

Esther Overview Study Guide

Who wrote Esther? Though unknown, it may have been Mordecai, Ezra, Nehemiah, or someone else – likely a _____ who was familiar with Persian and Hebrew customs.

Where and when did the events take place? What else was occurring around that time?

586 BC – Jerusalem was destroyed and Jews carried into _____ in Babylon

539 BC – Persia conquered Babylon, gaining control of the _____ exiles/their home nation.

Cyrus allowed them to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple, but _____ Jews did not.

Events in Esther take place from 483-473 BC during the first _____ of King Ahasuerus' reign.

Chronological sequence in Old Testament: Ezra 1-6, _____, Ezra 7-10, Nehemiah

In 483 BC the Persian Empire was the _____ the world had ever seen.

What additional details are helpful to know about the main characters?

- Ahasuerus, also known as Xerxes, was an ambitious & ruthless ruler and _____ lover.
- Haman was a descendent of Agag, king of Amalekites, who first attacked/attempted to destroy Jews after they departed Egypt. Haman carried deep _____ toward Jews; Haman and Mordecai had not forgotten the feud. This is why Mordecai refused to _____ to Haman and why Haman served as _____ pawn.
- Esther has long been admired for her _____ by risking her life in approaching the King on behalf of her people. She said, "If I perish, I _____."
- Compared with Daniel, Esther and Mordecai were _____ in their lifestyles. We see them fasting, but there is no mention of _____. They kept their Jewish heritage a _____. Yet God used them to save His people!
- Though He is not mentioned even one time in Esther, the lead character is _____.

What is the major theme(s)? The _____ of God. Everything that occurs is under God's sovereign guidance and control. Definition of providence in Augustus Strong Systematic Theology: God's _____ concentrated everywhere.

Isaiah 46:10-11, Ephesians 1:1

Beneath the surface of seemingly insignificant human decisions and events, an _____ power is at work that cannot be explained or thwarted – God!

AW Tozer: "I do not know why God does some things, but I am convinced that nothing is _____ in His universe."

What are sometimes called coincidences are situations where God is _____.

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Romans 8:28 "We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His _____ for them."

What additional concepts or repeated words appear in the book of Esther?

- Reversal of _____ - Instead of Jews being annihilated, their enemies were killed.
- Feasting – 8 specific banquets mentioned

Why was the book written? To explain how the feast of _____ was instituted.

It was decreed to be celebrated annually by every Jewish family.

How is the book of Esther relevant to us today?

Reversal of destiny – God reversed the fate of the exiled Jews; likewise, Jesus took the death that was our _____ so we can have eternal life, the ultimate reversal!

God continues to work through seemingly insignificant _____ today. There are no _____ . Through it all God's ultimate purpose is to form Christ's _____ in us.

Because of God's providence, we know:

- He is _____, in control and in charge of everything
- He is _____, making no mistakes
- He is _____, having our best interests at heart
- He is _____. We can rely on His steadfast love, grace, and mercy.

Charles Spurgeon encourages us to "acquire the habit of observing His _____ in our lives."

God desires to be seen and known by us. Jeremiah 29:13-14