

“A Study In The Book of Esther”

Edited By
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LESSON #2

Esther, the Jew, Becomes Queen

God's purpose was to place Esther on the throne as queen. To fulfill this purpose, the throne must be vacated (emptied). Esther chapter one showed how this purpose was accomplished. Now the king must choose a new queen. God's choice was Esther. What would the king's choice be?

After the decree was published throughout the kingdom, the king's wrath was _____ (Esther 2:1; "appeased" means "decreased, diminished, abated"). When he finally simmered down, he remembered Vashti and realized he needed a new queen.

The king's servants had a plan that would surely please their heathen master, Ahasuerus (Esther 2:2-4). They would search for the most lovely virgins in the kingdom. When the beauty contestants gathered the king would choose the one who pleased him the most! If two virgins were selected from each province, how many contestants would there be? _____ (see Esther 2:3 and 1:1)? With so many women involved (compare Esther 2:8), what would be the chance of Esther becoming the one chosen? From man's viewpoint it seemed very unlikely. From God's point of view, there is no such thing as chance, only a sovereign God Who "works _____ after the counsel of His Own _____" (Ephesians 1:11).

How should a believing young person select a mate for life? In the king's search only physical beauty and appearance were considered important. Is beauty only skin deep? Is there such a thing as "inner beauty" (1 Peter 3:3-6; 1 Timothy 2:9-10; Psalm 90:17)? Outer beauty may conceal and cover the real you without Christ (which is quite ugly), but inner beauty, which is produced by the Lord Jesus, shows through and can even be seen on the outside! What do you look for in a young man or young woman? What would someone find in you? Can you improve or change? How can you develop inner qualities that can make you the person you need to be?

How can a young woman develop inner beauty and strength of character? What inner qualities should young men develop? What does it mean to be "manly." Does it mean that the young man must be at least six feet tall with bulging muscles? What does God look for in a man, in a woman?

Whether male or female, the following qualities are good to develop, with the Lord's help.

Modesty (not seeking to draw attention to self, but to the Lord)

Dressing in a respectable way (attractive, neat, clean, well-groomed)

Having a warm, genuine smile

Being friendly but not a flirt

Avoiding what is not healthy (smoking, drinking, drugs, etc.)

Using clean and wholesome speech (no swearing)

Being thoughtful and helpful towards others

Being sexually pure

Courtesy (do you ever hold a door open for others?)

Lending a helping hand

Having a concern for the needs of others

What was a Jew doing in the capital of the Persian Empire (Esther 2:5)? Jews belong in Palestine. Why was Mordecai in Shushan (see Esther 2:5-6 and 2 Kings 24:10-16)? Mordecai's cousin and adopted daughter was named H _____ (this was her Jewish name) and E _____ (this was her

Persian name which means "star"). Who was Esther's father (Esther 2:15)? _____. Her mother and father were both **D** _____ (2:7). Esther is described as "fair and beautiful" (beautiful of form and lovely of appearance--Esther 2:7) which qualified her as one of the many finalists in the king's beauty pageant (Esther 2:8). Immediately Esther won the favor of the eunuch who was in charge of the women, as the blessing of God was evidently upon her (Esther 2:9). What fact did Esther conceal and cover, according to Mordecai's command (Esther 2:10)?

Should believers hide the fact that they belong to the living God? See Romans 1:16; Jonah 1:8–9; compare Esther 7:3–4. _____

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Before any young woman could go in to the king, she first had to go through a time or "purification" and preparation that lasted _____ months (Esther 2:12). This involved being rubbed with various ointments and perfumes, as described in verse 12. Thus a whole year was spent in preparing for that brief time when she would be before the king, in order to please him.

The believer shall someday stand before the King of Kings (Romans 14:10–12; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 4:4–5). The time to prepare for that event is **now**. The time to be well pleasing to the Lord is **now** (2 Corinthians 5:9; Ephesians 5:10; Hebrews 13:21).

When each maiden's turn came to see the king, she could choose to adorn herself with as many ornaments and jewels as she wanted, so that she might appear before the King adorned and dressed according to her own taste (Esther 2:13). When Esther's turn came she required **N** _____ (Esther 2:15, literally—"she did not seek or ask for a thing").

There is something more important than mere outward adornment and jewelry—see 1 Peter 3:3–4; 1 Timothy 2:9–10. What kind of clothes and garments should believers put on according to Colossians 3:12–14?

Esther's turn came in the _____ year of Xerxes' reign (Esther 2:16). Vashti was dethroned in the _____ year of his reign (Esther 1:3). What happened during this long four-year period? History tells us that during this time Xerxes held his military campaign against Greece that was totally unsuccessful. The defeated king hoped to find some measure of encouragement from his new queen. Esther is the one he chose and loved more than all the others (Esther 2:17). She received the royal crown (Esther 2:17; see Esther 1:11) and became _____ instead of Vashti. **God's choice was chosen!** God removes queens and sets them up (compare Daniel 2:21).

Do you want **God's choice** for you? If so, then let Him work out all things. It is impossible for the One Who controls all events and circumstances to make a mistake! Make sure your heart stays right with Him and that your greatest concern is to please Him (1 Corinthians 7:32).

The king declared a national holiday and called a special feast in honor of the new queen (Esther 2:18). Meanwhile Mordecai was able to communicate with Esther, being concerned for her welfare (Esther 2:11,19). During all this time Esther had obeyed Mordecai's command to hide the fact that she was a Jew. She was obedient and submissive to her "cousin-father," just as she had always been during the time that Mordecai nourished her and brought her up (Esther 2:20).

Vashti was known for her disobedient rebellion. Esther was known for her obedient submission (Esther 2:20). "Submission" means "to rank one's self under God and under His orderly arrangement." What are you known for? Are you submissive to those who are over you? If you fear God, then you will _____ (Ephesians 5:21).

Who was our perfect example of submission? (Luke 2:51)? _____

Two of the king's eunuchs became wrath (hot with anger) against the king and intended to stretch out their hand against him to slay him (Esther 2:21). The Lord allowed Mordecai to find out about this assassination plot. He told _____ and she told _____ (Esther 2:22). The king investigated and found it to be just as Mordecai said (Esther 2:23). The criminals were executed and the matter was recorded in the official records of the kingdom. In the providence of God (God working unseen and "behind the scenes"), the king soon forgot the incident and Mordecai was not even rewarded for the lifesaving information that he provided. Later, *in God's time*, this deed would be remembered and a whole nation would be saved (compare 6:1-3)!

Because of the wrath of the king, Esther became queen. Because of the wrath of two men, the Jewish nation was saved from destruction. Truly, God is praised by the _____ of _____ (Psalm 76:10)!

We have seen the hand of **God** at work in the first two chapters of Esther—removing Vashti (Chapter 1) and setting up Esther (Chapter 2). Now we shall see the active hand of **Satan** as he works through his yielded instrument, Haman! In the end, we shall see who is the Greater (see 1 John 4:4)!

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