

EXAMINING ESTHER: SEEING GOD THROUGH DIVINE PROVIDENCE (Esther 1:1-3)

A. THE INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION About “ESTHER”.

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 _____ of God’s earthly people - _____.
5. The *characters* of this book include a Persian king named _____, a beautiful queen named _____, a wise Jew named _____, his dazzling cousin named _____, and an anti-semitic antagonist named _____.
6. The *uniqueness* of this book is that the name of _____ is never mentioned, though His hand is ever present in the human affairs of life.
7. The *genre* of the book is _____ of the highest quality.
8. The *chiastic structure* of this book is:
 - A - Opening and background (1)
 - B - The King’s first decree (2-3)
 - C - The clash between Haman & Mordecai (4 & 5)
 - D - “On that night the king could not sleep” (6:1)
 - C - Mordecai’s triumph over Haman (6-7)
 - B - The King’s second decree (8-9)
 - A - Epilogue (10)
9. The *key verse* of this book is _____.
10. The *canonicity* of this book was challenged but _____ in both OT and NT times.
11. The *purposes* of this book are to explain...
 - a. *Nationally*, God’s _____ for His chosen earthly people - _____, even when they were outside of the Promised Land because of disobedience.
 - b. *Historically*, how the Feast of _____ began and why it is still celebrated today.
 - c. *Theologically*, the tension between human _____, divine _____, and human _____.
 - d. *Personally*, how God can and does _____ to accomplish His sovereign plan and will without violating their human volition.

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

1. The *events* in Esther begin in the _____ year of the reign of Ahasuerus / Xerxes, and encompass the years of _____.
2. The *geographical setting* for this story centers in the royal palace of _____, in the country of _____, which is modern-day _____.

C. The BIBLICAL CONTEXT of this Book. What events had transpired with the nation of Israel leading up to this story and situation?

D. The SCRIPTURAL LESSONS from this Book.

You can expect to learn about ...

1. The _____ of God, who is incredibly faithful to His promises.
 2. The _____ of the nation of Israel, in spite of their disobedience to God's Law (though not without consequences)
 3. The _____ of man, and the self-induced troubles it creates in our lives.
 4. The problem of _____, which is growing in our day.
 5. The perverseness of _____, and its many carnal ramifications.
 6. The poisonous nature of _____ and _____ upon ourselves and others.
 7. The personal value of _____ in the Lord, _____ to do what is right before God, and _____ to the Lord in a day of unfaithfulness.
- Some closing thoughts for you. The book of Esther contains a message of:
 - 1) Hope for _____ - she has not been forgotten by God!
 - 2) Hope for _____.- you have not been forgotten by God!