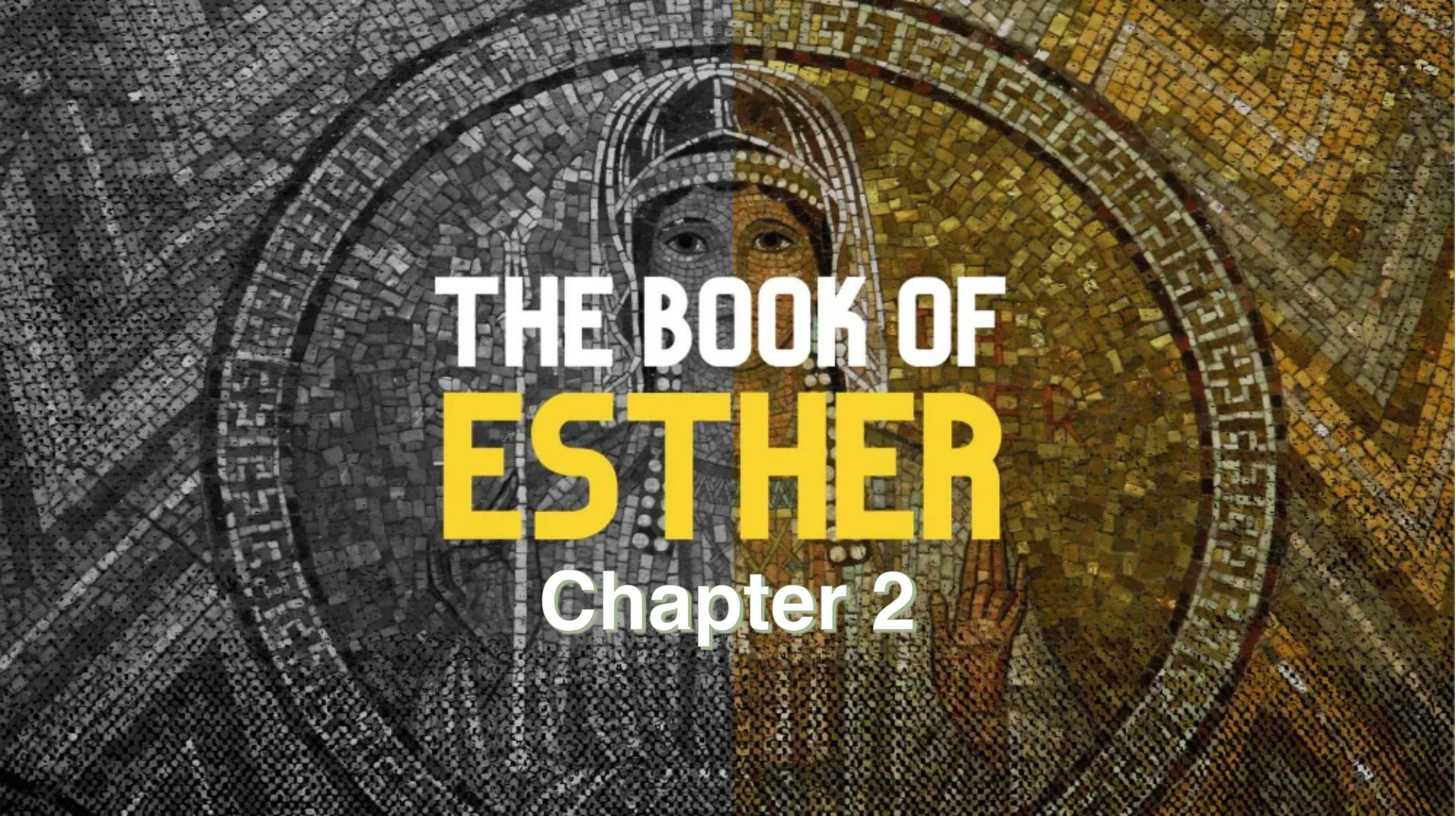


ESTHER

Dan Schuch

VLCC 2026





**THE BOOK OF
ESTHER**

Chapter 2

The Search for a New Queen

¹Some time later, when King Ahasuerus's rage had cooled down, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what was decided against her. ²The king's personal attendants suggested, "Let a search be made for beautiful young virgins for the king.



³Let the king appoint commissioners in each province of his kingdom, so that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to the harem at the fortress of Susa. Put them under the supervision of Hegai, the king's eunuch, keeper of the women, and give them the required beauty treatments. ⁴Then the young woman who pleases the king will become queen instead of Vashti.” This suggestion pleased the king, and he did accordingly.



⁵In the fortress of Susa, there was a Jewish man named Mordecai son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjaminite. ⁶Kish had been taken into exile from Jerusalem with the other captives when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took King Jeconiah of Judah into exile.



The Triumph of Mordecai, attrib. Abraham van den Hecken the Younger, between 1635 and 1655

7Mordecai was the legal guardian of his cousin Hadassah (that is, Esther), because she had no father or mother. The young woman had a beautiful figure and was extremely good-looking. When her father and mother died, Mordecai had adopted her as his own daughter.



The Triumph of Mordecai, attrib. Abraham van den Hecken the Younger, between 1635 and 1655

8When the king's command and edict became public knowledge and when many young women were gathered at the fortress of Susa under Hegai's supervision, Esther was taken to the palace, into the supervision of Hegai, keeper of the women.



9The young woman pleased him and gained his favor so that he accelerated the process of the beauty treatments and the special diet that she received. He assigned seven hand-picked female servants to her from the palace and transferred her and her servants to the harem's best quarters.



¹⁰Esther did not reveal her ethnicity or her family background, because Mordecai had ordered her not to make them known. ¹¹Every day Mordecai took a walk in front of the harem's courtyard to learn how Esther was doing and to see what was happening to her.



¹²During the year before each young woman's turn to go to King Ahasuerus, the harem regulation required her to receive beauty treatments with oil of myrrh for six months and then with perfumes and cosmetics for another six months. ¹³When the young woman would go to the king, she was given whatever she requested to take with her from the harem to the palace.



¹⁴She would go in the evening, and in the morning she would return to a second harem under the supervision of the king's eunuch Shaashgaz, keeper of the concubines. She never went to the king again, unless he desired her and summoned her by name.



Esther Becomes Queen

¹⁵Esther was the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai who had adopted her as his own daughter. When her turn came to go to the king, she did not ask for anything except what Hegai, the king's eunuch, keeper of the women, suggested. Esther gained favor in the eyes of everyone who saw her.



¹⁶She was taken to King Ahasuerus in the palace in the tenth month, the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

¹⁷The king loved Esther more than all the other women. She won more favor and approval from him than did any of the other virgins. He placed the royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti.



18The king held a great banquet for all his officials and staff. It was Esther's banquet. He freed his provinces from tax payments and gave gifts worthy of the king's bounty.



Esther and Ahasuerus
Geldorp Gortzius
(Leuven 1553 – ca. 1619 Cologne)

Mordecai Saves the King

¹⁹When the virgins were gathered a second time, Mordecai was sitting at the King's Gate. ²⁰Esther still did not reveal her family background or her ethnicity, as Mordecai had directed. She obeyed Mordecai's orders, as she always had while he raised her.



The Triumph of Mordecai, attrib. Abraham van den Hecken the Younger, between 1635 and 1655

21 During those days while Mordecai was sitting at the King's Gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who guarded the entrance, became infuriated and planned to assassinate King Ahasuerus



The Triumph of Mordecai, attrib. Abraham van den Hecken the Younger, between 1635 and 1655

22When Mordecai learned of the plot, he reported it to Queen Esther, and she told the king on Mordecai's behalf.

23When the report was investigated and verified, both men were hanged on the gallows. This event was recorded in the Historical Record in the king's presence.



The Triumph of Mordecai, attrib. Abraham van den Hecken the Younger, between 1635 and 1655



**KEEP
CALM
AND
START
DIGGING!**





Charles Spurgeon

Spurgeon's Verse Expositions of
the Bible

Introduction - Esther

We cannot commend Mordecai for putting his adopted daughter in competition for the monarch's choice; it was contrary to the law of God, and dangerous to her soul in the highest degree. It would have been better for Esther to have been the wife of the poorest man of the house of Israel than to have gone into the den of the Persian despot. The Scripture does not excuse, much less commend, the wrong doing of Esther and Mordecai in thus acting, but simply tells us how divine wisdom brought good out of evil, even as the chemist distils healing drugs from poisonous plants.

Esther & Ruth

REFORMED
EXPOSITORY
COMMENTARY

IAIN M. DUGUID

Only three virtues were necessary in this “better” woman: she had to be young, she had to be unmarried, and she had to be extraordinarily good looking.

A Woman of Strength & Dignity

ESTHER

*Profiles in Character from*CHARLES R.
SWINDOLL

See how this contestant's resume reads. She was a Jew and an orphan, raised by her cousin. Not much else is recorded about her except that she was shapely and stunning. Yet, as we will see, she became the queen who had saved the Jews from complete annihilation.

A Woman of Strength & Dignity

ESTHER

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The verb “was taken” doesn't connote volunteerism. In fact, this verb can mean “taken by force”. It could well be that Esther was reluctant to participate. After all, she was a Jew, and becoming a concubine or marrying a gentile was against the code of conduct handed down from early Jewish law.

esther

IT'S
TOUGH
BEING A
WOMAN

BETH
MOORE



 LifeWay
BIBLICAL SOLUTIONS FOR LIFE

We'll begin to see that something far greater than beauty positioned Esther as our protagonist in this narrative.



Charles Spurgeon

Spurgeon's Verse Expositions of
the Bible

Introduction - Esther

By singular providences did the Lord place those two most efficient instruments in their places. Mordecai would have been of little use without Esther, and Esther could have rendered no aid had it not been for Mordecai. Meanwhile, there is a conspiracy hatched against the king, which Mordecai discovers, and communicates to the highest authority, and so puts the king under obligation to him, which was a needful part of the Lord's plan.

**HOW THIS
PASSAGE RELATES TO
YOU AND ME**



A Woman of Strength & Dignity

ESTHER

*Profiles in Character from*

C H A R L E S R.
S W I N D O L L

A character in this story who is often overshadowed by Esther is queen Vashti. Not many people would be able to stand so firm in their convictions.

How about you? Does any principal mean so much to you that you would be willing to risk losing your job over it?

Is there any principle for which you would be willing to risk a significant relationship?

**What do you think
about what the king
did to get a new
queen?**

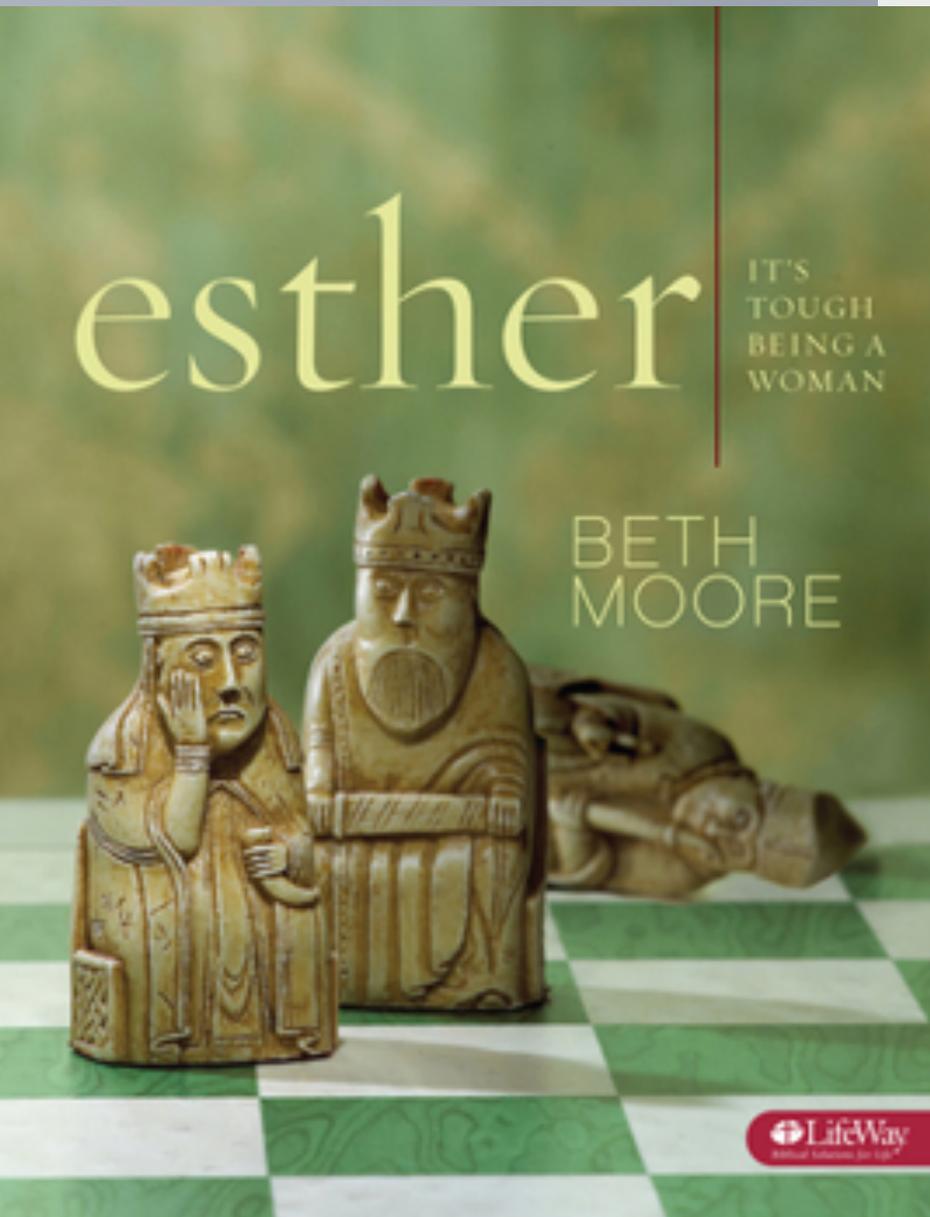


**Why do you think that
Esther gained more
favor than all the other
girls?**



What are positive traits of Esther?





My goal is to suggest how thoroughly and literally we bought in. Beauty is an estimated \$29 billion business in the United states annually. What's more, the big bucks aren't spent just by those who could use a little help. Ironically, no one feels more pressured to look good than those who already do. You and I both know beautiful women who are so insecure that they are painful to be around.

A Woman of Strength & Dignity

ESTHER



Profiles in Character from

CHARLES R.
SWINDOLL

God's plans are not hindered when events are secular or carnal.

His power penetrates through the broken glass of a drunken banquet as well as through the stained glass of a gothic cathedral.

A Woman of Strength & Dignity

ESTHER

*Profiles in Character from*CHARLES R.
SWINDOLL

God's plans are not frustrated by moral or marital conflicts.

The king, in all his drunken debauchery and cruel chauvinism, could not thwart the purposes of God. In reality, he was not king at all, but only one more pawn in the hand of God. And God could move him anywhere on the chessboard that he wanted.

A Woman of Strength & Dignity

ESTHER

*Profiles in Character from*CHARLES R.
SWINDOLL

God's people are not excluded from high places because of handicap or hardship.

Esther was a foreigner and an orphan. By all human odds it was a million to one chance that she would even be invited to the pageant, let alone win it. But by God's Providence, it happened.



Charles Spurgeon

Spurgeon's Verse Expositions of
the Bible

Every child of God is where God has placed him for some purpose, and the practical use of this first point is to lead you to inquire for what practical purpose has God placed each one of you where you now are? You have been wishing for another position where you could do something for Jesus: do not wish anything of the kind, but serve him where you are.