



# Women of the Bible

## Esther

### The Book of Esther

Esther stands out for a number of reasons. She is a woman of beauty and brains. She is wise and patient, but she is also fearless when she needs to be.

What is happening when the story begins? It helps to understand Esther's decisions.

King Ahasuerus is well known to history, though more commonly under the name *Xerxes*. At this time, the Persian Empire was the largest the world had ever seen. It covered what we call today Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel; and also, parts of modern day Egypt, Sudan, Libya, and Arabia. It was no small party that Ahasuerus was throwing.

There were three feasts held: The first feast was for all the government officials, where Ahasuerus showed off the glory and splendor of the riches of his kingdom. This feast lasted for 180 days. The second feast was for the citizens of the capital city, Shushan, and it lasted seven days. The third feast was for the women and it was hosted by Vashti, who knew the drunken state of the men and refused to come when called. She was deposed and a new queen was sought.

Esther had many decisions to make, and she made them according to her personality, her character, and her fear—the same things that determine our decisions.

What might her thoughts/decisions have been at the first?

- What decision had she made early in life according to the beginning of Esther 2?
- Do I contend for this position? *Word is out that he is a drunken, angry king! Yikes!*
- What should my attitude be toward the other women? *You know women can be snarky :!*

The historian Josephus says tradition tells us that there were 400 women gathered.

It was sort of like a Miss Persian Empire Pageant.

- What's this about "twelve months according to the manner of women"? *Do what?*
- What will I be expected of me when I see the king?

So many more thoughts/decisions *after* chapter 2!

#### INSIGHT INTO HER PERSONALITY:

- She was comfortable in her own skin.

*"Esther obtained favor in the sight of all "* (2:15).

People who are comfortable in their own skin put others at ease.

- She was warm and gracious.

*"the king loved Esther above all the woman"* (2:17)

The things that stood out about Esther more than all the women was her graciousness, the same thing that makes us stand out above the norm.

- She exercised discretion and could keep a secret.  
*"Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people . . ." (2:20)*
- She was respectful of authority.  
*" . . . as Mordecai had charged her" (2:20)*
- She had a personal relationship with God and could lead others "likewise."  
*"fast ye for me . . . I also and my maidens will fast likewise" (4:15)*  
*If you wonder what God has to do with personality, do you know people who don't know Him? What kind of personality do they have?*
- She took risks to protect God's people (who were also her people).  
*"so will I go in unto the king . . . and if I perish, I perish" (4:16)*
- She knew and used good manners.  
*"If I have found favour in the sight of the king" (5:8)*
- She was slow to react and deliberate.  
*"And the king said again unto Esther on the second day . . ." (7:2)*
- She spoke with passion and persuasiveness when needed.  
*"for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish . . ."*  
See 7:3,4.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED FROM ESTHER:** (TAKEN FROM IBELIEVE.COM/FAITH)

- God has a plan for our lives. 4:14
- We are given divine moments to alter circumstances.  
Esther was the only Jew with access to the king. See Esther 4:14
- We must stand with courage. 4:16
- Fasting and prayer brings clarity and hope for deliverance.
- God demands obedience. Esther's obedience saved God's people from genocide.
- God uses everything and everybody for His divine purpose.  
*The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. Proverbs 16:4*  
*Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. Hebrews 2:8*

#### **CONCLUSION:**

1. God is the only One who has the power to turn trials into blessings.
2. Our prayers matter. Our voice matters. Our actions matter. And God is our Deliverer.
3. God is able to bring great favor and blessing on our lives, even in hard places.
4. Pride is a trap. Humility is key.

*If you find yourself facing times of trouble or testing right now, be assured that God is at work in your situation. He's working within you, and on your behalf in all the events that surround you, no matter how difficult. In whatever we face, God is still on the throne. He is powerful, and nothing is too difficult for Him. He cares for you. He loves you. He knows everything you're facing even now, though you may have believed that no one could understand your situation. He does. —Debbie McDaniel, Fresh Day Ahead*