

THE THREE HOUSES OF ESTHER

By Dr. Brian Bailey

An important key towards spiritual growth can be seen in the three houses that Queen Esther passed through. The first one mentioned in the Bible, her Uncle Mordecai's house, can be called the *house of adoption*. The second was the *house of women* where she was purified, after which she was brought into the third *house of the king* where she was crowned as queen. As we will see, these three houses signify three spiritual steps that our Lord will lead us through that we may be counted worthy to be part of His Bride, to rule and reign with Him.

A. THE FIRST HOUSE:

The House of Adoption

In chapter two of the Book of Esther we can read how the parents of a young girl named Haddassah (meaning *myrtle*) had died. Her uncle took her and adopted her as his own daughter. Likewise, this is the first step in our Christian experience. When we accept Jesus Christ into our lives as our Savior, we receive "the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, Abba, Father," Rom.8:15.

Haddassah received a new name. Her name became Esther, which means *star*. We will also receive a new name if we are overcomers like those mentioned in Revelation 2:17. From myrtle, the name of a tree dwelling upon the earth, we will be elevated to be like a star, whose dwelling place is in the heavenlies (see Daniel 12:3). However, from the house of Mordecai (or adoption), Esther was then taken to the House of Women.

B. THE SECOND HOUSE:

The House of Women

In chapter 2:8-12 we read that Esther remained in this house for a period of twelve months. Yet because she found favor in the sight of Hegai the keeper of the women, Esther quickly obtained her things for purification.

There is an important truth here for our consideration. Some Christians quickly receive the experiences of water baptism and separation from the world, to then move on rapidly into the power of the baptism of the Holy Spirit followed by the experience of the crucified life.

It seems that by *our attitude* some can enter quickly into victory over the carnal nature and thereby become purified, as did Esther. Yet others, like the rest of the young women, seem to have to wait for their purification.

How important *good attitudes* are to quick development in our spiritual life. Because she was preferred above others, Esther obtained seven maidens to care for her needs. For six months she was given the oil of myrrh, and for six months she was given sweet perfumes.

Let us now consider the spiritual truths that these facts contain. Firstly, twelve is the number of government. We can see this by considering that the Israelites were governed by twelve tribes and the early church by twelve Apostles. Also, our days and years are governed by twelve hours and twelve months. Esther's twelve months of preparation speak of how she was being prepared for the throne. Likewise, we are being prepared to be kings and priests, and co-heirs with Christ.

Hegai, the keeper of the women, is a type of the Holy Spirit. The seven maidens that served Esther speak of the seven spirits of the Lord, Rev.4:5. It was the Holy Spirit who enabled Christ to offer Himself without spot to God (Heb. 9:14), and it is only through the help of the Holy Spirit that we, too, can be purified.

The purification of Esther involved six months of the oil of myrrh and then six months of sweet perfumes. Myrrh is bitter, and is an embalming fluid used throughout the Middle East. Scripturally it speaks of meekness. It is through bitter experiences that we come to know what Paul meant in Galatians 2:20 about being crucified with Christ. These experiences can also help develop within us a meek and quiet spirit which is of great price in the sight of God, 1 Pet. 3:4. However, purification cannot be attained solely by painful situations. We need the balance of *sweet perfumes*. We need the times of refreshing in the presence of the Lord, times of joy and gladness so that we may be purified vessels that are filled with love, joy, and peace.

Esther's gracious attitude won her favor in the eyes of Hegai, even as Joseph received favor in the sight of his jailor centuries before. Our attitude is so important. Joyful acceptance brings its rewards when we are in times of great darkness. May God cause us to be triumphant in suffering, knowing that it works for us an infinitely greater measure of glory.

Another important aspect of this story is this- at the time they departed from the House of Women, each maiden was allowed to take any of the treasures from the house that she so desired. Again, the attitude of the one who would be *chosen* shined forth. It was written of Esther that she required nothing but what Hegai appointed. How well Paul wrote, "Godliness with contentment is great gain," 1 Tim. 6:6.

Those who will be *chosen* by the Lord should have a good report from outsiders. To qualify as a leader in the church we must have a good testimony in our place of work and among our family and friends. "Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil," 1 Tim. 3:7.

C. THE THIRD HOUSE:

The House of the King

When Esther finally entered into the presence of the king she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the other virgins. The king made Esther queen instead of rebellious Vashti, and Esther went to live in the House of the King. In like manner, the Church shall take the honor

which should have been given to rebellious Israel. What a solemn warning the Lord Himself gave the church of Philadelphia when He said, “Hold that fast what you have, that no man may take your crown,” Rev. 3:11. There are several instances in the Word of God of those who lost their positions and eternal inheritances. Of Judas it was said in Psalm 109:8: “Let another take his office.” We also know that Esau sold his birthright for a single meal, Heb. 12:16.

A Solemn Warning

Those virgins who did not qualify for the royal crown were placed in what we may term “The Fourth House,” which was the Second House of the Women. They had the rank of concubines, but they did not come again into the presence of the king unless the king delighted in them and called them by name, Est.2:13-14.

This reminds us of the prophet Balaam who failed. He was a man who heard the words of God and knew the knowledge of the Most High. Yet Balaam himself testified that because of his disobedience to the Lord, he would see Him, but not near or up close, Num. 24:17. We are warned in Hebrews 12:14 that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Let us listen to these warnings so that we do not end up in this *fourth house*. Instead, let us seek to qualify for the king’s house, to receive the royal crown and reign with King Jesus as joint-heirs with Him.

Queen Esther, the Deliverer

Unlike so many novels and movies of today, the Book of Esther does *not* conclude with a wedding and the words, “And they lived happily ever after.” No, marriage is a time of new beginnings, of destiny, and of purpose. It is a time of setting our faces into the will of God, for there is a work to be done. So it was also for Esther. She had come to the throne with a mission from God.

After evil Haman obtained the king’s permission to destroy the Jews, Mordecai tore his clothes and went into the city, wailing loudly, Est.4:1. After he led the way, we can read how all of God’s people followed his example. Today, leaders and nations still need to follow these same steps to turn judgment away from their doors.

Mordecai sent a message to Esther, warning her not to think that she would escape the decree against the Jews because she was in the king’s house. He warned her that if she remained quiet, deliverance would come from another place but that she and her father’s house would be destroyed. What a solemn warning this is to us if we fail to raise our voice. God will judge us for sins of *omission* as well as *commission*. We must speak out against sin and corruption even in high places and warn people everywhere of eternal judgment.

When Esther went in before the king, God was with her and she obtained favor in the king’s sight. At the risk of her own life, Esther saved her people from destruction. Because of her intercession the king reversed the judgment against the Jews and they obtained victory and revival, Est.8:17.

As it was said of Esther, may it be said of us that we have “come to the kingdom for such a time as this,” Est.4:14. May God grant that we become like Esther and be leaders who do not think of our own welfare, but seek the true good of others.

The 3 Steps of Our Spiritual Experience

The Book of Esther shows us the steps to the throne by way of the three houses through which she passed. The following chart shows us how these three steps are taught to us in numerous other scriptures as well. There are also many sets of *threes* throughout the Word of God that teach these same truths. In Revelation 17:14 there are three qualifications for the saints with the Lamb, listed as *called*, *chosen*, and *faithful*. There are the three divisions of the Tabernacle of Moses: the Outer Court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. In Deuteronomy 16 there are the three principal feasts of the Lord: Passover, Weeks [or Pentecost], and Tabernacles. There are three stages of spiritual growth as the Apostle John defines them in his first epistle- little children, young men, and fathers, 1 Jn. 2:12-14. And finally, the three houses of Esther may be compared to the three anointings that David received during his lifetime.

In the House of Adoption, Esther was adopted by and brought into the house of Mordecai. This speaks of our salvation experience where we receive the “spirit of adoption.” From the Tabernacle of Moses, this is equivalent to coming into the *Outer Court* where the altar of burnt offering is used for the shedding of blood. It corresponds to the *Passover* feast of the Israelites where they were saved by the blood of the lamb. At this first stage of growth, we are “*little children*,” and we know that our sins are forgiven, 1 Jn.2:12. Esther was *called* in the House of Adoption, just as David was called when he received his *first anointing* by Samuel. This was his call to become king, just as we are all called to become kings, Rev. 5:9-10. However, David had to first qualify to become selected as king. There were many tests he had to pass before he was chosen and installed into that kingship.

In the second house, the House of Women, Esther went through a process of preparation. We will also go through trials and purifying, and if we endure we will be *chosen* and installed into our calling. Using the example of the Tabernacle of Moses, this is equivalent to progressing from the Outer Court into the *Holy Place*, where there is the candlestick, which represents the seven spirits of the Lord. In this second house there is a new anointing. This is what the second feast of *Pentecost* represents, as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2. David similarly received this *second anointing* after passing his tests in the wilderness, when he was chosen as the king of Judah. This is also viewed as growing from the little child stage into becoming spiritual *young men*, 1 Jn.2:13-14.

Finally, Esther became established in the House of the King and ascended to the throne. There she entered into the *authority* of her calling and was *faithful* to both the King and her people. Beloved, let us study Esther earnestly that we may be found in the third house—not only called

and chosen, but also *faithful*. This Third House represents coming into the *Holy of Holies* where the law of the King is written in our hearts, Heb.10:16-20. It is a place of maturity, of receiving the *third anointing* like David, and of becoming spiritual *fathers* as mentioned in First John 2:13. A true father who dwells in the King's House, when entrusted with authority over people, will judge uprightly and with wisdom (read Psalm 75:2).

May the Lord help us each to become good leaders, like Esther. Her beauty and purity, her need of nothing beyond necessity, and her character qualities of virtue and honor all served to move her closer to the throne and to the very heart of the king. Jesus said, "Many are called but few are chosen," Mt.22:14. By God's grace let us determine in our hearts to walk along the pathway that leads us not only to being *called* and *chosen*, but also to being found *faithful*. Then with great joy we may await that great day when King Jesus will say to the faithful, "Come, you who are blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you."