**Esther 1-2**

And the **king loved Esther above all the women**, and **she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins**; so that **he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti**. (Esther2:17)

**INTRODUCTION**

**CHAPTER 1**

**Ahasuerus’ Banquet (1-8)**

Now it came to pass in the days of **Ahasuerus**, (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:)**2**That in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace,**3**In the third year of his reign, he made a **feast** unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him:**4**When he shewed the **riches** of his glorious kingdom and the **honor** of his excellent majesty many days, even an hundred and fourscore days.**5**And when these days were expired, the king made a **feast unto all the people** that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, **seven days**, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;**6**Where were white, green, and blue, hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble.**7**And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king.**8**And the **drinking** was according to the law; **none did compel**: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

**Vashti’s Banquet (9)**

Also **Vashti the queen** made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus.

**Vashti’s Refusal to Come at the King’s Command and its Consequences (10-22)**

On the **seventh day**, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he **commanded** Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the **seven chamberlains** that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,**11To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal**, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on. **12**But the **queen Vashti refused** to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the **king very wroth**, and his **anger burned in him**.**13**Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:**14**And the next unto him was Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and which sat the first in the kingdom;)**15What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law**, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?**16**And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.**17**For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.**18**Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath.**19**If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, That **Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus**; and **let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she**.**20**And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall give to their husbands honor, both to great and small.**21**And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan:**22**For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every man should bear rule in his own house, and that it should be published according to the language of every people.

**CHAPTER 2**

**Search for Vashti’s Replacement (1-4)**

After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.**2**Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, **Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king:3**And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given them:**4**And **let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti.** And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

**Mordecai and Esther Introduced (5-7)**

Now in Shushan the palace there was a **certain Jew**, whose name was **Mordecai**, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a **Benjamite**; **6**Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.**7**And he brought up Hadassah, that is, **Esther**, his **uncle's daughter**: for **she had neither father nor mother**, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, **took for his own daughter**.

**Selection Process (8-15)**

So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when **many maidens were gathered together** unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that **Esther** was brought also unto the king's house, to the **custody of Hegai, keeper of the women**.**9**And the maiden pleased him, and **she obtained kindness of him**; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens, which were meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and **he preferred her** and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women.

**10Esther** had not shewed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew it.**11**And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her.**12**Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odors, and with other things for the purifying of the women;)**13**Then thus came every maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house.**14**In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.**15**Now when the turn of **Esther**, the daughter of Abihail the **uncle of Mordecai**, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And **Esther obtained favor in the sight of all them that looked upon her.**

**Esther Selected (16-20)**

So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.**17**And the **king loved Esther above all the women**, and **she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins**; so that **he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti**.**18**Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.**19**And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.**20**Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

**Mordecai Saves the King’s Life (21-23)**

In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, **two of the king's chamberlains**, **Bigthan and Teresh**, of those which kept the door, were **wroth**, and **sought to lay hands on the king Ahasuerus**.**22**And the thing was known to **Mordecai**, who **told** it unto **Esther the queen**; and **Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name**.**23**And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.