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If It Pleases the King...A Study of Esther

A Study for Women by *Stephanie Little*

Key Verses: "And the king held out his golden scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, 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 8:4-5

We left Haman hanging on the gallows and the Jewish people awaiting for God's deliverance. Chapter 8 opens with the king, the queen and Mordecai coming together and God giving them a plan to save His people.

- 1) Please read all of Esther 8 in one sitting. As you read, think about how God has radically changed the heart of King Ahasuerus. Verse 1 lists all the people involved in the unfolding drama. Write down each person and a quick note about how God worked in them, through them or against them.
- 2) Verse 2 records the transfer of enemy property. Haman's belongings are given to Esther, who in turn gives them to Mordecai. Mordecai is also given the king's _____. Remember, this is the symbol of the king's authority. There is a huge difference between the king's giving the ring to Mordecai as opposed to him giving it to Haman. How has Mordecai proven himself trustworthy to the king? In looking back at the timing of all of the circumstances surrounding Mordecai and the king, how do you see God's hand working?
- 3) Haman has been killed, the evil has been halted; yet the edict he put in place is still there. The people of the Persian kingdom are still preparing for the appointed day when they are to destroy the Jews. Esther still has work to do. She goes before the king again and pleads with him to revoke the edict that Haman wrote. Describe the exchange between the king and Esther in verses 3-8:
- 4) The action of verses 9-14 happens very quickly. Mordecai is in charge now and he uses his elevated position to work on God's behalf for the deliverance of His people. Mordecai writes the decree and sends it out as quickly as he can. Remember, although the king's couriers are the fastest around, it takes time for the decree to reach everyone in the kingdom. Think about the Jews who are praying and waiting. They don't know what is happening in the palace between the king, Esther, Mordecai and Haman. They have no idea how God is working. Yet, He has already

sent the decree of deliverance. It's on the way. Take a look at Daniel 10:10-13. What does the angel tell Daniel about the answer to his prayer?

God began moving as the people were praying and He was at work while they waited. Their prayers, like Daniel's, were already being answered. Do you think God begins sending an answer when **you** humble **yourself** to pray and that He is working even while **you're** waiting?

- 5) Read verses 15-17 again. Mordecai is an exalted leader in the kingdom now. How is he dressed? How do the people of the kingdom react to him and all that has taken place?

How is the reaction of the Persian people in the royal city different than when Haman was in charge in chapter 3, verse 15?

What do Proverbs 11:10 and 29:2 have to say about this contrast?

The end of Esther 8:17 is amazing! Why did many people become Jews?

Esther is saved, the Jews are delivered, Haman is dead and Mordecai is elevated. All of this is a part of God's plan and He has brought it all together for their good (Romans 8:28); but how does it all fit into His plan to bring glory and honor to His name?

As you think about God working on your behalf and sending an answer to your prayers for deliverance, how has what you've learned about His timing and purpose affected your faith in Him?