

# **ESTHER**

## **BIBLE BACKGROUND**

### **PASSAGE**

Book of Esther

### **MEMORY VERSES**

Esther 4:14b: "Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this.

Proverbs 3:5: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight."

### **PURPOSE**

#### **Spiritual Objective**

Having faith in God is choosing to trust God even in scary times.

#### **Teaching Objectives**

- The children will learn where Esther is in the Old Testament and be able to locate the book.
- The children will learn that God is always watching over them.
- The children will learn that God always helps His people.
- The children will learn that God is in control and that we should worship Him.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Just as God had a plan for the exiled Jews, God also has a plan for each one of us. Sometimes we tend to think that God is somehow unaware of what is happening to us and instead of turning to God and looking for God's guidance, we turn away and begin to think "why me?" This is directly linked to a lack of teaching on the Sovereignty of God. If we can give our children even a small grasp of the importance of trusting God "no matter what" at a young age, they will be better equipped to handle life as young people and adults.

### **THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

The book of Esther could also be called, "God's Providential Care of the Jews."

Providence is not a word that is in the Bible, but the doctrine behind this theme is that God is in full control of all events. In Latin it means "pro-advance" -- God saw, and planned for it.

There are no supernatural miracles in Esther, only natural events supernaturally ordered.

God's name is not mentioned in the entire book, but His presence is plainly evident. God was working quietly, behind the scenes, shaping events for the good of His people. However, "both Esther and Mordecai seem to have lacked spiritual awareness except in their assurance that God would protect His people."

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Chronically, Esther comes between the return of the first group of Jewish exiles from Babylon, 538 BC, and the second group, which was led by Ezra in 458 BC. The majority of the Jews chose to stay in Babylon rather than return to their homeland. The few who did return to Palestine were busy rebuilding the Temple and setting up the sacrificial system. Esther and Mordecai were among the majority who chose to stay with their captors in the Persian Empire.

Xerxes (Zurk-seez), or Ahasuerus, (ah-has-you-EH-rus), was extremely handsome and a great builder. However, he was no prize to live with and he was an extremely cruel king. History tells us that when a storm destroyed a bridge he had commissioned, he had all the bridge builders killed. Yet, God put Esther in his palace to live with him so that her people would be saved.

In Iran, archeologists have unearthed two whole rooms of Esther's and Xerxes' palace, which are now on display at the Louvre in Paris!

## **SOURCES**

New International Bible  
New Century Version Bible  
The Bible Knowledge Commentary  
The Teacher's Commentary  
Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament

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