

Ruler of the Realm (Right?)

OPENING QUESTION

In your childhood family, was the primary authority figure male or female?

READ Esther 1:1–22.

1. How impressed are you by the introduction of King Xerxes?

- A. He's my kind of man.
- B. He sounds like most men I know.
- C. His realm seems vast.
- D. This is one "party animal."
- E. He sounds like someone Christians should support.
- F. I think he's quite generous.
- G. It sounds like he has ego problems.
- H. This reminds me of some world leaders today.
- I. Other.

2. What stood out to you about the 7-day banquet at the palace?

- A. This was quite the banquet.
- B. The decorating was "over the top."
- C. A no-drinking policy was available.
- D. Drunk people make stupid decisions.
- E. Seventh-day Adventists should be doing 7-day banquets.
- F. The King did this for everyone in the palace.
- G. There's no end to the celebrating in the Persian palace.
- H. The queen held a separate banquet concurrently for the women.
- I. Other.

3. What is the significance of the number 7 in this chapter?

- A. Nothing.
- B. I didn't even notice it.
- C. The Jewish number for perfection shows up in the Persian palace.
- D. This seemed like the "perfect" banquet.
- E. The number 7 is significant for Persians.
- F. This provides hints for why the number 7 shows up in Revelation.
- G. This is God's way of showing that he's still in control.
- H. It's just a number; get over it.
- I. Other.

4. Why did King Xerxes want Vashti to appear before him?

- A. To show off.
- B. She was beautiful.
- C. He was drunk and out of control.
- D. To honor her.
- E. To stroke his fragile male ego.
- F. He wanted to gawk at her wearing only her crown.
- G. His missed his wife.
- H. He wanted a private moment of intimacy.
- I. Other.

5. What do you think should have been done to Vashti for refusing to appear at the king's request?

- A. She should have been honored.
- B. Kill her on the spot.
- C. Take the king and queen to marriage counseling.
- D. Give her a second chance.
- E. Give the king a second chance.
- F. She received what she deserved.
- G. She became an example of what martyrs would later experience.
- H. Other.

6. What does it mean to proclaim that every man should be the ruler of his home (vs. 22)?

- A. The man should rule the house.
- B. This is the old patriarchal system still prevalent today.
- C. Proclaiming it doesn't make it reality.
- D. If you have to proclaim it, it probably isn't reality.
- E. Women need to be held in check periodically.
- F. When one group decides for all groups, expect injustice.
- G. I don't want to get into it.
- H. Other.

7. What would you have done if you were King Xerxes? What would you have done if you were Queen Vashti?

8. How do power games between genders play out in your life?