

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: *"If it pleases the king, let a royal decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it will not be altered, that Vashti shall come no more before the King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she." Esther 1:19*

Intrigue, mystery, secret murder plots, manipulation, wealth, a beauty contest like no other, a simple girl's rise from obscurity, irony and humor...sounds like a promo for a bestselling page turner, doesn't it? As a matter of fact, the story comes straight from the bestselling book of all time, the Bible! The book of Esther certainly is a page turner, filled with exciting details, yet it's in the hidden elements of the narrative that we discover the most exciting intrigue of all. Though the name of God is never mentioned in the book of Esther, we'll see His miraculous power revealed through the providential deliverance of His people, the Jews. Join me as we embark on an eight week study of Esther...*If it Pleases the KING...*

Week One – The King

The book of Esther opens with a breathtaking scene. A larger-than-life king hosts an over the top party where he makes a gluttonous display of his vast wealth. Those in attendance are amongst the most powerful government officials, the highest of society. The king's prideful display lasted for one hundred and eighty days! Take a moment to read the first chapter of Esther and let the magnitude of this event sink in.

- 1) Record some of the details of the banquet listed in verses 1-8:
- 2) The king's wife, Queen Vashti, held a banquet of her own to entertain the wives of important officials attending the festivities. As they were feasting, the king commanded Vashti to come before him and the men dining with him. Verse 12 records her response. What did she do?

- 3) Vashti's refusal seals her doom as the king seeks retribution and satisfaction for his anger. What do the king's advisors tell him to do in verses 13-20? Obviously, these powerful men respond in self-centered fear over the possible effects of Vashti's actions. Why do they want Vashti punished?
- 4) The king is pleased with the plan and sets it in motion with a letter to everyone in his kingdom and provinces. His rash action reveals something of the king's character. What kind of man is he?
- 5) Although the name of God is not mentioned in all that we read, He is there. We see Him in verse 19. Underline the phrase: *"and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she."* Obviously, the advisors are speaking of King Ahasuerus choosing another woman; but God Himself, the King of Kings will be the One Who will do the choosing. Read Proverbs 21:1. How does the truth of this verse apply to the actions of King Ahasuerus?

Is there some "king" in your life reacting in selfish fear and making rash decisions? If so, take some time now and pray Proverbs 21:1 concerning him or her. Stay focused on God, submitting your own heart and actions to Him daily. As you submit and pray in faith, look for His hand moving. Praise Him for His rightful place as King of all Kings.