

Day 1

October 7



Pray / For courage and endurance in your faith

OUR SOCIETY sometimes seems to be caving into a secularized world. A world pushing God further and further away.

God's people have faced a wide range of persecution over the course of history ranging from verbal ridicule to physical abuse and death. We are not meant to follow Jesus Christ alone or without leaders. Christians are stronger and more effective as a united people and with leaders willing to intercede on behalf of others. Today's scripture verses point to Mordecai as a leader of the Jews willing to risk his life on behalf of his people.



Read / Esther 4:1-3, Isaiah 53:4-5



Reflect / Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Mordecai could have hidden or tried to escape. He instead took action, created quite the public scene, and began the process of interceding for his people. What actions do you take when you face scrutiny for your faith or that of your family or friends?

One of God's greatest gifts is his redemptive qualities and his will to directly intercede on our behalf in the face of evil or provide someone to intercede for us. How have you responded to the redemption that God has provided through his son Jesus Christ?

Who are some of the people in your life whom you consider courageous for their faith in Jesus Christ? What qualities do they possess that you admire or can try to take on?

Day 2

October 8



Pray / Praise God for providing you with tangible resources

GOD HAS provided for us in massive and obvious ways; creating us, sending Jesus to save us, and sending the Holy Spirit.

God also provides for us in ways that might be a little less obvious. These might include the Bible, church gatherings, family relationships, friend relationships, or prayer. In today's scripture verses, Mordecai uses God's provision of the relationship he had with Queen Esther. God put them in a relationship at that place and time to accomplish his mission and for Mordecai to be able to accomplish his goals. God uses ordinary people, maybe even you, to bring about his missional purposes.



Read / Esther 4:4-8

Reflect / Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

In times of great personal need, what resources and relationships do you rely on and how have you benefited spiritually from them? These resources could be the prayer station at Five Oaks, a prayer request on the communication card, a small group, and many others.

Mordecai was more of a source of an informal leader of the Jews at this time. This would be people not necessarily in a position of official authority over you, but those in your life to whom you look for spiritual guidance and healing. How is God challenging you to use the resources he provides for you?

What are some ways in which you can step out in faith and become a person who helps lead others in their faith journey? How does being a leader in someone's faith journey glorify God?

Day 3

October 9



Pray / Tell God you will take risks to glorify him

THERE ARE places in this world that are unapproachable—the Oval Office or the inner rings of the Pentagon. Imagine what might happen if you opened the glass case that houses the original United States Constitution.

King Xerxes' inner court was forbidden to enter unless he gave permission. The penalty was death. Mordecai asked Esther to enter the inner court in great peril to her safety. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we can approach God's inner court and be justified in his presence.



Read / Esther 4:8-11, Hebrews 4:14-16



Reflect / Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Esther feared for her safety and her plan required risk. Consider a time when you have risked your safety for others. It might not be as dramatic as what Esther was facing, but praying with others in public or telling someone who is far from God about Jesus can be a risk to your safety from ridicule, losing a friend, or alienating a family member. Spend time in prayer and ask God to help you recognize the opportunities he provides for you.

Today's scripture verses indicate Esther may not have fully processed what Mordecai was asking or the severity of the situation. Her reply seems reactionary and focused on herself. Do you take time to consult with God when you are faced with difficulties? What does your process entail?

If you are seeking a relationship with Jesus Christ, spend time in prayer and ask him into your heart. Be confident that he is approachable—he is waiting for you. His inner court is open to anyone.

Day 4
October 10



Pray / Trust God's providence during difficult times

GOD USES human circumstances to bring about his will.

God put Esther right where he needed her. Esther, a Jewish woman, became queen to one of the most powerful kings of that time. Without Esther, Mordecai may have had little or no hope. God chose the circumstances in Esther's and Mordecai's lives at that time to save his people from near extinction.



Read / Esther 4:12-14



Reflect / Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

In verse 14, God was not mentioned by name, but Mordecai seemed open to God's mission. Mordecai seemed to understand that God puts people in positions to carry out his mission. Has God put you in someone's life to bring about his glory?

What people has God put in your life in times of great spiritual need, a difficult time, or times of doubt? Give thanks to God for providing his redemptive qualities to you through others in your life.

What current events, either in your life or events around the world, do you see God using his providence to bring about his glory? Pray about how you can partner with God and be willing to submit to the circumstances in which he has placed you.

Day 5

October 11



Pray / Give thanks to God for always being with you

ALL HUMANS are subject to death but are also given the opportunity to dwell in God's eternal kingdom.

By this point in time, Esther seemed to be gaining a better grasp of the severity of her circumstances. She came to the realization that she could die with God by her side or die apart from God. She was willing to set aside her worldly comforts and accept Mordecai's plan.



Read / Esther 4:15-17



Reflect / Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

“And if I perish, I perish.” This is a bold statement by Esther. She submitted to God's will even though it included the possibility of death. What worldly comforts have you set aside to submit to God? Let the Holy Spirit guide you where you spend your time and money.

Fasting was a regular part of the spiritual journey for Jews throughout the Old Testament. Even though Esther had a lot going on in her life, she did not forget to honor God. Have you ever considered fasting as a way to remember and honor God?

Where do you feel God is leading you? What are some of the ways in which you remember to honor him? Spend time in prayer and tell God you will obey him and will go where he leads you.

Unless indicated otherwise, all Scripture quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible, New International Version® (NIV®)*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. ® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.