



Real Characters

Esther: *From Fear to Faithfulness* (Esther 2:1-10)

By Pastor David Hillis, 01 June 2014

BIG IDEA: Courage is not the absence of fear; courage is fear that has said its prayers.

- What are we supposed to do in life when we are paralyzed with fear? How do we get courage when fear is keeping us from moving forward in life?
- *Courage* - the ability to stare down and get past your biggest fears in life - doesn't come from not having fear. In fact, without fear there cannot be courage. Courage comes to us as we take our fears to God and trust Him, as He gives us the faith to overcome them.

Esther's Story

- About 500 years before the time of Christ, there was a great Persian empire that stretched from Africa all the way to India. By this time, the *Babylonians* had been conquered and a powerful king named Ahasuerus (or Xerxes) ruled it all. God's people were no longer slaves, but many of them had never returned to Jerusalem.
- Esther finds out that Haman tricks the king into signing a decree to exterminate the Jews and her worst fears are realized. What does she do? Does she keep quiet, not tell anyone she is a Jew, to save her life when all of her people are killed?
- How does Esther face her fears? How does she find courage to listen and respond to what God wants? *She prays.*

"Then Queen Esther, seized with deadly anxiety, fled to the Lord...She prayed to the Lord God of Israel, and said: 'O my Lord, you only are our king; help me, who am alone and have no helper but you...make yourself known in this time of our affliction, and give me courage...O God, whose might is over all, hear the voice of the despairing, and save us from the hands of evildoers. And save me from my fear!'" — [Esther 4:29,31,40,47 \(NRSV-Apocrypha\)](#)

- On the third day, when Esther ended her prayer, she dressed up and went before the king, even though her heart was still frozen with fear.

Facing Our Fears

- The story of Esther also reminds us that serving God may require that we move out of our comfort zones at times. To speak up, to step forward, to inconvenience ourselves, to even take risks at times to follow his *incredible plan* for our lives.

What situations do you need courage to face today, for God to use you?