



ESTHER

Study Guide by Pastor Keith Hamblen



2012

Calvary Bible Church
3180 West Elm Street
Lima, Ohio 45805

“such a time as this” (4:14)!
Esther 1-2

Monday—prayerfully read Esther 1:1-8, and answer the following.

1. Give the geographical range of Ahasuerus’ kingdom, and give the number of provinces within this kingdom (1:1). _____

2. Spell the name of the king of the Medo-Persian empire from memory, and the name of his palace (1:2). _____

3. When did King Ahasuerus make a feast, and for how long was this feast (1:3-4)? _____

4. Give the number of days the king made an (apparently) “grand finale” feast; and, list the different colors used in decoration (1:5-6). _____
5. The drinking at the feast was according to the law, which (apparently) meant that no one was _____ to drink, but that the drinking should be according to every man’s _____ (1:8).
6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps a verse to displace worry such as I Peter 5:7 or Proverbs 3:5-6.

Tuesday—prayerfully read Esther 1:9-15, and answer the following.

1. Who made a royal feast for the women, and where did she make it (1:9)? _____

2. On which day are we told the king's heart was "merry with wine," what were the seven called who served in the presence of the king, and what were they asked to do (1:10-11)?

3. The seven princes of Persia and Media, who "saw the king's face," and "sat the first in the kingdom," were what kind of people (give two qualities) (1:13-14)?

4. Give two of the names of the seven wise men who sat before the king (your two favorite names) (1:14).

5. It seems to me that "according to law" in verse 15 refers to "natural law" (meaning "common sense" law and "self-evident" truth), as I consider verse 13 and the fact that this situation probably was unprecedented (2:5). What do you think?

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps a verse to displace discouragement such as I Samuel 30:6 or Psalm 42:5.

Wednesday—prayerfully read Esther 1:16-22, and answer the following.

1. What was so serious about Vashti's refusal to come at the king's command (1:16-17)?

2. What is the KJV's phrase in 1:18 for "social unrest"?

3. What two-fold punishment was given to Vashti (1:19)?

4. What was the intent of the king's decree (1:20)? _____

5. What seems to have been the heart of the decree, and how was the decree written so that everyone would understand it (1:22)?

6. Memorize a portion of **scripture** (1:22?), and take it with you for the day!

Thursday—enjoy reading Esther 2:1-8, and answer the following.

1. What do you suppose Ahasuerus “remembered” regarding Vashti, in light of verses 2:1-2? _____

2. How wide-ranging was this search for “fair young virgins,” where were they to be gathered, and unto whose custody were they to be placed (2:3)? _____

3. What was the standard by which the maiden was to be selected to be queen, and what do you suppose this included (2:4)?

4. What was Esther's other name, who brought her up as his own, what was his family relationship to her, what was the name of their tribe, and in what city apparently did she grow up (2:5-7)?

5. What can you apply to your life from this section (or so far in the story)? _____

(alternate question for those truly frustrated by this question, meaning those who thought about it for at least 60 seconds)
Name the king of Judah who was king when Judah was carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar (586 B.C.). _____

6. Memorize a portion of **scripture** (2:4 or perhaps Phil.4:4 which helps us rejoice in the Lord), and take it with you for the day!

Friday—prayerfully read Esther 2:9-16, and answer the following.

1. Who pleased whom in 2:9, and what three, or four, things did he give her (2:8-9)? _____

2. What had Esther not told, and what did Mordecai do every day (2:10-11)? _____

3. Every maiden was given whatever she wanted to take with her when she went in unto the king (which would give clues to the king as to her personality and wisdom); what did Esther take with her, and what does this tell us of her “coachability” (teachability) (2:13-15)? _____

4. What did Esther obtain from all who “bumped into” her (2:15)? _____

5. Give something you can apply to your life in this section.

6. Memorize a portion of **scripture** (2:15), and take it with you for the day!

Saturday—prayerfully read Esther 2:17-23, and answer the following.

1. What two or three things did Esther obtain from Ahasuerus (2:17)? _____

2. What was the name of the feast (apparently) given by Ahasuerus upon Esther’s being chosen as queen (2:18)?

3. Evaluate Esther’s upbringing in light of 2:20. _____

4. Where did Mordecai sit, who were the co-conspirators against the king, and what was their “job” (2:21)? _____

5. Give something you can apply to your life in this section.

6. Memorize a portion of **scripture** (2:20), and take it with you for the day!

Sunday—prayerfully review Esther 1-2.

Memorize a portion of **scripture**, and take “it” with you for the day!

**“such a time as this” (4:14)!
Esther 3-5**

Overview of Esther (“star”)

Theme: Providence! the deliverance of the Jews through Esther

Outline: 1-2 Setting, 3-9 Thwarting of Haman’s plot, 9 (vs.20-32)-10 Purim and Mordecai’s greatness

Message to CBC: “... with the well-advised is wisdom”

(Pro.13:10); “... come to the kingdom for such a time as this” (4:14)! “Now it came to pass [providence versus fate]” (1:1)

Key verses: 4:14, 16; Pro.13:10

Commentary: *Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther*, H.A. Ironside, 1913

Place: Jerusalem, Shushan (Persia)

Time: 521-509 B.C. (Scofield)

Monday—prayerfully read Esther 3:1-7, and answer the following.

1. Who (apparently) were commanded by the king to bow and reverence Haman (3:1-2)? _____

2. What had Mordecai told the king’s servants when they asked him, “Why transgresses thou the king’s commandment?” (3:4)? _____
3. What made Haman full of wrath (3:5)? _____

4. What was not enough to satisfy Haman’s wrath (3:6)? _____

5. What year of Ahasuerus’ reign was it now in the story apparently (3:7), and what year (in his reign) was it that he put away Vashti (1:3), and what year did he take Esther to be his queen (2:16); and so, for how many years had Esther been queen when the Haman crisis began? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps a verse from the great one-liner series of I Thess.5 such as v.16 “Rejoice evermore.”

Tuesday—prayerfully read Esther 3:8-15, and answer the following.

1. What two reasons did Haman give the king for destroying this “certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people” (3:8-9)? _____

2. Give the full “name” of “the Jews’ enemy” (3:11).

3. How many months “to the day” would there be from the announcement to kill the Jews (3:12) to the day of the killing (3:13)? _____
4. “And the _____ and _____ sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was _____” (3:15).
5. Since we know “the end of the story,” what lesson could we learn from this part of the story should such a decree go out against us today? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps a verse from the great one-liner series of I Thess.5 such as v.17 “Pray without ceasing.”

Wednesday—prayerfully read Esther 4:1-9, and answer the following.

1. From reading this section, do you think Esther knew what had been decreed by Haman (and Ahasuerus) before Mordecai told her, and why or why not? _____

2. What could a person not do regarding the king’s gate (4:2)?

3. What was Queen Esther “exceedingly,” and what did Mordecai refuse from her (4:4)? _____
4. Who went forth to Mordecai, to the street of the city outside the king’s gate (4:6)? _____
5. What did Mordecai command (“charge”) Esther to do (4:8)?

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps I Thess.5:18 “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

Thursday—enjoy reading Esther 4:10-17, and answer the following.

1. Only which two groups of people would be spared if they went into the king “into the inner court” (4:11)? _____

2. Who obviously would know now (besides Mordecai) that Esther was a Jew (4:13 with v.10)? _____
3. What was Mordecai’s faith regarding the Jewish people which becomes obvious in 4:14? _____

4. Quote the most famous line in 4:14 (and perhaps the most famous line in the whole book of Esther). _____

5. Quote probably the second most famous line in the book of Esther found in 4:16. _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps I Thess.5:19
“Quench not the Spirit.”

Friday—prayerfully read Esther 5:1-6, and answer the following.

1. Where was the royal throne located (5:1-2)? _____

2. What same person do you suppose both the king and Esther were thinking about when the king saw Esther standing before him uninvited, both knowing her “employment” could be terminated? _____

3. How did the king address Esther (with what title), and what was her initial request (5:3-4)? _____

4. What was this initial banquet called by the king (5:6)? _____

5. What was Haman to make for this banquet (this question is in honor of those men who think they are incapable of making anything, and it probably is KJV-specific) (5:5)? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps I Thess.5:20
“Despise not prophesying [preaching and prophecy].”

Saturday—prayerfully read Esther 5:7-14, and answer the following.

1. What was Esther's second request (the first being to come to this initial banquet) (5:7-8)? _____

2. How did Haman manifest symptoms of being bi-polar (going between extreme highs and lows emotionally) (5:9)?

3. What two good qualities did Haman demonstrate (5:10)?

4. What did Haman do right as a husband, and what did he do wrong (5:11-12)? _____

5. Evaluate (discuss a little): should Haman have listened to his wife in 5:14)? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps I Thess.5:21 "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

**“such a time as this” (4:14)!
Esther 6-8**

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may [regard with pleasure] wondrous things out of thy law” (Ps.119:18)!

Remember to pray for Spirit-filling to understand and enjoy this study (Lk.11:13)!

Overview of Esther (“star”)

Theme: Providence! the deliverance of the Jews through Esther; God providentially preserves (and matures) His people to fulfill His promises

Outline: 1-2 Setting, 3-9 Thwarting of Haman’s plot, 9 (vs.20-32)-10 Purim and Mordecai’s greatness

Message to CBC: “... with the well-advised is wisdom” (Pro.13:10); “... come to the kingdom for such a time as this” (4:14)! “Now it came to pass [providence versus fate]” (1:1)

Key verses: 4:14, 16; Pro.13:10

Commentary: *Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther*, H.A. Ironside, 1913

Place: Jerusalem, Shushan (Persia)

Time: 521-509 B.C. (Scofield)

Monday—prayerfully read Esther 6:1-6, and answer the following.

1. What did the king command to be brought to be read to him, apparently because he couldn’t sleep (6:1)? _____

2. Name the two chamberlains “who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus” (6:2). _____
3. What good leadership quality did Ahasuerus demonstrate in 6:3? _____

4. Why had Haman come to speak unto the king (6:4)?

5. What weakness of Haman was revealed in 6:6? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Proverbs 27:2, “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.”

Tuesday—prayerfully read Esther 6:7-14, and answer the following.

1. How many distinct things did Haman recommend be done for “the man whom the king delighteth to honor” (6:7-9)?

2. Where was Mordecai known to sit (6:10)? _____

3. What do you suppose Mordecai was thinking as Haman led him through the city? _____

4. With whom did Haman share his grief (6:13)? _____

5. What prophecy did Haman’s wife and his wise men give him (6:13)? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Proverbs 16:18, “Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”

Wednesday—prayerfully read Esther 7:1-10, and answer the following.

1. The first banquet to which Esther invited the king and Haman was identified in 5:4-5, and the second was identified in 7:1-2. Give the name of both banquets. _____

2. What two things does Esther request of the king at this second banquet (7:3)? _____

3. From the text, it appears that Haman was not afraid until when (7:6)? _____

4. Where did the king first go in his anger, and what signaled Haman's end (7:7-8)? _____

5. When was the king's wrath pacified (7:10)? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Obadiah 10, "For *thy* violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever."

Thursday—enjoy reading Esther 8:1-17, and answer the following.

1. What became known, apparently for the first time, and what did Ahasuerus do upon learning this new piece of information (8:1-2)? _____

2. Why did Esther again approach the king, again (apparently) taking her life into her hands (8:3-6)? _____

3. What did the king authorize Esther and Mordecai to write in the king's name (8:7-9)? _____

4. Quote the most famous line in 4:14 (and perhaps the most famous line in the whole book of Esther). _____

5. Quote probably the second most famous line in the book of Esther found in 4:16. _____
6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps I Thessalonians 5:19 “Quench not the Spirit.”

Friday-Saturday—prayerfully read Esther 8:1-17, and answer the following.

Joel Arnold’s five principles of “rightly dividing the word of God” (hermeneutics) are (1) read for understanding (what is it saying, what are the facts, cognitive-knowledge over affective-feelings), (2) context is king (look at the scriptures on both sides of the text under consideration), (3) see the big picture (how does this fit in God’s overall plan), (4) be active (take notes, summarize and outline), and (5) “bridge two worlds” (identify timeless principles and make applications for today’s living). The following questions ask you to practice these five principles on this chapter.

1. What is the “understanding” (“knowledge”) of this chapter? Perhaps to answer this you could simply tell what happened in one sentence. _____

2. What is the immediate context of this chapter? (Give where this chapter fits into the story by looking at the chapters on either side of it.) _____

3. How does this chapter (or entire book of Esther) fit in God’s overall plan? _____

4. Outline this chapter into three or four events (points).

5. How does this apply?

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Esther 8:16-17:
“The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honor [because they believed the word of the king].”

Sunday—prayerfully review Esther 6-8. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps a verse from the great one-liner series of I Thessalonians 5 such as v.22 “Abstain from all appearance of evil.”

**“such a time as this” (4:14)!
Esther 9-10**

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may [regard with pleasure] wondrous things out of thy law” (Ps.119:18)!

Remember to pray for Spirit-filling to understand and enjoy this study (Lk.11:13)!

Monday—prayerfully read Esther 9:1-5, and answer the following.

1. “Read for understanding”—give two facts of this section. (Joel Arnold taught that our first purpose in studying the scriptures is to understand, and it is also good and appropriate to seek refreshment and encouragement as we “daily meditate”!)

2. “Context is king!” What is the story line as chapter 8 ends?

3. “Think big”—think in terms of how this story fits in with the big picture (metanarrative) of progressive revelation (which is the over-arching story beginning at creation and the fall, progressing through the flood and then Abraham, Moses and the Law, the captivities, the death/burial/resurrection of Christ, Pentecost and the church, and then consummation of it all summarized in the Revelation). Where does this story fit in the “big picture”? _____

4. “Be active”—take notes, including at least one or more of the following: summarize, write down something you learned (perhaps the theme of that section or something you never noticed before), outline, mark and look up words (please give a sample of your “activity”). _____

5. “Bridge two worlds”—identify the timeless truths that speak equally to the world of Esther’s day and to our world today. “You haven’t finished interpreting a passage until you make personal application (to your world).” _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Proverbs 1:5, “A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.”

Tuesday—prayerfully read Esther 9:6-12, and answer the following.

1. How many men did the Jews destroy in Shushan the palace, and who else were slain (9:6-10)? _____

2. Who was identified as “the enemy of the Jews” (9:10)?

3. What do you suppose Mordecai was thinking as Haman led him through the city? _____
4. What did the Jews not touch (9:10)? _____

5. What leader followed up with Esther to check on her mission (9:12)? _____
6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Proverbs 1:6, “To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.”

Wednesday—prayerfully read Esther 9:13-19, and answer the following.

1. Summarize these verses (9:13-19). _____

2. What fact is repeated at least three times (9:15-16, 10)?

3. How many total were killed in the city of Shushan (both days) and in the all the king’s provinces (9:12, 15, 16)? _____

4. What happened on the day following the completion of the Jew’s defending themselves (9:17-19)? _____

5. What practical willingness do we need today to have regarding the declared enemies of God’s people (cf. 9:13-16)? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Proverbs 1:7, “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Thursday—enjoy reading Esther 9:20-25, and answer the following.

1. What was written regarding Mordecai in 9:20 that could (and does) lead some to see him as the writer of this book (Esther)?

2. What did Mordecai establish officially (9:20-22)? _____

3. What was turned into a good day? _____
4. To “codify” means to “put into law.” Which verse in this section summarizes Mordecai’s codification of their practice?

5. What seems to be included in Mordecai's decree in 9:24-25?

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Proverbs 1:8, "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother."

Friday—prayerfully read Esther 9:26-32, and answer the following.

1. What were these days called, and what is the irony of this feast being so named (since the book of Esther is known for providence)? _____

2. For what two groups did the Jews accept this codification (see Thursday #4) of the events of this book (9:27)? _____

3. How do these verses illustrate the great governmental principle embodied in our *Declaration of Independence* in the words "We the people," especially verses 26-27 and 31? _____

4. Who apparently ratified (confirmed with authority) Mordecai's proclamation (9:29)? (Extra credit—factor in 10:3 and Mordecai's being "next unto king Ahasuerus".) _____

5. What words accompanied "this second letter of Purim" (9:30)? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Proverbs 1:9, "For they *shall be* an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

Saturday—prayerfully read Esther 10:1-3, and answer the following.

1. Why do you suppose the Holy Spirit included the fact at this point regarding the king's taxes ("laid a tribute")? _____

2. What (do you suppose) is the antecedent of "his" in 10:2?

3. Where are further details regarding Mordecai's advancement to be found (10:2)? _____
4. What could be the implication in 10:3 that Mordecai was "accepted of the multitude of his brethren"? _____

5. The answer to the question is: "by seeking the wealth of his people." What is the question? _____

6. Take a verse with you for the day, perhaps Proverbs 1:10, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

Sunday—prayerfully review Esther 9-10.