

The Scriptures Summarized / Book 17 – Esther

The book documents God's providential deliverance of the captive Israelites from anti-Semitism within the Persian Empire while Xerxes reigned. The book also details the creation of an annual memorial for this miraculous escape from annihilation. This national celebration called Purim, became the favorite social festival of the year. (The holiday combines elements of Spring Break + Christmas + Independence Day + Halloween!)

This book is named after its courageous heroine, not its unknown Jewish author, who likely wrote using Mordecai's records, several years after these events.

Esther 9:20 Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far, 21 to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar 22 as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

Purim is the Hebrew term for the decision-making practice of casting lots which was a dramatic element in the story.

Prov. 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

The inclusion of this book into the Canon of Scripture is often questioned and criticized. God is never mentioned. However, belief in and dependance upon Divine Providence are clear.

Esther 4:14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

- I. The Providential Controversy Prior to the Threat
 - A. Uncooperative Vashti is removed as Queen
 - B. Unequaled Esther replaces Vashti as Queen
 - C. Uncle Mordecai reports treason to the Queen
- II. The Providential Crisis that Prompted the Threat
 - A. Angered Haman is Offended by Mordecai’s disregard
 - B. Audacious Mordecai is Obstinate and disrespectful
 - C. Annihilation of the Jewish race is Ordered and dated
- III. The Providential Character who Pre-empted the Threat
 - A. Esther was Conflicted
 - B. Esther was Convinced
 - C. Esther was Courageous
 - D. Esther was Cunning
- IV. The Providential Circumstances that Pre-dated the Threat
 - A. The King was Restless
 - B. The Chronicles were Read
 - C. Mordecai was Rewarded
 - D. Haman’s Doom was Realized
- V. The Providential Confrontation that Proclaimed the Threat
 - A. Esther’s Supper
 - B. Esther’s Supplication
 - C. Esther’s Surprise
 - D. Esther’s Success
- VI. The Providential Control that Prevailed over the Threat
 - A. The Decree that changed the equation
 - B. The Deliverance that changed the emotion