

Dear Friend,

And He (Jesus) said to them, *"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you"* (Luke 10:18–19).

There is such incredible power unleashed when you and I choose to walk in simple obedience to the plan of God for our lives. Jesus opened to His disciples a window into what they were unable to see with their natural eyes. They were sent out, as you and I are, to pray for an increase in laborers for God's kingdom; to trust for provision for their journey; to heal the sick; and to warn those who were indifferent to God's offer of forgiveness. They could not have known what their simple obedience was accomplishing in the heavenlies.

In the accompanying sermon letter, you will see that window was opened again through the obedience of one girl who made herself available for the purposes of God. Once again, the plans of Satan fell like lightning from heaven! They fell swiftly and with a holy violence upon his own schemes.

As believers, we hold incredible power against the flood of evil in our time. As Paul would have exhorted Timothy, "May God give you the eyes to see your part in these things!"

With you in the battle,

Pastor Carter Conlon

A CRY AT THE KING'S GATE by Carter Conlon

"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).

***Do you realize
that He chose
to have you and
me born into
this world, at this
time, for a divine
purpose?***

This well-known verse came as a challenge from a man named Mordecai to his cousin Esther, who had recently been made queen. However, have you ever taken the time to think about this regarding your own life? Do you realize that there is no happenstance with God—that He is in control of all things from beginning to end—and He chose to have you and me born into this world, at this time, for a divine purpose?

As we take a moment to look at the story of Esther, I believe we will gain a greater understanding of our own responsibility in this hour. The Bible tells us that Esther was brought into proximity to the

king for a purpose she did not initially understand. Nevertheless, as a new bride, Esther frequently began meeting with the king and learning her new role.

Similarly, when you and I turned to God, we were born again and brought into proximity to the King of kings. We were forgiven, covered with a beautiful garment of righteousness, and allowed access to God. As new believers in Christ, we, too, learned to meet with God—praying, studying the Bible, going to church, adapting to our new responsibilities. After a while, everything tends to go on fairly routinely—sometimes for a long time.

Unfortunately, the tragedy of it all is that the human tendency is to not only become familiar with something but to grow bored with it over time. We become bored with prayer, bored with going to church. It is the reason so many marriages fall apart. The couple starts out passionately in love, only to end up becoming distant. Or when people start a new job, they may begin by boasting about it, yet after five years, they are constantly looking at their watch. It is something in the fallen nature of all of us.

■ NEWS OF A CRY

Esther went on, and while I am sure it was a wonderful beginning, something happened over time: She began to grow more and more

distant from the king. Meanwhile, news of a cry at the king's gate came to her one day.

People in our generation do not have access to the throne of the King as we do!

“When Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry. He went as far as the front of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes” (Esther 4:1–3).

This cry was essentially saying, “Help us, Esther! We are not clothed in the royal robes that have been given to you; we are not allowed access to the king as you are. We can cry, but only from a distance! Esther, don't leave us behind. Though you think you may be able to escape because of where you are, we cannot escape this sentence of death that is permeating our streets and our culture. Remember that you are the one who has access to the king! Don't forsake us!”

In our day, this represents the cry that is arising as the law of sin and death seemingly advances unabated throughout society—destroying homes, minds, and even children in their mother's womb. It is the cry of our youth who have no direction; it is the cry of the single parent who does not know where provision will come from;

it is the cry of one contemplating suicide because he does not see a future. People in our generation are trying to cry out to God, but they can get only so close. They do not have access to the throne of the King as we do!

So what was Esther's response to this cry? *“Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her, and the queen was deeply distressed. Then she sent garments to clothe Mordecai and take his sackcloth away from him, but he would not accept them” (Esther 4:4).*

If you are walking with God, you likely hear these inner whispers that seem too preposterous to believe.

I believe there must have been an inkling in Esther's heart, just as there is in many of ours today, that she was being led toward a purpose far deeper than she could naturally see or understand. If you are walking with God, you likely hear these inner whispers that seem too preposterous to believe. Yet somehow you can sense that God has a purpose and plan that is far beyond what you think you are capable of accomplishing. However, just like Esther tried to put a different set of garments on Mordecai, you and I often try to push these whispers away and give them another appearance so that we can remain in our comfort zone.

The Bible goes on to tell us that *“Esther called Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend her, and she gave him a command concerning*

Mordecai, to learn what and why this was...Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews. He also gave him a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people. So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai” (Esther 4:5–9).

■ A BRIDE WHO RULES AND REIGNS

Esther then sent this word back to Mordecai: *“All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days” (Esther 4:11).*

It was in that very place of being abandoned to the will of God that Esther found favor with the king.

Perhaps Esther felt unlovely and undesired. She may have wondered in her heart, “Is there some flaw in me that has caused the king to draw back? Sure, I could have made a difference before, but how can I do anything now? I have not heard him say, ‘I love you,’ in such a long time. Mordecai could not have come to the gate at a worse time!”

Sometimes as believers in Christ, we, too, can feel helpless, unlovely, and unwanted. Esther is a type of Christian in this generation who objects to the call on his or her life. “But you don’t understand! You see, my relationship with the King is not what it used to be. Things have cooled off. He has not even been speaking to me recently. You should have come to me fifteen years ago when my relationship with God was hot. I was at every prayer meeting; I heard His voice every day! It was a powerful love relationship, but now I don’t even know how to approach the King!”

You and I are called to more than Sunday religion! We are called to reign with Christ.

Nevertheless, despite the initial reservations in her heart, Esther ended up doing what all of us ought to do: She found some friends who would fast and pray with her. Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: “Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; 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).

Esther had finally come to a point where she was no longer seeking her own provision or safety. Rather, she was going to the throne for the sake of people who were under a law of death—fully aware that doing so could cost her her life.

It was in that very place of being abandoned to the will of God that Esther found favor with the king,

and she was granted her request. Ultimately, she was given the power to rewrite the law of death into a law of life, enabling the people of God to stand up and gain the victory that was theirs. Esther essentially became co-ruler with her husband, which had been unheard of in the Medo-Persian Empire!

I implore you to take seriously the cry at the King’s gate now.

■ OUR SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

In the same way, you and I are called to more than Sunday religion! We are called to reign with Christ. He is looking to you and me as His Church in this generation, saying, “I want something deeper from you! I do not want you to simply come in and tell Me that you love Me. I am looking for a partnership. I am looking for a Bride who will rule and reign with Me, not just in eternity, but in this lifetime as well.”

Psalm 149 says it this way: “*Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise His name with the dance; let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp. For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; and He will beautify the humble with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute on them the written judgment—This honor have all His saints*” (verses 2–9).

The psalmist is saying, “If only those who belong to God would understand the spiritual authority that they have.” If only we would

remember that “*the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled*” (2 Corinthians 10:4–6). As the verse says, we have this authority “when our obedience is fulfilled”—or, in other words, when we have chosen the ways of God; when we have decided to no longer sit on the sidelines as an observer, watching as a whole generation is swallowed up in death.

It is important that you and I make this decision now, for we are standing at a critical juncture. We are in danger, as a society, of losing our freedom of religion and speech. There are godless elements in this nation that are emboldened to pursue their full agenda: the destruction of everything that represents God and holiness. It is a sober moment indeed.

If I perish, I perish! I refuse to sit on the sidelines and give this generation over to darkness!

Therefore, I implore you to take seriously the cry at the King’s gate now. Let’s go in; let’s ask God to do something in us that will enable us to rewrite the law of death for somebody else into a law of life. Let’s ask God for unselfish hearts that truly care about the souls around us.

Remember, there cannot be a spiritual awakening without prayer, and prayer will not be effective as long as it is self-focused. The people who will have an impact on

this generation are those who will go to the throne of God, taking their authority as the Bride of Christ, unafraid of throwing their life in with their prayers. It will be those who say, “Lord, You told us that we are going to rule and reign with You for all of eternity. But You have also given us power now to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy. You said that nothing would by any means hurt us. You have not given us a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind. Therefore, if I perish, I perish! I refuse to sit on the sidelines and give this generation over to darkness! I am going to pray the prayers of someone who rules and reigns with Christ!”

Perhaps it has been your desire to walk in this boldness and authority, yet you, like Esther once did, cannot help but feel like an unlovely and unwanted bride today. However, I would like you to consider the possibility that the distance you are feeling is because God is calling you to something deeper. I love how it is written in the Song of Solomon, which I have always believed to be a type of Christ and His Church: The Bridegroom says, “*O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely*” (Song of Solomon 2:14). In other words, “Oh, my beloved bride who is still hidden, who has found refuge in something that falls short of what I have for you, do not be silent anymore! Do not buy the lie of the devil that I do not want to see you at My throne!”

Esther ultimately made the choice to approach the throne of the king and petition him for mercy, and she was granted her request. How much more will the King of kings be merciful if we ask? Remember, the Lord has chosen you and me for such a time as this. Therefore, let's take courage and respond to the cry—and we will witness what it truly means to rule and reign with Christ!

Carter Conlon
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Carter Conlon is senior pastor of Times Square Church, where he has been on the pastoral staff since 1994.

TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of “The Cross and the Switchblade.” It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

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WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday	10:00AM	3:00PM	6:00PM
Tuesday	7:00PM	Prayer Service	
Friday	7:00PM	The Gate*	

*Youth and Young Adult Service

Live Webcast:

All our Sunday and Tuesday services can be watched live and replayed for seven days on our website.

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