

EXAMINING ESTHER (Esther 1:1-3)

* Is there much personal value in studying the Old Testament?

I. AN OVERVIEW OF THE BACKGROUND TO "ESTHER"

A. The MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS of this Book.

1. The **TITLE** of this book is _____, named after its major human character.
2. The **AUTHOR** of this book is _____, though several names are suggested.
3. The **THEME** of this book exalts the _____.
4. The **PLOT** of this book centers around the _____.
5. The **CHARACTERS** of this book include a Persian king named _____, a beautiful queen named _____, a wise Jew named _____, and his dazzling cousin named _____.
6. The **UNIQUENESS** of this book is that the name of _____ is never mentioned, though His hand is ever present.
7. The **GENRE** of the book is _____ of the highest quality.
8. The **KEY VERSE** of this book is _____.
9. The **PURPOSES** of the book are to explain...
 - a. God's _____ for His _____, even when they were outside of the Promised Land because of their _____.
 - b. How God can and does _____ to accomplish His plan and will.
 - c. How the Feast of _____ began and why it is still celebrated today.

B. The HISTORICAL SETTING of this Book. (1:1- 3)

1. The events in Esther begin in the _____ year of the reign of Ahasuerus.

* Who is Ahasuerus referring to?

* When did this all occur?

2. The geographical setting for this story centers in the royal palace of _____, in the country of _____.

* Where is this today?

C. The BIBLICAL CONTEXT of this Book.

- * What events had transpired with the nation of Israel leading up to this situation?

D. The SCRIPTURAL LESSONS from this Book.

You can expect to learn about ...

1. The _____ of God.
2. The _____ of Israel.
3. The _____ of man.
4. The problem of _____.
5. The perverseness of _____.
6. The poisonous nature of _____ and _____.
7. The personal value of _____, _____, and _____ to the Lord.

- Some closing thoughts:

II. AN OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF "ESTHER"

A. THE PERSONAL SELECTION OF ESTHER (1-2)

- 1. The dethroning of Vashti. (1)**
- 2. The deciding on Esther. (2:1-18)**
- 3. The discovery by Mordecai. (2:19-23)**

B. THE DIABOLICAL INTENTION OF HAMAN (3-4)

- 1. Haman's evil conspiracy. (3)**
- 2. Mordecai's great concern. (4:1-3)**

C. THE COURAGEOUS INTERCESSION OF ESTHER (4:4-5:15)

- 1. Her initial reaction to the news. (4:4)**
- 2. Her willing response to Uncle Mordecai. (4:5-17)**
- 3. Her unusual request at the banquet. (5)**

D. THE DIVINE PRESERVATION OF ISRAEL (6:9-19)

- 1. The magnifying of Mordecai. (6)**
- 2. The hanging of Haman. (7)**
- 3. The decree of Ahasuerus. (8)**
- 4. The defeat of the enemy. (9:1-19)**

E. THE JEWISH INAUGURATION OF PURIM (9:20-10:3)

- 1. The feast of Purim instituted. (9:20-32)**
- 2. The honor of Mordecai recognized. (10:1-3)**