

Positioned for Influence

*A Messianic Jewish Teaching by Rabbi Jeff
...to build, to encourage, to inspire*

And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"
(Esther 4:13-14)

We know that the manner in which Esther became queen was miraculous. She was positioned by God, as Mordecai said, "...for such a time as this..." But positioned for what? ...Positioned by God for influence. Her influence on the king saved the nation of Israel!

What is influence? It is the power to indirectly or tangibly affect a person or a course of events, in a positive or a negative fashion. Just as Esther was positioned by God in her day, so too, you and I have been positioned for influence in the sphere in which we have been placed. As we trust the Lord, day by day, He will position us for influence in our families, our workplaces, our congregations and communities.

Here are some basic facts about influence...

Fact#1: We are all influenced to a degree by the people, things, and circumstances around us. Proverbs 13:20 say that "*He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.*" We need to be wise about who and what we give heed to.

Fact#2: The kind of influence you have will be largely determined by what/who you allow to be the dominant influence in your life.

Esther "...obeyed the command of Mordecai as when she was brought up by him." (Esther 2:20)
Who are the people and what are the forces that influence you the most? The Holy Spirit or your flesh? The Word of God or the popular opinion of the culture we live in? We must make the choice and be determined to allow the Word and the Spirit to influence us.

Fact#3: Esther needed to be awakened by Mordecai regarding her position and responsibility... and so do we.

Esther had to resist the comfort and protection of the palace, in order to identify with and advocate for her people. We also need to resist the temptation to hide in passivity or comfort when God calls us to act.

Through Yeshua, we have all been positioned by God to exert a positive influence in our world...but how?



Here are Four Ways We Can Exercise Godly Influence...

#1: A Godly Character

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)

Personality can help open many doors, but your character is what will keep them open. Mordecai's character was evident when he refused to bow down to Haman. The fear of the Lord, integrity, honesty, holiness – these bring salt and light into the world around us. Let us all shine before men!

#2: A Godly Example

This includes the things you say and do as well as the things you don't say and don't do. *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works...."* Esther was willing to die for her people and the world. One act of love is greater than hundreds of words. Let us influence by our example.

#3: Prayers

Our prayers have a powerful influence in the world. Esther knew this and asked Mordecai to gather all the Jews together to fast and pray for her. *"...neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!" (Esther 4: 16)*

God responded to those prayers with the miraculous turn-around events of Purim. The people prayed, and God delivered them!

#4: Godly Leadership

This means taking initiative. Purim was instituted by the godly leadership and initiative of Mordecai and Esther. *"Leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less"*(John C. Maxwell)

Esther 10: 2-3 recounts Mordecai's legacy, a result of his godly leadership: *"Now all the acts of his power and his might, and the account of the greatness of Mordecai, to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the Jew was second to King Ahasuerus, and was great among the Jews and well received by the multitude of his brethren, seeking the good of his people and speaking peace to all his countrymen."*

Mordecai and Esther are outstanding examples for us. We too have been called into the Kingdom for a purpose. Our life's place and position is not an accident; it is of God. Through our character, example, prayers and leadership, we can exercise godly influence and be the fragrance of Messiah for such a time as this!

