

God Uses Step-Fathers Too!

Esther 4:12-14

Observations

- **Step-parents don't get the media attention in our society that they deserve**

- **Many of you older adults remember "The Brady Bunch" on T.V. many years ago. Mike Brady, "*who was busy with 3 boys of his own,*" was married to Carol Brady, who had her own 3 daughters; thus the "blended family" was on T.V.**
- **There is an emerging consensus that children who grow up with "involved stepdads" enjoy many of the same advantages as children raised by men whose names appear on their birth certificates**
- **Studies have shown that kids who grow up with outstanding stepfathers perform better in school, enjoy healthier relationships with their peers, and are less likely to suffer from depression, than kids who grow up in single parent homes**

Mordecai Was a “Functional Stepfather.” Here is His Story!

“Now there was in the citadel of Susa a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, named Mordecai son of Jair, the son of Shemei, the son of Kish, who had been carried into exile from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, among those taken captive with Jechoiachin king of Judah.

Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This young woman who was also known as Esther, had a lovely figure and was beautiful. Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter (adopted, N.L.T.) when her father and mother died.” Esther 2:5-7

Question: How Many Men Would Raise Their Cousin’s Daughter As Their Own When Both Parents Had Died?

#1 As a “Functioning Stepfather,” Mordecai Stayed In Touch With Esther

- **At this time in Jewish history, God’s chosen people had been captured by the Assyrians and were under their rule**
- **In Esther chapter one King Xerxes, the King of Assyria, had a major disagreement and felt disrespected by his wife Queen Vashti, whom he felt had embarrassed him publicly**
- **He consulted his “wise men” on what he should do, vs.13**
- **They told him that if your wife gets away with this public refusal to respect you, this could start a trend among other women in our country verses 16-18 (remember our gender differences with love and respect)**
- **Unfortunately for men, Respect is higher than Humility in our lexicon for Christian conduct! (violence and death result) Proverbs 16:18, “*Pride goeth before destruction...*”**

So King Xerxes “Dethrones” Vashti and Begins Looking for a New Queen

- Esther 2:8 says that many women were taken to the king’s palace to be considered for next Queen. He chose Esther
- Though removed from his protection, Mordecai Stayed in Touch with his stepdaughter (a relationship was there)

“Every day he walked back and forth near the courtyard of the harem to find out how Esther was and what was happening to her (as his own child).” Esther 2:11

- Every good relationship requires communication. Children/parent relationships should be no different, even when children reach adulthood (my father wrote letters)
- Today, Mordecai might call, text, or tweet Esther daily
- The lesson, fathers, is to develop a “spiritually influential relationship” with your child That They May Need One Day

Stepfathers:

Your Relationship With God Can Generate Good Spiritual Advice to Your Stepchildren and Your Children, To Help Them To Shape the Wise Decisions That They Must Make!

Remember: All Christians are “Adopted Children Through Jesus Christ!”

Ephesians 1:5

#2 Mordecai, the Stepfather, Offered Godly Counsel to Esther

- **Remember, Esther was a Jew, not an Assyrian; and she had not revealed her nationality or family background, because Mordecai had forbidden her to do so, Esther 2:10**
- **Mordecai was a palace official of Jewish descent and they knew he was; but he did not want the knowledge of his relationship with Esther to negatively affect his daughter (he wasn't using her for his career advancement)**
- **This is the Plot of the story: The second highest ranking official in Assyria named Haman, fell out with Mordecai, because everyday when Haman passed by Mordecai's post, Mordecai didn't bow down and honor Haman like he thought he should, Esther 3:1-6**
- **Haman felt so insulted by this "perceived lack of respect," that he looked for ways to destroy not only Mordecai, but all of his people, the whole nation of Israel, Esther 3:6**

Following Her Stepfather's Advice, Esther Ultimately Saved the Nation of Israel

- In chapter 3 and verses 8-10 Haman, not to be outdone, then told lies to King Xerxes about the captured Israelites: that they were “insubordinate separatists,” and that they should not be tolerated in the kingdom, but destroyed.
- The king agreed without an investigation, and sent out a decree to set up a day of “total annihilation” of the Jewish race everywhere in the land (whole race). Esther 3:13
- This information was dispersed throughout the kingdom of Assyria; and the stepfather, Mordecai, got wind of it too and became very upset to the point of tearing his clothes and mourning visibly in the streets with sackcloth and ashes, which represented grief and self-humiliation.
- But the Stepfather had one card that he hadn't played!

The Queen of Assyria Was His Stepdaughter!

- **Mordecai sent word to the Queen concerning Haman's dislike for him and his plans to totally annihilate all of the Israelites. He instructed her to go to the King and to plead for mercy for her people**
- **Esther sent word back to her stepfather that she was limited in what she could do because the king had a rule:**

Any man or woman (including her) who approached the king in the inner court without being invited by the king would be put to death with one exception: if the king would hold out a golden scepter to "spare their lives." Esther 4:11

She even said that she hadn't seen the king in 30 days!

She felt that surely Mordecai didn't expect her to disobey the king's law and put herself at risk of death!

Mordecai Immediately Sent a “Heart Stopping” Message to Esther

Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this? Esther 4:6

- God's nature is of such that He will take care of His people, Psalms 91
- Esther, you have to decide whether you will be part of the problem or part of the solution
- Esther listened to Mordecai. Why? Their Relationship!
- She followed her stepfather's advice, put her life in God's hands, prayed, and went to see the king “uninvited” 4:16

When We Follow God's Will, He Takes Care of the Rest

- What Esther was worried about never happened (familiar?)
- Chapter 5 opens with the King sitting in the inner court of the palace, and seeing Esther approach the court uninvited!
- The King asked Esther, what is your request, *“if it’s as much as half of my kingdom, it’s yours”* *God took care of Esther!*
- Ultimately what happens is that Haman, the lead official who wanted Mordecai and the Jews extinguished, was executed on the same apparatus he had built to execute Mordecai, and the Jewish nation was spared, Prov. 16:7
- And Mordecai, Esther’s stepfather, ends up second in command in the nation of Assyria, answering only to the King. And, of course, the Queen was his stepdaughter!

Who Is the M.V.P. in This True Story?

- King Xerxes? The king of Assyria
- Queen Esther? The Queen for whom the book is named
- Mordecai? The Stepfather who gave Esther good advice
- Haman? The sinister official whose evil was used for good
- GOD? Through His providential guidance in the lives of each of these people the Nation of Israel was spared, including Mordecai and Queen Esther

And we know that all things work together for good for them that love the Lord. Romans 8:28

“All things” Worked Out for Esther, Mordecai (the stepfather) and They Will Work Out For You If You Obey His Will!

The Plan of Salvation

Hear the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 8:38