

Esther 4:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

Analysis

Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

Mordecai sent Hatach back with a copy of Haman's decree, written evidence of the genocide plot. He instructed Hatach to show Esther the decree, explain it fully, and charge her to intercede with the king for "her people"—identifying Esther with the Jewish community despite her position as Persian queen. The threefold instruction (show, declare, charge) emphasizes thoroughness—Esther needed full information and clear direction. Mordecai's charge that she intercede demonstrates his faith that God positioned her strategically "for such a time as this" (v. 14). The written decree provided concrete evidence, transforming abstract threat into undeniable reality requiring response.

Historical Context

Written copies of royal decrees circulated throughout the empire (3:14), making Mordecai's acquisition of one plausible. The decree's written form made the threat undeniable—not rumor or fear but official, legal genocide. Mordecai's instruction

to "charge her" uses strong language suggesting both urgency and authority—despite Esther's royal position, Mordecai exercises guardian's authority in crisis. His identification of Jews as "her people" reminded Esther that queenship didn't exempt her from ethnic identity or communal responsibility. Ancient Near Eastern culture recognized that privilege created obligation to benefit one's community. Mordecai's challenge appealed to this understanding.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the written decree's concrete evidence illustrate the importance of documenting injustice to motivate action?
2. What does Mordecai's charge teach about how privilege creates responsibility to advocate for one's community, not exemption from it?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵת H853	כְּתֹב H6572	כְּתֹב H3791	הַדֵּת H1881	אֲשֶׁר H834	נָתַן H5414	בְּשׁוּשַׁן H7800
	him the copy	of the writing	of the decree		Also he gave	at Shushan
לְהַשְׁמִיד H8045	נָתַן H5414	לֹא H0	לְהַקְדִּים H7200	אֵת H853	אֶסְתֵּר H635	
to destroy	Also he gave		them to shew		it unto Esther	
וְלִהְיוֹת H5046	לָהּ H0	וְלִצַּו H6680	עַל יָדָהּ H5921	לֵב וְאֵל H935		
and to declare		it unto her and to charge		her that she should go in		
אֶל H413	הַמֶּלֶךְ H4428	לְהַתְחַנֵּן H2603	לֹא H0	וּלְבַקֵּשׁ H1245		
unto the king	to make supplication		unto him and to make request			
עַל H5921	מִלְפָּנָיו H6440	עָמָהּ H5971				
before	him for her people					

Additional Cross-References

Ecclesiastes 10:4 (Parallel theme): If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.

Job 9:15 (Parallel theme): Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge.

Esther 2:20 (Parallel theme): Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.