

# The BOOK of ESTHER



## California Kids Camp 2009 Teen Workbook

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# Preface




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The book of Esther is an amazing book to study! The name of God is not mentioned, even once, in the book of Esther. This has led some to question its place in the scripture. Others say it is simply a nice, un-inspired story, as in the following quote: -- "Esther is more purely a historical book than any other in Scripture... direct religious teaching is wholly absent from it... the main scope is simply to give an account of the circumstances under which the feast of Purim was instituted." (The Speaker's Commentary)

But we know from our early Sunday School days that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim 3:15,16) The book of Esther certainly provides many, many lessons for us. The wisdom of Mordecai, and amazing courage of Esther have many lessons for us in our walk to the Kingdom today. And even though we don't literally *see* God in our lives, we learn through the story of Esther that He is there, working through every day, every moment, to accomplish His plan with us, and with the earth.

We pray that God will guide your study of this wonderful book, and that when you are finished, you too will clearly see how the book of Esther is so obviously divinely inspired, and a very necessary part of God's Word!

You will see the following symbols next to some of the questions in the workbook:

-  Bible Marking – You should note your answer in your Bible along with any cross references
-  Advanced Question – These questions take a bit more study, and may require extra lined paper.
-  Thought Question – There is not necessarily a right or wrong answer to these questions.

# Projects...

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Choose **ONE** of the following projects to complete before you come to camp.

1) In your own wide-margin Bible, Bible Mark all the types in Esther. (You will be learning about these as you go throughout the workbook). Make use of tables to compare the similarities between characters and events in Esther and their counterparts (God, Jesus, the saints, the Kingdom, etc.) Include references to other scripture passages that you will learn as you go through the workbook. Make photocopies of the pages from your Bible and hand them in as your project. You should also Bible Mark any other helpful points or references that you have noticed in your Bible study. This project will require some real effort and should take about 3-5 hours.

2) The book of Esther introduces the feast of Purim which is still celebrated today. There are other feasts celebrated by the Jews. Make a timeline showing when the following feasts were celebrated during the year. Your timeline should include the dates of each feast (month & year), the Jewish names of the months and their modern equivalents:

- Passover/Unleavened Bread
- Firstfruits
- Pentecost/Feast of Weeks
- Day of Atonement
- Tabernacles/Booths
- Purim

Choose four of the above feasts to research. Provide one page on each feast, describing:

- a) Where in the Bible the feast is described
- b) How God asked it to be celebrated
- c) What lessons it taught (and why it was instituted)
- d) If and how the Jews celebrate it today.

3) Essay (Ways of Providence) – As noted in the Preface, the name of God is not mentioned even once in the book of Esther. This has led some to question its place in the scripture. Others relegate it to the position of just a nice story, as in the following quote: -- "*Esther is more purely a historical book than any other in Scripture... direct religious teaching is wholly absent from it... the main scope is simply to give an account of the circumstances under which the feast of Purim was instituted.*" (The Speaker's Commentary)

Write an essay (approx. 3 pages) proving why the opinion in the above quote is false. Your essay should explain how God is seen and taught in the book of Esther. As well, you should describe several key first principles that are taught in the book of Esther, and how they are taught. Finally, your essay should reference two or three other bible stories where God works invisibly behind the scenes to bring about his will.

# Chapter 1

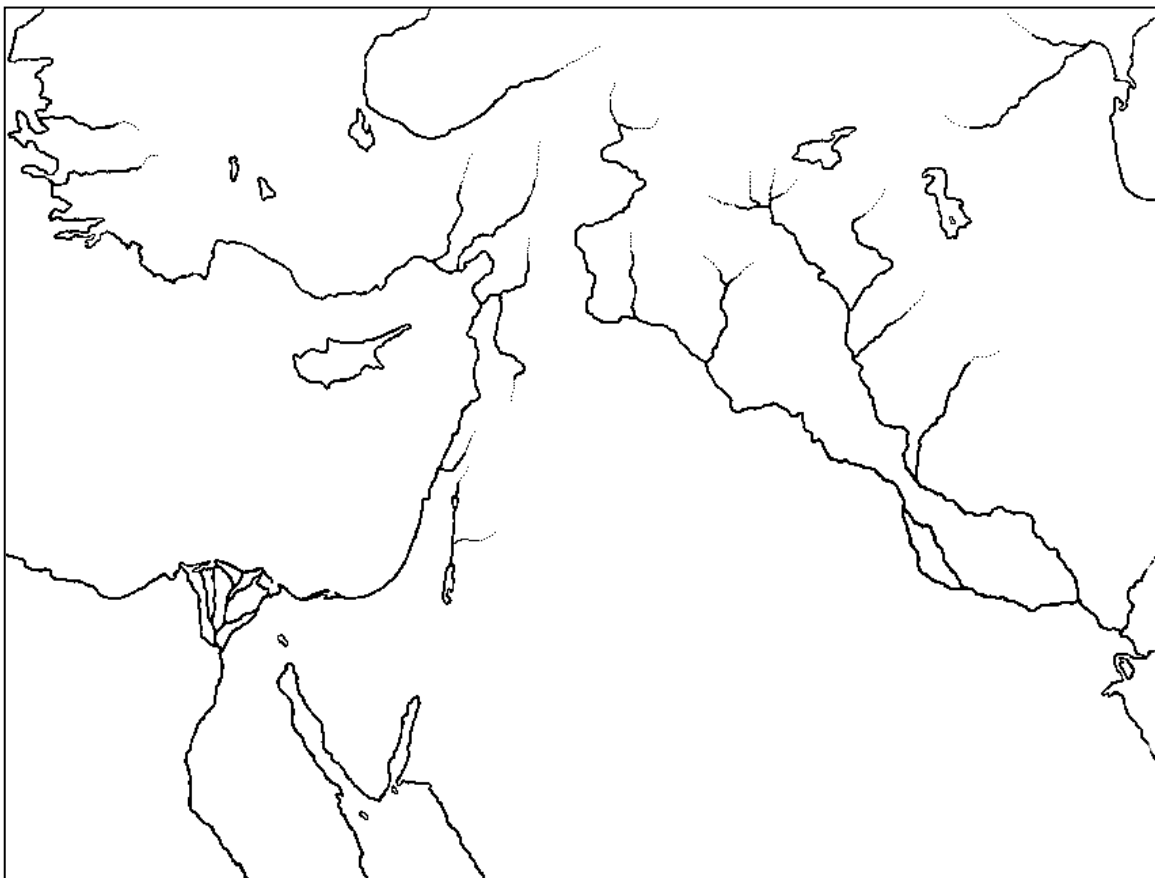
## VASHTI DETHRONED

Locate the following cities on the map below:

- Shushan
- Babylon
- Jerusalem

In what modern day country would Shushan be found? \_\_\_\_\_

How far was it from Jerusalem to Shushan? \_\_\_\_\_



Shushan was the summer residence of the king. Look up the word Shushan in a concordance, or Bible Dictionary. What does it mean?

Where else in the Bible (outside of Esther) is the city of Shushan mentioned?

From those verses what two other Bible characters had spent time in the city?

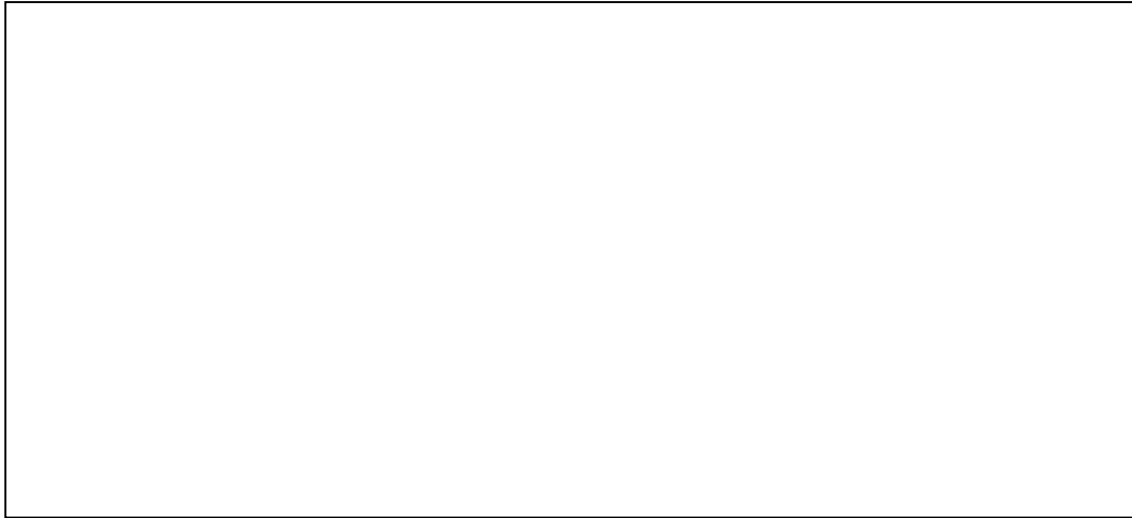
What province was Shushan in? (Daniel 8:2) \_\_\_\_\_

📖 Find out who was the first king of Elam mentioned in the Bible. What is the significance of this?

How many provinces were there in Medo-Persia? \_\_\_\_\_



In the box below draw a map that shows the extent of the Medo-Persian empire. How did it compare to the size of the other great world empires?(Babylon, Greece and Rome)



In what year did King Ahasuerus hold his feast? \_\_\_\_\_

**Point from History!**

*Ahasuerus (Darius Hystaspes) had a rough start to his reign. He spent the first two years of his reign fighting and overthrowing opposition to his power, especially from a Babylonian rebellion. In his third year, Ahasuerus finally gained control of all the countries in the empire and set out to celebrate the empires achievements by having a great feast.*

How many feasts did Ahasuerus hold? \_\_\_\_\_

How long did each last? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was invited to each one? \_\_\_\_\_

At the feast of Ahasuerus, his gardens were decorated with many wonderful items. What do each of the following represent?

- white (Rev. 3:4,5; 7:13-17)
- blue and purple (Esther 8:15; Exodus 39:1; John 19:2)
- fine linen (Rev. 19:8)
- purple (Exodus 39:1)

- silver (1Pet 1:18,19; Exodus 30:12-14)

Was the feast held indoors or outdoors? \_\_\_\_\_

What feast of the Jews was centered on the fact that it needed to be celebrated outdoors?

Who hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> feast mentioned in Esther chapter 1? \_\_\_\_\_



The picture we get of Vashti is that of an independent woman, not inclined to submit to her husband. What phrase in verse 9 indicates she might have been overstepping her position to hold a feast for the women?

What words are used to describe queen Vashti?

By her actions how would you describe her?

Psalm 45:10,11 speaks of a king desiring the beauty of his bride. In that passage, how does the bride treat the king?

How does Proverbs 12:4 relate to this story?

Read 1Peter 3:1-7 and list the characteristics that husbands and wives should have:

<i>Husbands:</i>	<i>Wives:</i>



❓ Can we apply these principles in our lives before we are married or dating? How?

Who did king Ahasuerus consult with when responding to Queen Vashti's disobedience?

What concerned king Ahasuerus and his men more than Vashti's disobedience?

What was decided on as punishment for Queen Vashti?

The laws of the Medes and Persians were unalterable. Where else in scripture do we learn this?

📖 The punishment designed for Queen Vashti was meant as a lesson to all those in the kingdom. This teaches us that we should learn from the examples of others (both good and bad). Find at least two verses where the Bible promotes rules to punish evildoers as a warning to all others.

📖 Research the laws and customs of the Medes and Persians. List 4-5 interesting points you learn and relate them to events in the book of Esther.

Chapter one describes the feast of King Ahasuerus which speaks of a greater feast to be held in the future.



When will God hold a feast?

Who will be invited?

According to Revelation 5:10 what titles will those invited have?

King Ahasuerus gave the guests at his feast wine to drink. Find a verse that indicates we will drink wine with Christ in the kingdom.

What were the vessels that they drank from made out of? \_\_\_\_\_

Look up 1Peter 1:7; Job 23:10 and Proverbs 17:3 and summarize what Gold represents:

*In type King Ahasuerus represents God as the supreme ruler. At the Feast King Ahasuerus showed those that came to his feast the riches of his kingdom (v.5). In the New Testament there is a series of verses which speak of the riches of God. Look up the verses and compile a list of the riches that will be shown to us in God's Kingdom.*

Romans 2:4

Romans 9:23

Romans 11:33

Ephesians 2:7

In one of Jesus' parables there was an invitation given to a feast, which was refused.

Where is that parable recorded (it is found in 2 separate gospel accounts)?

Who declined to come?

What happened to those who refused?

Who was then invited?

How does the second invited group fit with what takes place in Esther chapter 2?

*In type Vashti represents the natural nation of Israel who refused to obey God. Because of the disobedience natural Israel was put away. They are described as committing adultery with the Gods of the nations.*

According to Jer. 31:32, what relationship did God have with Israel?

According to the following verses, who makes up the bride of Christ?

Ephesians 5:30-32

Rev. 19:7-9

# Chapter 2

## THE CALL and PREPARATION of ESTHER

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What did king Ahasuerus remember when his anger settled down?

What were the characteristics of the women who were to be gathered to Shushan?

List several verses which explain what “virgins” represent in Scripture and summarize them.



Who was the keeper of house of the women?

What does the word “chamberlain” mean?

What was the purpose of gathering all the virgins from the provinces?

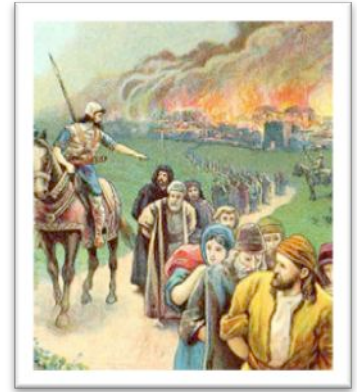
We are introduced to Mordecai as being a certain “Jew”. In the world today how is this term generally used?

What does the name Mordecai mean?  
(ignore the meaning “worshipper of Mars” if you find that)

How does his name relate to the tribe he was from? (Hint: look up 1 Sam 9:21)

Mordecai was the son of Kish. Who else in the Bible had a father named Kish and what tribe was he from?

Mordecai had been taken captive into Babylon during the second invasion of King Nebuchadnezzar in 597 BC. The details are given in 2 Kings 24:6-14. According to that account what type of men were taken captive?



How were Esther and Mordecai related?

What does the name Esther mean?

What was Esther's Hebrew name? What did it mean?

Esther was fair and beautiful. List how Esther is described from a couple of other translations.



As the narrative progresses we learn that it was not Esther's physical beauty that was important, but rather her spiritual character. Look up 1 Peter 3:3,4. List some of the inner characteristics which make a person beautiful.

Describe how Esther might have felt being taken from Mordecai to the house of the women in Shushan.

Being taken to the palace of the king was not an great situation for Esther. Ideally she should have been married in the truth. However she was not the only one that had been placed in a difficult situation during the captivity. What other captives had been taken to the palace of a foreign king? (hint: Babylon) What had they purposed in their hearts?

Why do you think that Esther was shown kindness by Hegai, the keeper of the women? (Daniel 1:9 may give you an idea)

◇ Hegai gave to Esther seven maidens to be her companions. He would have specially chosen these women for their character. Why is it important for us to have the right companions? Is the fact that our companions are “Christadelphian”, or come from Christadelphian families enough?

What secret was Esther keeping and why?

📖 Describe the interesting connection between verse 11 and Revelation 2:1,2. (note that the 7 candlesticks represent 7 ecclesias)

Describe the details of the purification process for the virgins.

What does oil represent in the Bible? Provide references to prove your answer.



What do “sweet odors” (incense) represent in the Bible? Provide references.

What did Esther take with her when she went to see the king? What does this say about her character? What other evidence is there of this aspect of her character?

Esther obtained favor in the sight of them that looked upon her. Find and list others to whom a similar thing is said. (Try to find two!)

Esther became queen in the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year. Approximately how long was Ahasuerus without a queen? (compare 1:3)

Make a list of all the positive statements made about Esther in chapter 2.



◇ Besides the character of Queen Esther, there was a more important reason she was chosen by the king. Why do you think God ensured that she became the new Queen? (If you are not sure, Esther 4:14 may help!)

Esther continues to respect the commandments of her cousin Mordecai even when she is Queen of Babylon. This is a valuable example to young adults. Think of some situations where you might be tempted to feel that you are now above the need to obey the commandments of your parents.

How does Philippians 2:12 relate to Esther's new-found position and her continued respect for the command of Mordecai?

Where did Mordecai sit? (2:19) Look up this location in a Bible dictionary. What significance did this have?

What were the names of the two men who conspired to lay their hands on king Ahasuerus?

Later in the book of Esther it becomes important that Esther made known this matter to the king in the name of Mordecai. Why was this important and what other detail of this event is equally important?

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*Esther is a type of those that are accepted into the kingdom of God. She represents the Ecclesia or the Bride prepared for her husband.*

The principle is stated that “many are called, but few are chosen”. Find two passages where this is stated. How do the events in Esther chapter two teach this principle?

All of those gathered to the house of the women were virgins. Look up Revelation 14:4,5 and describe what virgins represent.

Find a parable that speaks of virgins. Describe what set those that were chosen apart from those that were rejected.

In our preparation to meet our bridegroom, what would the house of the women represent?

In the questions above you researched what oil and incense represent. How does this help explain the need for 6 months of purification with each item? We are told there were other things for the purification of women, but are not told specifically what they were. What other spiritual activities help prepare us for the kingdom?

Hegai was immediately impressed with Esther and shows her great kindness. List all the measures he took to ensure that Esther was prepared to meet the king. The apostle Paul had the same loving care towards the brothers and sisters in the ecclesia of Corinth (see 2 Corinthians 11:2). What are some of the things Paul did to ensure that his brothers and sisters were prepared for the kingdom?



# Chapter 3

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## INTRODUCTION of HAMAN

We are introduced to a man who is called “the Jew’s enemy” four times in the book of Esther. What information are we given about this man?

The Agagites were descendants from the Amalekites. What does Numbers 24:20 tell us about the Amalekites? (consult your margin for clarification).

This first battle against Israel is recorded for us in Ex. 17. After this, the Amalekites became a type of all the Jews’ enemies. In Ex. 17:16, we read that Yahweh would have war with Amalek “from generation to generation” ...over and over again. A war that never ends.

As “children of God”, what is our greatest enemy...what are we warring against? (Rom.7:23, Rom. 8:7) Man was told in the very beginning that this fight would last for a long time. What verse in the early part of Genesis tells us about this battle?

The Amalekites were cowardly: Look up Deut. 25:17-18 – in these verses, who did Amalek attack?

Why is this cowardly?

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*This provides an important lesson for us today. We are fighting the constant battle of sin. If we keep at the front of the battle, we can avoid the “Amalekites” – sin. But if we are feeble, faint and weary, and hanging around “at the back”, we will be smitten by sin!*

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In Psalm 83:1-7, we have a list of all those that hate the Jews – Amalek is listed. What does the Psalmist tell us will happen to these enemies? (v.17,18)

📖 Look up the word “Agag” in a concordance. List the places it is found in scripture (outside of Esther), and summarize what each passage is talking about.

Haman was an extremely proud man. Find the verses throughout Esther that prove this.

Where did Haman expect people to bow down to him? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was sitting among these people? \_\_\_\_\_

Look up the words for “bow” and “reverenced” in Strongs. What were the people expected to do?

Bow = \_\_\_\_\_

Reverenced = \_\_\_\_\_

Did Haman notice that Mordecai was not bowing down?

How often did the king’s servants try to get Mordecai to obey the king’s commandment?

What was Mordecai’s reason for not bowing down?

Think about the character of King Ahasuerus, in relation to punishments, and his expectations of people. How do we know he was a frightening ruler?

Keeping this in mind, what might have Mordecai faced in making a stand?

Why would Mordecai, as a Jew, be opposed to bowing down to Haman?  
(See Psa 95:3-6, Isa 45:22-25)

Who is the only one who we should ever bow down to?

Who else will we bow down to in the future? (Psa 72:11; Phil 2:10)



In the Tanakh, which is a Jewish version of the Old Testament according to the traditional Hebrew Text, v.4 is translated as follows: *“When they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai’s resolve would prevail; for he had explained to them that he was a Jew.”*

The king’s servants wanted to see if Mordecai would be able to hold up under the pressure – it was one thing to keep his resolve before he was caught – it would be quite another to keep his resolve once Haman (and potentially the King) were aware of his disobedience. Did this deter Mordecai at all?

◇ What are some times in life that this type of situation might happen to you? Would you be strong enough to keep your resolve to stand up for the Truth? What could you do now to ensure that that is the case? List three possible times in your life where you might have to make a stand for the Truth, and verses that can help you prepare for them NOW, which will help you in your resolve if they come up.

How did Haman feel when he saw that Mordecai would not bow down?

📖 Look up the word “wrath” in a concordance. What does it mean? What other ways is it translated? Look up Psalm 140:1-5. Which word is the same word as “wrath” in the Hebrew? How does this Psalm (esp. v.1-8) relate to Haman?

What does Haman decide to do as revenge? (v6) (Look this verse up in the NIV to make it clearer).

Look up Deut.32:10, as well as Zech. 2:7-8. What does God call His chosen people?

Look up the word “apple” of Dt. 32:10 in Strong’s. What does it mean?

One of the meanings of the name Mordecai is “Little Man”! Haman is directing his wrath towards Mordecai, and all of his people, the “little men” of God’s eye!! Little did Haman know that he was not up against these Jews that he so despised, but up against Yahweh, the God of Israel. He would soon learn that “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb 10:31)

Can you think of another man in the history of the last 100 years that tried to “destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom...”. Did he succeed? Why not?

❓ The leader of Iran was quoted in October 2005 as saying that “Israel must be wiped off the map”. Do you think this could happen? Why or why not?

How did Haman go about deciding what day to carry out his terrible plan?

What month was it? \_\_\_\_\_

What month was decided upon, based on the casting of lots?

Based on this “good luck” in favor of the Jews, who was guiding the casting of the lot? \_\_\_\_\_

Look up Prov.16:33. What does it mean? (The NLT makes it clear!)



In Numbers 23: 21-23, we read this spoken about Israel: “No misfortune is seen in Jacob, no misery observed in Israel. The LORD their God is with them; the shout of the King is among them. God brought them out of Egypt; they have the strength of a wild ox. There is no sorcery against Jacob, no divination against Israel. It will now be said of Jacob and of Israel, 'See what God has done!'”(NIV)



◇ We know from Esther 2:20, that no one knew that Esther was a Jew. Why does Haman seem hesitant to name the “certain people” by name when seeking the King’s permission? (Est.3:15 and Est. 9:15 may help you)

What was Haman’s reasoning to the king for annihilating the Jews?

Can you list other events in Scripture where the Truth has been stretched, or lies made up completely about righteous people or the nation of Israel as a whole, in order to get rulers to hurt them? In each circumstance, what were the emotions driving the evil-doers? What can we learn from this for our own lives?

What is significant about giving the King’s ring to someone? (Est. 8:8) Provide other examples of this happening in scripture.

Notice the emphasis here of what is happening...the record says “And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite the Jews’ enemy.” Except for his introduction, the author has simply written the name “Haman” throughout the chapter. Here we are reminded who he really was.

What day and month was it when the scribes were called in to write out Haman’s commandment?

Who was Haman’s command given to?

How did he ensure there would be no confusion?

What exactly were the commands contained in the letter?

What was the reaction of the city of Shushan? What does this tell us about how they regarded the Jewish people among them?

What did Haman and the king do after issuing the decree?

What does this tell us about Haman's character?

Can you think of another time the same type of cold-blooded heartlessness was shown?  
(Hint: Genesis 37)

◇ How do you think Mordecai felt knowing that his obedience to the Lord had brought about Haman's decree to kill the Jews?

Often difficult times come to us when we make a stand for the Truth, and what is right. How did Moses speaking up for God lead to hardship for his brethren?

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*Haman is typical of the “adversary” and “false accuser”, or “satan” and “devil” of the Bible. The biggest adversary to any of us is sin. If we bow down to it, it will overtake us. In our lives, we resist bowing down to sin, and if we succeed, we will be saved.*

Look up Gen. 3:15. What two seeds are spoken of?

What would happen between the two seeds?

Which seed would eventually win the battle?

Which seed is Haman a type of?

Look up Heb. 2:14. What did Christ do to “the devil” by dying on the cross?

What eventually happened to Haman? (Esther 7:10)



# Chapter 4

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## MORDECAI *and* ESTHER MAKE PLANS

What does Mordecai do when he knows about the command that has gone out from Haman? How do the rest of the Jews react?



List some other times when people in scripture tear their clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. What are the circumstances? Who are they usually appealing to when they do this?

What do Esther's servants do when they see what Mordecai is doing?

What is Esther's reaction? Look up the word "grieved" in a concordance. What does it mean? How else is it translated in scripture?

Why would Esther send raiment to Mordecai? (see v.2)

Did Esther know what was going on?

📖 ✍️ What was the sum of money that Haman would pay to the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews? (Esther 3:9)

Look up the word "sum" in verse 7. Where is the only other place in scripture that that same Hebrew word is used? Explain why you think this is.

What does Mordecai have in his possession that he gives to Esther? How do you think he got this?

What message does he send to Esther?

What is Esther's answer?

Who could approach the King in the inner court uninvited?

What was the punishment for doing so?

What was the only exception to the rule?

How long had it been since Esther had been invited to see the King? Why do you think this mattered?

What was Mordecai's warning to Esther?

Mordecai showed complete faith in God that He would deliver His people. He believed it so much that he was willing to put the life of Esther, the girl he had raised and loved so much, in great danger. God has shown His people many times that He will deliver them, and he does it through regular people like you and me. Look up Gen. 45:4-8, 2 Sam 5:13 and Acts 7:20-25. Who are the examples in these passages of those whom God rose up in order to deliver his people? Can you think of a negative example of God raising someone up for the sake of showing His power? (Provide a reference).

Gen. 45:4-8:

2 Sam 5:13:

Acts 7:20-25:

◇ How can you apply this attitude in your life today? Do you think God still works this way?

Esther realized the truth of Mordecai's words. What does she request of Mordecai and all the Jews in Shushan, and for how long?

Where else in the Bible do we read of that length of time?

What does it symbolize?

What is the significance of this in the story of Esther?

What is the incredibly brave statement that Esther makes?

Look up the following verses:

Luke 17:33, John 12:25, Acts 20:22-24, Matt. 19:29, 1 Pet. 3:14. What do these tell us about the way we should view our lives? Can you find any other verses?

Chances are, in our modern lives, we don't often have to risk our lives for the sake of the Truth. In what way can we apply these verses?



# Chapter 5

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## ESTHER'S FIRST BANQUET

What does Esther do to prepare herself to go into the king's palace?

◇ We saw earlier that it had been 30 days since Esther had been summoned to the king. The verse describes in detail the location of both the king and queen Esther. Imagine yourself as Esther, in the court, waiting for the king to acknowledge you. What thoughts would be running through your mind?

The term “up to half the kingdom” probably has the meaning of “whatever you ask, within reason”. Who else in scripture was offered this by a ruler? What did she ask for? (Provide a reference)

How many times throughout the story of Esther does King Ahasuerus offer to give Esther whatever she desires?

Contrast the attitude of Esther towards the King, to that of Vashti.

It is quite clear that the banquet of wine prepared by Esther was not a party where the participants would become drunk. Wine in the scriptures is associated with various activities. Look up the following verses and note what wine was used for and whether it was a good or a bad use.

Proverbs 31:4,5

Proverbs 31:6,7

1Timothy 5:23

Matthew 26:27-29

Numbers 5:5

1Samuel 25:36

Amos 6:1,4-6

Luke 12:45,46



Summarize the dangers of wine and alcohol.

◇ What do you think was Esther's reasoning for not immediately asking the king for the life of her people (even at the first banquet)?

We can see the hand of God working behind the scenes to ensure that Esther asked the king at the exact right time. Looking ahead to chapter 6, what events would be essential to getting a favorable response from King Ahasuerus?

Why was Haman so happy when he left the banquet of wine?

How long did he remain happy?

What changed his countenance?

Who were Haman's peers and advisors? Did they give him good or bad advice? Find 2 or 3 other examples in the Bible where a person is influenced to do the wrong thing by peer pressure.

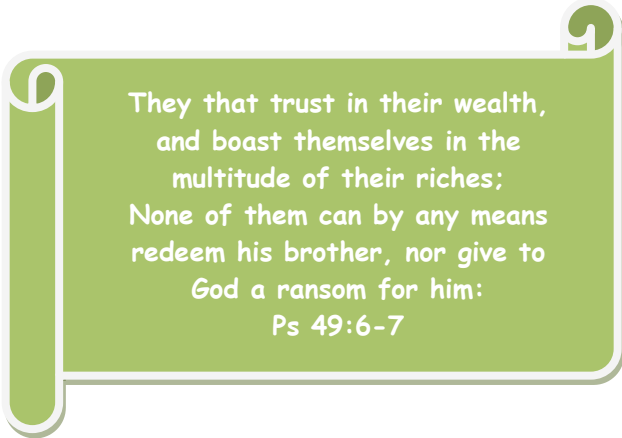
Peer pressure does not have to be bad. Consider the following verse, "*He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*" (Prover 13:20). Find at least one example of positive peer pressure.

In light of Proverbs 14:20 what type of people would Haman's friends likely have been?

What characteristic of Haman's do we see in verse 11? List a couple of other Bible characters who also were known for this characteristic.

How high is 50 cubits? Why do you think they wanted to make the gallows so ridiculously high?

Haman's wife and friends suggest that Haman would be happy once Mordecai was hanged. After what other event was Haman previously content?



They that trust in their wealth,  
and boast themselves in the  
multitude of their riches;  
None of them can by any means  
redeem his brother, nor give to  
God a ransom for him:  
Ps 49:6-7

*As Esther approaches the king, she represents the ecclesia coming before the judgment seat. She wonders if she will be accepted by her husband or condemned to die. She comes before the king in her royal apparel, having prepared herself. Her hope is that the royal sceptre will be extended to her and that her and her people will be saved from death.*

Find some verses which speak of God (or Christ as God's representative) sitting to judge the world.

The word "apparel" in verse 1 is in *italics* in the KJV, meaning that it is not in the original. A better rendering would be "Esther put on royalty". She was there because she reflected the royalty of the king! What does it mean to reflect the glory of God? (a couple of verses that might help get you started are Hebrews 1:3 and 2 Corinthians 4:6)

# Chapter 6

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## MORDECAI REWARDED

◇ In Daniel 6:18 we have an indication of what might have been normally done to help put a king to sleep. Why do you think Ahasuerus chose instead to have the book of records read to him?

In relation to the fact that the king could not sleep there is an interesting reference in Psalm 121:4, which says *“Behold he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep”*. This concept of God working behind the scenes is called providence. List as many of the “coincidences” that you can find in Esther chapter six, which contribute to Mordecai’s salvation.

Behold, the eye of the LORD  
is upon them that fear him,  
upon them that hope in his  
mercy;  
To deliver their soul from  
death, and to keep them  
alive in famine.  
Psalm 33:18-19

Explain how these events work together with our theme “all things work together for good to those that love God.”

Look up Proverbs 4:16 and Isaiah 59:7-8 and discuss how each relates to the fact that Haman is present in the king's court at a very early hour.

Proverbs 6:16-19 lists seven things that the LORD hates. List the 7 things and connect as many of them as you can to the actions and plans of Haman.



Pride goeth  
before  
destruction, and  
an haughty spirit  
before a fall.  
Prov 16:18

When the king asks Haman to suggest what should be done for the man the king delights to honor, why is it important that he doesn't mention Mordecai's name?

What would riding on the king's horse represent? (see 1Kings 1:33)

Haman thought that the king wanted to honor him. What does the reward Haman suggested say about his ambition? (What more did Haman want?)

Who was another Israelite upon whom was bestowed a similar honor by a foreign ruler? (Hint: Genesis) What were the similarities?

Read verse 10 carefully. Up until what point in the king's commandment would Haman's excitement have been rising?

❖ What thoughts do you think would have been going through Mordecai's mind as Haman led him through the city? (think about both the moment and the greater problem which still faced the nation)

He hath shewed  
strength with his  
arm; he hath  
scattered the proud  
in the imagination of  
their hearts.  
He hath put down  
the mighty from  
their seats, and  
exalted them of low  
degree.  
Luke 1:51-52

What would Haman be thinking?

What might the Jews in Shushan have been thinking?

Where did Mordecai go after receiving his reward? Where did Haman go?



What are Haman's friends now called in verse 13?

📖 Haman's friends, wisely recognize that Haman could not prevail against the Jews. In Acts 5:34-39 a wise Pharisee, named Gamaliel, articulates a similar concept. Look up the verses in Acts and describe the background to which they apply. Do you think Haman's friends knew the Jews were God's people?



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*Mordecai here is type of righteous men and women who have to wait before they receive their reward. All the while he waited he must have marveled how wicked Haman had risen to such importance in the kingdom of Persia. There are many righteous men in the Bible who have looked at the prosperity of the wicked and commented upon it. We too may look at the wicked in the world around us and be surprised at their prosperity.*

Look up the following verses and note who the author is and what advice they give us to comfort us.

<u>VERSE</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>LESSON</u>
Psalm 37:1-11		
Proverbs 24:19,20		
Psalm 49:16-20		
Psalm 73:3-19		
Jeremiah 12:1-3		



Mordecai was rewarded long after he saved the kings life because a book of remembrance was written. The Bible speaks of books which will be opened in the day of judgment. Look up all of the following verses (and others if you can find some more). Then write a summary paragraph which describes everything about these books, including what the books are called, what they contain and why they are important. Philippians 4:3; Revelation 5:3; Revelation 20:12-15; Revelation 21:27; Exodus 32:30-33; Malachi 3:16; Isaiah 43:25

As we noted in chapter 5, Mordecai is a type of Christ and Haman of his enemies. Find a reference in the New Testament where the enemies of Jesus come to the ruler early in the morning seeking to have him killed on a tree.

According to John 11:47-50 what were the rulers of the Jews afraid that they would lose if they did not put Jesus to death?

What shall be done for the faithful man or woman whom God “delights to honor” in His kingdom?

# Chapter 7

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## ESTHER PLEADS for HER PEOPLE

What is the setting of chapter 7?

◇? Between chapters 5-7, the king asks Esther three times what her request is. It is not till the third time that she finally makes her real petition. How do you think spending extra time with the king would have helped Esther? How do you think it would have helped having Haman there too?

Whose life is Esther pleading for?

◇? How would you have felt having to tell the king about Haman, while he was there in the room?

Describe why it is probably better to confront a problem situation with the person who has offended you in the room, rather than doing it behind their back.

Who else shared wine with an enemy whom they knew was ready to sell them to their death?

What does Esther mean when she says, “*Although the enemy could not countervail the kings damage*”? (another version may help you)

Apart from not wanting to trouble the king, why else would Esther have been content if the enemies plan was only to sell the Jews as slaves? (Hint: when had this happened before and what was the end result?)

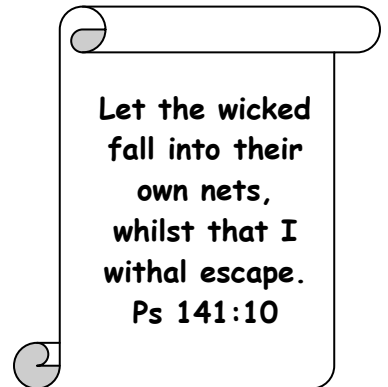
King Ahasuerus wants to know where the man is “*that durst presume in his heart to do so*”. The margin says, “*whose heart has filled him*”. There are many religions that teach that the evil that people do comes from a supernatural devil working in them. How does this verse disprove this theory? Find some other verses in scripture which also help?

What three words does Esther use to identify Haman to the king?

King Ahasuerus was filled with wrath and went out to the garden, presumably to gather his thoughts and decide upon a course of action. What lesson can we learn from this?

Look up the meaning of the word “force” in verse 8 and record it in the space below.

What was Haman pleading for?



When the king re-enters the room he believes that Haman is assaulting the Queen and he is outraged. What did the servants do to Haman at that point?

Whose side do you think Harbonah was on? Why?

How was Haman killed? Look up Psalm 7:15,16 and describe how these verses relate.

List another time when an enemy was killed in the same manner he intended for another. (Hint: there is one during the time of the Babylonian captivity)

What was the significance of the gallows being 75 feet high now?

*In this chapter we are presented with a picture of a banquet of wine. In type we have a picture of the memorial service that takes place each Sunday.*

In Jude 1:12 what is the memorial service called? (use various translations)

At the memorial service what does the cup of wine represent? What does sharing wine together represent?

Present at the banquet are King Ahasuerus, Esther and Haman. As we have seen in previous chapters the King is representative of God, Esther is representative of the ecclesia and Haman is representative of the Jew's enemies. In what way could there be "a Haman" present at the memorial service?

When Jesus instituted the last supper, who was there that we might say was typified by Haman?

At the feast Esther (the ecclesia) pleads to the King (God) for her life and for the life of her people (brothers and sisters). At the memorial service what is the enemy that has condemned us to death? Find a verse which proves your answer.

Esther and her people were literally sold by Haman unto death. According to Romans 7:14 what are we sold unto? Is there any way we can buy our freedom? In this context, what are 3 lessons the parable in Matthew 18:25-35 teaches us.

After the feast, Haman was publicly hung on the gallows he had built, so all could see that he was defeated. In speaking of baptism in Romans 6:6, what do we crucify at baptism? How is baptism a public declaration of a change in our life?





# Chapter 8

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## HAMAN'S PLOT is OVERTHROWN

Who eventually inherits the house of Haman?

How do Psalm 49:6-13 and Proverbs 13:22 relate to Haman's end and the events of v.1-2?

In giving his ring to Mordecai what was the king effectively giving him?

In verse 3, Esther bows down at the feet of the King. How was this different than Mordecai bowing down to Haman?

Esther pleads with tears to the king for deliverance. Find the verse in the Bible where it says, "*when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death.*". Who was it that offered up prayers with strong crying and tears?

What could Esther not endure to see?

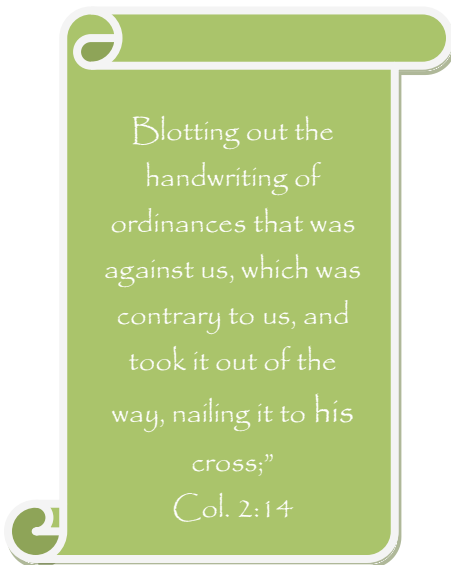
We are often concerned with our own well-being. How can we nurture our concern for the welfare of others?

According to the king, why did he hang Haman on the gallows?

How many days had passed since the first decree to destroy the Jews was written?  
(compare 3:12)

Who wrote the letter in the king's name?

How do most other translations differ from the King James Version in v.10?



What six things did the letter written by Mordecai grant the Jews power to do?

Compare this decree to the decree made against them in Esther 3:13. Are there any significant differences between the two decrees?

The decree of Mordecai allowed the Jews to avenge themselves on their enemies. Romans 12:19-21 teaches that rather than seek revenge we should overcome our enemies with good. What would have made this action by the Jews acceptable in God's sight?

What made the city of Shushan rejoice and be glad? Based on this do you think the city of Shushan was pro-Jewish or anti-Jewish?

Look up the four words that described the feelings of the Jews in v.16 and write their meanings below.


- light
- gladness
- joy
- honor

There are two new words or phrases to describe their feelings in v.17. Write their meanings below.

- feast
- good day

Summarize in your own words how the Jews in Shushan, and in the surrounding provinces, must have felt and what they would have done to celebrate.

The word “honor” in v.16 is used extensively in chapter 6. Look back and see who received honor before the rest of the Jews.

 Many of the people of the land became Jews. Research what becoming a Jew would have entailed and write a couple of paragraphs detailing your answer. (suggestion: look up the word “proselyte” in a Bible dictionary) You may need an extra piece of paper!

The scriptures speak of “spiritual” Jews and teaches that we should strive to become spiritual Jews. Look up the following verses and write down what each says about this concept.

Romans 2:28,29

Romans 9:6-9

Ephesians 2:11-13

Galatians 3:26-29 (note seed of Abraham is an equivalent term for spiritual Israel)

Types in Christ

*Earlier in the book of Esther a decree of the king brought a sentence of death upon the Jews. That decree, like all those of the Medes and Persians could not be altered. Instead of reversing the decree, a way to deliver the Jews had to be found. This is similar to the principle which affects our salvation, a principle called the law of sin and death.*

Locate a passage in the Bible this phrase is used.

From that same passage – what is the second law that delivers us from death?

Describe the law of sin and death in your own words.

In the story of Esther, Haman is the one who sends out the first decree and Mordecai sends out the second. Again there is a similarity to our salvation from sin. It is clearly described in 1 Corinthians 15:21,22.

Whose actions brought the sentence of death? How?

Whose actions brought deliverance? What is the deliverance?

*When Queen Esther falls before the king and pleads for the life of her people the king reassures her of his favor towards her by reminding her that he has already done two great things – given Mordecai the house of Haman and hanged Haman on a tree. These two things relate to covenants made in Genesis.*

Explain how hanging Haman on the tree was like the promise of Genesis 3:15 where the head of the serpent would be crushed.

Explain how giving Mordecai the house of Haman was similar to the promise made to Abraham in Genesis 22:17.

# Chapters 9 & 10

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## THE JEWS' ENEMIES DESTROYED. FEAST OF PURIM

As Chapter 9 begins, what day of the year is it? What day was it, according to Haman's commandment?

What had the enemies of the Jews hoped to have on this day?

What was the reality?

Look up Isaiah 14:1-2, Isaiah 60:14-15 and Zech 12:1-5. What do these verses say?

When will this happen?

How many times in this chapter do we read "the Jews gathered themselves together"?

What can we learn from this?

Who did the Jews "lay hands" on?

Think of the promises to Abraham. Which aspect of the promises to Abraham did this demonstrate?

What was the attitude of the people towards the Jews?

Why did the rulers and various other officers of the king help the Jews? Look up the word "helped" in a concordance. What does it mean?

How is Mordecai's status described in v.4?

Look up 2 Sam. 3:1, and 1 Chron. 11:9. What do these verses describe? How are the circumstances similar to Mordecai? What does 1 Chron. 11:9 tell us is the reason for this greatness?

"His fame went throughout all the provinces". Look this up in the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge. What are some cross references for this phrase? Who else is spoken of in scripture this way?

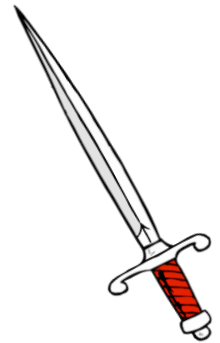
Psalm 118:6-7 says: *"The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me."* How does this reference relate to v.5?



How did the Jews smite their enemies? Look up Deut. 32:41-43. Who was really fighting the battle?

In the future God's people will again take vengeance on their enemies, as described in Psalm 149:5-9. When will this take place? Who will be involved in this battle?

📖 The sword is often the weapon used to describe God's vengeance. Find as many verses as you can that speak about the sword in relation to God. What is the spiritual significance of a sword in scripture? (Provide verses to back up your answer).



How many enemies had the Jews killed in Shushan the palace alone? \_\_\_\_\_

How many sons did Haman have? What happened to them?

The Jews did not lay their hand on the spoil (see also v.16), even though the king had included that in his decree (Esther 8:11). What does it mean to "take the spoil"? Look up the following references and explain what happened to the spoil and why in each case: (see next page)

Gen. 14:21-23

Exodus 3:21,22

Joshua 6:17-19

1 Sam 15:3

In which two cases was the command broken, and by whom?

What was the king's reaction to hearing the number of those slain on the first day? How do you think he was feeling?

What is so ironic about his relationship with Esther now?

What does Esther request in v.13?

It might seem to us a bit cruel that Esther was not yet satisfied with the number of people that had already been killed. Why do you think she asked for another day? What was the danger of stopping when the King first mentioned it?

Can you think of any other times in scripture when the Jews suffered for not completely destroying the enemy like they were supposed to?

How can we apply that to our lives today?

How many enemies were slain in Shushan the palace on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of fighting?

How many enemies were slain in the King's provinces outside of the city?

When did the Jews that lived outside of the city rest from their battle?

When did the Jews that lived inside of the city rest from their battle?

How did the Jews celebrate their victory on these two days?

What decree did Mordecai write in letters to all of the Jews?

In v.22, it tells us that the month of Adar was “turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day”. Look up the following verses, and briefly describe what they are speaking about (see next page):

Matt 5:4

John 16:20-22

Jer. 31:13

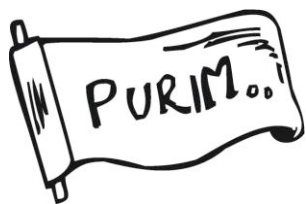
Isa. 61:1-3

Isa 60:20

Isa 35:10

What would these feast days be called, and why?

Is the feast of Purim still celebrated by Jews today? How do they celebrate it?



What is being emphasized in v.27,28? Why is this concept so important?

◆The first feast of Purim after the defeat of the Jews' enemies must have been a most wonderful celebration. Imagine the relief the Jewish population would have felt! What other emotions and feelings would they be having?

Read through Psalm 30 (typed out here). Underline any phrases that have an echo back to the story of Esther. Note where it is found in Esther alongside the corresponding verse. When you have finished, transfer this to your Bible.

1 I will extol thee, O LORD; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me. 2 O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me. 3 O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. 4 Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. 5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. 6 And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. 7 LORD, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled. 8 I cried to thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication. 9 What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth? 10 Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper. 11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; 12 To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

What feast will be celebrated with the saints after Jesus returns and sets up the kingdom? Try to imagine the amazing feelings of that day. What will it be like? How will those who are invited to partake of this feast be feeling? Do you want to be part of that?

Chapter 10:

What did Mordecai become in the land of Persia?

List all of the descriptions of Mordecai in these few verses.

*We have seen Mordecai go from a man despised and rejected by Haman, to a man elevated and “made great” by the king. Mordecai’s people, the Jews, went from being hated and powerless, to being feared and powerful. Mordecai and the Jews are a type of Christ and the Jews (both natural and spiritual) in the coming Kingdom.*

Look up 1 Corinthians 15:24-28. Who are these verses talking about?

When will these verses come to pass?

Mordecai was made second in command to the king. He also wrote a letter issuing a command for all Jews to observe a religious holiday, which in a way made him a type of priest for the people. Find a verse that shows that the saints will be kings and priests in the kingdom age.

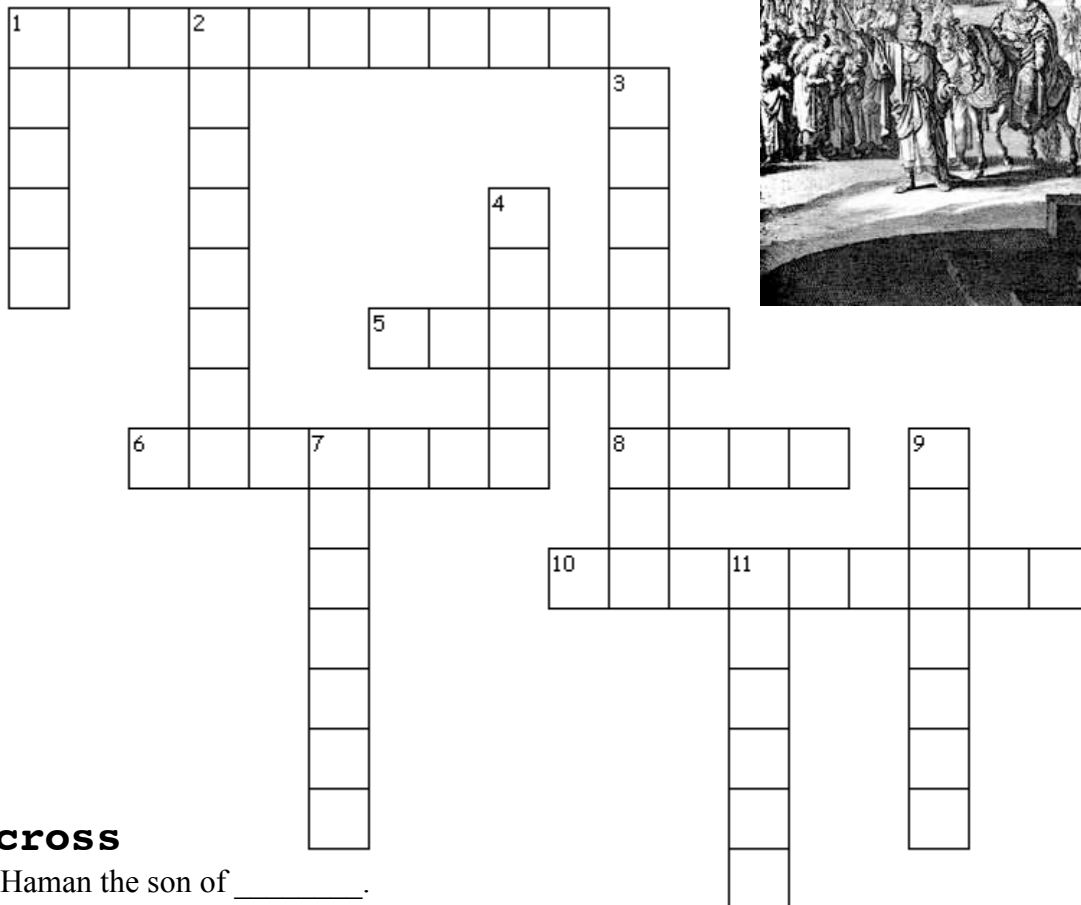
Back in Esther 8:17, as well as 9:2, we read that the fear of the Jews had fallen upon all the people. What does Zech 8:23 say will happen in the future?

Why will this be such a change from now?

There are many similarities between Mordecai and Jesus. Find verses to support the similarities in the chart below:

MORDECAI	JESUS CHRIST	PROOF VERSES
Inherited the possessions of his enemy (Est. 8:2)	Will inherit the possessions of his enemies	
Was great in the King’s house (Est. 9:4)	His name shall be great	
Was next unto the King (Est. 10:3)	Was glorified by God and sits at His right hand	
Accepted of the multitude of his brethren (Est. 10:3)	Jesus will be accepted by his brethren	
Brought wealth and peace to his people (Est. 10:3)	Christ will bring peace and prosperity to the world in the kingdom age	





**Across**

1. Haman the son of \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Haman's other half.
6. "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the \_\_\_\_\_ for such a time as this?"
8. Month of impending doom.
10. "And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him \_\_\_\_\_, then was Haman full of wrath."

**Down**

1. "After these things did king Ahasuerus promote \_\_\_\_\_ the son of Hammedatha the Agagite..."
2. Haman hated him.
3. Where Mordecai sat.
4. Jews today celebrate the feast of \_\_\_\_\_ to celebrate the victory over Haman and his plot.
7. A hangman's tool.
9. Esther requested one.
11. She replaced Vashti as queen.