

Loyal Heart MINISTRIES

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If it Pleases the King...An Eight Week Study of Esther

A Study for Women by *Stephanie Little*

Key Verse: *"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 2:17*

Last week, we met Esther and saw how God was working to put her in a position to serve Him in an exceptionally unique way. This week we will see God at work again. Remember, even though His name is not mentioned, God is present in every detail of this historical account. Proverbs 21:1 says, "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes." As you study this week, look for the way the truth of Proverbs 21:1 unfolds. The same God Who turned the heart of King Ahasuerus is the same God Who turns the hearts of "kings" today.

- 1) Read verses 15-23 of Esther two. Glance back at verse 14 and remember the process of the young women's presentation to the king. Each girl passed from the house of the women through the halls of the palace and into the chamber of the king. After her encounter with the king she was ushered into a second house, the house of the concubines, to wait for his decision. Verse 15 centers on Esther and her turn to appear before the king. We are reminded of her heritage and of God's grace in placing her in Mordecai's home. The young women could take whatever they wanted to impress the king. When it came time for Esther to enter the king's presence, what did she choose to take?
As Esther passed by the other young women awaiting their turn and through the palace halls, what does verse 15 say of all who saw her?
In a world driven by the appearance of "natural beauty" obtained by extreme and fake measures, what does Esther's choice to take nothing extra say about her?
- 2) Four years had passed since the king's banishment of Vashti. He was ready for a new wife. God was working and in verse 16, Esther is presented to the king. We can only imagine his astonishment at her beauty. Verse 17 gives the account of the king's choice for queen. Four things happen very quickly in this verse. a) The king I_____ Esther more than all the other women. b) She obtained

g_____ and f_____ in his sight more than all the virgins. c) He set the r_____ c_____ upon her head and d) made her q_____.
Esther is God's choice for queen. True or False

- 3) Wow! Esther is queen! Verse 18 gives the account of the celebration in the kingdom. Can you imagine? A holiday in Esther's honor. To the royal court and all those present in the kingdom, the choice appears to have been made by the king. But, to us it's clear that the choice was made by the King of Kings. Obviously, Esther possessed physical beauty given to her by God; but she also possessed inner beauty that is a reflection of His Spirit within her. Look through the list of the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) and circle the characteristics we have seen in Esther as we've read this chapter:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."

Esther certainly is a fine example of a godly woman. Each of us can be godly women. First, we must give our lives to Jesus Christ through recognizing and repenting of our sin and then practice the fruit of the Spirit placed within each of us at salvation. As you read through the list, underline the one(s) that need more work in your own life. Submit that area to God and ask for His help in displaying His fruit every day.

- 4) Verses 19-23 take a sharp turn from the light and laughter of a royal celebration to the dark shadows of an evil plot. We're reminded once again of Esther's faithful allegiance to Mordecai and his command. As Mordecai serves within the king's gate, he overhears a sinister plot to assassinate the king. What does he do with the information he hears?
God is working again. Record evidence of Him in the circumstances of verses 21-23:
- 5) Psalm 103 is a song of praise to the Lord for His tender mercies. Sometimes His mercies are not clearly evident to our physical sight. Ask the Lord to open your "spiritual eyes" to see His merciful hand in your life and in the lives of those around you. Read through this Psalm and write down His actions and characteristics for which you are most thankful today.

God has made His choice for queen and He has great plans for her future. His plans will include allowing danger and difficulty into the life of the queen; yet He will remain true to His promise to never leave nor forsake His own. Join us again next week as we explore chapter 3 of this fascinating book!

