

Ruth and Esther Lesson 4—Esther 1–2

Esther in the Persian Court



Memorize the TRUTH!

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

DAY 1: ESTHER 1:1-9—King Ahasuerus’s Banquet

1. Who was Ahasuerus? What did you learn about him while reading verses 1-4?
2. What happened after 180 days? How would you describe the event?
3. What are your thoughts about King Ahasuerus and the culture of his day?
4. What special arrangements had been made for the women?

DAY 2: ESTHER 1:10-22 —Queen Vashti’s Refusal

5. What command did the king give concerning the queen and why?
6. Verse 12 says the king was “enraged.” Why do you think he reacted this way?
7. How did the king decide what to do with Queen Vashti? What do you think of his decision?



Learn the TRUTH!

Throughout the book of Esther, we see King Ahasuerus making significant decisions based on the counsel of others. Often they turned out to be poor decisions that had far-reaching consequences. In rage and embarrassment, he asked his “wise men” for advice on how to deal with Vashti. Chapter 2 records him listening to his young male servants’ advice on how to select a new queen. In later chapters, the advice the king received would lead to a death threat for an entire race of people. When you make decisions, do you look to others for advice? What kind of people do you choose to advise you? Review your memory verse, James 1:5. How can you use this truth when you make decisions? Plan to share your thoughts in your small group.

DAY 3: ESTHER 2:1-11—Esther Is Brought to the Harem

8. What advice was the king given for finding a new queen?

9. What does this passage tell you about Esther’s background, personal appearance, and character?
10. How would you describe the relationship between Esther and Mordecai?

DAY 4: ESTHER 2:12-18—A New Queen

11. How were the young virgins prepared before seeing the king?
12. What happened to the young women after the king spent the night with them?
13. What effect did Esther have on others, including the king?

DAY 5: ESTHER 2:19-23—Mordecai Speaks Up

14. What did you learn about Mordecai from this chapter?
15. How did Mordecai save the king’s life?
16. Why do you think Mordecai asked Esther not to reveal her Jewish heritage?



Apply the TRUTH!

Vashti and Esther lived during a time when women were degraded. God’s good and pure intentions for male and female relationships were ignored. A king had absolute authority over all people, and women were used according to his whims. Vashti chose to resist the king—and lost her position and influence. Esther worked within the system—but is sometimes criticized for compromising. Have you ever had to make a tough choice similar to those made by Vashti and Esther? Consider their stories, along with the following Scripture passages: Mathew 10:16; Romans 12:2; James 1:5. What insight from your study could help you with similar decisions?

DAY 6: Participate in Class