

Influencer
Esther: Positioned for Purpose

Week 1 Introduction to the Book of Esther

- I. Historicity – What is the historical setting of the events in this book?
- a. Biblical History
- i. The events of this story happen between _____.
 1. The Jews first return from exile led by _____. (Ezra 6)
 2. The Jews second return from exile led by _____. (Ezra 7)
 - ii. It is an account of what happened to the vast majority of the Jews who _____ rather than to return to _____.
 1. Few stayed for _____.
 2. Most stayed as an _____.
- b. World History
- i. The _____ has supplanted _____ as the leading power of its day.
 - ii. The Persians are ruled by _____ from 486 – 464 BCE. The Book of Esther covers a _____ period during his reign (483 – 473 BCE).
 1. Historian Herodotus references a military banquet where Xerxes I _____ in 483 BCE that corresponds with the events in Esther 1.
 2. The Greeks defeated the _____ in 479 BCE at Salamis. Herodotus says that Xerxes then sought consolation in his harem. This corresponds with the events of Esther 2.
- II. Canonicity – Why is Esther in the bible and what is its relationship to the larger story of scripture?
- a. The Book of Esther reveals how _____, even in exile. (Ezekiel 11:14-20, Romans 11:25-32)
- i. God protected them in spite of their _____.
 - ii. God protected them through a _____ who uses her position and influence for the _____.
- b. The Book of Esther explains the origins of the Jewish _____.
- i. The Book of Esther is _____.
 - ii. Esther’s fast is _____.
 - iii. Extreme celebration is _____.
 - iv. Charity is _____.
 - v. Purim baskets are _____.
- c. Esther is an Old Testament picture of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 2:5-11, 1 John 2:1, John 14:16, Romans 8:34)
- i. Esther is fully obedient to her guardian, _____, instructions.

ii. Esther is willing to _____.

iii. Esther is a capable _____.

III. Relevance – Why should I study this book of the bible?

a. The Book of Esther teaches us that God's _____ is often hiding in plain sight.

i. God's name is not mentioned, no prayers are explicitly prayed, there is no mention of the Temple or sacrifices, and there are no supernatural miracles. Yet, God clearly _____ of this book to bring about deliverance for the Jews.

ii. Some find meaning in the fact that _____ is found acrostically in Esther 1:20, 5:3, 5:13, and 7:7.

b. The Book of Esther teaches us that God protects God's people in

_____.

i. Esther overcomes a _____.

ii. Esther overcomes a _____.

iii. Esther overcomes a _____.