well. She understood that her meeting with the king was not about herself only, but that the outcome would impact the future of many others.

Finally, how should we **talk** to the King? Scripture paints a picture of Esther approaching the king in a respectful and humble manner responding to his question with quiet resolve. Is our approach to the King similarly reverent? Is our attitude sincere? Or is approaching the King for us merely an afterthought, an interruption, another item on our daily list of things to get done?

We must remember that we are the invited guests into the King's house. It is we who respond to His invitation. We are on His schedule, not He on ours. A casual manner, unfocused thought, or flippant language reveals a casual attitude toward our Lord and does no honor to us, to our neighbors, or to our King.

We can learn much from the example of Queen Esther. Her humble boldness resulted in saving the entire Jewish race. To this day her actions are celebrated annually during the Jewish Feast of Purim.

How we approach the King in modern times is no less important than in Esther's time. And our example will likewise result in how well our people will live for years to come.