

THE BOOK OF
ESTHER



A WOMAN FOR THE TIME!

- **AUTHOR** – UNKNOWN, FROM EXILE?
 - WRITTEN IN ARAMAIC, NOT HEBREW (PORTIONS OF DANIEL)
- **PURPOSE**
 - TELL A STORY IN CAPTIVITY – GOD’S HAND!
 - HISTORY BEHIND FEAST OF PURIM
 - CELEBRATE AND REMEMBER GOD

The Persian Empire



AN IMPORTANT BOOK

• MAIN TEACHINGS-

- GOD AT WORK UNSEEN
- GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY
- GOD'S CHOICE OF SERVANTS/TIMING
- OBEDIENCE...
- FAVOR

HISTORY:

- **586 BC - BABYLONIANS CONQUER JERUSALEM**
- **538 BC - BABYLON DEFEATED BY CYRUS "THE GREAT"**
- **AHASUERUS (XERXES) - PERSIA 485-465 BC**
- **ESTHER BETWEEN EZRA CH. 6 & 7**

ESTHER

God's providence among His people during . . .

Hard Times

Happy Times

	King's Banquet	Haman's Edict	Queen's Courage	God's Deliverance	Mordecai's Edict	Jews' Rejoicing	Shalom!
	Honoring the kingdom		Urging of Mordecai	Mordecai honored		Enemies destroyed	
	Honoring the new queen		Approaching the king	Haman hanged		Feast established	
	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 1-2	<i>CHAPTER</i> 3	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 4-5	<i>CHAPTERS</i> 6-7	<i>CHAPTER</i> 8	<i>CHAPTER</i> 9	<i>CHAPTER</i> 10
Circumstances	Threat and trust			Deliverance and praise			
Feasts	of the king	of the queen		of the nation			
Dates	483 BC						473 BC
Theme	The sovereign accomplishment of God's purposes through ordinary people and apparent coincidences						
Key Verses	4:12-16; 10:3						
Christ in Esther	Pictured in Esther, who was an advocate for her people, even willing to die for them						

CAST OF CHARACTERS

- **AHASUERUS / XERXES**

- KING OF PERSIAN EMPIRE 485-464 BC

- **VASHTI – CURRENT QUEEN**

- **HAMAN – HIGH RANKING OFFICIAL**

- **MORDECAI – COUSIN TO ESTHER,
RAISING HER, GOD-FEARING**

AND HADASSAH (MYRTLE)

• ORPHAN AND CAPTIVE

- TAKEN FROM HER HOMELAND
- RAISED BY HER COUSIN
- TIME OF GREAT UNREST
- DANIEL HAS PROPHESED... NOW DEAD
- SOME JEWS HAVE GONE BACK
- SOME CHOOSE TO STAY IN 'CAPTIVITY'

AN RASH KING - CH. 1

• BANQUET OF CELEBRATION

- DISPLAYED RICHES – 180 DAYS (4)
- 7 DAY ROYAL BANQUET (5)
- ROYAL WINE FLOWS (7) GOLD CUPS
- ‘DO AS YOU PLEASE’ (8)
- THE DANGER OF UNRESTRAINED PLEASURES
GLUTTONY, DRUNKENNESS, LUSTS

- In antiquity, rulers used lavish banquets to secure the loyalty of their leadership, to lay plans and strategies for ruling the nation, and for launching military campaigns. The guests included all the nation's nobles (businessmen) and political leaders, as well as the military leaders of both Persia and Media. Years before, Cyrus the Great had conquered Media and formed an alliance with the Medes. Together the Medes and Persians conquered the vast empire that was then being ruled over by Cyrus' grandson Xerxes.
- six month celebration was twofold:
 - ⇒ To plan the strategy for the Grecian and European invasions.
 - ⇒ To show the leadership, both military and political, that the empire was strong enough to launch the campaign—economically and militarily.

ANOTHER CELEBRATION

- **VASHTI AND THE ROYAL WOMEN**
 - SEPARATED FROM THE ORGY AND ABUSE
- **7TH DAY – ‘BRING THE QUEEN!’**
 - ‘ROYAL CROWN’ – DRUNKEN IDEAS...
 - ‘DISPLAY HER BEAUTY’
 - COMMON PEOPLE?

VASHTI SAYS “NO!”

- **XERXES WAS TRYING TO PLAN!**
 - QUEEN’S REFUSAL MADE HIM LOOK WEAK
 - ‘WRATH BURNED’ (12)
 - CONSULTS THE ‘ADVISORS’ – BAD EXAMPLE!
 - VASHTI BANNED
 - GET A **NEW QUEEN!**
 - **STAR SEARCH....**

THE STORY UNFOLDS... CH. 2

- **VIRGINS SOUGHT... (2-3)**
 - GOD AT WORK UNSEEN
 - HEGAI BECOMES A KEY PERSON...
- **MORDECAI – IN SUSANNA**