

Esther

May 15, 2013 · AM · <https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/2013/esther/>

All Slides

The INTRODUCTION OF ESTHER Provides the Background of the Book and Its Value to Us.

- A. All scripture was inspired by God for our profit and learning (II Timothy 3:16-17; Rom 15:4).
 - 1. As has been taught recently, all scripture teaches us lessons about the mind of the Lord.
 - 2. Even though the book does not mention “Jesus,” “God,” or “Lord,” it has lessons for us.
 - 3. Esther is inspired by faith in the Jewish canon of scripture (Rom 3:2 cp Luke 24:44-45).
 - 4. All scripture contains the testimony of Jesus Christ, so we shall look for Him (John 5:39).
 - a. Satan through Haman tried to destroy the royal line of Christ, but God preserved Him.
 - b. Satan through Haman tried to destroy the temple at Jerusalem, but God preserved it.
 - 5. The book of Esther will teach us God’s providence and a number of practical lessons.
- B. The book’s setting relative to world politics was during the middle of the Persian Empire.
 - 1. The four great successive world empires were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.
 - 2. God revealed to Daniel that the Persian Empire would have four kings (Daniel 11:1-4).
 - a. Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian reigned jointly at first (Da 5:30-31 cp Is 45:1).
 - b. Then Cyrus reigned alone over the Persian Empire to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1:1-2).
 - c. Cyrus was the king reigning when Daniel learned of the four Persian kings (Dan 10:1).
 - d. Following Cyrus were Cambyses (2), Darius Hystaspes (3), and the rich Xerxes (4).
 - e. History confirms the defeat of Xerxes with 1.8 million men, and Alexander was next.
 - f. There were other lesser kings of short duration or insignificant power after Xerxes.
 - 3. The Jews were in the midst of rebuilding Jerusalem during this time (Ezra 4:23-24).
 - 4. We cannot overlook the importance that demonic activity played at this time (Dan 10:13).
- C. Ezra and Nehemiah record God’s care of the returned Jews, while Esther describes the rest.

The KING OF ESTHER Identifies and Reviews the Wife Crisis of Ahasuerus of Persia (Esth 1).

- A. The Ahasuerus that reigned was Darius Hystaspes, who reigned thirty-six years over Persia.

1. This king is called in scripture Darius (Ezra 4:24), Artaxerxes (Neh 2:1), and Ahasuerus.
 2. All three of these names were common names among the Medo-Persian kings (Daniel 9:1).
 - a. Arta (great) + xerxes (shah) means the great shah – a name of position like Pharaoh.
 - b. The first king of the Medes was Darius (Dan 5:31) and his father Ahasuerus (Dan 9:1).
 3. This Ahasuerus was neither Cambyses (Ezra 4:6) nor the father of Darius (Daniel 9:1).
 4. He is known by history for his conquest of India and tribute from islands (Esth 1:1; 10:1).
 5. Cambyses and Darius had extended the Empire from the original 120 provinces (Dan 6:1).
 6. His palace in Shushan replaced Babylon as the capital of the empire (Neh 1:1; Daniel 8:2).
 7. Observe the reversal of the nations Media and Persia (Daniel 5:28; 8:20; Isaiah 13:17).
 8. In the third year of his reign he sponsored a great party for 180 days for his rulers.
- B. Persia under Ahasuerus had laws against asking people to drink more than they wanted (1:8).
1. Social compelling is usually accomplished by numerous toasts that all cannot handle.
 2. This particular law shows a degree of natural temperance that is commendable (Pr 31:4).
- C. In the following events, we can exonerate Ahasuerus, condemn him, or ignore any judgment.
1. We shall consider the Author, the lack of judgment, God's blessing, and other scriptures.
 2. Whatever the case might be, God providentially arranged events to promote Esther.
- D. Vashti refused to honour the king by showing her beauty before the guests (1:9-12).
1. We need not assume that Ahasuerus's merry heart was a drunken heart (Ruth 3:7).
 - a. Yet we must admit that a merry heart can also be a very drunken heart (I Sam 25:36).
 - b. God made wine for cheer, not for taste (Ps 104:15; Judges 9:13; Ec 10:19; Zech 10:7).
 - c. God condoned the use of wine for its pleasure (Deut 14:26; Prov 31:6-7; John 2:1-11).
 - d. Drinking wine for taste and not for cheer is missing its purpose. Nature teaches that.
 - e. He requested her presence with the royal crown, not a G-string or other lewd outfit.
 - f. A drunken man does not usually show such a great respect for wise counsel (1:13-15).
 - g. Wine can deceive (Pr 20:1) and cause sexual sin (Gen 19:32; Hab 2:15), but may not.
 2. A woman who looks beautiful and those who admire her have not necessarily sinned.
 - a. Some will surely argue that Vashti was not wise to subject herself to leering men.
 - b. Godly women appeared beautiful in public (Ge 12:10-15; 24:16; 26:7; 29:17; I Sa 25:3).
 - c. Ruth, who was described as a virtuous woman, took pains to be attractive (Ruth 3:3).
 - d. Modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety need not mean ugly and dowdy.
 - e. Women should be all that God intended them to be for His glory and a testimony.
 1. Being attractive while maintaining sobriety and modesty testifies against the world.
 2. God made the woman distinctly beautiful in her own way. She should not despise it.
 - f. A man has not sinned who is proud of a beautiful wife who looks beautiful in public.
 - g. Men may admire a beautiful woman as righteously as a wise woman or a new house.
 1. Lawful desire is clearly justified in scripture (Deut 14:26; 21:11; Ps 37:4; Pro 8:11).

2. The husband of a married woman should cover your eyes (Gen 20:16 cp Deu 21:11).
 3. For married men, the covenant of marriage covers the eyes from maids (Job 31:1).
 4. We admire and even desire clothing, automobiles, houses, and furniture without sin.
 5. We may touch it, test it, analyze it, and comment on certain features without sin.
 6. Lust is either (1) consuming desire or (2) desire that would consider a sinful act.
 7. Amnon was sick with his lust (II Samuel 13:1-2) and Achan sinned (Joshua 7:21).
 8. Consider these verses: Exodus 20:17; Job 31:1,9; Matthew 5:28; James 1:13-16.
 9. Heart adultery is more than admiring and a second look but less than the act.
 10. However, the weakness that men have for beautiful women should keep them sober.
 11. Godly men will flee any woman or habit of admiring, if it hints of lust (Ro 13:14).
3. Her behavior was totally unacceptable both to God and scripture and the laws of nature.
 - a. God created Adam first (I Tim 2:13) and the woman for the man (Ge 2:18; I Cor 11:9).
 - b. Because Eve was deceived by Satan, she is under further rule (Gen 3:16; I Tim 2:14).
 - c. Paul in the New Testament taught wives to submit to their husbands (Eph 5:22-24,33).
 - d. Paul taught the identity of women as the glory of man for his benefit I Cor 11:3-16).
 - e. Peter used the example of Sarah to teach wives to submit with fear (I Peter 3:1-6).
 - f. God's law exalts the man (Ex 20:17; Nu 5:11-31; De 21:10-14,15; 22:13-21; 25:11-12).
 - g. Nature teaches plainly that society requires spheres of authority to operate smoothly.
 - h. Nature teaches plainly in agreement with God that the woman is inferior (I Pet 3:7).
 - i. Wives should accept submission as do children, servants, citizens, and church members.
 - j. Since God only has absolute rule, wives must obey God first (I Pet 3:6; I Sam 25:25).
- E. Ahasuerus appeals to his seven counselors for their judgment according to the law (1:13-22).
1. He is to be highly commended for his great confidence and respect for wise counselors.
 2. Knowing the times is knowing the right action for a given time (I Chron 13:32; Eccl 8:5).
 - a. This phrase is metonymy of the adjunct – times is used for things to be done in time.
 - b. God prophesied that the papacy would think to change times and laws (Daniel 7:25).
 3. They recommend divorce for injustice toward the king and the risk of public precedent.
 - a. God told Abraham to divorce Hagar when domestic peace was destroyed (Gen 21:9-14).
 - b. Those in positions of authority must have exemplary wives and children (I Tim 3:4-5).
 - c. Since obedience by a wife is essential to a marriage, she was guilty of desertion.
 - d. Consider the lot of servants who did not obey their masters well (Exodus 21:20-21).
 - e. Consider the lot of children who did not obey their parents well (Deut 21:18-21).
 - f. Consider the lost of citizens who did not obey their government well (Romans 13:4).
 - g. If Ahasuerus were to divorce Vashti, then all husbands would receive proper honour.
 - h. The published decree taught all people of every language that the man was to rule.

4. If women are given such liberty to disobey their husbands, contempt and wrath result.
 - a. The women shall show contempt of authority and their husbands by greater rebellion.
 - b. The men shall be provoked to wrath against their wives for their insubordination.

The RISE OF ESTHER Is God's Work Raising the Jewess Esther to the Persian Throne (Esth 2).

- A. The situation requiring a new queen was the result of Vashti's crime of chapter one (1:19).
 1. When the anger of Ahasuerus had cooled, he realized that he was without a wife (2:1).
 2. The king's servants suggest he have a beauty contest to select the next queen (2:2-4).
 - a. The taking of beautiful women by killing husbands was not unusual (Ge 12:12; 26:7).
 - b. It is a law of nature that most men require virginity for marriage (Deut 22:13-21).
 - c. The authority of a king's position allows him privileges not open to all (II Sam 12:8).
 - d. Since the Persian Empire included many nations and customs, purification was needed.
 - e. The women would be kept by one of the king's chamberlains who managed the women.
 3. At each step of the way, we see the hand of God evident in the affairs of Persia.
- B. The introduction of Esther and Mordecai relates their circumstances and relationship (2:5-7).
 1. Mordecai was a Jew who was carried captive to Babylon under Jeconiah (II Kg 24:10-16).
 - a. He returned with many Jews under Zerubbabel to rebuild Jerusalem (Ezra 2:2).
 - b. After the work was hindered, he must have returned to Shushan (Ezra 4:23-24).
 - c. If we assume Ahasuerus to be any other Persian king, then we have problems here.
 2. Esther was a Jew who had been born in captivity and was raised by cousin Mordecai.
 - a. An orphan, Esther lost both parents in captivity before Mordecai took her (Ps 27:10).
 - b. Mordecai was an early captive; Esther was a young virgin; and she was his daughter.
 - c. She was fair and beautiful. It is valuable to recognize God's providence in bodies.
- C. Esther shows herself to be a wise and obedient young woman with God's favour (2:8-11).
 1. Esther was among the young fair virgins gathered for the king's beauty contest (2:8).
 2. Esther pleased Hegai the chamberlain such that he preferred her above the others (2:9).
 - a. A proud woman would have resented the contest and made things miserable for Hegai.
 - b. A haughty woman would have despised the poor eunuch Hegai and been obnoxious.
 - c. Consider the valuable proverb of Solomon relative to beautiful women (Prov 11:22).
 - d. Does not the favour Esther received remind you of Joseph in Egypt (Ge 39:1-6,21-23)?
 3. Esther kept secret from Hegai both her nationality and relationship with Mordecai (2:10).
 - a. She obeyed her cousin-father carefully and showed further her wisdom and discretion.
 - b. Mordecai had a plan and trusted God to bless it, but we must use means (II Sa 15:31).
 - c. A wise man does not feel anxiety to tell everything, but a fool must speak (Pr 29:11).
 - d. Especially in an evil time, the prudent will keep silence (Proverbs 22:3 cp Amos 5:13).

4. Mordecai kept in close contact with Esther as they waited for God's blessing (Pr 24:3-4).
- D. The beauty contest's procedures reveal the financial means and vanity of a king (2:12-14).
1. Each woman was required to spend twelve months in preparing herself for the king (2:12).
 - a. They received six months with oil for texture and six months with perfume for odor.
 - b. The length of purification emphasized the occasion and guaranteed no other fathers.
 2. Each woman was allowed to take with her whatever she desired to please the king (2:13).
 3. She went in the evening to see the king and joined the concubines the next day (2:14).
 - a. If the king delighted in her, he could call her again by name to see her sometime.
 - b. Otherwise, the women became concubines of the king and were supported by him.
 - c. Such a distinction between wives and concubines is scriptural (Gen 25:6; II Sam 5:13).
- E. The beauty contest was won by Esther as God turned the king's heart to love her (2:15-20).
1. Esther used wise counsel by taking with her only what the experienced Hegai appointed.
 - a. Though the women were all beautiful, they should have sought the wisdom of Hegai.
 - b. Nature teaches that most women could benefit by trusting men for appearance hints.
 - c. Commentators assume she chose nothing to show resentment. But with Ahasuerus?
 - d. Whatever Hegai appointed for her, it was effective. She was the universal favorite.
 2. Esther met King Ahasuerus in the tenth month of the seventh year of his reign (2:16).
 - a. Vashti had been divorced in the third year of his reign, so four years had passed (1:3).
 - b. Either (1) the king did not miss her for a while or (2) Esther was not first in line.
 3. As Pharaoh made Joseph ruler over Egypt, so Ahasuerus made Esther his queen (2:17).
 - a. The words of Hannah (I Samuel 2:7-8) and Mary (Luke 1:52) are most appropriate here.
 - b. God blessed the wise plans of Mordecai in turning the heart of Ahasuerus to love her.
 - c. Mordecai shows his zeal for the Lord by running the high risk of losing Esther (2:14).
 - d. Proverbs says, "Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feared...."
 - e. A wise servant can be promoted past a son, so a wise captive past natives (Pr 17:2).
 4. King Ahasuerus honoured his new queen with a great feast in her own name (2:18).
 - a. Observe that those in attendance were the same that witnessed Vashti's sin (1:3).
 - b. If it was Esther's feast, obviously Esther was there to be admired by the crowd.
 - c. It was time of great celebration as the king reduced taxes and gave gifts as he could.
 5. Mordecai was promoted to sit in the king's gate for the next beauty contest (2:19).
 - a. Sitting in the gate is not a being a beggar, but an important position (Daniel 2:49).
 - b. Most likely Esther was instrumental in showing her gratitude by helping Mordecai.
 6. Esther continues to show her wisdom by obeying Mordecai as when she was child (2:20).
 - a. God honors those who learn to honor authority, since authority is divine (Eph 6:1-3).
 - b. There was no purpose to reveal her nationality yet; Mordecai knew how to play aces.

- F. Mordecai shows his faithfulness by his loyalty to the king against two enemies (2:21-23).
1. While many in our generation “do not want to get involved,” Mordecai did the opposite.
 2. It is the duty of those under authority to inform those in authority of evil (I Cor 2: 11).
 3. Who arranged the circumstances where Mordecai would be able to save King Ahasuerus?
 4. The use of Esther as his medium kept Mordecai from exposing himself publicly (2:22).
 5. Observe the justice of Ahasuerus: when it was found out the two conspirators were hung.
 6. Mordecai’s service was noted in the chronicles of the king – the Congressional Record.

The ENEMY OF ESTHER Relates the Rise and Plan of Haman Against the Jews (Esther 3).

- A. King Ahasuerus promoted Haman to be over all the princes that were with the king (3:1).
1. Why did God raise Haman to such a prestigious position knowing he was to be destroyed?
 2. Why did God raise Pharaoh to such a great position before his destruction (Romans 9:17)?
 3. The promotion served to harden the heart of Haman against Mordecai (Proverbs 1:32).
- B. The king commanded all his servants to reverence Haman, but Mordecai would not (3:2).
1. The command must be taken here to mean some act of divine reverence to a mere man.
 - a. A promotion such as recorded would have received full respect of Persian citizens.
 - b. Mordecai’s answer of his Jewishness indicates more than civil reverence (3:4 cp 2:20).
 - c. The Jews were willing to show appropriate civil respect for authority i.e. Daniel.
 2. If the reason was not divine reverence, then it could be God’s curse on the Amalekites.
 - a. Haman is called an Agagite, which is used of Amalekite kings (Num 24:7; I Sam 15:8).
 - b. God perpetually cursed Amalek and told Israel not to forget (Ex 17:16; De 25:17-19).
 - c. If Haman was a descendent of Amalek, it helps explain his character (Deut 25:17-18).
- C. When Haman is informed of Mordecai’s lack of reverence, he is incensed against him (3:3-6).
1. His wrath was so great that he scorned the idea of killing just Mordecai alone (3:6).
 2. His wrath was too great for his own good, for God was to be praised (Psalm 76:10).
 3. As God hardened Pharaoh’s heart for His own glory, so the heart of Haman (Ex 14:17).
- D. Haman makes a plot to destroy all the Jews in Persia and gets Ahasuerus’s approval (3:7-15).
1. In order to select the proper day for their destruction, he casts Pur – the lot (3:7).
 - a. The Persian word for casting of lots is extremely important, if you love God’s humor.
 - b. As Solomon prophesied before, the Lord disposes the casting of lots (Proverbs 16:33).
 2. In order to obtain the approval of Ahasuerus, Haman accuses the Jews with sedition (3:8).
 - a. This is an old tactic by the enemies of Christians (Ezra 4:11-16; Acts 16:20; 17:5-8).
 - b. Christians must be ever so diligent to avoid civil offence before men (I Pet 2:12-16).
 - c. Ahasuerus behaves foolishly by not proving Haman (Pr 14:15; Job 29:16; I Thess 5:21).
 1. Honourable kings will search out a matter (Pr 25:2; I Kgs 3:16-28; Ezra 5:17 – 6:2).

2. Ahasuerus on other occasions showed greater honour than here (Esther 1:15; 2:23).
 - d. A minister who rules well is a man who does not judge without a search (I Tim 5:17).
3. In order to obtain Ahasuerus's approval, Haman bribes him with a payment of silver (3:9).
 - a. Haman offered to pay 10,000 talents of silver to those over the business of finance.
 - b. Haman either (1) hated the Jews supremely or (2) intended to participate in the spoil.
 - c. The sum shows Haman's great hatred (I Chron 29:3-4), yet is possible (I Chron 22:14).
4. The king blesses the plan by giving Haman his ring – the royal signet of Persia (3:10-12).
 - a. The ring gave Haman the seal, or authority, of the king. The decree would be law.
 - b. The king has become such a buddy with Haman that he returns the silver to Haman.
 - c. The king gives complete approval to Haman to do with the Jews as he saw fit.
5. The letters sent throughout the Persian Empire detailed the extermination plan (3:13-15).
 - a. All the Jews were to be killed by whatever means – young, old, women, and children.
 - b. The thirteenth day of the twelfth month – Adar – was the day determined by Pur.
 - c. The spoil, or the possessions, of the destroyed Jews were to be taken for a prey.
 - d. Since the decree went out over the seal of the king, the post office made haste.
6. Though Ahasuerus and Haman were at ease, the inhabitants of Shushan were perplexed.
 - a. Perplexed describes a state of being filled with uncertainty and fear (Luke 9:7; 24:4).
 - b. Solomon told of the perplexity and vanity of oppression by those in power (Ec 4:1-3).

The PLAN OF ESTHER Relates the Means Mordecai and Esther Use to Defeat Haman (Esth 4).

- A. Much mourning was done by Mordecai and other Jews when they heard of the plot (4:1-3).
 1. Grief and sincerity are manifested by sackcloth and ashes (I Kgs 21:25-29; Jonah 3:4-10).
 2. He did not enter the king's gate in sackcloth for good reason (Compare Nehemiah 2:2).
 3. When a people repent and seek God, He will hear (Ex 2:23-25; De 30:1-10; II Ch 7:12-15).
 4. Under the New Testament we are to follow the same practice (I Timothy 2:1-2; I Co 7:5).
- B. Mordecai informs Esther of the plot and tells her to go request mercy of the king (4:4-9).
 1. It is apparent that Esther was not involved in the business of the kingdom (4:4-5).
 - a. When she hears that Mordecai is in sackcloth, with grief she sends him clothing.
 - b. However, she did not know the reason for his grief, but sent to inquire of him.
 2. Mordecai showed the degree of Haman's hatred by telling her about the silver amount.
 3. He gives her a copy of the decree so that she can see the reason and reality of his grief.
 4. He charges her to go before the king and make supplication for her people – the Jews.
 - a. He preserved her identity until now in order to give her maximum advantage (2:10).
 - b. It was now time to use information that had not been necessary beforehand (Pr 29:11).

- C. Mordecai and Esther debated the risk of going before the king without approval (4:10-14).
 - 1. Unless you were invited, you received the death penalty for coming in before the king.
 - 2. The only exceptions were those to whom the king would hold out his golden scepter.
 - 3. Esther reminds Mordecai that she had not been invited by the king for thirty days.
 - 4. Mordecai uses superb reasoning to convince Esther she ought to go before Ahasuerus.
 - a. Will you realistically escape the unchangeable Persian law because you are the queen?
 - b. When deliverance comes from another source, you will be destroyed for your cowardice.
 - c. How can you not consider the providence of God in bringing you to the kingdom now?
 - 5. Esther is moved by Mordecai to go before the king, if the Jews would pray (4:15-17).
 - a. She asked for all the Jews in Shushan to fast three days and nights for God's help.
 - b. She promised to fast the same way with her maidens in preparation for her bold move.
 - c. Observe the contentment under the prospect of death due to her confidence in God.
 - 1. She was convinced that going before the king was the prudent and necessary thing.
 - 2. She trusted the Lord with the outcome based on her fervent prayer for assistance.
 - 3. We should (1) do the wisest thing and (2) sincerely trust God for the blessing.
 - 4. Consider these texts further proving this point: James 4:13-16; II Samuel 10:9-12.

The TIMING OF ESTHER Shows the Providence of God Encouraging the Evil Haman (Esther 5).

- A. Esther is kindly received by King Ahasuerus when she entered the forbidden inner court.
 - 1. The "third day" can easily be seventy-two hours as with Jesus (Matt 12:40 cp Mat 16:21).
 - 2. Esther showed wisdom by putting on her royal apparel for (1) beauty and (2) dignity.
 - 3. God moved the heart of Ahasuerus to think favorably upon her and extend the scepter.
 - a. Though Esther had not been called before the king for thirty days, she was received.
 - b. Not only did the king extend the scepter, but he offered her any desire she wished.
 - c. The expression "half of the kingdom" is obvious hyperbole (5:3,6; 7:2 cp Mark 6:23).
 - 4. Esther shows great wisdom by dramatizing the seriousness of her request of the king.
 - a. She delays him initially by requesting his presence with Haman at the first banquet.
 - b. She delays him further by withholding her petition until the second banquet later.
- B. Esther requests the king to attend another banquet where she will ask her petition (5:6-8).
 - 1. Such a wise delay obviously raised the king's concern over the seriousness of her request.
 - 2. Such a delay also afforded Haman the great opportunity to gloat over his good fortune.
- C. Haman is so taken by Esther's invitations to two banquets that he celebrates (5:9-13).
 - 1. Haman went forth from the royal banquet joyful and with a glad heart. Hate such joy!
 - a. Everything was coming up roses for Haman, or so he thought; but God had other plans.
 - b. God may bless the wicked with prosperity before crushing them (Job 12:6-25; 21:7-33; 24:1-25;

Ps 73:3-20; 50:21-22; Eccl 7:15; 8:12-14; Jer 12:1-3; Acts 12:20-23; Ro 9:17).

2. When he was again reminded of Mordecai's irreverence, it was a great source of anger.
 3. It reads, "Nevertheless Haman refrained himself..." God maximized his pride and anger.
 4. Calling for his friends and wife, Haman proceeds to boast of his promotions in Persia.
 - a. Consider Haman's riches. The wicked increase in riches based on scripture (Ps 73:12).
 - b. Consider Haman's children. The wicked have children like a flock (Job 21:8,11).
 - c. Consider Haman's promotion. The wicked are raised up on high by God (Romans 9:17).
 - d. He makes a great boast of the "favor" shown him by Queen Esther at the banquets.
 5. Even before his friends with such good things to consider, he cannot forget Mordecai.
 - a. Hatred is an evil that will consume you. Make sure you go to bed without it (Ep 4:26).
 - b. A meal of dandelions with love is better than much steak with hatred (Pr 15:17; 17:1).
- D. Haman's wife and friends suggest he make a high gallows on which to hang Mordecai (5:14).
1. It is only the infinitely wise God of the scripture that could have arranged this building.
 2. With a gallows awaiting Mordecai, Haman would psychologically be able to be merry.

The HUMOR OF ESTHER Relates the Humility that God Providentially Sent Haman (Esth 6).

- A. God providentially keeps Ahasuerus awake that night to remember Mordecai's loyalty (6:1-3).
 1. Consider (1) the insomnia, (2) the chronicles, (3) the discovery, and (4) the concern.
 2. When the king reads of the old event, he inquires as to what reward was given Mordecai.
 3. The king had only executed justice speedily and recorded the event initially (2:21-23).
- B. Ahasuerus rewards Mordecai for his loyalty by having Haman honour him publicly (6:4-11).
 1. When Ahasuerus realizes he forgot to reward Mordecai, he asks who is available in court.
 - a. See again the glorious providence of our God for bringing Haman to the court early.
 - b. Consider wisely that Haman was in the court early to seek the hanging of Mordecai.
 2. Ahasuerus innocently asks Haman what should be done for whom he delighteth to honour.
 - a. The king was definitely innocent not knowing yet the evil of Haman, but God was not.
 - b. Consider the heart of a wicked man. It will deceive at every turn (Proverbs 28:26).
 3. Because Haman proudly assumed he was the man, he goes "for the gold" in style (6:7-9).
 - a. The man should be arrayed as the king – the king's royal apparel, crown, and horse.
 - b. One of the king's most noble princes should publicly proclaim the man's honour.
 - c. Do you have the mind of the Lord? If so, then what caused Haman's wise suggestion?
 - d. My God – the God of heaven and earth – laughs in derision at His enemies (Psalm 2:4).
 4. The king thinks Haman's idea is terrific, and asks him to do so unto Mordecai (6:10-11).
 - a. Ahasuerus makes sure that Haman understands it is to be done exactly as described.
 - b. Ahasuerus knows Mordecai is a Jew, but he is ignorant of Haman and the Jews (3:8).

- c. Has a man ever been more publicly humiliated than was Haman this day in Shushan?
- 5. Haman went to his house mourning in great grief – quite a change from the previous day.
 - a. Could this beginning of a day be accurately called “getting off to a bad start”?
 - b. Observe very carefully that his wise men advise him of certain doom déjà vu Pharaoh.
 - c. The timing is great – as he hears of certain doom he is summoned to Esther’s banquet.

The REVENGE OF ESTHER Describes How Esther Moved Ahasuerus to Kill Haman (Est 7).

- A. The king for the third time offers to grant Esther any request (Compare 5:3; 5:6; and 7:2).
- B. Esther informs the king in a wise manner of Haman’s plot against the Jews (Esther 7:3-4).
 - 1. Kindly begging the king for mercy, she supplicates him submissively (Proverbs 18:23).
 - 2. She presents the bottom line first: Will you save me and my people upon my request?
 - 3. She uses similar language to the king’s decree in describing the planned pogrom (3:13).
 - 4. If the plot had been servitude, she would not have spoken: she dramatizes her great fear.
 - 5. She then tells the king that their enemy is not able to countervail the king’s damage.
- C. When Ahasuerus asks the identity of the enemy, Esther identifies the wicked Haman (7:5-6).
 - 1. What had started as a bad day for Haman all of sudden got considerably worse quickly.
 - 2. The king shows his rising anger by asking for his location and mocking his presumption.
 - 3. Esther had called him a wicked man and the king was visibly mad: Haman became scared.
- D. The king takes charge of the problem and Haman ends up falling on his own gallows (7:7-10).
 - 1. With his anger rising rapidly, King Ahasuerus steps away to consider things briefly.
 - 2. It was obvious the king was past reasoning, so Haman appeals to Esther for mercy.
 - 3. When the king returned into the room, Haman was on the bed (couch) with Esther.
 - 4. Hearing the king mock Haman with attempted rape, the servants cover Haman’s face.
 - 5. A servant tells Ahasuerus that Haman had gallows ready for Mordecai – the king’s friend.
 - 6. The king orders Haman to be hung on his own gallows to fulfill scripture (Ps 9:16; 35:8).

The LEGALITY OF ESTHER Shows the Steps Mordecai and Esther Took for Protection (Esth 8).

- A. Ahasuerus promoted Mordecai to the office vacated by Haman and gave him his ring (8:1-2).
 - 1. The king gave Haman’s house to Esther, who in turn gave it to Mordecai for resolution.
 - 2. Esther showed her relationship to Mordecai, and the king promoted him over the princes.
- B. Esther approached King Ahasuerus again to seek protection for the rest of the Jews (8:3-6).
 - 1. She approached with tears and falls down at his feet begging, and he offered his scepter.
 - 2. Since the decree authorized all the Jews to be killed, Esther sought for a reversal.
 - 3. Observe again the humility with which Esther approaches the king: four conditions.

- C. Ahasuerus solves the legal block by giving the Jews opposite power under Mordecai (8:7-14).
 - 1. The laws of the Persians once authorized by the king could not be reversed (1:19; 3:12).
 - 2. While this meant there could be no reversal, it did not mean there could be no new law.
 - 3. Mordecai uses the power to authorize the Jews to take the offensive upon Adar 13.
 - a. The Jews could gather together and kill all – women and children – of their enemies.
 - b. They could also take the spoil for a prey. All of this action had to occur on Adar 13.
 - 4. The dromedaries that helped carry the decree were a special breed of riding camels.
- D. The promotion of Mordecai and the authority for the Jews caused great happiness (8:15-17).
 - 1. Mordecai was arrayed in royal splendor and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.
 - a. Solomon taught long ago that righteous rulers are a great blessing (Pr 29:2; 11:10).
 - b. Note the great contrast between the times of Haman and of Mordecai (3:15 cp 8:15).
 - 2. The Jews rejoiced in their deliverance and had light, gladness, joy, and honour.
 - 3. As the king's decree came to cities with Jews, they held feasts to celebrate their joy.
 - 4. Some Persians converted – via circumcision, because they feared the Jews and Adar 13.

The DELIVERANCE OF ESTHER Describes the Final Confrontation and Victory (Esther 9-10).

- A. The Jews took advantage of their power under Mordecai and slew their enemies (9:1-11).
 - 1. No man could withstand the Jews, because the fear of the Jews rendered them helpless.
 - 2. The rulers, deputies, and officers of the king helped the cause for fear of Mordecai.
 - 3. They did whatever they would in the way of slaughter and destruction to their enemies.
 - 4. In Shushan they slew five hundred enemies and killed the ten sons of Haman the Agagite.
 - 5. They did not touch the spoil that was granted to them in the decree of the king (8:11).
- B. Esther, not satisfied with the five hundred dead on the first day, asked for more (9:12-15).
 - 1. The king, with great desire to please Esther, reported to her the results of the first day.
 - 2. Esther asked for Haman's ten sons to use the gallows and for one more day of vengeance.
 - 3. On the fourteenth of Adar, Haman's sons were hung and the Jews killed three hundred.
- C. The Jews celebrated over two days their great deliverance from their enemies (9:16-19).
 - 1. The Jews that were in the provinces slew of their enemies seventy and five thousand.
 - 2. The Jews that were in the provinces rested with feasting and gladness on Adar 14.
 - 3. The Jews in Shushan, because they slew their enemies for two days, rested on Adar 15.
 - 4. Note that a victory of God deserves gladness, feasting, a good day, and sending portions.
- D. Mordecai and Esther established and confirmed the days as a perpetual custom (9:20-32).
 - 1. Mordecai wrote a letter summarizing their victory and establishing the two feast days.
 - 2. They called the two days Purim after the name of Pur – the lot (Compare Esther 3:7).
 - 3. Esther then wrote a second letter confirming what Mordecai had established (9:29).

- E. Ahasuerus is identified as the Persian king who collected tribute from sea islands (10:1).
- F. Ahasuerus's great acts, including Mordecai's promotion, are written in Persian history (10:2).
- G. Mordecai was next unto the king Ahasuerus and used his position for his people (10:3).

The APPLICATION OF ESTHER Teaches New Testament Saints Lessons for Patience and Hope.

- A. A summary of chance events that God managed to His own glory is profitable (Lam 3:37-38).
 - 1. What caused King Ahasuerus to summons Vashti? And what caused her to refuse (1:12)?
 - 2. What caused the wise counselors to recommend that the king totally demote her (1:19)?
 - 3. What caused the wise counselors to recommend a beauty contest including Jews (2:3-4)?
 - 4. What caused Esther to be in Shushan when many of the Jews were in Jerusalem (2:7)?
 - 5. What caused Esther to be fair and beautiful so that she could win the contest (2:7)?
 - 6. What caused Esther to receive preferential treatment from Hegai the chamberlain (2:9)?
 - 7. What caused King Ahasuerus to love Esther above all the young, virgin women (2:17)?
 - 8. What caused Mordecai to know the conspiracy of two servants to slay the king (2:21)?
 - 9. What caused Haman to be promoted so high when he was only going to fall so far (3:1)?
 - 10. What caused Haman to be so honoured that a Jew would have to reveal his religion (3:4)?
 - 11. What caused Haman to be so angry with Mordecai that he would seek all the Jews (3:6)?
 - 12. What caused the Pur to select the thirteenth day of the last month which is Adar (3:7)?
 - 13. What caused King Ahasuerus not to inquire about Haman's accusations as was usual (3:8)?
 - 14. What caused King Ahasuerus to receive Esther the first time she entered the court (5:2)?
 - 15. What caused Esther's timing to perfectly match the timing of Haman's gallows (5:14)?
 - 16. What caused King Ahasuerus to wake, want to read, and find Mordecai's deed (6:1-3)?
 - 17. What caused Haman to enter the court early just when Ahasuerus needed a man (6:4-6)?
 - 18. What caused Haman to recommend royal treatment by another ranking officer (6:8-9)?
 - 19. What caused Haman's wise men to tell him of certain doom before the banquet (6:13-14)?
 - 20. What caused circumstances to be such that Haman was hung upon his own gallows (7:10)?
 - 21. What caused Ahasuerus to receive Esther the second time she entered the court (8:4)?
 - 22. What caused Mordecai to receive such honour that it created fear of the Jews (9:2-3)?
 - 23. What caused the Jews to name their two day festival Purim after Haman's Pur (9:26).
 - 24. What caused Esther and Mordecai to be ruling when Jerusalem needed the aid (Neh 2:6)?
 - 25. What caused the story of Esther to be recorded and preserved for 2500 years to our day?
- B. We should accept God's evil works – orphan – and exploit His gifts – beauty (Job 1:21).
- C. God is a tender sovereign: He is able to honour a captive orphan (I Sam 2:1-10; Luke 1:46-55).
- D. The Lord is known by His judgment: He takes vengeance and repays: He takes the wicked in their own nets (Job 5:8-27; Ps 7:16; 9:15-16; 10:2; 35:8; 37:12-13; 141:9-10; Pr 1:31; 5:22).

- E. Esther was practical (2:8), obedient (2:10,18,20), discreet (2:9; 5:1,4,8), wise (2:15; 4:16; 7:3-6), considerate (2:19,22), sensitive (4:4), prudent (4:11), faithful (4:16), humble (8:5), courageous (7:7; 8:2; 9:13), and joyful (9:29).
1. Esther had both great beauty and character at the same time – a true queen (Pr 11:22).
 2. Godly women will maximize character and beauty in that order (I Tim 2:9-10; I Pe 3:3-4).