

Determine whether i
think elizabeth the
first deserved the title



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This essay will determine whether I think Elizabeth the first deserved the title, 'Good Queen Bess.' Elizabeth Tudor was the daughter of Henry the Eighth and his second wife, Anne Boleyn. She ruled Britain for 45 years, from 1558 until 1603. My resources and information is mainly from the booklet I read in class, and the book, 'History Alive.'

First of all I would like to say that it is hard to decide completely an outcome for which you are decided 100% in favour or against in anything, and especially when you are talking about a person, because if you think about it most people are often always confused about themselves, and therefore it is hard to determine the character of a woman who died almost 400 years ago. But I have decided that mainly, from my point of view, Elizabeth I did deserve the title, 'Good Queen Bess.' To arrive at this outcome, I studied several aspects of her reign, the main subjects being: Religion, Parliament, the Armada, and Mary, Queen of Scots.

One of the most important decisions Elizabeth made during her reign was on the matter of Religion, which was an issue that was more important to the majority of the population in the sixteenth century than it is now. The country was strongly divided into two main religious belief groups, the Catholics and the Protestants, whom both believed in different types of worship. The Catholics liked elaborate, beautiful churches and decorations, Priests and the Pope, with Latin services and prayers, whilst the Protestants believed that it was what was inside the worshipper that mattered, and not the church. They believed in plain, simple church buildings, no leaders, and services in English so that ordinary people could understand the Bible's teachings.

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For years before Elizabeth these groups had been in disrepute, with different monarchs belonging to, and enforcing different beliefs (Henry Tudor was Catholic, Edward VI Protestant, and then Mary I a devout Roman Catholic.), but Elizabeth changed that by allowing people to privately worship in whatever they wanted in the privacy of their own homes, as long as they attended her church regularly. She took the elements of each religion and combined them to make, 'A middle way.' To illustrate this point, Elizabeth declared that she had, 'No wish to make windows into men's souls.' Elizabeth never publicly confirmed what religion she was. I think that the whole decision was very wise, and showed much forward thinking in such a conformist time, especially as she kept the land mostly in harmony, with very few people killed because of religion in her time, particularly when compared to Mary I.

Although her parliament might not have agreed with me on this point, as they encouraged her to stick to one religion. Though there was a Parliament in Elizabeth's time, it was nothing like the one that is held in London now. The Elizabethan Parliament was only called when the Queen wished it, and its members were rich men. Parliament was also only allowed to discuss matters that were given by the Queen for it to discuss, as she believed that it was her right, and hers alone to decide on items of conflict to the realm.

One main item perpetually on the agenda was the subject of Elizabeth's marriage, to produce a successor to the throne. Elizabeth never married, and is often known as the 'Virgin Queen, ' though whether that was true is a matter on which historians are undecided. Nevertheless it was considered extremely important for a suitable heir to be produced for the future ruling of <https://assignbuster.com/determine-whether-i-think-elizabeth-the-first-deserved-the-title/>

the throne, but whenever the issue was raised Elizabeth had a fit of temper, and basically said that it was her business and no one else's.

Elizabeth had a cousin, Mary Queen of Scots, who was not so unattached. Having been married thrice, with all three husbands dead, the Scottish grew suspicious, and Mary fled for her life to England where she begged with her cousin to take pity on her. Elizabeth did, and allowed Mary to stay in England, but she was a threat to the queen as Mary was strictly Catholic, and had numerous supporters in the empire. Therefore it was considered dangerous for Mary to die by Elizabeth's hand, so the queen kept her alive, but in a safe house, with no freedom, and, 'men visitors.' But there were many plots with the intention to give Mary the throne of England, so eventually, after the discovery of the 'Babington Plot,' Mary was executed. I think Elizabeth deserves the title for this as well because she looked after Mary for years, but in the end Mary had plotted to kill her so I believe that she was justified in signing the death pledge.

One of the biggest trials in Elizabeth's sovereignty was the Armada in 1588. The King of Spain at that time was called Phillip, and he had previously asked Elizabeth to marry him, but she had refused. He grew more annoyed with her because they belonged to different religions, and she had encouraged her pirate's to raid Spanish ships, amongst other reasons. Eventually, he prepared an Armada to attack England, but it failed and the Spanish returned home. I think that Elizabeth could have behaved with a little more diplomacy to avoid war, and she didn't actually help to defeat the Spaniards, although she did make a very stirring speech to her troops, which started, 'I may have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and
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stomach of a great king.' Also, lots of her injured soldiers who returned home alive were not paid and were left to beg in the streets for the remainder of their lives, although that might be a different issue.

So basically I do think that Elizabeth deserved the title, 'Good Queen Bess,' because she was very innovative and forward thinking for her time, and wasn't too cruel for her time. One thing is sure, and that is that she was certainly a very interesting woman. In conclusion, I would like to end this essay thanking you for reading it, I hoped you enjoyed it.