



Esther

“Young Lions”

“The king fell in love with Esther far more than with any of his other women or any of the other virgins—he was totally smitten by her. He placed a royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti.” Esther 2:17 The Message

The Jewish people had served in bondage and now was the time for God to free them. The person chosen to do that was a young orphan girl named Esther. Esther was being raised by her uncle, Mordecai. One day King Ahasuerus told his queen, Vashti, to entertain his banquet by removing her clothes. When she refused the order, he banished her from his site and set out to find new young virgins for his court and a new Queen.

Mordecai wanted Esther to be a part of the court because he felt it would be a way for the Jews to work for freedom from bondage. Mordecai was loyal to his earthly king, but he was also a man of God and realized that the Jews needed to be freed from bondage. He suggested that Esther “try” for the position. This would be a way for Esther to reach the king and potentially save her people. The young maids spent months in preparation before the King was ready to choose his Queen.

The Bible tells us that Esther was fair and beautiful. Esther was chosen as the new Queen. God was working his plan through Esther and her uncle to free the Jews from their bondage. She did not reveal that she was a Jewess.

But there is much more to this story. Haman, who was very high in the court, probably like a prime minister today, was very jealous and wanted Mordecai killed because Mordecai would not bow down to him. But he couldn’t just go against Mordecai, so he decided to tell the king there were many people that were different and he didn’t think the king should tolerate them. Haman, in his jealousy, asked King Ahasuerus to have all the Jews killed. The king agreed and gave his signet ring to Haman and told him to do what he thought needed to be done. So Haman built a gallows and was ready to do what he wanted to do.

Mordecai thought this was the time for Esther to do her part for her people. She suggested that Mordecai gather together all the Jews and hold a fast and she and her maids would also fast. And, she promised to go to the king even if it meant her death. For days she and all the other Jewish people wore sack cloth and clothed themselves with ashes while they prayed to God for help.

That night the king couldn’t sleep and he began to read about the past and recognized that he had never honored the man who had guarded the threshold when some men had tried to kill him. He asked who that man was and found out it was Mordecai.

Then Esther approached the king as she had promised and asked for freedom for herself and her people. The king asked who it was that was going to destroy these people and his Queen. Because Esther was willing to listen and be used by God she was able to free her people. She had been given a plan. This could have meant her death because she was not permitted to enter the court without permission, the king allowed her to go in.

She asked the king to come to a banquet in her quarters and bring Haman along. Everything went well, and she invited them to a second banquet. Haman was feeling pretty smug. Then Esther revealed to the king the fact that she was a Jewess, and she pleaded for the life of her people. When the king heard this he left the banquet in anger. After he had some time to think he returned to the banquet hall only to find Haman at the feet of his queen. The king was so irate. The king said "Will he even assault the queen in my presence, in my own house?" When he realized his error he asked to have Haman killed and the gallows which Haman has prepared for Mordecai were used to hang Haman.

Esther, a young woman, risked her life and helped to deliver her people from bondage as the king then allowed the Jews to arm and defend themselves. They killed their enemies, and thus were saved by God.

Prayer: Dear God, You can use all of us to do Your work and spread Your gospel here on earth. Help us to pray and know what You want us to do and help us to know that You will always be with us as You have promised. Amen.

1. Can God use other people to encourage us to do God’s will?
2. Has God put some duty on you to help accomplish His work?

3. We have no record of Esther's Uncle, Mordecai, having been married, so we have a young woman raised by a single man. Do you ever feel unworthy of God's love and work?
4. Do we have a duty to help those who have no one to watch out for them?
5. Should Mordecai have used Esther instead of approaching the king himself?

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