

## Beauty and Virtue

One of the many loved accounts in the Bible is that of Esther (Hadassah). She was a Jewish girl who would become Queen of Persia. Esther was lovely and beautiful (**Esther 2:7**). She was willing to risk to her life to intercede and help save her people. She certainly can serve as a role model for young women today.

What type of example does she set for us today? She shows the power and the potential impact of one person. Even though the name of God is not mentioned in the book, His sovereign actions are everywhere. He is directing many seemingly minute events for the bringing about the deliverance of His people.

“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him” (**2 Chronicles 16:9**). Esther was willing to stand in the gap (**Ezekiel 22:30**). Contrast this with the days of Jeremiah when he was told to go through the streets of Jerusalem to see “if there is anyone who executes judgment, who seeks the truth, and I will pardon her” (**Jeremiah 5:1**). Or with the latter part of **Ezekiel 22:30** where no one was willing to stand in the gap

Esther was free to act as she chose, but she carefully considered the advice of Mordecai. “Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (**Esther 4:14**). Esther was devoted to God and to His people against tremendous odds. She was willing to do what was right, and if in doing that she perished, she would perish (**Esther 4:16**).

Esther was beautiful on the outside, as was Sara (**Genesis 12:11**). However, beauty cannot just be physical. “As a ring of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a lovely woman who lacks discretion” (**Proverbs 11:22**). If one only chases the physical things of the world, it is vanity of vanity, all is vanity (i.e. **Ecclesiastes 1:2**).

However, Esther was more beautiful on the inside. This is to be true of all women of God who trust in Him (**1 Peter 3:3-6**). Others would observe her chaste conduct accompanied by fear (respect). Her adornment is to be the hidden person of the heart. Others would observe the beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

A wise woman builds her house. The foolish woman pulls it down with her hands (**Proverbs 14:1**). All the ways of a man (or a woman) are pure in his (or her) own eyes. But the Lord weights the spirits (**Proverbs 16:2**). Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she should be praised (**Proverbs 31:30**).

Look at the qualities of a virtuous woman in **Proverbs 31:10-31**. Here is a picture of a woman of strong character, great wisdom, many skills, and great compassion. Indeed, her worth is far above rubies (v. **10**). Many daughters have done well, but she excels them all (v. **30**).

This virtuous woman would be found doing good and not evil all the days of her life. She willing works with her hands. Strength and honor are her clothing. She opens her mouth with wisdom and the law of kindness is on her tongue.

“We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (**Romans 8:28**). Being courageous for God is a virtue worth rewarding (**2 Timothy 1:7-8**). God does take care of His people (**Hebrews 13:5-6**).

God is at work in our lives, even when we do not see it. We are to trust in the Lord with all our heart. We are not to lean on our own understanding. In all our ways we are to acknowledge Him, and He shall direct our paths (**Proverbs 3:5-6**). Indeed, we are to walk by faith and not by sight (**2 Corinthians 5:7**).

Something to think about.

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