



ESTHER

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INTRODUCTION

- **Author: Unknown; The author was believed to be a Jew.**
- **Location: Persian city of Susa**
- **Main Characters:**
 - **Esther**
 - **Mordecai**
 - **King Ahasuerus**
 - **Haman**

ORGANIZATION

- **Chapters 1 – 2** **The Rise of Esther**
- **Chapters 3 – 4** **Haman and His Plot to Destroy the Jews**
- **Chapters 5 – 7** **Esther's Life and Key Decisions**
- **Chapters 8 – 10** **How God Used Esther to Save the Jews**

BACKGROUND

- **The Lord had previously commanded the Jews to leave Persia and return to Jerusalem. Some Jews returned to Jerusalem, and some remained in Persia. The Jews who remained in Persia were in disobedience to God.**
- **It is important for us to understand that opposition will come when we disobey God, the same as it happened to the Jews who remained in Persia in disobedience.**
- **God can still protect us. God is faithful to His sons and daughters in spite of us disobeying Him sometimes.**

CHAPTER 1

- **The king hosted a party that lasted for months.**
- **On the last days of his party, the king sent for Queen Vashti, and she refused to come.**
- **The king was angry, and he sent Vashti away and refused to see her again.**

THE RISE OF ESTHER

ESTHER 2:3 – 4 (NKJV)

³ and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the citadel, into the women’s quarters, under the custody of Hegai the king’s eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given *them*. ⁴ Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti.”

This thing pleased the king, and he did so.

THE RISE OF ESTHER

The king sent his servants out into all of Persia to gather beautiful young virgins to consider to become his new queen.

- Mordecai was Esther's cousin who raised her as his daughter since her parents had passed away. He was a Jew, from the tribe of Benjamin.**
- Esther's Hebrew name was Hadassah. She was a Jew who was raised to serve and obey God. She was brought to the palace along with many other beautiful young virgins.**
- Mordecai instructed Esther to not reveal her identity as a Jew. The young virgins were given twelve months of preparation time before meeting with the King.**

SUMMARY OF ESTHER 2:12 – 15

- **The young virgins received six months of beauty treatments with baths and oil of myrrh. Then they received six months of beauty treatments with baths and sweet perfumes. Each virgin was to go before the king when summoned to meet with him.**
- **The virgins were allowed to choose from the royal jewels to take with them for a visit to see the king. (Esther 2:13) They were allowed to keep the jewels they chose.**
- **The other young virgins gathered lots of jewelry when they were summoned to go before the king. They went with the expectation of keeping the valuable jewelry they gathered.**
- **Their focus was on the value of keeping the jewelry they chose, and not on pleasing the king in finding out what he would desire.**

ESTHER 2:17 (NKJV)

17 The king loved Esther more than all the *other* women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

- **Esther pleased the king. He loved Esther, and she obtained favor with him. Esther was made the Queen of Persia to replace Vashti.**
- **This is a life lesson for us. Are we focused daily on what God values and what God wants for our life?**

QUESTIONS TO ASK OURSELVES

ARE WE...

- **PRAYING** each day for guidance from God?
- **READING GOD'S WORD** to know what His will states?
- **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES** for areas of life we are facing to find the truth in His Word?
- **OBEYING GOD** as He guides us in life?

ESTHER 2:21 – 23 (NKJV)

²¹ In those days, while Mordecai sat within the king's gate, two of the king's eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, doorkeepers, became furious and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. ²² So the matter became known to Mordecai, who told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name. ²³ And when an inquiry was made into the matter, it was confirmed, and both were hanged on a gallows; and it was written in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

THE PLOT

- **Mordecai heard the men plot against the king while he sat at the king's gate. Mordecai informed Esther that there was a plot against the king.**
- **Then Esther informed the king of the plot that she explained was told to her by Mordecai.**
- **The king ordered that the men were put to death.**

HAMAN AND HIS PLOT TO DESTROY THE JEWS

ESTHER 3

Haman was promoted by the king over all the princes and all the king's servants.

- There was an order issued that all of the king's servants were to bow down in reverence to Haman. Mordecai would not bow down to reverence him.**
- This angered Haman, and he was told that Mordecai was a Jew. (Esther 3:1-5) Haman then began to plot to destroy all of the Jews in the land of the king.**

- **Haman told the king that the Jews did not follow the laws of the king. He then asked the king to issue an edict to destroy all the Jews. (Esther 3: 6-13)**
- **This caused the Jews to be in great mourning due to the edict from the king to destroy all of the Jews in Persia.**
- **Please remember that the background of the book of Esther was that the Jews were instructed by God to depart Persia and return to Jerusalem. Some Jews stayed in Persia in disobedience to God, and now they were facing a death sentence issued by the king's edict.**
- **Mordecai sent a message to Queen Esther that the king issued the edict to destroy all the Jews. He asked that Esther would go and petition the king on behalf of the Jews. (Esther 4:8)**

ESTHER 4:10 – 17 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: ¹¹ “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.” ¹² So they told Mordecai Esther’s words.

13 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. 14 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 4:10 – 17 (NKJV)

15 Then Esther told *them* to reply to Mordecai: **16** “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!”

17 So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded him.

ESTHER 4:14 (NKJV)

14 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?"

- **Verse 14 is powerful! Mordecai says to Esther that if you won't take action then the Lord can bring deliverance from another place. He understood that God would fight for the Jews because they were God's chosen people.**
- **Mordecai also says to Esther, could it be that you were brought to the palace for such a time as this.**

ESTHER 4:14 (NKJV)

- **Esther sends word back to Mordecai for all of the Jews to fast and pray for her for three days. They were instructed to neither eat nor drink for three days. Esther stated that she and her maidens would fast and pray also. She confirmed that she would go before the king.**
- **Esther's words at the end of verse 16 are amazing as she declares I will go before the king to petition for the Jews. Then she says "if I perish, I perish".**

ESTHER'S LIFE & KEY DECISIONS

Esther was willing to risk losing the palace and willingly risk her own life to save the Jewish people.

- She understood her assignment and accepted that God sent her to the palace to be a leader who could bring deliverance for the Jewish people.**
- She knew that fasting and praying was the way to accomplish this successfully.**

QUESTIONS TO ASK OURSELVES

Are we willing to follow God even when it comes with high risk for our lives?

- We must remember that sometimes when we obey God, it will require a sacrifice in our lives.**
- It is better to obey God, sacrifice, and allow God to protect us. (1 Samuel 15:22b - Remember that Obedience to God is better than sacrifice.)**
- Praying through our decisions is key to obeying God to follow the destiny that he wants for our lives.**
- Just like Esther, sometimes our decisions and actions can help others' lives.**

The Jewish people, Queen Esther, and her servants were fasting and praying for three days.

Esther was focused on the solution for her people and hearing God's instructions for her life.

ESTHER 5 (NKJV)

- **In chapter 5, we see that Esther goes before the king without being invited. Remember the king can order that a man or woman who comes before him without being invited, could be put to death.**
- **Esther received favor from the king, and he held out the golden sceptre to allow her to come before him. (Esther 5:2)**
- **In Esther 5:3-5, she inquires of the king for both the king and Haman to come to a banquet that she will prepare for them. They both attended the banquet that Esther prepared.**
- **The king asked Esther what is your petition and I will grant it. She responded to ask that the king and Haman come again to a banquet that would be prepared for them.**

ESTHER 7:1 - 10 (NKJV)

7 So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther. **2** And on the second day, at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, “What *is* your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what *is* your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!”

3 Then Queen Esther answered and said, “If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. **4** For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king’s loss.”

ESTHER 7:1 - 10 (NKJV)

⁵ So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, “Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?”

⁶ And Esther said, “The adversary and enemy *is* this wicked Haman!”

So Haman was terrified before the king and queen.

⁷ Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine *and went* into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king. ⁸ When the king returned from the palace garden to the place of the banquet of wine, Haman had fallen across the couch where Esther *was*. Then the king said, “Will he also assault the queen while *I am* in the house?”

As the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. ⁹ Now Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the king, "Look! The gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good on the king's behalf, is standing at the house of Haman."

Then the king said, "Hang him on it!"

- **In chapter 7, the king and Haman attended the banquet with Queen Esther. The king inquired again to Esther for what is her petition.**
- **He stated that he would grant her petition. Esther then informed the king that it was proclaimed that her life was to be taken. She petitioned for the lives of the Jewish people also.**
- **The king asked who was responsible. Esther explained that Haman in his evil ways was attempting to take her life and the lives of her people.**
- **The king grew angry at this revelation. While the king was contemplating his thoughts and walked out briefly, Haman sought to obtain favor from Esther for his life and fell down on Esther.**
- **The king returned and was even more angry in seeing Haman on top of Esther. The king ordered that Haman be hung on the very gallows he built when he plotted to kill Mordecai.**

HOW GOD USED ESTHER TO SAVE THE JEWS

ESTHER 8 (NKJV)

- **In chapter 8, the king gave all of the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther. Esther informed the king that Mordecai had raised her.**
- **The king gave Mordecai the ring that was taken from Haman. Then Queen Esther set Mordecai over all of the house of Haman.**

ESTHER 8:3 – 8 (NKJV)

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

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?”

7 Then King Ahsuerus 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. 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.”

ESTHER 8:3 – 8 (NKJV)

Esther's last petition of the king was to request that he would save the Jewish people in Persia from the previous edict that was issued from Haman's evil request.

- **The king ordered that the previous edict to kill the Jews was reversed.**

Esther saved the Jewish people from being killed.

- **She obeyed God and risked her life to save the Jewish people.**
- **She was faithful in her assignment to heed the call to fast and pray.**
- **Then, she took action to obey God to save her people.**

LIFE APPLICATION

- **Let's be willing vessels to pray and seek God for what He desires for our lives. We are sometimes the person that God can use to help save others' lives.**
- **We should obey God even when it requires sacrifice and risks for our lives.**

Like Esther, we might find that we are around people who don't believe in God. The Lord wants us to love them, and exhibit patience and kindness. We are to be a good influence on others. He also desires for us to share the knowledge of the salvation of Jesus with them.