

INTRO REMARKS:

XVII. Esther

A. Introduction

1. Title: "Esther" in Hebrew and LXX

✠ The conclusion of Esther:

Esther 10:2-3 all the accomplishments of his authority and strength, and the full account of the greatness of **Mordecai** to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia? ³ For **Mordecai** the Jew was second only to King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews and in favor with his many kinsmen, one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.

2. Date of Events: From c. 483 B. C. (1:3) to c. 473 B. C. (2:16-c. 479 B.C.; 3:7-c. 474 B.C.) [MSB, 685; CBCOT, 70]

¹ Notes prepared with help of The Master's Seminary BI 501 Bible Survey syllabus.

3. Canonical Position: Between “Ecclesiastes” and “Daniel,” associated with the Feast of Purim (9:20-32).

B. Outline

Preservation through Providence

1. The Threat to God’s People (1-4)
2. The Triumph of God’s People (5-10)

C. The Major Themes

1. God – Though No Mention of God’s Name

2. No Mention of Palestine, Jerusalem, the Temple, the Law, Prayer

3. The Reversal of Human Plans (4, 6, 7, 8, 9)

✠ Vashti to Esther 1:1 – 2:18

✠ The reversal of Haman & Mordecai 2:19 – 7:10

✠ Calamity and genocide for the Jews is reversed to prosperity and celebration for the Jews in 8:1 – 10:3

✠ Vashti to Eshter 4:13

✠ 6 – a great reversal. Haman thinks ‘who else would the king want to honor’ above me ?

✠ 7 – the gallows intended for Mordecai, used for Hammon

✠ 8 – the decree to exterminate the Jews is supplanted by one to protect

✠ 9 – Jews gained mastery over those who hated them – for the Jews & the book, this was the great reversal

4. The Jews (2:5; 3:4, 6, 10, 13; 4:3, 7, 13, 14, 16; 5:13; 6:10-13; 8:1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17; 9:1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31; 10:3)
 - a. The Hatred/Fear of the Jews (3:5-6; 6:13; 8:13)

Esther 9:16 the rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces assembled, to defend their lives and rid themselves of their enemies, and kill 75,000 of those who hated them; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

- ✠ Esther reminds us that you do not try to start a fight with the Jewish people:

Gen 12:3 the one who curses you I will curse

Romans 11:28-29 From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for [the Gentiles'] sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; 29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

- b. The Deliverance of the Jews (4:14; 8- 9)

5. The Major Human Characters

- a. King Ahasuerus: impressionable; blessed by the people of Abraham; a bystander who experiences, as the world would call it, “dumb luck,” but as we understand it factually: providence graced him to be, unbeknownst to him, to be blessed of God for blessing the Israelites

- b. Haman- vindictive; crafty; proud; of the seed of Satan, seeking to destroy the line through whom the Messiah would come

- c. Mordecai- dedicated to the welfare of the Jews; dependent upon God's grace, favor, & promise to the people of Abraham

- d. Esther- beautiful; courageous; flawed; not prudent; in need of God's grace

- D. Purpose: While the physical seed of Abraham was not faithful to Yahweh, they were still protected by God from Gentile attack.

✠ Though the physical seed of Abraham is unfaithful-God is faithful

Jeremiah 31:35-37 Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for light by day And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The Lord of hosts is His name: ³⁶ "If this fixed order departs From before Me," declares the Lord, "Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever." ³⁷ Thus says the Lord, "If the heavens above can be measured And the foundations of the earth searched out below, Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel For all that they have done," declares the Lord.

✠ Behind Esther is the Abrahamic covenant.

E. Bibliography

1. Exegetical: Bush, *Ruth, Esther* (WBC)
2. English Interpretation: Baldwin, *Esther* (TOTC), Whitcomb, *Esther* (EBC), Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther* (NAC).
3. Expositional: Luter & Davis, *God Behind the Seen*

F. Preaching/Teaching Esther

- Teach it, asking, "What does this teach us about God?"
- God is the hero of Esther
- Some great world history happening, which secular scholars even agree with