

Cover to Cover: From Genesis to Maps
Sermon # 17 – “Esther”
September 23, 2007

The Book of Esther is one of only two bible books that bear a woman’s name. (The other is Ruth.)

The Book of Esther is a book of history. (It’s the last of the historical books of the Old Testament.) Chronologically, it fits in between Ezra chapter 6 and chapter 7.

The Book of Esther is the story of the Jews that did not return from the captivity (and how God providentially protected them.)

Matthew Henry: “*God’s name is never mentioned in the Book of Esther, but His finger turns every page.*”

The story of Esther is a drama.

The Cast of Characters

- **Ahasuerus** (Hebrew) / **Xerxes** (Persian) – The King of Persia
- **Vashti** – His wife, the Queen
- **Mordecai** – A Jew that had survived the captivity and taken on the responsibility of raising his young female cousin.
- **Haman** – A Persian that hated the Jews.
- **Hadassah** (Hebrew) / **Esther** (Persian), meaning “Star” – The young female cousin raised by Mordecai.

Outline of the Book of Esther

Chapter 1 – THE STAGE IS SET

- **King Xerxes...**
 - Ruled a vast empire. v. 1
 - Possessed great ambition and a lust for power. v. 3-4
 - Had a weakness for strong drink. v. 5, 7-8, 10a
 - Suffered from a moral deficiency. v. 10-12

- **Vashti...**
 - Seemingly was cooperative and supportive up to this point. v. 9
 - Now courageously put her foot down and took a stand. v. 12a.
- **The Outcome:**
 - The king responded with anger. v. 12b
 - The nobles responded with alarm. v. 17-18
 - The queen was quickly deposed.

Chapter 2 – THE HEROINE TAKES CENTER STAGE

- The king seeks a new wife by holding a beauty pageant. v. 1-4
- Esther and Mordecai are introduced in the storyline. v. 5-7
- Esther enters the competition and goes into intense training.
 - Mordecai advises his young cousin. v. 10
 - Hegai serves as Esther’s personal trainer and beauty consultant. v. 8-9, 12
- Esther wins the crown and becomes the new “Miss Persia” v. 15b, 17

Chapter 3 – THE VILLAIN APPEARS

- Haman is put in a position of authority
- Haman plots a Jewish Holocaust. v. 5-6, 13

Chapters 4-10 – THE HEROINE COMES TO THE RESCUE

- Mordecai informs Esther of the plot and persuades her to help. 4:12-14.
- Esther agrees to approach the king on behalf of her people. 4:15-16.
- Esther exposes Haman’s plot to the king. 7:3-6.
- Haman is hanged on the gallows he built for Mordecai’s execution. 7:9-10.
- What could have been a day of death for the Jews became a day of victory. 8:8, 11, 16-17.