

BECOMING A WOMAN OF INFLUENCE

Text: Esther 4-5:8

Key Word: Influence

Key Thought: Esther Became a Woman of Influence

Esther stands of one the preeminent women of the Bible. Few books can compare in placing honor upon one who maintains such a devoted heart of a servant in the midst of a treacherous opposition. **We find so powerfully displayed the example of a godly woman who has been positioned in a place of influence for a divine purpose.**

We have seen an incredible shifting of thought recently. Women are taking a more active role in many areas that for years were considered as man's domain. In fact, many areas are now accepted as public domain that once were limited to a chosen few. Because of this shift, we are witnessing a greater influence by females in most areas of our society. We are finally approaching the level of acceptance that the apostle spoke of,

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave or free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Galatians 3:28

When we consider the story of Esther, we become intrigued by the possibilities that God can accomplish when we surrender to His will. Our scope of influence can reach into areas that we never even dreamed about. As we honour mothers (and women in general), may God give you a fresh vision of what you can become in and through Him. Let us open the veil that encloses the simple and yet profound truths that surround the life of this Jewish woman who became the Queen of Persia.

How Did Esther Become Such a Woman of Influence?

I. PREPARATION FOR THE POSITION (Esther 1:16-18)

II. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN (Esther 4:8)

III. PROCESS TOWARD THE PAGEANT (4:15-10:3)

I. PREPARATION FOR THE POSITION (Esther 1:16-18)

One is quickly struck with the events that are set in place in order to prepare Vashti for her dethronement as well as Esther's preparation to her new position as queen of the empire. **God's preparation often leads us into times of unsurmountable obstacles in order that we learn not to trust on our own strength and wisdom.** Esther had to understand that she had little input into the final result of where she was to be positioned.

I. PREPARATION FOR THE POSITION (Esther 1:16-18)(Contd.)

God knows who to raise up as well as who to lower. Vashti had to be dethroned in order that God's woman would be elevated to a position of influence. She had little desire to become the queen and perhaps that was one reason why God directed the events to occur as they did.

“There are four steps to accomplishment: Plan purposefully. Prepare prayerfully. Proceed positively. Pursue persistently.”

“Prepare and prevent instead of repair and repent.”

E. C. Mckenzie
“14,000 Quips & Quotes”
p. 420

God's manner of preparing Esther as a woman of influence was surprisingly simple. So often we miss the mark by shooting for the wrong goal.

3014 No Extremes in Leadership

Self-reliant but not Self-sufficient
Energetic but not Self-seeking
Steadfast but not Stubborn
Tactful but not Timid
Serious but not Sullen
Loyal but not Sectarian
Unmoveable but not Hypersensitive
Tenderhearted but not Touchy
Conscientious but not a Perfectionist
Disciplined but not Demanding
Generous but not Gullible
Meek but not Weak
Humorous but not Hilarious
Friendly but not Familiar
Holy but not Holier-than-thou
Discerning but not Critical
Progressive but not Pretentious

“Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations”
p. 719-720

I. Preparation for the Position (Esther 1:16-18) (Contd.)

It seems like most churches and para-church organizations are looking for just the right leadership but are often unwilling to allow the proper time for the preparation of such a leader. Esther was divinely prepared for her upcoming position. After Queen Vashti was dethroned, Esther was brought into a harem of women (Esther 2:1-4) to await the selection by King Xerxes.

Even more than the outer beauty preparation came that of her inner spirit that was to be regarded as highly valuable.

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes.

4. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.

5. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful.

I Peter 3:3,4

Esther never questioned the need to be prepared for the work of service that was to be set before her. **When the preparation was complete, the position was granted.**

“And Esther won the favor of everyone who saw her . . .

”17. Now the king was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, and she won his favor and approval more than any of the other virgins. So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen.”

Esther 2:15,17

Don’t make the mistake of attempting to speed up the Lord’s timetable when He is preparing you for a position of influence. Allow Him to focus on your areas of inner need. Yet at the same time, be prepared to move ahead when God sets the pathway **clearly ahead**. Mordecai had a depth of insight when he prompted Esther to move ahead as God had completed the first stage of the process.

II. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN (Esther 4:8)

When you begin to contemplate the facts around these events, you quickly see the hand of God at work. We must come to grips with the truth that this Jewish slave girl, who had lost her parents and was raised by her uncle, reached a position that was desired by every potential virgin in the land.

We must realize that included with every **PREPARATION FOR POSITION** also comes a **PURPOSE AND A PLAN**. As the scene unfolds, we are soon brought into contact with an evil man named Haman. He was an Agagite. Agag was the king of Amalek (I Samuel 15:20). King Saul had killed Agag in a battle 500 years earlier. This did not eliminate the bitter confrontations between these two races of people.

It is ironic that during the same month that the Jews celebrated their deliverance from Egypt (Esther 3:7) that Haman began a plot to destroy the Jews. God allowed the Lot (Pur) to fall upon the month of Adar as the month that the Jews would be destroyed. This gave an adequate amount of time for God to overthrow Haman's evil plan. It also gave sufficient time for Esther to understand the PURPOSE of GOD's PLAN.

Mordecai mourned in sackcloth and ashes (Esther 4:1). His intense grieving soon spread to the rest of the Jews (Esther 4:3). Esther sent out one of the king's eunuchs to find out why her people were in such grief. Mordecai sent a copy of the edict back to Esther to explain the seriousness of the situation. The purpose of the plan soon came into focus.

“Urge her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.”

Esther 4:8b

Esther was being called to be a **Woman of Influence**. This awkward position caused her to wait a whole month before acting in any way (Esther 4:11). She knew that if she attempted to go before the king without him summoning her that she would be sentenced to death.

“The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him (or her) and spare his (or her) life.”

Esther 4:11

Even though the situation was to be entered with extreme caution, there was a guiding hand of God through her uncle Mordecai who was used to bring about the plan of God.

“And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”

Esther 4:14

III. PROCESS TOWARD THE PAGEANT (Esther 4:15-10:3)

Once again we see remarkable events taking place. We must remember that King Xeres had just dethroned Vashti as queen because of her high-spirited attitude. Esther was now about to go before the king and request a banquet to be held in honour of the king with Haman also to be invited. The last recorded banquet ended in public disgrace. Why would the king allow this new queen to come before his presence without being summoned? **It took great courage.**

“When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold scepter that was in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.”

Esther 5:2

“Give me a hundred men who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I will shake the world.”

John Wesley

“He feared man so little because he feared God so much”

Lord Lawrence

“Right is right, even if everyone is against it, and wrong is wrong, even if everyone is for it.”

William Penn

2478 My Influence

My Life shall touch a dozen lives
Before this day is done,
Leave countless marks of good or ill,
E'er sets the evening sun.
This, the wish I always wish,
The prayer I always pray;
Lord, make my life help other lives,
It touches by the way.

Author Unknown

*“Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations”
p. 604*

III. PROCESS TOWARD THE PAGEANT (4:15-10:3)(Contd.)

Queen Esther was willing to go before the King even though it may have meant that she would die.

“And if I perish, I perish.”

Esther 4:16

Esther was granted her petition. The King had stated several times that she could have anything she wanted up to half the kingdom (Esther 5:3,6). Haman must have been in the half of the kingdom that she could claim for her own. Haman’s deceitful injustice was soon exposed. He received his unbiased reward. He was hung on the gallows he had built for Mordecai.

As the story continues to unfold, we find Esther taking a lesser role in order to bring greater honour to her uncle Mordecai. Mordecai was given the king’s signet ring (Esther 8:2) as well as royal garments and a golden crown (Esther 8:15).

The Jewish people were given their freedom to defend themselves. On the same day that the Jews would have been ruthlessly slain (Esther 3:13), they were able to gain their freedom (Esther 9:17) by destroying 75,000 of their enemies.

I’m not suggesting that women reach a level of influence in order to destroy their enemies. Yet I do feel that the devil has had enough of a field day destroying our loved ones. I believe God is raising up a generation of godly women who will take their place and fulfill God’s desire in this evil day.

This woman could have set herself upon a high level and forgotten about those who were suffering from the many injustices of her day. **Instead, she used her influence to set her people free and gain for them a time of peace.** As this book comes to an end, I am once again captivated by the fact that Esther took on the lesser role in order to bring honour to her faithful uncle.

“Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes, preeminent among the Jews, and held in high esteem by his many fellow Jews, because he worked for the good of his people and spoke up for the welfare of all the Jews.”

Esther 10:3

Ladies, Let this Be Your Pattern to Influence Others During this Generation.

C:\Documents\WPWin (X9)\Sermons.19\Special Days\Esther 4_5.8.wpd

Date: May 12/19 (Mother's Day)

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: All He Wants - C; Take Me as I Am - D; All of Me - G

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Esther 2:1-4; I Peter 3:3,4; Esther 2:15,17

II. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN (Esther 4:8)

I Samuel 15:20; Esther 3:7; Esther 4:8b; Esther 4:11; Esther 4:11; Esther 4:14

III. PROCESS TOWARD THE PAGEANT (Esther 4:15-10:3)

*Esther 5:2; Esther 4:16; Esther 5:3,6; Esther 8:2; Esther 8:15; Esther 3:13; Esther 9:17;
Esther 10:3*

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