

Esther: Time to Cowgirl Up !

Introduction:



Back in 2006 a movie called One Night with the King hit the theatres. While it brought attention to a wonderful Book in the Bible, it did not portray all the characters true to the Scripture, but rather took artistic license as these things often do. In fact, the true account in the Book of Esther is far more exciting. You might say truth is stranger than fiction applies here.

The events of Esther occurred in history somewhere between 483BC and 471BC in the country that is now called Iran but was called Persia in that time period. King Ahasuerus rules. The Jews had been taken captive a generation or so before his rule. They were now the working poor and servants in the country. Mordecai, a Jew, works at the gate to the Palace where he has been raising his niece, whose parents have passed away. The niece Esther is about to become a Cowgirl Heroine and leave the innocent easy life behind.

Reference: The Book of Esther

Chapter 1:

Esther 1:22 ...that every man should bear rule in his own house...

King Ahasuerus loves a party. He throws a spectacular 180 day party for foreign dignitaries, foreign provinces, therefore, the king's notoriety is BIG. Immediately following this bash, he throws a seven day party for the Palace Staff/Employees. By Day #7 the King is drunk and he calls for Queen Vashti to come parade before the men's drunken party because she is a nice-looking lady and he wants to show her off.

Queen Vashti visualizes the whole scene: Seven days of drinking; she's the only girl invited. NO thanks.

Her refusal sets off a panic in the men. "What if our wives refused to obey us?" If they hear the Queen refuses to obey the King, then we are "toast". Let's write a decree & fix this. King says, "Where do I sign?" Be careful about following "friends" advice.

So they all decide to take away the crown from the Queen, her checking accounts, credit cards, her house and set her on the streets basically fired from being Queen. She deserves her own Cowgirl Story!

Chapter 2:

King Ahasuerus sobers up and realizes he has banished the queen. He now has no queen. His advisors [great guys so far; he listened to them and banished the first queen while he was inebriated and now he listens to these 'wise' guys again]...his advisors tell him "Hey, let's run a beauty contest [great value system these turkeys have] and the prettiest girl wins Queen." King says, "Where do I sign?"

Working at the Palace gate is the Jew, Mordecai, Uncle to Esther. Because he works there, his family is expected to send their young women to the contest. Esther is recruited.

The Jews and the Persians are not the same nationality. The Jews were a conquered people that had been dragged into Persia to serve the government there a couple of generations back. There were several nationalities of peoples living in Persia. The Jews were considered the low life; some were still slaves, many were servants, and the rest the working poor class. Mordecai told Esther to keep to herself her nationality and faith for the time being. He goes to check on her each day at the dorm where they have placed her for "training" in the finer things of life, that is royalty and how to present herself in the upcoming Beauty Pageant.

Twelve months of ceremonial interviews and so forth pass. King Ahasuerus takes one look at Esther; decides she's the Queen; puts the crown on her head and she rules. Well, not exactly rules. You see it was more of a token position. NO one including the Queen was allowed to even come into the King's presence without getting his permission first or they would DIE.

Meanwhile, Uncle Mordecai is doing his job as a gate-keeper at the Palace and he overhears two guys getting ready to overthrow the King. He tells Esther; she tells the King; they catch the two guys and hang them for treason. It is written down in the Chronicles of Persia. No one rewards or notices Mordecai and you don't see him asking for favors; he was just doing his job; doing right. No ticker-tape parades for Mordecai. The advisors make sure that there is no follow-through on this deal. Mordecai is a Jew.

Chapter 3:

Prejudice is a powerful hate tool. There was an ongoing hate between Agagites and the Jews. Haman was an Agagite; one of the higher up advisors to the King. He was all politician. Promoted up in the King's cabinet he decided that he would order everyone to bow to him, too. Mordecai works at the palace gate. He refuses to bow. Haman hates this so just decides to get all Jews killed. He heads into King Ahasuerus and says there's a group of people out here that are lawless I want them all dead. King says, "Where do I sign?" A real thinker is this King. Say King, how about a drink? Haman and King sit down for a drink. The Jews go into mourning; sold out.

Chapter 4:

Mordecai goes into mourning with fasting, prayers, sackcloth clothes, the works. He takes a leave of absence from his gate duties for a few days. Since there are no cell phones, text messages, internet or ABC evening news broadcasts, Esther hears Mordecai is depressed through the grapevine. She sends him new clothes, chicken soup; the usual to see if that helps with whatever he is going through. He sends it right back with the messenger she had sent. He also sends back a copy of the decree signed by the King that gives permission for all the Jews to be killed; that is men, women, children, all Jews on a date 30 days out from the decree! Not only that but Haman has put 20 million dollars into the bank from the King's treasury to pay for this killing day.

Mordecai tells Esther that it is TIME to COWGIRL UP and tell the King she is a Jew and he is about to have all of her people killed.

Esther gets it. Trouble is:

- *The Law is you don't go to the King uninvited under penalty of death, even the Queen.*
- *In Persia women are nobodies, influence is limited at best.*
- *He hasn't summoned her in over 30 days so it's not like she's a daily visitor to the King.*
- *If he finds out she's a Jew; she could die during the Killing Day herself.*

Mordecai answers her back. He explains that God will deliver His people, the Jews regardless. If you refuse to do God's bidding now though, you lose out on any blessings He had for you in this matter and:

Esther 4:14 " And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

She answers: Fast and Pray for Me.... I'm going in and "*if I perish, I perish*"

Summary:

Wow, what a Cowgirl ! Integrity abounds. The story doesn't end here. In fact, it gets more exciting as Esther invites the boys over for Supper. Oh, and did I mention there's an old west old fashion hanging before the week is out. The twists and turns have only begun in this true adventure. Before it is all over, well, I won't steal from the next lesson. You can always read ahead in Esther starting with Chapter 5.

**This lesson continues and concludes with Esther: Time to Cowgirl Up-Part 2
Worksheet for Lesson is: Devo_14_2011-11-6**