

Now there was in the citadel of Susa a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, named Mordecai, who had been carried into exile from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This young woman, who was also known as Esther, had a lovely figure and was beautiful. Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter when her father and mother died. (Esther 2:5-7)

#1 Esther was an orphan, a Jew and living in exile in a foreign land.

“Many young women were brought to the citadel of Susa for 12 months of preparation. Esther also was taken to the king’s palace and entrusted to Hegai, who had charge of the harem. She pleased him and won his favour. Immediately he provided her with her beauty treatments and special food. He assigned to her seven female attendants selected from the king’s palace and moved her and her attendants into the best place in the harem.” (Esther 2:9)

#2 Esther spent a year preparing – it was a time of personal transformation.

“When the turn came for Esther to go to the king, she asked for nothing other than what Hegai, the king’s eunuch who was in charge of the harem, suggested. And Esther won the favour of everyone who saw her.” (Esther 2:15)

#3 Esther wanted to know what the king wanted.

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

(Esther 2:17)

#4 Esther's influence flowed from intimacy and her access came from her relationship with the king.

During the time Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, became angry and conspired to assassinate King Xerxes. But Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai. (Esther 2:22)

#5 Esther's reliability and motives were tested when she dealt with the assassination plot.

King Xerxes honoured Haman and all the royal officials at the king's gate were commanded to honour him by kneeling down in his presence. But Mordecai refused to do it. When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down before him, he was enraged. Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he looked for a way to destroy all the Jews in the kingdom of Xerxes and not just Mordecai. (Esther 3:1-6)

#6 As Esther got ready to be used by God she would soon meet Haman, an enemy of the Jews.

Mordecai sent this reply to Esther: “Don’t think for a moment that because you’re in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed. If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?” (Esther 4:13-14)

#7 Esther knew she was divinely positioned to serve – to ask the king to save her people.

“Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: “Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king.” (Esther 4:15)

#8 Esther decided to take action because she cared about her people and she knew that God could help.

Esther said: “And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die.” (Esther 4:16)

#9 Esther knew that she could be killed for seeing the king without an invitation. But it was a price she was willing to pay.

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