

# Character Study: Esther

## Part 1 – Esther Becomes Queen

### Esther 1-2

#### What's happening?

- King Ahasuerus was a powerful king in Persia that reigned over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia. He hosted a feast for all the officials and princes that lasted 180 days. The queen, Queen Vashti, hosted a feast as well for all the women in the royal palace. The king made a request for the queen to come to his feast and show her beauty to his friends, but she refused, making the king very upset. (1:1-12)
- The king was told that the queen's behavior made it appear that the king did not rule well, and that it may encourage other women to become rebellious. He was advised to remove her from being the queen and find someone else to replace her. (1:13-22)
- A Jewish man named Mordecai, who lived in Persia because of the captivity, took his younger cousin, named Esther, under his wing and raised her as his own daughter. She was a lovely and beautiful young lady, whose parents had died years before. She, along with many others, was sent to the palace for a chance to become the new queen. (2:1-8)
- Esther found favor in the king's eyes, though she did not reveal to him that she was Jewish. The king loved Esther and made her his queen. The king hosted the Feast of Esther to celebrate his new queen. (2:9-18)
- Mordecai also gained some recognition when he overheard two men planning to kill King Ahasuerus. He informed Queen Esther and she told the king. Their plot was found out, and they were put to death. (2:19-23)

#### What's God doing?

> God had placed a Jewish woman in a position of great authority in the Persian kingdom. As we will see in the chapters ahead, this was not just a lucky break; God had placed Esther there for a very big purpose.

#### What's to learn?

→ When God blesses you, or gives you opportunities you never thought possible, do you ever wonder what purpose God may be accomplishing through you? Think of all the ways God has blessed you (your family, abilities, positions, etc.). Do you ever become self-absorbed and selfish with what God has done for you, or do you recognize that God may be at work doing something much bigger than you may initially realize?