

BUILD-A-BELIEVER WORKSHOPS

Ezra Nehemiah Esther

People say to me, "How do you build a church?" You don't build a church, you build a believer. As a result, the church will build itself. (John MacArthur).

Esther Chapter Eight

"Signeted, Sealed, Delivered"

Introduction

Mordecai got a makeover – complete with accessories!

The last time we saw him he was wearing sackcloth and covered with ashes. He was made-over and **went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple.**

The most important accessory of Mordecai's new wardrobe was the king's signet ring. It was the official seal of Persia. Once pressed into wax or ink, it was the seal and signature of the king.

Mordecai's makeover was not just a fashion statement:

1. The robes introduced him as the king's ambassador.
2. The ring endowed him with the king's authority.

Look closely at Mordecai. You are looking at yourself – in a spiritual sense:

1. You have a signet. Or it might be more accurate to say you've been signet-ed. When a person becomes a Christian, the Bible says they are **sealed... with the Holy Spirit** (Ephesians 1:13). It says you are **sealed for the day of redemption** (Ephesians 4:30). God gives every believer His signet by the Holy Spirit indwelling us.
2. You are the king's ambassador. An ambassador is one who represents his or her country. As a Christian, you are a citizen

of Heaven. While on the earth, you represent Heaven as one of its ambassadors.

3. You have the king's authority. You can declare, with absolute authority, the Gospel of Jesus Christ – calling upon men and women and children to either be saved or perish for all eternity.

I address you today, if you are a Christian, as Mr. or Miss or Mrs. Ambassador. If you are not saved: I address you as an ambassador with the authority to offer you citizenship in Heaven.

We'll organize our thoughts around two points: #1 You Have The King's Signet To Speak With His Authority, and #2 You Have The King's Signet To Stand As His Ambassador.

#1 You Have The King's Signet To Speak With His Authority (v1-10)

Previously in Esther... Persian Prime Minister Haman hated Mordecai because he refused to bow down before him. Mordecai wouldn't bow because he was a Jew. Haman convinced the king to issue a decree allowing Persians to attack and kill any and all Jews on a particular date. Little did Haman know that Mordecai was the uncle of Queen Esther and that the queen was a Jew! She revealed her true identity to the king and pleaded for her people. It resulted in Haman being taken away and hanged on a gallows on which he had intended to hang Mordecai.

The decree to annihilate the Jews on a certain day was still in effect – and it could not be revoked. The Jewish population of the Persian Empire was still in grave danger.

Esther 8:1 On that day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told how he *was related to her*.

Esther 8:2 So the king took off his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther appointed Mordecai over the house of Haman.

You'd think by now that King Ahasuerus would be a little more discriminating about who he gave his signet ring. With it a person wielded tremendous authority.

I mentioned that signets are used in the New Testament as a metaphor of God giving you His Holy Spirit. Look around. Believers are an odd bunch. You'd think God would be a little more discriminating about who He saves!

God is no respecter of persons. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all come to eternal life.

If you are a Christian, you have the Holy Spirit as a signet from God. Having the Holy Spirit means at least two things:

1. The signet of the Holy Spirit is a mark of ownership that you belong to God.
2. The signet of the Holy Spirit gives you security, guaranteeing safe delivery to Heaven and the assurance of full redemption.

If you're a Christian, you belong to God and are guaranteed getting to Heaven. Along the way, you can speak with authority about spiritual things. You can tell a person they can be saved; you can warn a person they will be lost.

- being changed to bring change -
Mordecai was [appointed](#) over Haman's house. It's time we understood that our circumstances are God's divine appointments. The places we find ourselves, and the people there, are our divine appointments, so we can exercise our authority to speak about eternal life.

Esther 8:3 Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme which he had devised against the Jews.

Esther 8:4 And the king held out the golden scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king,

Esther 8:5 and said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in his sight and the thing *seems* right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to annihilate the Jews who *are* in all the king's provinces.

Esther 8:6 For how can I endure to see the evil that will come to my people? Or how can I endure to see the destruction of my countrymen?"

Esther implored the king with tears on behalf of her doomed countrymen. So should we if we are to be effective in sharing the Gospel. We should implore God, with tears, on behalf of our doomed countrymen – the human race.

We should speak with authority to men; and we should speak with boldness and freedom to God.

Esther 8:7 Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Indeed, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he *tried to lay his hand on the Jews.*

Esther 8:8 You yourselves write a *decree* concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring no one can revoke."

The signed decree of a Persian king could not be revoked. It could only be countered by another decree.

A decree of death hung over the people. But a second decree is issued that can save the people who are destined for destruction. Only by the knowledge of, and by obedience to, the second decree can the effects of the first decree be averted. Messengers spread the good news throughout all the land.

You live in a world in which a decree of death hangs over all the people. *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23) and *...the wages of sin is death...* (Romans 6:23).

But a *second* decree has been issued that can save all of the people who are destined for destruction. *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* (John 3:16). By the knowledge of, and by obedience to, the second decree the effects of the first decree can be averted.

God could not simply ignore the decree He gave Adam and Eve to not eat of the fruit lest they die. He had to act to counter it with a second decree by sending Jesus to take our place in death.

Esther 8:9 So the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which *is* the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third *day*; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces *in all*, to every province in its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. Esther 8:10 And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed *it* with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses bred from swift steeds.

Words were written in every language and tongue in order to save the Jews. Messengers then spread the good news throughout all the lands.

God has given His Word, the Bible; He's preserved it – sometimes miraculously; it is constantly being translated into other languages and tongues. Messengers spread the Good News throughout all the earth: *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...* (Matthew 28:19).

We have the words of eternal life. Men may receive them; they may reject them. But when we speak, it is with God's full authority to declare men can be saved or they will perish.

The remaining verses present a picture of the ambassador.

#2 You Have The King's Signet
To Stand As His Ambassador
(v11-17)

Ambassador Mordecai is going to emerge from the presence of the king. Before he does, we see the result of his meeting with the king. His meeting privately with the king set in motion a great deliverance of people.

Ambassador Christians – like you and me - should also be meeting privately with their King. It is the key to setting in motion the deliverance of people that is possible at the preaching of God's Word.

Esther 8:11 By these letters the king permitted the Jews who *were* in every city to gather together and protect their lives - to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the

forces of any people or province that would assault them, *both* little children and women, and to plunder their possessions,
Esther 8:12 on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month of Adar.

The practical advice of these letters was for the Jews to **gather together and protect their lives**. It's still good advice. Believers ought to gather together as often as they can. God promises to be present in our gatherings. He can, and will, speak to us as we worship Him and read and teach His Word.

In Persia, the Jews gathered together on a particular day because it was on that day they were in danger of attack.

What day are you in danger? Everyday! Should you gather everyday? In a way, "Yes!" While we cannot necessarily have meetings everyday as a fellowship – you can gather everyday, either with God in your devotions; or through the day as you read or hear God's Word; or as you enjoy the fellowship of believers.

Too many Christians find themselves suddenly **plundered** by the enemy because they were not prepared for the attack.

Esther 8:13 A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province and published for all people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

Esther 8:14 The couriers who rode on royal horses went out, hastened and pressed on by the king's command. And the decree was issued in Shushan the citadel.

The decree originated in the capital and then was spread to every corner of the land. It's like coming to Church. You hear about God, about His decrees, about His commands, about His compassions. Then you leave – and you are to take with you what you've heard and learned to your corner of the land! You are equipped to do the work of the ministry.

Esther 8:15 So Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

Mordecai looked like the king. You are to 'look like' your King. To be a Christian is to be like Christ. You are being changed, day-by-day and moment-by-moment, into the image of Jesus. You are His representation to the world.

One thing people should 'get' from you as an ambassador is joy:

[Esther 8:16](#) The Jews had light and gladness, joy and honor.

Mordecai was engaged in serious spiritual business – spending time alone with the king, seeking ways to save people, plotting spiritual warfare. But he exuded [light and gladness, joy and honor](#), and it was contagious among his own people.

You should enjoy Jesus, and others should be able to see your enjoyment. You should be described as:

1. [Light](#) – The word can mean prosperity. It is a sense of your spiritual prosperity, your resources in the Lord.
2. [Gladness](#) – It describes a festival. Life should be a celebration.
3. [Joy](#) – It means cheerfulness and the accompanying rejoicing.
4. [Honor](#) – It is sometimes translated *worship*; sometimes *triumph*. The idea is you can worship because you know you will triumph in the Lord.

[Esther 8:17](#) And in every province and city, wherever the king's command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a holiday. Then many of the people of the land became Jews, because fear of the Jews fell upon them.

This is another look at their gathering together. Their gatherings were inviting and celebratory – so much so that many Persians converted to become Jews.

When we gather to be equipped for the work of the ministry, it should be with [joy and gladness](#). It should seem as if it were a [feast and a holiday](#).

That doesn't mean we dumb-down our message. Notice the Persians had [the fear of the Jews](#) upon them. They understood something deeply serious and sincere was taking place.

The current thinking among many Churches is that we must quit talking about things like sin and blood in order to be more attractive to seekers.

Not so! We need to be more genuine and exude light, gladness, joy and honor; have meetings that are like a spiritual feast and a holiday.

Think of it like this: It was not really advisable to convert to being a Jew in Persia. After all, there was still coming a day of attack upon which Jews must defend themselves. But Persians converted anyway – knowing the consequences.

We don't give people enough credit when we try to trick them into coming to Jesus. Tell the truth. It will be effective if you are also living proof of its power to change a life.

Spend time with the King, pleading for people. Then emerge looking like and acting like a Christian.

You can do it because you have been given the King's signet. You have within you the Holy Spirit.



Calvary Hanford
- being changed to bring change -