

October - December Newsletter – Ask For The Ancient Paths Kingdom Living
The Secret to Kingdom Living

This newsletter is absolutely the hardest I have ever written. Sadly, I write anticipating the loss of more than a few readers as I bare my soul in a way I never have before. Every time I thought I was ready to write, the lessons required for this newsletter seemed to continue. But I believe I am now ready.

This has been an incredible transitional period in my life. And I can honestly say that I am on the precipice of walking into Kingdom Living, at least the puzzle pieces are fitting together. I can truly say that I now have a taste of what Kingdom Living looks like. I feel it. I know it in the depths of my soul in a way I have never known before. I am beginning to understand God's concept of Kingdom Living, and it is completely different than my previous understanding.

I am beginning to understand how the early Christians could sing praises to God while being torn apart by lions, skewered by gladiators and set ablaze as if street lamps. They grasped something we, in the western hemisphere, have missed. It is the very reason Christians in Muslim and communist societies can stand strong in their faith despite the persecution of beatings, torture, imprisonment and death faced daily.

I wonder how I would fare if I were transported into their shoes, even for a minute. Would I be able to praise God for His mercies, for His salvation as the flames licked my skin...muscles...and ultimately my bones? Would I be able to stand strong and praise God for the opportunity of Christianity, for the opportunity to give my life as a testimony of His glory?

I can determine all sorts of resolve as I sit safely in a still relatively free country and warm home. But if it really came down to it...where would my vision be focused? Where would my love be directed? Where would my faith be placed?

I have always viewed my life dispassionately, safely storing each experience, as well as the things I have done, at a respectable, objective distance. I considered this ability a good thing, a strength. I actually thought I was alright. After all, I have had the most incredible visions, have heard the voice of God, and yadda, yadda, yadda. I am here to tell you that He is God and because He is God, He can use the jawbone of an ass to do the work He wants done. I suspect on many occasions I was that very jawbone. It puts the true "id" into prospective. ☺

And with that in mind, God has taken me on a journey over this past 18 months that has turned me upside down and inside out. And I praise Him for it completely.

I will share this adventure with you in the most honest way I possibly can.

The secret to Kingdom Living is found in the book of Esther – the entire book of Esther. I have never before seen this book in quite this way.

I wish I was the woman of God people expect me to be. But this is simply not so, nor have I ever made that claim. Like everyone else, I am in a state of "dealing with my stuff". The main difference, perhaps, is that there is little else in my life to distract from dealing with these things to the most finite detail. To be honest, I thrive on detail.

This has been an incredible year. I have overcome 3 generational principalities that were so prominent in my family line they actually defined me as a person. I thought it was who I was. I could have all my personality foibles and be a prophet as well. My personality foibles did not distract from the prophetic gift, equally, my prophetic gift did not remove my foibles. I had to deal with both of them. I have been through years of deliverance as the Lord has taken me down an ever narrowing path of exposing oh so many issues in my life. And I faithfully got rid of them as they appeared.

But the most recent ones revealed were so incredibly ancient I actually thought it was who I was. I thought these things were ingrained in my character from my experiences. I was completely wrong. Last fall, in Virginia, God began to do the deepest work I have ever experienced. I discovered that my grandfather's line (through which all the prophetic was inherited) was filled with illegitimacy, thieves, highwaymen, con artists, etc. Their inheritance was destroyed and buried until God decided it was time for the inheritance to be picked up. This represents the generational influence in all our lives and how it stands in the way of the pure relationship between us and our Creator.

Because of the nature of this generational line, I had continual "brilliant" business ideas. I thought I was a real entrepreneur, which in itself is not a bad thing. However, my constant barrage of ideas, without the ability or inclination to carry them through, dragged others along a costly path with me. I am ashamed of my generations in that they always took things into their own hands and did it their own way. As soon as I was shown this aspect of myself and my generations, I got rid of it immediately. The task took 3 days of repenting, tears (yes, real ones) and removing this evil from my line. I gave myself (as I have done so many times) over to the Lord completely laying down all the dead works that came out of my own will and understanding, and in my own way.

The second great principality I had to contend with was the spirit of death which has shadowed me all my life. We have gone into hand-to-hand combat, so to speak, more times than I can count. I had cast out all the little minions, but didn't realize there was a principality working in my life. I inherited that through my father's line who allowed it in when he was sold as a slave to a farmer. It has only been through God's graciousness and great love that I have not succumbed to this spirit's evil, and I am grateful for that. This represented the disparity of our lives, the hardship and hopelessness that dogs our heels and is the spirit that tries to destroy us at every turn. This is the spirit that causes us to fall into addictions, really bad decisions and everything that will eventually lead us to an early death or most importantly, the death of our calling. This too stands in the way of the pure relationship between us and our Creator.

I returned to Canada where I have been graciously provided housing by a friend. After 7 months of living in Canada, with government sponsored medical, and ultimately (for me) free prescriptions, I lapsed back into a prescription regimen for pain, and various other lifelong complications. But the number of prescriptions grew as the different side effects manifested, until finally I received the revelation that I was a prescription addict (Drug addict is still too harsh a word for me to admit). Medication has been such an integral part of my life since birth that I basically did not know or see any other way of living. It was a learned behavior and way of life I continued to walk in.

As soon as the revelation that these prescriptions stood in the way of our relationship, I immediately, and I do mean immediately, decided that I would get rid of these things. Deliverance took care of the spirits, repentance took care of the restoration of relationship, and the trash took care of my considerable stash. For 2 months I lay on my bed, nausea rocking my body, as I worked through the

physical addiction. I discovered that I continually praised the Lord that I would finally be free to be with Him in a more complete way.

I decided that God was more important to me than anything the world offers, or anything that I have thought I wanted. It doesn't matter what the obstacle; prescriptions, religion, philosophy, lifestyle.... It encompasses everything we learn as we go through life that stands in the way of a pure relationship between us and our Creator. I put even the most elemental aspects of my life into God's hand and the words I used were the ones I was taught – I put myself under His control. However, I was corrected as soon as I said those words. I was not to put my life under God's control, but His protection.

I was amazed by the concept and as soon as I said protection, I was flooded with the vision of His protection and love for me. It changed my life and concept completely.

And finally, I spent two weeks crying as the Lord accomplished the deepest surgery on my heart, restoring the emotion of humanity that I had lost through so many years of visions of hell and demons. Things I had buried so I would not feel, things I felt no connection with, were brought to mind and healed profoundly. These wounds also stand in the way of our pure relationship between us and our Creator. We must be without spot or wrinkle.

And here is where I may lose some of you, if I have not lost you already by my confessions. I spent the next 2 months healing to the very depths of my soul, an ongoing process. The tool God has chosen to reach me is the TV series Buffy the Vampire Slayer. After all, is that not what I do...reveal and slay the demonic enemy. I watched (and am still watching) every show over and over again. I can't stop watching. Suddenly a comment or an action brings me to tears as I relate to her life of fighting evil, alone and misunderstood. Something I have never felt. Layer by layer I am being healed to the depth of my soul.

I realize that I have seen the most spectacular things in the spirit world, but I have been out of touch with the human condition. My emotions have been cauterized since very young because of vows I made and things I have been through. One by one my emotions, empathy, compassion and passion have been kick-started through the struggles, loneliness, isolation and uniqueness of Buffy. And for those who would question this, please know that I have gone to my spiritual covering to bring this situation to them, and they confirmed that it is of God. He can use whatever He chooses to achieve His purpose.

I am so amazed that I love a God who is so great that He allowed a series like Buffy to be written. He oversaw every word of dialogue, every movement and every nuance so that it could be used one day to reach one of His children and kick-start them back to life. We so often just condemn things because they do not satisfy the dictates of our religious spirit forgetting that everything in all 3 heavens, everything in our life, everything that has ever been and will ever be is under the direction of the Creator of all things. We tend to think that Lucifer snuck one by Him, instead of realizing that **GOD WORKS ALL THINGS FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM, WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE.** Romans 8:28

I have been so healed that last week I heard words from a friend that I have heard many times before but suddenly compassion welled up within me and I began to cry for the pain she has suffered in her life. I even began to cry for someone because I was happy for them! These are 2 amazing things for me...the person who vowed never to cry...or feel.

And lastly, I had to repent for hating my life. I have repeated this mantra forever, harboring the feelings and resentment. Thursday I repented of hating my life – really repented from the depths of my heart. Friday I found myself in the shower praising God and thanking Him for the well of experience I have because of my life. And Friday I was shown the vision for my life. Not what I thought it was, not what people have pushed me into...neither was my true vision. Hating my life represented the human condition. I have never met anyone who at some point in their life was not discouraged by circumstances of their life.

And Saturday, I repented of the spirit of self-proclaimed obligations. I repented of every obligation I not only put on myself but allowed others to put on me. I began breaking those shackles and chains off my life, the words of obligation I foolishly spoke thinking that was what God wanted of me...and slowly, I began to be free.

Even as small children, we all create for ourselves binding obligations that are nothing more than chains and shackles on our lives. We do them because we believe we are supposed to, it is what others expect, it is what God requires of us, it is... whatever the reasons we accept. But they are wrong. They are chains, lodestones around our necks. The scribes and Pharisees put lodestones around the necks of the people by putting obligations on them in the name of religion. This has not changed, nor is it specific to Judaism..Christianity does it, Islam does it, every religion does it. I repented and broke them off, one by one and now am free from these false obligations.

It was a major piece of the puzzle of my life. Always trying to do what was right in man's eyes, mistaking it for what is right in God's eyes.

I know I have stepped completely outside of the safe arena of religiosity. The area of comfortable and familiar. But I find that I am pleased to do it.

Let's get back to the story of Esther. This story holds the secret to Kingdom Living. What is written in that book is precisely where I have been for the past months.

We all want to be queen. We all want the recognition, life of ease, warm fuzzy feelings, and positive reinforcement because we are queen to the King, bride of the Groom, etc. We all want Kingdom Living right here and right now. But such living comes with a cost that few anticipate or are even willing to pay. And many consider the sign of achieving Kingdom Living is financial freedom.

We have confused Kingdom Living with entering the Promised Land. There is a major difference.

When the children of Israel left Egypt headed for the Promised Land, there were many significant happenings. Firstly, God revealed Himself to them through a series of 10 plagues delivered upon the Egyptians. This was to encourage them to leave for all the right reasons: to follow their God, and not just to escape a life of brick making. Secondly, they left with the riches of Egypt...the Egyptians actually paid them to leave. Thirdly, they did not seem to leave of their own free will as each step of the way they really wanted to return to Egypt. They didn't really want to leave the world (Egypt)...they just wanted a better job description, an easier life. How many times have we gone before God and said our life isn't fair, we have been passed over for promotion, where's that raise or spouse I was promised, whatever? How many times have we gone to the Lord and just asked for an easier life instead of following Him with total sacrifice and dedication? And finally, when they saw the riches of the Promised Land they were

afraid of the people who lived there, once again questioning the Lord's ability to provide and protect, questioning His word.

Kingdom Living is a mindset that brings us into the fullness of the dimension of spiritual life. There is no magic formula. It is a complete change of mindset which can be, at times, an arduous task.

SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD... I finally understand what that means. Everything else is a lot like an illusion that we may feel and live, but an illusion nevertheless.

The story of Esther is an example of walking into Kingdom Living. It is the most complete example we have.

Esther was born around 492 BC as Hadaseh. She was an orphan. Her father was a Jew named Abihail of the tribe of Benjamin. Her family was of royal blood, descended from Kish, father of Saul. Esther's family was among those Jewish exiles who chose to stay in Babylon during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah when they were released to return to Jerusalem. Once orphaned, she was taken in by her first cousin, Mordecai, who was the royal accountant in Susa. Susa (Shushan) was formerly the capital of Elam and was 200 miles east of Babylon.

At this time, the Persian Empire ranged from India to Ethiopia and contained 127 provinces. The king, Ahasuerus, is more commonly known to us today as King Xerxes. After banishing his first wife, Queen Vashti, Xerxes ordered his men to bring the most beautiful women of his kingdom before him so he could choose a new wife.

Esther, who was then only 14, was chosen as one of these girls. Xerxes, at the time Esther entered the royal harem was 44 years old, 45 by the time she became queen.

127 has the meaning of the Completion of the Divine Period of Probation

14 has the meaning of Salvation and Deliverance

44 has the meaning of Judgment of the World

45 has the meaning of inheritance and preservation

Putting the numbers together with events, we find that at the completion of the divine period of probation, salvation and deliverance entered into the kingdom during the judgment of the world, bringing about inheritance and preservation.

It is an interesting story indeed. And it so summarizes the entire book of Esther. But let's dig a little deeper into the story.

Esther was born into a Jewish family who lived in a Jewish community in Susa. Despite the fact that she was of the royal bloodline of Saul, she was now nothing more than a mere orphan. Adopted by Mordecai, Esther moved out of the Jewish community to a house near the palace. Mordecai, a royal accountant to the king, put no emphasis on his Jewish roots. It is suggested in Jewish tradition that Mordecai could speak 70 languages.

At the age of 14, Esther was one of 400 virgins who were gathered from every corner of the kingdom to enter harem life.

400 has the meaning of children of promise of the earth

Esther was now a member of an upper class family. Mordecai was well paid for his accounting work at the palace. Mordecai raised Esther as his own daughter. She learned the duties of a woman; drawing water, cooking meals, washing clothes, sewing, shopping, cleaning, etc.

Now, getting back to the story, step by step.

While the king is hosting a banquet for his princes, nobles and servants, Vashti is holding a separate banquet for the women. On the 7th day (Shabbat) the king summons the queen to come and present herself before him and his guests wearing her royal crown to display her beauty. She refuses and is banished from the kingdom.

I have always had trouble with this story, siding with Vashti on this matter. However, I realized that she was to display herself, in complete transparency, wearing only her royal crown, the symbol of her station bestowed by the king.

Although this is an unpleasant picture, we are to appear before the King and His people completely transparent. But most of us choose not to do this. We like to keep a few things hidden. We dress in our own clothes, what we consider a suitable covering of our true selves. We create for ourselves Christian personas and false righteousness so we can appear acceptable and holy. I have seen this so many times. The clothes usually come from both fear and religious spirits. A good example of this is found in the Bible when the scribes and Pharisees (religious spirits) accused Jesus of being a glutton and a wine bibber because He did not don their self-righteous display.

But we are to come before God's people wearing only His crown that was given by Him. We are to be transparent before ourselves, our King and His people. Like Adam and Eve, who were so transparent they did not know they were naked. We instead come before Him in our fine raiments of pride and wickedness with the accessories of our own understanding and interpretations.

In this last year, I have been stripped of these clothes that I covered myself with. My pride and understanding have been stripped away and I stand before my King naked, wearing only what He has given me. I have given up what I understood my calling to be, given up what I have allowed others to put upon me, given up everything I understood about God and His teachings. I have once again stood before my King and declared that I have been wrong and He alone has been right – teach me, heal me, free me.

I have put away the tiara I purchased of my own accord and stood before my King naked. He then put on me the crown of His own devising – the calling He has anointed my head with.

We are so often pressured by others, through prophesy or whatever, to be something that was never God's plan for us. Thus putting on a tiara instead of His crown.

It is reputed that Vashti was the great-grand daughter of King Nebuchadnezzar, daughter of King Belshazzar. She was given to Ahasuerus by Darius after conquering Babylon.

Vashti's pride took away her place in the Kingdom and she lost her crown. In fact, she lost everything. Although the Bible says that Vashti was no longer permitted to come in and see the king, the practice in

those days was that she would be executed so that she would never dishonor the king by being with another man.

This gives us a glimpse into the severity of the punishment for pride in our lives, the very sin that condemned Lucifer.

To replace Vashti as queen, the king's soldiers and eunuchs went throughout the kingdom in search of the most beautiful virgins of royal and wealthy families. The virgins were invited to the king's harem in preparation to be the next potential queen of Persia.

Women in ancient Persia were accorded the same rights as men. They had authority in the land. They could own property and were fluent in commerce. It was not as we have believed of ancient practices where women were dominated and controlled. In fact, it was not until after Vashti disobeyed that the command went out into the land that women should honor and obey their husbands.

Esther was raised with a practicing knowledge of Jewish tradition. Mordecai was called a prophet by the Jewish people, obeying all the laws and commandments of the Torah. The Persians allowed religious freedom within their borders, everyone practicing the religion of their choice. Esther knew all the rituals of the Feasts of the Lord, and the constant vigilance of looking for the time of their Redeemer.

There were many ways to become a member of a 400-1200 plus harem. Slave girls brought from distant lands would be sold from the caravans to the king or wealthy men. Slave girls were spoils of wars, given to the victors of the battle. Some girls were sold for income by their poor parents. Girls who entered the harem through these means were concubines and consorts. These women, although part of the royal household, would receive the smaller rations.

Any woman giving birth to a female would receive a smaller portion, while the double rations went to the women who produced a male child.

Another way for a woman to become part of the king's harem was if the hand of a daughter of a royal household were given to the king to seal an alliance. A Persian man could have as many wives and concubines as he could afford.

Finally, a woman of nobility or royal blood might be invited by the king to join his harem, becoming his queen or one of his royal wives. This was the way Esther became part of the king's harem.

The head of the Harem was the king's mother who held authority over all those that dwelled within the confines of the harem. Daughters would remain in the harem while the males were removed when they were 16, it being inappropriate for them to remain in the women's quarters.

The king's mother had great wealth and possessions which demanded her attention each day. The queen also had great wealth and possessions which she managed every day. The third highest woman was the mother of the crown prince regardless of her standing in the harem. She could even rent out or lease her lands to earn monies. These women were trained in commerce and business and looked after the financial matters of the king's household.

Unlike common belief, these women enjoyed great liberties and freedom. The guards at the doors and on the walls were there for the women's protection rather than to prevent the women from escaping. The women of the harem did not want to escape.

The story of Esther gives new understanding to the verse, "Many are called but few are chosen." (Matthew 22:14) 400 women were called but only 1 was chosen.

Each one a virgin despite their religious allegiances. Each one from a royal or wealthy household. Each one with some degree of understanding the most rudimentary living standards of the kingdom of Persia.

We are called, each one of us a virgin for we are a babe in Christ. We are washed anew and given a new life. We are covered with the righteousness of Christ and so, despite our upbringing and former religious allegiances, we are all the same – in this scenario, all were Persians.

Despite what we may think of Persia; especially after the movie 300 which cast them as despicable, bisexual despots, they are famous for many things.

The Persian King, ruler of 127 provinces, or kingdoms, was called **King of Kings**. This was his formal title because he never destroyed the kings of the kingdoms he conquered. The conquered still maintained their way of life including retaining their kings, which made the Persian king, the king of many kings. This, of course, is the same title Jesus holds – Jesus, mighty Savior and King of kings.

King Darius, Xerxes father, wrote the first Human Rights Charter. It is still engraved in the Alvand Mountain (Ganj-Nameh), near the ancient Persian Capital of Hagmataneh (present city of Hamadan). It was this concept of Human Rights, freedom of religion and the equality of all races that led to the freeing of the Jews, from the captivity of Babylon, by Cyrus the Great of Persia (539 B.C.).

While all other world powers persecuted and discriminated against the Jews, the Persians were the only world power who actually liberated and protected the Jews (the only monotheistic religion of that time). By doing so, the Persians pioneered the freedom of religion and culture of the minorities in the world. The Persian kings supported the local culture and religion.

Regardless of our choice in life, Jesus allows us to be who we are, to decide for ourselves. He allows us to make our own decisions. He allows us to go to hell if we so desire. He allows us to die if that is what we choose. Unlike many religious zealots and religious institutions that force people to follow the same belief system, Jesus gives us that freedom of choice that is unparalleled.

In fact, when we read what the Spirit and the Bride say in the book of Revelation, it is one word – COME. It is a wooing plea, not a command to be enforced.

Women had more rights and freedoms in the Persian Empire than we see today under the Islamic rule. Queens reigned as Regent if their husbands, the king, died. Women were educated in the art of commerce and politics, owned lands and ran businesses.

400 virgins were chosen from the lands between India and Ethiopia. 400 just so happens to be the number of years in the period between the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham in the birth of Isaac (2048 or 1713 BCE) to the Exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land (2448 or 1313 BCE).

There was also a period of 400 years between the Old and New Testament. The number 400 stands for period between 2 periods/events. We are at the end of a period now, standing between the 6th day and the 7th day of the Biblical timeline.

Like Esther, we have been called beyond the veil into a new way of living. And like the 400 who were brought into the harem, it is a new, unfamiliar way of thinking and living.

It indeed gives new understanding to the scripture: Many are called but few are chosen (Matthew 22:14)

In the story of Esther, 400 were called but only 1 was chosen.

There is a remarkable similarity between the story of Esther and the story of the 10 virgins. They were all called to be married to the king. The tradition of kings in the Middle East at that time was to provide the wedding garment to the invited guests. Thus we have in Matthew the guest who had crashed the party without the provided wedding garment. The bride also would have been provided everything she needed to prepare for the wedding. The 10 virgins, like Esther, brought nothing of their own into the tent to await the king. They left behind all they had to enter into the marriage with the king.

In Esther, 399 women were not chosen. The only requirement we know of was the king's reason for rejecting Vashti – transparency and obedience. 5 of the 10 virgins were chosen because 5 of them did not bring enough oil. Here we have the 2 sides of the choice. Those who were rejected either had too much or not enough. Too much meant that they had brought (were dressed in) their own works, and not enough meant that “they” made their own choice of what was good.

Either way they were excluded from entering.

Esther was asked by the king's guards to come to the palace as one of the women from whom a queen would be chosen. It was her choice. She stood in the family area of her uncle's house, surrounded by everything familiar, everything she knew, and she had to decide whether or not to give it all up and enter the king's house...the unknown. She left everything that was in her comfort zone. She looked around at the only family she had, and decided to leave them and move into the harem of strangers in the king's house.

There was no dowry. There were no possessions. There was only Esther, who was most likely, given the garments to wear as she entered the palace. She took nothing of her own, not her clothes, a comb, or toothbrush. She left her house with only the king's provision.

And then Esther entered the gates of the palace and disappeared into a different world. She left the world of small sun dried brick houses into the grandiose majesty of the palace. Unlike bricks, the palaces were built from hewn stone brought from all areas of the empire, and constructed by the skilled craftsman from every corner of the empire, taking decades to finish. There was a tremendous staircase leading from the courtyard to the palace entrance. Reliefs and elaborate designs, paintings and hangings covered every wall of the palace. Visitors were struck by the wealth, talent, abilities and prestige of the king and his kingdom. Esther disappeared into a world of glorious creativity and talent like she had never seen outside the walls. And only those who were counted worthy enough would ever see the grand spectacle of the palace.

This was to become her home.

But first, Esther had to learn to live with 399 other women. And she would have to learn to live with them in a unified, peaceful way. Any bickering, stress, fighting, pent up anger would show on her physically...and would be seen by not only the king's mother but to the king as well. It is perhaps why the king did not see any of the women for a period of at least 1 year, allowing them time to bathe and to learn the ways of kingdom living.

In the beginning, harem life was a battle ground. Instead of joining forces and helping one another, there was vicious competition between the would-be rivals. They all wanted to be the chosen one, the queen. But only one would ultimately be chosen. So each girl had to become the prettiest, the most graceful, and develop the most charming and compelling personality. She was to become the king's representative to the kingdom. This required that she become one with the mindset of the king. To see her was to see the king. In other words, each girl had to become as like unto the king as she could be, a woman fit for the king.

Now I can hear every one groan because this is dangerously sounding like works. I am not now nor ever going to suggest that your works will gain any kingdom ground. There will be too many people who go to Jesus on their judgment day and say they did this and that (their works) in His name, and He should consider them. Sadly, He will say, "Go away, I never knew you." (Matthew 7:23)

Each woman was responsible for only 3 things. She had to learn about the king. She had to strip herself of her old life. And she had to learn how to live kingdom life which included learning to live with everyone else in the kingdom.

Jesus coined this another way. Love God. Love yourself. Love others. (Matthew 22:34-40)

No, there was nothing much for these women to do during their initial 6 months in the palace. They bathed. They dressed. They ate. They slept. They bathed again. And I can guarantee you, that the king's mother, who was in charge of the harem, spent every possible moment ensuring that these women knew her son.

They learned what he liked and what he did not. They learned his favorite meals, fragrance, interests, habits, everything. They learned whatever was necessary to please the king.

And in the meantime, they were shedding their former life. They bathed away the filth, wounds and scars of the outside world, the world outside the protective walls of the King's palace. They bathed in myrrh, the fragrance enveloping them. They soaked away the weariness of life and considered the things the king's mother had taught them. They meditated on the words, taking them deep into their hearts.

And they learned to make friends with the other women in the harem. They had a common bond, a common goal, that set them apart from absolutely everyone else in the world. They were there to please the king. They were to be one with him, to be of one mind, one body and one spirit. Friendships were forged and the harem became a place of pleasure and peace instead of competitors and enemies.

I heard Todd Bentley say that Holy Spirit was female. I do not understand that statement, but I do know in this story the king's mother is a picture of the Holy Spirit. And please understand, I am NOT saying that Jesus is the son of the Holy Spirit and the Father. But the Holy Spirit is the one who teaches us everything about the King. He writes the words of the Bible upon our hearts, just like the king's mother. He is the one who will teach us not only the secrets about the King, but the secrets about ourselves, including how to live in harmony, in unity with others... kingdom living.

Esther had to give up both her family and the old familiar way of doing things. There were a possible 400 different religions in that harem due to the religious freedom of the Persian Empire. The most beautiful virgins were taken from every culture and race in the kingdom. There were Greeks, Babylonians, Assyrians, Indians, Ethiopians, Egyptians, Sumerians, Elamites, Akkadians, Kassites, Medes, Cimmerians, Thracians...124 provinces. But I suspect there was only 1 Jew amongst them.

We all come from different backgrounds, different areas of the kingdom. We come from different religious understanding and when we accept the King's invitation of salvation, we enter the unknown world of God's kingdom. And yet, we fight, bicker, attack, wound and scuttle each other's Christian growth with misunderstandings, judgments and accusations. We don't realize that we come together to help each other, to heal and grow and learn of the King. We do not realize that we come together with one goal in our hearts. The attacks and poor attitudes we harbor injure not only the others in the harem, but ourselves as well. We simply show that not only have we not learned how to live in the Kingdom, but too often are not even open to learning about how to live in that Kingdom. There is no room for independence.

Esther was brought from the "outer court" into the inner court of the palace. She moved from a place of doing her own labors to a place where it was no longer acceptable to do her own works.

In the outer court we find the laver representing death to self, cleansing from the life we knew, and the brazen altar representing death to sin at the cross. She left her old life and accepted the life of her king in exchange.

Then she was taken into the inner court of the harem where we find the table of showbread representing feasting on the body of Christ. We also find the golden candlestick representing union of spirit of man and God. And finally we find the golden altar of incense representing the offering of the soul – our prayers. The body of Christ is the church or the other women of the harem and we are to feed each other and help each other. We are to become one with the King just as the golden candlestick shows. We are to pray always, becoming one with the King.

And finally, Esther was to enter the Holy of Holies, the King's chambers where she would be overshadowed with His mercy, as shown by the mercy seat, to finally meet the man child, the King.

The food she ate was prepared for her, brought before her and served to her. Her bath of healing was prepared for her. The oils she was anointed with were brought to her and applied by servants, who rubbed the aromatics into her skin. Her clothes were picked out for her, now she wore the garments of the kingdom. They were expensive fine linens, brightly colored and cool. Outside the walls people wore wool and cotton garments requiring constant work to maintain the body temperature. But the linens Esther now wore kept her warm in the cooler seasons and cool in the warm seasons without concern for what may be needed. It is a marvelous picture of the total and superior provision of our Lord's Kingdom.

Esther found herself suddenly in a position where nothing she did would add or subtract from her provision. She needed only to ask the eunuch for anything she wanted and it was provided. She could ask for anything that could be found in the kingdom, that is, she could ask for anything except to return to her old life.

The only things Esther could choose herself were to heal in the daily baths of myrrh, wear the clothes of the kingdom, get along with the other women in the harem and eat from the king's table. And she could learn of everything that would please the king. She had choices, but nothing she could put her own hand to, all matters of the heart.

Consider for a moment our lives as Christians.

We have been chosen to be the bride of the King. But we are not the only one who has been called. Many have been called from every corner of the kingdom and we all come with our mindsets, cultures, religions and issues. We are brought from outside the wall to inside the wall.

But one of the requirements is not where we come from or what circumstances formed our thought processes and understanding, but that we wash at the laver to cleanse ourselves from these misconceptions and mistruths. And let me say that any concept that is not solely from God, even if spoken from the lips of religious men, is a partial truth at best. Only those things spoken to us by the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, are truth. Everything else must be washed away leaving only the cleanliness and purity of new birth.

The second thing we need to understand is that there is absolutely nothing we are, we have or can do that pre-qualifies us to be acceptable. There is only one way into this group – and that is through the sacrifice of the laver – the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Sacrifice and cleansing. Sacrifice and bathing. Sacrifice and washing away what we have been. These are the qualifications to enter the inner court.

The parables Jesus spoke are now ours to understand. The Bible that explains everything is ours to explore and devour. It is a Kingdom treasure. We have been brought into the kingdom where labor under our own works, struggle for our own provision is no longer productive, or even permissible. We have been brought into a position to learn first-hand everything there is to learn about the King and Kingdom Living.

The Holy Spirit provides our food, serving to us morsels from the King's table. He prepares for us a banquet of sweets, wine and meat. We can eat whenever we want, getting fat on the word and revelation of the King. Those who do not take the time to eat from the King's table run the risk of malnutrition and even death. And let me add, that those who do not take the time to feast on the body of the Christ, His church, building those relationships, also stand to die of malnutrition and even death. There is a reason Paul tells us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together but to exhort one another (urge, advise, caution earnestly, encourage).

There is a reason that to be completely nourished in the natural we need water, carbohydrates, proteins, lipids (fats, oils), vitamins and minerals. We need each other. Each one brings a necessary nutrient to the table which he has been provided with.

The Father has provided for us the robes of righteousness given to us through the sacrifice of His Son. We no longer wear the worn and tattered rags of the world that are coarse and unattractive. Fine linen is labor intensive and difficult to produce. It keeps a person warm in the winter and cool in the summer. It is a material designed for all seasons and circumstances. Whatever weather is thrown at us, it covers us without effort on our part. The clothes of righteousness we are given are fit for every occasion and every circumstance; the valleys, the mountains, the streets, the gala banquet.

The guards of ancient Persia walked the hallways fully armored. They stood outside the windows and doors, dutifully on patrol over the gates and walls of the palace. They were not there to prevent the women from escaping but were on duty to protect the women from intruders. The women of ancient Persia did not try to escape their harem life as we might think, for, unlike today, they were given a great deal of freedom in the kingdom. They are like the angels the Father dispatches to watch over and protect us from enemy forces of Lucifer's kingdom, the tribulations of this world.

Finally, Esther was taken before the king. He saw her in her nakedness. She was bathed, perfumed and taught...and that was all she could bring before the king. The water, oils and teaching were all provided by the king...her part was what she did with them, how she made them a part of herself. It was how she carried them. Were her features marred from an argument that day? Or was she clear of all conflict and distraction? She stood before the king naked, just as Adam and Eve stood before their God and each other naked in the Garden.

He was taken by her beauty. The beauty of her attitude, her thoughts, her mannerisms, her confidence, her demeanor, and it all showed in her body. She was beautiful first on the inside and then on the out. He was so taken by her beauty he chose Esther as his queen. She became the Shulamite bride.

Not until she became queen, did she receive a portion of the kingdom's wealth. We all want the wealth up front. We all want to have it without paying the price, on credit so to speak. It is not that the work is terribly hard. We are simply required to become transparent. We are simply required to become clean. And not by our own psychological understandings or efforts, but through the deliverance and healing that comes from the myrrh bath. While in the harem, Esther had every need provided for...but it was only her need that was provided for. Food, shelter, clothes, etc. were provided. But after she became queen, and fully walked into Kingdom Living, she acquired wealth.

My very dearest friends and myself have lost everything. We have lost our homes, our income, our money...everything. I personally am living in a friend's basement. She thought it would be for a couple of months but it has turned out to be a year... sleeping on a blow up mattress. I have been stripped of the most foundational parts of my core identity. I have turned from everything that I have ever thought or done. I have even given up the "ministry" everyone thought I should have. I have let it all go in the water of myrrh. And then I began to learn what the King actually had for me...what He had always had for me.

And yet, with absolutely nothing to my name and no source of income, I have opened myself to the complete healing of everything in my life. I have given myself completely – physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and every way possible to the Lord. I no longer want my old life. I didn't even want the ministry I had picked up over the years. I want ONLY the life God has for me regardless of what it is. I have, for the first time in my life, completely and honestly submitted myself to the Lord. No holding back this time.

This is the secret of Kingdom Living. It is not wealth, riches, possessions, ministries or anything else. It is being one with the King. Jesus, the King of kings, the only begotten Son, who came, giving everything up, to die on a cross for us. But we don't want to experience giving up everything... including our false identities. I actually thought that I was those things the spirits had formed me into. I actually thought the prescriptions could make me a normal person instead of letting God make me a healed whole person. I actually thought that I was the person I had been struggling with all these years, only to find out I was not that person, I am the person God created me to be.

I had a dream last night that I was on family land. It had been in my family since the beginning...for thousands of years. The house was completely and totally renovated and new, brilliantly lit from within as I stood outside. It was everything I want in a house and I remember the joy I felt just being there...at peace and at home. I knew there was a well in the back yard that I had to see. And as I ran into the backyard, a bulldozer sat beside the well, only a few steps from the back door. This bulldozer had already leveled the land in the back acreage, removing weeds, removing everything that was dead and misshapen so that rich fresh soil could be spread and new seed planted. The well was dry and bottomless. At the very bottom was the body of a dead baby – I couldn't see the body, but I knew it was there even though I did not know how it got there. I peered into the well and could not see the bottom – it went down for miles. That well had been dug by the very first ancestors in my family line. I turned to speak to the man who was standing beside me asking him about the baby, but he only smiled. I turned back to find my foot upon the earth that now filled the bottomless well up to ground level. That ancestral well, the generational pit of spirits that had come down my family line was filled in and under my feet. They would never again trouble me. I was that house, brilliantly lighted from within by the light of the Lord. I believe the baby represented my own attempts at ministry (dead works) leaving me free to begin moving in His plan, in His time.

This is Kingdom Living. Freedom. Peace. Joy. Acceptance. Correct attitude. And gratitude.

It has been a long time – years – of being honest with myself and with God. I have repented to friends and family and walked away from all that I was. I have changed profoundly with each thing the Lord has revealed to me. I have been transparent, and when I thought I wasn't transparent enough, I chose to become more transparent.

Transparency also means the realization that the spirits are not me. I don't have to have anger, addiction, fear, bitterness, whatever in my life. I have the authority in Christ Jesus, through His blood to evict them to the pit and ask the Holy Spirit to heal me from their touch. I have the authority to get rid of anything in me I do not want...I simply have to make that decision and stay with it. I simply have to make the decision that I want God's way, not mine or the devil's. It is simple. It is simple. It is simple. There is no magic formula, just standing up for what you want – God in every aspect of your life.

Esther decided to leave her life behind and enter the kingdom. It was a decision. Simply a decision.

I want to point out to you that Esther's ministry before entering the palace was to be a housewife; what was expected of her... married, mother and wife of Persia. A noble and important calling used by God to train up the next generation, but often for a season. But once she was chosen, her ministry was to be queen, now married, mother of the next king, and wife of the king. It was not until she was queen that she was given money and lands. It was not until she was queen that she was given authority. And it was not until she was queen that she was in the position to save her people.

She could not save them from the outside, but needed to be on the inside. We are always too much in a hurry to be something, even if it is what we are not. We too often push to have the ministry that is not ours to have. Everyone pushed and groomed her to be a wife – but the king chose her to be wife of the king. Everyone pushed and groomed her to be a mother – but the king chose her to be the mother of royal children. Everyone pushed and groomed her to help others – but the king chose her to have the authority to make a difference for the entire nation of God's people.

You must wait until you have completed the grooming of the inner court to become the queen the King desires you to be.

This is the secret of Kingdom Living. You don't want to hear, "...go away, I never knew you."

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24).

Father God, my heart is one with yours. You have poured your anointing oil over me and bathed me in your healing. You have made me whole and alive. You have taught me things I didn't know existed. You have brought me to a place I didn't know existed. I praise You and I worship You. But what is more, Lord, I love You. And You have given me a new love for others. I have torn off the garments of arrogance and donned Your gift – the garment of humility. And Lord, it is upon my knees and with tears flowing that I pray to You now for Your people. Father, bring them to that experience and freedom of the inner room experience of learning of You. Father, anoint them with Your healing oil. Bathe them in Your cleansing waters. Father, provide for them everything they need to grow strong and free in You and bring each one of them into the realm of Kingdom Living as your queen. Father, as they sacrifice themselves to be with You, their King, completely, bring them into their calling, their authority, their life...give to them the crown of Your choosing. Father be with them, and lift them up. Heal them and teach them. And let no one stand alone, but with sisters and brothers who stand beside me, hand in hand with You. Father, let us be one with You as Jesus is one with You. In Jesus' most holy and precious name, amen.

God bless you all abundantly
Jessica