OLD TESTAMENT TIMES

BROOKLYN TABERNACLE BIBLE STUDIES

GOD'S PROVIDENCE RE TWO QUEENS.

Vashti's Method—Esther's Method. Present Day Applications.

Esther iv, 1-5:3—Nov. 5

"The Lord preserveth all them that love Him."—Psalm cxlv, 20.

TODAY'S study has Queen Esther for its topic. She was a Jewess, noted for her beauty, and on this account she was chosen of Ahasuerus, King of Persia, to be his queen. It is presumed that she received the name Esther, which signifies *a star*, because of her beauty, Hashtar being the Chaldaic equivalent for Venus. She succeeded Vashti, the former queen, who had displeased the king and been divorced.

In the opposite course of these two queens we find a lesson bearing on the Suffragette question of today. The king had a banquet with the lords of his empire. It may be assumed that it was a revel, and that the king and his guests, at the height of the revel, were more or less under the influence of wine. Giving Queen Vashti the benefit of the doubt, this was probably her reason for ignoring the king's request that she come into the banquet garden.



"We plead the right to vote."

Many will say that she did just right in asserting her womanhood, in "standing up for her rights," etc. We will not dispute that all women have rights, and that Queen Vashti had hers and that she exercised them. We merely offer the suggestion that in a question of "rights," along lines of force and compulsion, Queen Vashti won a victory which cost her dearly. In Queen Esther's procedure, which is the subject of this lesson, we see the opposite course pursued—the queen won a great victory with happy results by a totally different method, and one which in our judgment recommends itself to the wisest and best of men and women.

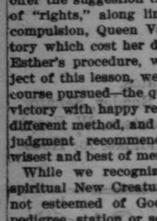
While we recognize the fact that spiritual New Creatures in Christ are not esteemed of God on account of pedigree, station or sex, that "there is neither male nor female" in Christ Jesus, still it is true that, as the Scriptures declare, "Man is the head of the woman," and she is the "helpmeet for him." See Genesis ii, 18; I Corinthians xi, 3; Ephesians v, 23-25.

Esther Stooped For Victory.

Queen Esther was not a suffragette. When invited to become the queen she did not decline and see to it that she stood on the same ground as Vashti. She accepted her accession as of Divine providence. She clothed herself with humility and with the most becoming of her fine apparel. She made herself as agreeable to the king as possible. Haman, the king's favorite, took a dislike to the gate-keeper of the palace, Mordecai, a Jew, because the latter did not bow before him, as did others. Mordecai was so faithful that Haman could not hope to find a fault with him, and thus to cause his removal. His hatred extended to the entire Jewish race. He prevailed upon the king to issue a decree that all the Jews of his kingdom should be set upon and killed, as enemies of the country. This, of course, would include Mordecai, his special enemy, whom he would then feel free to kill.

As the time for the enforcement of the decree drew nearer and nearer, Mordecai and all the Jews throughout the empire were in great distress and fear, yet not without hope that their God would work for them some deliverance.

Queen Esther was cousin to Mordecai although the latter was old enough to be her father. She was, indeed, his adopted daughter. He appealed to her to use the influence of her position to have the king rescind the order, assuring her that she was about to lose a great privilege of service for her people; that God evidently raised her to this position in the kingdom for this very hour and for this very purpose of bringing to the Jews relief and that if she failed to note and to use the privilege, God doubtless would use some other agency and still bring deliverance in harmony with His promises. The appeal was sufficient. The queen merely delayed for three days more, requesting that Mordecai and all the Jews of the royal city should join with her in a three days' fast before God.



"Queen Esther, what wilt thou?"

Love and Beauty Conquered.

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