

Let's Go Deeper:

Read **Esther 1:10-12, 16-19**

1. In the beginning of the book of Esther, King Ahasuerus throws a 180 day feast to celebrate his own wealth and power. A week into his celebration, he demands his wife, Queen Vashti, be brought before the courts so that they could marvel at her beauty. Vashti refuses, and is stripped of her royal title and exiled. Have you ever seen someone make a sacrifice for something that was important to them?
2. In our own lives, what are ideals for which you would sacrifice your reputation, wealth, or community standing?

Read **Esther 2:2, 4, 5-8, 10, 16-18**

3. Unlike Vashti, who openly defies the king, Esther doesn't reveal people or kindred (v 10), meaning that she hid the fact that she was a Hebrew woman. She was an ancestor of Abraham, and a daughter of the covenant from Genesis 17. Have you ever hidden a piece of who you are for the sake of self-preservation? Looking back, would you have made that same decision if given another chance?
4. Last week, we highlighted spiritual practices such as Study of Scripture, Prayer, Fasting, Meditation, and Acts of Mercy. These practices help center us amidst our busy lives, and also root us in our identity in Christ. Has engaging in a spiritual practice ever affected the way you approached a difficult situation or decision?