

The Humble Exalted Esther 2:1-20

INTRO: The second chapter of Esther opens with this phrase, “after these things.”

1. After Ahasuerus suffered defeat from the wars he waged on Greece 480-479 BC. The great fleet of Ahasuerus was defeated at Thermopylae and Salamis.
2. After he returned to the palace without Vashti and recognized how lonely he was, verse one says: “...he remembered Vashti: and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.”
 - a. Although he seems to have wanted Vashti back, he could not change his own law.
 - b. The law of the Medes and the Persians could not be altered; it was irrevocable.
3. Verse 2-4- noticing how moody and lonely the king was, those close to him, his cabinet, made a suggestion.
 - a. They suggested a beauty contest (vs 2).
 - b. The entire kingdom was searched for beautiful young women. They were brought in from far and wide.
 - c. The number of women brought in must have been quite large (vs 3).
 - d. Vs. 4, the king was to be the sole judge of this contest.

I. VSS. 5-7, ESTHER'S CONDITION

- A. Vss 5-6, Esther's story begins here.
 1. Mordecai was in a strange land. He had been taken captive, probably at a young age. Mordecai is mentioned as a high official in the court of Xerxes on a cuniform tablet of the period.
 2. Mordecai was in the second deportation of Nebuchadnezzar.
 - a. The first deportation out of Jerusalem had been of the upper class, princes and nobility. Daniel was in this group.
 - b. The second deportation was of the upper middle class. Mordecai was in this group.
- B. Vs. 7, Here we find Esther's condition.

1. Her Hebrew name was Hadassah meaning Myrtle. In Palestine, you will find one of the finest hospitals in the world. It is a great research center. It is the Hadassah Hospital, named after this young Hebrew woman.
2. Esther from the Babylonian goddess Ishtar, the name we know her by, means “star.” Her bright characteristics will shine forth as we study this book.
3. “She had neither father nor mother.” She was brought up by Mordecai, her older cousin. He took her “for his own daughter.” She was an orphan.
 - a. No one seemed further away, by birth and circumstances, from being a queen than Esther.
 - b. In the mysterious providence of God, the most unlikely things do happen as we shall see.
4. The Bible teaches us that we were far from God and unlikely candidates for salvation (Eph 2:12-14a).
 - a. By nature, we were children of wrath without God as our Father or heaven as our home (John 3:36).
 - b. By the blood of Christ, we have been washed and made kings and priests unto God (Rev 1:5-6).

II. VSS 8-14, ESTHER’S CALL AND CHARACTER

- A. Vs. 8, Her call. “Esther was brought also unto the king’s house.”
 1. She is a candidate for the crown.
 - a. Not many were brought within the reach of this prize.
 - b. In this contest, only one would receive the crown.
 2. The Gospel call goes out to all. We are to preach the Gospel to every creature.
 - a. Mark 16:15, “Go ye therefore and preach the Gospel to every creature.”
 - b. “God....commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30).
 - c. In God’s sovereignty, “Many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt 22:14). Many hear the Gospel but few believe it.
 - d. All who believe are brought into the King’s house, brought into His presence.
 - e. For the child of God, there are crowns to be won, but salvation is the gift of God.
- B. Vss 8b-9, Her Comforter.

1. Hegai, a picture of the Holy Spirit, prepares her to meet the king; just as the Holy Spirit prepares us to meet our King.
 2. He came along side of her to guide her to the king. The Holy Spirit separates us unto God, leads us unto the Sovereign of the universe (I Pet 1:2).
- C. Vss 10-11, Her Character.
1. Vs 10, She was true to Mordecai's instructions not to reveal her nationality. Anti-Semitism has long been around.
 - a. She was an old fashioned gal with great character (vs 20). She had had good upbringing.
 - b. The scripture says, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." A good and honest heart is good ground for kingdom seed. Of course, this good heart and good ground come from Holy Spirit preparation.
 2. Vs 11, Mordecai is caring and concerned, but God is working.
- D. Vss 12-14, Her Cosmetics. These verses speak of a year in the beauty salon.
1. Heathenism always emphasizes physical beauty as the world sees it.
 2. The further we get away from God, the more emphasis there is on cosmetics.
 3. But don't gripe, fellows, when your wives spend a little time and money on make-up.

III. VS 15, HER CHOICE

- A. She chose to be satisfied with the things appointed by the king.
- B. She left herself entirely in the hands of him who had been preparing her to go before the king.
 1. Her own thoughts or devices find no place here.
 2. She submits to the one who will lead her to the king and to prepare her for a life with him.
- C. Let us submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit who has prepared us and brought us to Christ.
 1. His office is to sanctify us.
 2. His office is to prepare us for the actual presence of the King.
 3. We need to be satisfied with the robe of righteousness He has given us.

IV. VSS 16-19, HER CROWN

- A. Vs. 16, Prepared by Hegai, a picture of the Holy Spirit, she is brought before the king by him. We are drawn by the Holy Spirit to God (John 6:44).
- B. Vs. 17, The crown is set upon her head.
 - 1. Her humility and faith are rewarded.
 - 2. She is crowned with glory and honor.
- C. Vss 18-19, A great feast is made for the occasion.
 - 1. One of these days there is going to be a feast for those who have been called of God to salvation (Rom 8:28,30; 9:24; I Cor 1:2, 9, 26; I Tim 6:12; II Tim 1:9).
 - 2. The feast will be the marriage feast, just as it was for Esther. The church will be the bride (Rev 19:7-9).

CONCLUSION: There is a Gospel call that goes forth. Friend, heed that call today. Believe on the crucified, buried, and risen Savior.

9/23/2007

Dr. Cecil A. Fayard, Jr.