

ESTHER LESSON-PART 1

For Such a Time as This- What is God Doing?

Scripture: Esther 1 & 2



The word “God” is never mentioned in Esther. It’s a strange book. But because this book doesn’t talk about God explicitly, it mirrors our lives. We don’t see God regularly perform miracles. We don’t audibly hear from God. Yet, God is still at work in our lives. And Esther shows us how God works in our lives.

Background: God’s people at the time of Esther.

Esther occurs at an interesting time in biblical history. The Jewish people had been living in exile in Persia. The Persian king, Cyrus, allowed the Jews to go back to Jerusalem. Many went back to Jerusalem, but some stayed behind in Persia. Esther is the story of those people who stayed behind in Persia.

READ: ESTHER 1

God’s people were controlled by a dictator.

In Esther, the king of Persia is a guy named Xerxes. In chapter 1, he threw a huge party for all of his most important officials that lasted for 6 months. In the last 7 days of the party, Xerxes expanded the party to include everyone in the city.

After seven days of getting drunk, Xerxes called for his wife, Queen Vashti. He wanted all of his friends to ogle his wife and see how beautiful she was. But Vashti refused, which made Xerxes angry.

[Esther 1:19](#) So if it please the king, we suggest that you issue a written decree, a law of the Persians and Medes that cannot be revoked. It should order that Queen Vashti be forever banished from the presence of King Xerxes, and that the king should choose another queen more worthy than she.

Vashti is removed as queen, and all the wives of Persia are told not to be defiant like the queen!

READ: ESTHER 2

Esther becomes queen of Persia.

In chapter 2, Xerxes decides to find a new queen. He's not romantic, however. He's a sick dictator. He has his servants go throughout Persia to find beautiful virgins. They are brought back to the palace, and then they are to spend one night with Xerxes.

One of the women brought to the king is Esther. In chapter 2, we are introduced to Esther, and her cousin Mordecai who raised her because she was orphaned. Esther is taken into the king's harem. And when it is her turn to be with the king, he falls for her.

[Esther 2:16-17](#) Esther was taken to King Xerxes at the royal palace in early winter of the seventh year of his reign. And the king loved Esther more than any of the other young women. He was so delighted with her that he set the royal crown on her head and declared her queen instead of Vashti.

Esther becomes queen, but we learn that she doesn't tell anyone she is Jewish. It's a secret.

Mordecai saves the king.

We also learn that Mordecai found out about a plot to assassinate the king. He told Esther, who told the king, and the perpetrators were executed. As chapter 2 ends, Esther is queen and Mordecai is responsible for saving the king. But remember, no one knows Esther is Jewish.

God uses unusual events to accomplish his plans.

The story of Esther is like an elaborate chess board, and God is moving the pieces of the chess board into place to accomplish his purposes.

God does this in our lives too. You might wonder why God allowed your parents to get a divorce, or why he allowed your family to move to a different state. You might wonder why God isn't giving you the things you want in life. Well, here is what the Bible says.

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

This is what God does in your life too. He takes all of the experiences of your life and uses it for your good. As we continue in Esther, we will say how this was true for Esther and Mordecai.

Discussion Questions:

1. Watch the video together or invite someone to summarize the topic.
<https://youtu.be/T8HFCxozQSU>
2. What is your initial reaction to this video? Do you disagree with any of it? What jumped out at you?
3. What do you do when you feel like God is not listening to you, or when you feel like God isn't doing anything in your life?
4. Why do you think there is a book in the Bible that doesn't mention God?
5. How do we see God working behind the scenes in the first two chapters of Esther?
6. Why do you think God used such messed up people to accomplish his plans in Esther?
7. Describe a moment in your life when you didn't understand why God allowed something to happen to you.
8. Read **Romans 8:28**. What is the promise in this verse? Share an example of how you have seen this promise realized in your life.
9. Write a personal action step based on this conversation.

ACTIVITY: ESTHER WORD SEARCH

The Life of Esther

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PREPARATION

DELIVERANCE

INTERVENTION

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

THREE DAYS

FAST

AMALEKITES

AGAG

HAMAN

QUEEN VASHTI

PROVIDENCE

NEVER MENTIONED

FEAR GOD

KING AHASUERUS

GOD

PRAYS

MORDECAI

ORPHAN

MYRTLE

STAR

PERSIAN NAME

HADASSAH

ESTHER

BENJAMIN