

Esther 2:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Analysis

Esther becomes queen: '**And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti**'. Ahasuerus's love for Esther led to her coronation, fulfilling God's providential plan. The phrase 'obtained grace and favour' (hesed ve-chen) uses covenant language—Esther found unmerited favor. Her selection over many candidates shows God's providence governing even pagan king's romantic preferences. The replacement of Vashti completed, Esther now positioned to intercede for Jews when crisis comes. God's 'hidden' sovereignty (His name never appears in Esther) works through natural attraction, beauty contests, and palace intrigue.

Historical Context

Persian royal marriages involved political considerations—queens came from noble families creating alliances. Esther's selection despite unknown background (she concealed Jewish identity per Mordecai's instruction, Esther 2:10) shows the king's genuine attraction. Archaeological evidence from Persepolis shows elaborate harems and beauty preparation processes. The four-year gap between Vashti's removal (Esther 1:3, third year) and Esther's coronation (Esther 2:16, seventh

year) included Xerxes' Greek campaign (480 BCE), explaining delay. Esther's coronation positioned her strategically but didn't guarantee she could influence the king—approaching unbidden meant death (Esther 4:11). Only God's further providence would enable her intervention when needed.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does God's governance of human romantic preferences demonstrate His comprehensive sovereignty?
2. What does Esther's unlikely rise teach about God positioning unlikely people for crucial kingdom roles?

Interlinear Text

הַנְּשָׁהִים מְלֵאָה אֲסֵתָר אֶת לְהַנְּשָׁהִים
above all the women
loved And the king Esther H853 H3605 H802
H157 H4428 H635 H3605 H802

הַבְּתוּלָת מְלֵאָה לְפָנָי יְהִי סָד
more than all the virgins
and she obtained grace and favour in his sight H3605 H1330
H5375 H2580 H2617 H6440 H3605 H1330

קְתַרְתָּם שְׁמָךְ בְּרָאֵשׁ הַמֶּלֶכֶת
and made her queen
so that he set crown the royal upon her head H8478 H4427
H7760 H3804 H4438 H7218 H8478 H4427

וְשָׁתִי
instead of Vashti
H2060

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 17:24 (Creation): And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it.

Esther 1:11 (Kingdom): To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on.

Esther 4:14 (Kingdom): For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

1 Samuel 2:8 (Parallel theme): He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them.

