

3. It was a time of strong drink in the nation-- Esther 1:7-8.
 - * We are slowly becoming a nation of drunkards and alcoholics. We keep seeing the danger but doing nothing about it. Proverbs 20:1; 23:21; 23:29-35
4. It was a time of immodesty and debauchery-- Esther 1-2
 - a. It was a time when the King demanded Vashti the Queen to come before the leaders of 127 provinces and display her body before their drunken lustful eyes (1:10-11).
 - b. The Queen had the moral courage to dare to do right! 1 Timothy 2:6-10;
5. It was a time when the sanctify of marriage was at a low ebb.
 - a. The King was willing to get rid of the Queen for no fault of hers. (Esther 1:19)
 - b. Now one of every two marriages end in divorce. (Mt.19:3-9)
6. It was a time when human life was cheap.
 - a. The leaders were willing to sign a decree to have 2,000,000 Jews killed, because one of them would not bow and tip his hat to Haman, a wicked scoundrel (Esther 3:9, 13).
 - b. Life today is cheap. Murders escalating wildly. Theft and hate escalating. 'Aborting on demand' supported by the news and entertainment media.
7. It was a time that needed the good woman Esther (4:13-16)
 - a. Her silence would have been sin. She found herself in a responsible position and she had to do what she could.
 - * A TIME that needs good people-- good people in leadership in the nations-- in business-- in education-- in communications-- and in the home.

CONCLUSION:

"For such a time as this" what kind of disciples do you think the Lord needs? Are you one of that kind? Are you one the Lord can count on and depend on?



Walking Thru The Bible ESTHER

INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: It is considered possible that Mordecai was the author of the book ("And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both nigh and far," Esther 9:20). The Hebrew is similar to that of Ezra and Nehemiah.

RECIPIENTS: The book seems to be especially designed for the Jews of the dispersion in the various parts of the Persian empire (9:20). (See Purpose)

DATE: The events described in the book begin with the third year (1:3) of the reign of Ahasuerus and closes with his twelfth year (3:7). This was approximately 483-474 BC. Esther became queen in 479 BC (2:16).

The Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther is also known in secular history as Xerxes, king of Persia (485-465 BC). He is famous for his expedition against Greece and how the Greeks defeated his tremendous fleet at the battle of Salamis in 480 BC. Historians tells us that this was one of the world's most important battles.

From parallel passages in the works of Herodotus we find that the feast described in the first chapter of Esther was the occasion for planning the campaign against Greece, the third year of his reign.

Esther replaced Vashti in the seventh year of his reign (Esther 2:16) when Xerxes returned from his disastrous defeat.

PURPOSE OF THE BOOK: To show God's providential care for His people even in the dispersion; also to show the origin of the Jewish feast of Purim (3:6-7; 9:26-28).

THEME: The providential deliverance of the Jews from destruction through the agency of Esther and Mordecai. Esther is like Joseph and David. God had each one hidden away for His purpose. When the day came, He brought them to the front to work out His plan.

KEY VERSE: The key verse of the book is Esther 4:14:

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14)

KEY WORD: "The Jews" (43 times)

Note: Although God's name is not mentioned in the book of Esther, every page is full of God who hides Himself behind every word. Matthew Henry, the great commentator, says, "If the name of God is not there, His finger is." It is called "The Romance of Providence." God has a part in all the events of human life.

OUTLINE OF ESTHER

- I. ESTHER BECOMES QUEEN OF PERSIA -- Ch. 1-2
 - Ch. 1 Queen Vashti displeases the king and is dethroned.
 - Ch. 2 Esther is selected and made queen.
- II. HAMAN'S PLOT TO KILL THE JEWS IS DEFEATED -- Ch. 3-8
 - Ch. 3 Haman plots to destroy the Jews
 - Ch. 4 Esther promises to intercede for her people
 - Ch. 5 Esther secures the favor of the king and his presence at her banquet for him and Haman.
 - Ch. 6 Mordecai is honored and Haman humbled.
 - Ch. 7 A second banquet foils Haman's plot and he is hanged.
 - Ch. 8 Mordecai is promoted to Haman's position and the Jews are authorized by the king to defend themselves against their enemies.
- III. THE DELIVERANCE AND THE FEAST OF PURIM -- Ch. 9-10
 - Ch. 9 The Jews are victorious over their enemies and the Feast of Purim is established.
 - Ch. 10 The greatness of Mordecai during the remainder of Ahasuerus' reign.

Note: This is the true story of a little Jewish orphan girl becoming Queen of Persia. At this time the Persian throne controlled over half the then-known world.

Esther was the Queen of the famous Xerxes for thirteen years. No doubt she lived for many years into the reign of her stepson, Artaxerxes. Under this king, Nehemiah rebuilt Jerusalem. It was Esther's marriage to this famous Persian monarch that gave the Jews enough prestige at this court that made it possible for Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem with official help (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

"FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS"

Esther

Introduction:

1. Esther 4:13-16. The background story of the events in Susa.
 - a. Ahasuerus (481 BC) was king of Persia.
 - b. God's people Israel were in the provinces of Persia.
 - c. The King had the leaders of 127 provinces to come to a celebration that lasted 187 days-- more than six months.
 - (1 It was a feast of drinking and sin.
 - (2 The King sends for Vashti to come and display her beauty. She refuses because of her modesty.
 - d. The King accepts the suggestion to reject her and choose another to be queen in her stead.
 - (1 Esther, a young Jewess, is eventually chosen.
2. Her cousin (uncle?) Mordecai had offended Haman a high official in the King's court. By trickery Haman gets the King to sign a decree that all the Jews should be put to death.
 - a. A decree issued by a Persian monarch was unalterable.
 - b. God stepped in and in a providential way delivered His people from the decree that Christ might come of their seed as promised (Gen. 12:1-3).
3. This story is written for our benefit (Romans 15:4) and shows God's providential care for his people.

"FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS" Esther 4:14

Mordecai thought Esther had come to the throne "for such a time as this."
What sort of a time was it?

1. It was a time when the King and the leaders of the nation were selfish, wicked, and immoral.
 - a. Sin was in the saddle so to speak.
 - b. "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." (Proverbs 29:2)
 - * What about the "leaders" (?) of today? What kind of a role-model are the politicians, sports and entertainment figures today?
 - * What about the morals and philosophies of those molding and shaping the minds of our youth? (The media, the educators, etc.)
2. It was a time of worldly pomp and show (Esther 4:13-16 and especially 1:3-8).
 - a. It was a time when the leaders of 127 provinces recklessly took 6 months vacation for wickedness and sin.
 - b. They neglected the nation, its welfare, and their homes.
 - * Today our nation is neglecting to preserve the fountains of righteousness in our nation: "Prayer" outlawed from schools; "homosexuality" paraded as a civil rights issue instead of sin; the murder of innocent babies legalized!
2 Timothy 3:1-5; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.