



Title | Defining Moments
Series | IN SPITE OF MYSELF
Text | Esther 4:1-17
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Sermon Notes

Esther 4:1 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. . . . **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. *ESV*

Big Idea:

Text questions during the sermon: 623-850-8809

Joel 2:13

. . . Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

ESV

For Reflection & Application:

Monday:

- Recall and describe a time in the past when you were headed in the wrong direction and faced a defining moment in your life. What did you do? To what extent do you see God in it?

Tuesday:

- Read Esther 4:1-17. Identify how many times and in how many ways Esther may have tried to avoid taking a stand. To what extent can you identify with her reluctance?

Wednesday:

- In Esther 4, do you think Esther was courageous or simply forced to take a stand? Or both?

Thursday:

- Do you sense that you may be facing a defining moment right now? What are your options?

Friday:

- Read Joel 2:12-14. In what ways do you think Esther and her fellow Jews may have strayed from the Lord? In what ways do you sense that you may need to “return to the Lord?”

Joel 2:13

. . . Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.