### Esther

## Chapter 4

1Well when MordecAi realized that this was the end, he ripped his clothes, put on sackcloth, [covered himself with] ashes, and he rushed to the city square, where he yelled as loudly as he could:  
  
 ‘A nation is being removed that has wronged no one!’  
  
2Then after that, he went and stood outside the palace gate (because he wasn’t allowed to enter the courtyard in sackcloth and ashes). 3And everywhere that the letters were on display there was crying, beating on chests, and great mourning among the Judeans, as they put on sackcloth and made beds for themselves in ashes.  
  
  
4Well, the queen soon learned about this plot through her handmaids and eunuchs, who came to her and told her about it… And she was very upset when she heard what had happened.  
  
Meanwhile, she sent a robe to MordecAi and told him to stop wearing his sackcloth; but he refused to do it.  
  
5Then Esther called Hatach (her personal eunuch) and sent him to MordecAi, 6so she could learn the details of the situation. 7And MordecAi explained to him how it all came about… Of how HaMan had gotten the king’s promise to receive 10,000 gold coins from his treasury so he could destroy the Judeans... 8And then he gave a copy of the decree that was on public display in Susa (which said that they were to be destroyed) to Hatach, who carried it to Esther.  
  
He also told the eunuch to ask her to [go before] the king [to beg for his mercy] and for her to prove worthy by speaking on behalf of her people.  
  
He said:  
  
 ‘Tell her to explain to him about how lowly she was once considered and of how I took her in and raised her, because HaMan (the king’s second in command) is talking about killing all of us.  
  
 ‘Tell her to call upon the Lord [our God], and then go speak to the king about us and rescue us from death!’  
  
9So Hatach returned and told Esther everything that [Modecai] had said.  
  
10And then Esther told Hatach to go to MordecAi and say:  
  
 ‘Everyone in the kingdom knows that there’s no hope for any man or woman who goes into the king’s inner courtyard without being called [first]. 11Only those to whom the king stretches out his scepter is safe… And I haven’t been called to see the king for some 30 days now!’  
  
12Therefore, Hatach went and told MordecAi everything that Esther said, and MordecAi told him:  
  
 13‘Go and tell Esther not to think that she’s the only Judean who’ll be saved. 14And if she wants to ignore us this time, the Judeans will get help from somewhere else… Then she and the house of her father will be destroyed!  
  
 ‘But... Perhaps she was made queen for this very purpose?’  
  
15Then Esther sent a reply to MordecAi, saying:  
  
 16‘Gather all the Judeans in the City of Susa and ask everyone to fast for me… Don’t eat or drink anything for three days and three nights!  
  
 ‘Also, my handmaids and I will go without food before I go in before the king, because I’ll be breaking the law.  
  
 ‘Yet, even if it’s necessary for me to die, I’ll do it!’  
  
17And thereafter, MordecAi did everything that Esther told him to do.