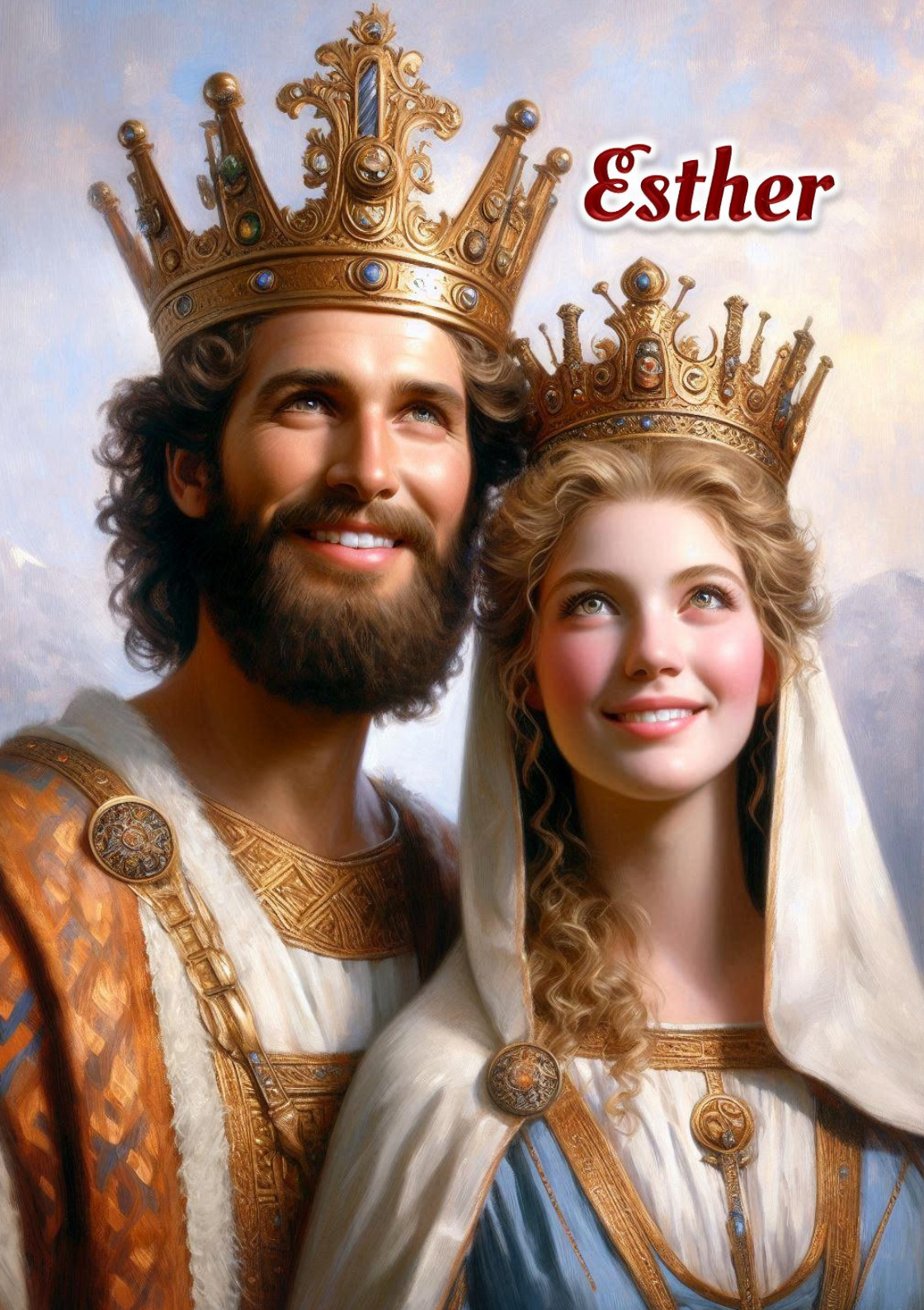


Esther



William Marrion Branham

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The Lamb*

What the church ought to do, is do like Esther did. Esther refused the adorning of the world.

147 We know that little book of Esther, how that Mordecai...His uncle had a daughter. And was down during the times of the reigns of the Medes and Persians. It's a very beautiful type there. The

king, one of the greatest kings in the world that day, he had a great feast. And he called the queen to come set by him, but she wouldn't do it. She refused to do it. So what did he do? He was so humiliated, didn't know what to do, that his own wife wouldn't come.

148 I think that's a whole lot like Christ today. Christ has invited us to set in Heavenly places with Him, and we're ashamed of it. Many people are ashamed to say that they got the baptism of the

Holy Ghost. Pentecostal people, that's right, they're ashamed to say it. We're ashamed of Him.

149 And so the queen wouldn't come. She refused to come. It humiliated him. His face turned red. Everybody noticed.

150 I wonder if Jesus' face don't turn a little red, too, when He calls on us for a work, calls on the Pentecostal movement for fellowship and brotherhood, and we're so tightly organized in little

groups till we won't bend for the other. We're so, getting so worldly and things like that, we're getting ashamed of the name of Pentecost. Some people is afraid to say. Say, "Well, I—I belong to...I'm a Christian, but..." I'm glad I got a pentecostal experience. Amen. I'm glad to bear the Name of Jesus Christ. It's the greatest privilege I ever had, to say I'm part of Him.

151 Now we find out, then, he got some consultants, to ask what

must he do. And they said, “If this goes on like this, all the rest of the women throughout the country will take the example of the first lady.”

152 Of course, that’s what’s happening tonight. I look at some of these women. I hope I don’t hurt your feelings, and yet I do, I hope I do. Uh-huh. Right. Trying to be this here first-lady stuff, with these water-head haircuts. I never seen such a thing in all my life.

153 The other day there was a woman come up in a store where I was waiting for my wife, and that woman's head was *that* big, and she had green paint under her eyes. I said, "Go back, boogerman. I'll be good." It was the awfulest sight. It would scare you. What is it? The first lady. It's the first lady. That's it. And they take an example by that.

154 And let me say this now. I didn't say it jokingly, but in a parable, that you would see. That's

exactly what you older Christians are doing for these younger. Exactly right. You're supposed to be examples. You Pentecostals that profess to have the Holy Ghost, you are to be an example for the Methodists, and Baptists, Presbyterians. Not like the first lady, but like Jesus you're supposed to be. He tells you in Here what to do, how to do it. We must follow His rules and examples. But that's the way we find it. Esther...

155 This queen, she wouldn't listen to it. She wouldn't come; humiliated him. Said, "If—if this first lady of the land sets an example like that, all the rest of the women will do it. So then when a man calls for his wife, she'll say, 'Go jump in the river.'" See? Boy, he really foretold America, didn't he? Now, we find out that, in doing so, then there was a man that had some wisdom about him, come up and counsel with the king. He said, "The thing to do is

excommunicate her. And send out through the nation, and call in all the virgins that there is, young virgins, and there pick yourself a wife.”

156 It pleased the king. So he sent, and he sent out the chambermaids, and so forth, that went out to—to pick all the young virgins that could, the beautiful women throughout all the kingdoms and the provinces that he was over, which was the greatest in the world.

157 And when he did, it come to this little Jewish girl. She was rather a kind of an off-cast, because, like the Gentiles, you see, she was cast off to one side. And she had no father and mother. And Mordecai, her uncle was raising her. And she had to go, to qualify.

158 And so what they did, they had to take these girls in for purification for so many months. They had to perfume them and do all kinds of adorning, and fix them

all up, so they could go before the king.

159 Now, that's just about the way the world wants to fix the church today. Adorn it up with the world; pattern after the things of the world; trying to get more members, taking in anything in their fellowship. My! It's a pitiful thing. One organization trying to beat the other one, take anything in for a member. You might take them in this organization, but they'll never come into the

fellowship of Christ until they are cleaned up and born again of the Spirit of God. That's true. They might have their name on a book here, but not up There, on the Lamb's Book of Life, till it's wrote with the Blood of the Lord Jesus.

160 All the women, they fixed themselves all up, to look pretty. And, oh, I imagine they got really some looks on them, maybe after the first lady and so forth. They got themselves all fixed up because

they was going to appear before the king.

161 I think that's about the whole lot is getting the matter with our churches today. They're trying to fix themselves all up, worldly, having worldly entertainment, worldly things in it, doing things that's of the world, associating in the world, thinking they can meet the King. God don't care about that. He hates that. But we want to act like the world.

162 Some of our churches, I have said, let down the bars, taking in deacons, and so forth, in the church, and sometimes pastors, that's married four or five times, and—and some of them that smoke cigarettes. Say, "They'll—they'll get over it. They'll be all right." Get a man out of a barroom one night, and put him in the pulpit the next night. I don't believe in no such stuff. I believe a man has got to be proved, that's

right, proved. I tell you, a lot of times we call...

163 I believe in the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I believe in speaking in tongues, but I think we lay too much emphasis on that. A man can speak with tongues, and a woman speak with tongues, and if her life and his life doesn't compare with what tongues you're speaking in, then it's the wrong tongue, 'cause the Holy Spirit will make you act like the Bible. It'll

bring you to the fullness of the stature of Christ.

164 You take a person that speaks with tongues, enough temper to fight a buzz saw, and talk about the neighbors, and everything like that. Why, you call that the Holy Ghost? It cannot be. No, sir.

165 The Holy Ghost is meekness, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, gentleness, patience, faith. The Holy Ghost, that's the

fruit of the Spirit, that the Holy Spirit bears in the Church of the living God, sweetness, and humbleness, humility, love one for another, longsuffering.

166 If a brother has gone wrong, don't just beat him or something another. Go after him and see if you can get him back. Don't wait for the preacher do it. You do it, somebody else. Preacher can't do it all, neither can the deacons. Everybody, is a member of this Body of Christ, should go

after one another. We got...And if we got the Spirit of Christ in us... He taught the great parable. They left the ninety and nine, and went after that one. That's what we're supposed to do. But we say, "Oh, let them go." We never should do that. We should be gentle, forgiving, longsuffering. That's the fruit of the Spirit.

167 Now, we find ourselves then, that Esther, after she...They put her in one of these places, to get herself all fixed up, to make her

show before the king. My! She refused it. She didn't want it. She wanted to go out just like she was. Amen.

168 We got today that churches that wants to act like the world, or 'cause we get big. God said, "One time he was little, they served Him. But when he got big, then they forgot Him." That's right.

169 When we had a tin pan down here on the alley

somewhere, with a tambourine, beating it on the back of our hands; and an old guitar, strummed it; and having a street meeting, you were humble. But when we get to having three or four million dollar buildings, and great big things like that, then we get so arrogant we forget about that, that's right, polish up with the world.

170 I was into a place the other day where, a holiness brother, there was a bunch of people

working for him. And if every woman come out of there at coffee time, to take a coffee-break, every woman in there had short hair and wearing lipstick. Now, you say, “Brother Branham, you ain’t got no business saying that.” I have. The Bible says that. That’s right.

171 Lot of the Pentecostal women wearing clothes that pertain to a man, and God said it’s an abomination in His sight. That’s right. How you expect to go to

Heaven like that? It shows that the Holy Spirit isn't in there. If the Holy Spirit was in there, It'd condemn you. Right. Oh, you might shout, speak with tongues, run up-and-down, dance in the spirit. I've seen Hindus do that, and Indians, and everything else. That don't mean nothing, unless there's a life to back up what you're talking about, power of the Holy Ghost, to make godly living people. That's the Bride of Christ.

172 Esther was to become a bride, so she didn't want none of the adorning of the world. She wanted to go in, to the king, just like she was. She adorned herself like the pentecostal women ought to, with a meek humble spirit. And when all these fancy, first ladies come by, with all their new fandango things, the king looked at them, and put them in the chamber with the concubines. But when this Esther come into his sight, and he got a glimpse of that

sweet, humble, meek spirit, he said, “That’s her. Go get the crown and put it on her head.” That’s it.

173 Let them adorn themselves with that kind of a spirit, not only the women, but the men, too, adorn themselves with that kind of a spirit. Then you’re becoming ready for the—the Bride, sweet, reverent. Esther made her heart clean.

174 There’s so much we take care of, this outside, oh, it’s got to

have so many wrinkle removers, and so much of *this*, to—to go about it.

175 Here some time ago, I was standing in a—a museum down in Tennessee. I passed by a little place, and it showed the analysis of a human body. It said a man that weighed a hundred and fifty pounds, in chemicals was worth eighty-four cents. Now, you're somebody, aren't you, eighty-four cents? And some women will, Pentecostal women, will put on a

five-hundred-dollar mink coat and stick their head up, if it rained, it'd drown them, and they're not even worth eighty-four cents, that's right, in chemicals. That's the truth, not a joke. That's the truth. Eighty-four cents, about enough whitewash to sprinkle a hen's nest, and a little bit of calcium and so forth. Eighty-four cents, you watch that awful close.

176 You go at the restaurant and find...get a bowl of soup and

there'd be a spider in it, you'd sue the restaurant.

177 But you'll let the devil poke old dirty televisions and card things down your neck, and swallow it; make you put on old unclean clothes, these women, these little old tight dresses like a skinned-down wienie, and walk out here on the street like that. And do you know, my sister, I ain't saying that joking. You get me wrong.

178 Listen. I'm saying this. You act like that, and at the Day of Judgment you'll be counted as an adulterer. Right. Jesus said, "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her in his heart." And when that sinner has to answer for committing adultery, who is it? You. Who caused it? You. That's right. If you put yourself out there, to look before men, to be like the world and dress like the world.

179 I said that one time, and a woman, Louisville, Kentucky, she said, “Well, listen here, Mr. Branham. I’ll give you to understand right now!”

I said, “Yes, ma’am?”

She said, “That’s the only kind of dresses they make.”

I said, “They make sewing machines and sell goods.”

180 It’s because you want to. There is something wrong in you. That’s exactly right. You do it not

because it's a fashion. You do it not because you have to. You do it because you want to.

181 You smoke because you want to. You don't have to. I think the silliest thing I ever seen was a woman going in the street, like you see every one, automobile, with them cigarettes up between their fingers. Why, it's a disgrace. That's the biggest fifth-columnist move we got in the nation, when the doctors and medical science says it's full of cancer and

everything else. And they suck right down on them, all the time.

182 See a woman, supposed to be a Christian, stretched out there on a bank, with mixed bathing, with a bathing suit on, stretched out there. I got two girls. I don't say they wouldn't do it. They say they're getting a suntan. They'll get a son-tan if I'm living. It'll be a son of *this*. See? It'll be the son of Mr. Branham, with a board about *that* long. I believe it's wrong.

183 Then we call ourself, “Oh, we’re a member of the Pentecostal church.” Oh, shame on you! Right. The Pentecostal church needs a cleansing, all the way from the front to the back, and through the cellar and basement, and upstairs. That’s right. And yet, in all of it, it’s the best we got. But it can...

184 Just like in the revolutionary and during time of Joan of Arc, France needed a revolutionary, then they need a counter-revolutionary to

straighten up some of the things they was revolting about.

185 And the Pentecostal church needs a revolutionary. Right. Certainly does. A revolt against the things that's wrong, and accept the things that's right, amen, a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost: "A Church to make Herself ready!"

186 Remember, it will never be...You can't say, "Well, now, I belong to *this*, the Assemblies. I

belong to the Foursquare, or the Church of God, or the Jesus Name,” or—or any of the rest of them. Naw! You can’t get in on any of them.

187 God calls you as an individual. And it’s you that’s got to clean up, because, “He’s taking a people from the Gentiles, for His Name’s sake, His Bride, the Gentile.”

188 Esther cleaned herself. She cleaned her heart. That’s what she

cleaned. That's what the church needs: a heart-cleaning.

“How do you clean your heart, Brother Branham?”

189 “Washed by the water of the Word,’ through the Blood of Jesus Christ.”

190 The Bible said it's wrong for women to act that way, and for men to let them do it. That's both of you. A man that'll let his woman get out in the street with naked, with clothes on like that, I got little

respects for him being even a man. He's a puppet. That's right. She uses him as a dishrag. Shame on you. You ought to be men.

191 And a pastor will let his church get by with such things, without blasting the tar out of it from the pulpit. He's a sissy. What we need is men, the Gospel, not with rubber gloves, but with the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost, with the Word. The Bible says these things are wrong. It's wrong for people to do that

way, to act that way. It ought to be preached, and lived, and everywhere. Or, the church needs a purging, a cleaning out.

192 Esther purged her heart before God, walked up with a meek and humble spirit; the Church that's going to be the Bride of Christ. Now, remember, Esther refused the worldly adornment. She took the Spirit in her heart, to go before the king.

193 And the woman today, the church that thinks she's going to get in because she's got more numbers, she's the best dressed crowd, she's got the biggest organization, the biggest church in the city, and things like that, you'll miss it a million miles if you're depending on that.

194 It's a sweet, kind, reverent spirit to the Word of God, "washed by the water of the Word," and the Word in you. It's a washing. Amen. The church needs a

washing, a full-Gospel washing. That's right. Not just a part washing, but a full-Gospel washing, cleaned up, "made new creatures in Christ Jesus."

195 Jesus' Bride is not a dirty bride. He wouldn't have His dirty, Bride.

196 If a woman come up to get married, and she looked like she'd come out of the pig pen out there; a man that's got any dignity about

him, wouldn't marry her. He'd make her clean herself up.

197 And when the church of Christ comes up to get married, thinks she's going in the Bride, with all the world tagging onto her, Christ's Bride won't be like that. No, sir.

I must hurry.

198 Neither is Church of Christ, of the Lord Jesus Christ, that Church is not a ragged Church, either, with worn-out rags of

denominations. She don't have to be a member of some great denomination. She has to be Blood-washed, Blood-bought. Not saying we belong to the biggest church, the biggest organization, or *this*, *that*, or the *other*. She's got to be pure, sanctified, holy, without spot or wrinkle, by the Blood of her—her Saviour, Jesus Christ.

199 Like Esther, the hidden Man in the heart, the hidden Man,

the meekness and gentleness of the Spirit of God, in the human heart; not the glory and class of the world.

200 I've always said the world shines; the Gospel glows. Oh, it's a million miles apart. Hollywood shines; the Church of Christ glows with loveliness, and soft, and sweet, kind. That's right.

201 Esther didn't want to adorn herself with all the modern

apparel of the world. That wouldn't look like a king's wife.

202 And do we, wanting to be like the world, and would that look like a Holy Man's Wife? We, as the Church of the living God, adorn ourselves with the things of the world, and then look like a Holy Man's Wife? Would that look natural?

203 If you seen a man today, that's supposed to be a holy man;

here come his wife down, like the first lady, one of those great big hairdos out like *this*; and red stuff on one side, and green stuff on the other side, and—and look like she been hit in the mouth with a paint brush; and all these kind of things like that, walking down the street, in little wiener-tight clothes like that; and heels about so high, twisting along, mincing down the street; and say, “That’s a holy man’s wife”? I’m not telling jokes. I’m only making statements.

204 I come to one of our great Pentecostal moves, here not long ago. I had a tent set up. And the pastor said to me, said, “My wife is the organist.”

I said, “That’s good, brother.”

“Do you mind her playing?”

I said, “No. No, sir. I sure don’t.”

205 And he went to the manager. Manager said, Brother Baxter, said, “That’s all right.”

206 He said, “Brother Branham, come over here. I want you to meet my wife.” And I went over there.

207 Please forgive me. See? I’m not trying, make us a—a remark. I’m trying to make a statement. See?

208 And the woman had one of these here manicure. I don’t know. That stuff, you know, all fixed up, and I never seen such in my life;

and a dress that was so way down in *here*, no back in it, and hardly any bottom in it. And I—I never seen such a look in my life. And she had great big earrings hanging down like *this*, and whole lot of stuff on.

209 And I looked around. I thought, “Oh, me!” I’m a Baptist, and I know better than that. I looked again. I said...

210 Now, please, this is not a joke. But I had to say it to the brother, and I hope it helped him. Not say it to be different; if I did, I was a hypocrite, see, needed to be cleaned up, myself.

I said, “Mister, did you say your wife was a saint?”

Said, “Oh, yes.”

211 I said, “She looks like a hain’t, to me.” I said, “I—I never seen such a sight in my life, as a

minister's wife. That don't look like the wife of a holy man."

212 And neither does the church of the living God, depending on her fashions, her tea parties, and bunco parties, and card games, and dances, and social, adorning herself like that, with the world, look like a Holy God's Bride. When she smokes cigarettes, and dances, and parties, and soup suppers, and cocktail drinking, and all like that,

and say they're the Bride of Christ? Don't look like a Holy Man's Wife, to me. No, sir. He wouldn't choose such a thing. He would get a woman that was right, look like what He was trying to represent. I believe that's true. That might hurt a little bit.

213 My old southern mother is gone. When I was a little boy, we used to have...Didn't have nothing to eat, hardly, and we had black-eyed peas and corn bread. I don't

know whether you know what they are or not. So we hadn't...She didn't have any grease through the year, and we'd almost have to take old big old pan like *that*, and put meat skins in it. We'd get where they'd cut, or butchers would cut the meat off and give us the skin. And we'd render it out, to get the grease, and pour it on there.

214 Every Saturday night, mama said we needed a dose of castor oil. And I—I just can't stand

the stuff even yet. And I'd have to take it. I'd come to her, holding my nose like *this*. I'd say, "Mama, I—I just can't take it." I said, "It makes me so sick."

She said, "If it don't make you sick, it don't do you any good."

215 So I think that's the way with preaching the Gospel. If It don't stir you up a little bit, get your...feel your spiritual gastronomics started right, make

you a little sick, to examine yourself with the Bible: see if that old temper, and selfishness, ungodliness, love of the world, television, and things at night; and leaving the church set empty, and the pews set empty. When, you ought to be out there like Jesus, you got His Spirit in you, trying to get everybody in the country to come to your church, to receive Christ. And we call ourselves then the Bride of Christ? Oh, what a pity, friend!

216 The hour has come. “His Bride has made Herself ready.” Oh! “Made Herself ready.” She laid aside all of these things. Remember, Esther was chosen, and the others was rejected. And only those that’s born again, that’s got the Spirit of God, will be the Chosen that Day, that the crown of glory will be set upon Her head. And the others will be rejected.

