

**Context**

1] The King has a gathering to display His wealth. His wife Vashti refuses to obey his command to come to the feast and display her beauty. On advice, he exiles her, and sends a message to all his empire that following his example, everyman should be ruler of his home.

2] God rules absolutely (but gives us free will). God rules according to his Word (experts in the Law). God expects us to obey (His) authorities - in the home etc.

**Surprises** Why is Esther not revealing nationality or family repeated (10, 20)

--Because this is the Key God first – Mordecai the Jew (God) then King (temporal authorities)

**MP** God's people should live submitting to earthly authorities, subject to His overall authority.

**KV** “Esther had kept secret her family background and nationality, just as Mordecai had told her to do for she continued to follow Mordecai’s instructions as she had done when he was bringing her up”. (20)

**The plan for the beauty contest (1- 4)**

1] Wrath subsided (1, 7:10)

2] The proposal (2-4)

1) beautiful young virgins (2)

2) every province (3a) – 127 (1:1)

3) beauty contest (3b)

4) successor to Vashti (4a)

3] The thing pleased the king and he did so (4b)

*Nb Plan with min fuss and the King listened to his advisors*

**Mordecai the Jew introduced (5-7)**

1] Mordecai (5&6)

*Nb – 1<sup>st</sup> mentioned before Esther*

*(Book could be named ‘mordecai’ Book names are not inspired?!)*

*Jew, (M the Jew) 6:10; 8:7; 9:29,31; 10:3)*

*Saul’s line, in detail*

*Aristocracy, - Nebuchnezzar & Jehoichin Emperor (597BC)*

*\*God knows those who are His, whatever their current circumstances\**

2] Esther

a) Hadassah

*nb means myrtle (?) some rabbinic trad refer to Deut 31:18 - hebrew root str ‘to conceal’ cf Esthers identity (Tyndale Debra Reid p 79)*

b) step daughter

c) Called Esther

*nb brought over into Hebrew – ‘I am hidden’ or ‘I hide myself’ either referring to God or Esther (?) Focus on the Bible Luter & Davies p152*

d) Lovely form and features (NIV), fair and beautiful (KJV)

**Esther becomes Queen (8-18)**

1] emotive words 'brought into' – 'taken' (8)

*Nb Prohibition on marrying non Jew – in Judah (Deut 7:3) & in exile (Ezra 9:1-10:44; Neh 13:23-31)*

\*all things work for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose\*

2] Beauty treatments – 7 maids (9)

*Cf 7<sup>th</sup> day, 7 Eunuchs, 7 nobles (1:10,14)*

3] Enjoyed favour – Hegai (9), everyone who saw her (15), the King (17)

*Cf Favour with custodian (Gen 39:21), Favour with the world around (Acts 2:47)*

4] Concealed national and family background identity (10, 20)

*Nb Jew and of Mordecai's family*

*cf Special food and treatment (Daniel 1:15). Openly exercising faith in the Lord (Dan 6:10).*

*Obedying God not man (Acts 4:20)*

5] Myrrh treatment – 6 months (12)

*Cf holy anointing (Ex 30:22-33), perfume S of S (3:6; 4:14; 5:5,13) birth (Matt 2:11). Death of Jesus (Jn 19:39)*

6] to go in / to enter 3x (12-15)

*Nb strong sexual overtones (12-15 cf Ruth 4:13; 2 Sam 11:4)*

*Cf Don't commit adultery (Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18)*

7] 7<sup>th</sup> year of reign (16) – Vasthi deposed 3 ½ years into reign (1:3,4,10)

8] Made queen (17b, 18)

a) 'Esthers' banquet

b) Holiday throughout provinces – (127!).

c) gifts

*cf Jesus ascended gave gifts (Ps 68:18; Eph 4:8)*

d) with royal liberality cf 1:7

### **Mordecai unearths assassination attempt (19 -23)**

1] Mordecai sitting at gate (19)

*Nb Govt official*

2] Esther

a) kept it secret. (20a)

*nb from the enemy of the Jews (3:6) For a minimum of 5 years (2:16 -3:7)*

b) Esther followed his instructions (20b)

*? obeyed stepfather not husband? (cf Gen 2:24)*

*Cf Jesus humbled himself and became obedient to death (Phil2:5ff)*

\* Jesus – he obeyed the authorities but always in submission to His Father (Luke 2:49; Jn 5:16ff; Matt 22:21)\*

4] Mordecai

1) Exposes plot (21,22a)

2) Esther to king (Mordecai mentioned) (22b)

5] Official hanged (23a)

*Nb hung on gallows killed and disgraced (cf Deut 21:22; Josh 8:29; 1 Sam 31:10)*

6] Recorded in annals in presence of King (23b) (Cf 6:1,2)

## **Conclusion**

a) cf Mordecai & Esther - Trust God for direction and 'good' amidst disasters

b) Submit to God & the authority set over you.

Obey your parents in the Lord (Eph 6:1)

Honour your father and mother ... so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is given you (Deut 5:)