

ESTHER

1. The Background

A) Date: Ballpark date around 375 BC

B) Unique features of the book

> We don't know who the author is God

> The events of this story usher in a new celebration for the Jews – the Feast of Purim

What is this Feast?

How did it get its name?

2. The Characters

A) Characters mentioned by name

> King Ahasueras – a great kingdom (Esther 1:1)

A great celebration (Esther 1:3-5)

A great threat (Esther 1:15-22)

A great search for a new queen (Esther 2:1-4)

> Mordecai and Esther (Esther 2:5-7)

> Haman (Esther 3:1-2)

B) Characters not mentioned by name

> God – His name isn't mentioned even once.

> Satan – he is the diabolical one who is devoted himself to destroy the plans of God

Abraham's jaunt to Egypt endangered the seed of the woman (Genesis 12:14-20)

Athaliah's attempt to destroy the royal line endangered the seed of the woman (2 Kings 11:1-3)

Killing Jesus was his ultimate assault – only he murderous assault accomplished the will of God.

God's people (1 Peter 5:8)

3. Brief overview of the story

- A) Esther, a Jew, becomes queen by way of a beauty contest (Esther 2)
- B) Mordecai overhears a plot to kill the king and tells Esther (Esther 2:19ff.)
- C) Haman is promoted to a position of high honor in the kingdom (Esther 3)
- D) When Mordecai learns of Haman's plan, he encourages Esther to intercede (Esther 4:13-17)
- E) Haman's bad day (Esther 6-7)
- F) Esther, with the king's authority, issues an edict that will not only protect her people, but authorizes them to punish those who would harm them (Esther 8-9)

4. Divine Coincidences

Esther just happens to be Jewish, and she just happens to be beautiful and chosen by the king

Mordecai just happens to overhear the plot against the king's life and a report of this just happens to be written in the king's chronicles

Haman just happens to notice that Mordecai does not kneel down before him and he just happens to find out that Mordecai is a Jew

When Haman plots his revenge, the dice just happen to indicate that the date for exacting revenge is put off for almost a year.

Esther just happens to get the king's approval to speak – but then she just happens to put off her request for just one more day

Her deferral just happens to send Haman out by Mordecai one more time which just happens to cause him to recount it to his friends

His friends just happen to encourage him to build a scaffold immediately

Haman just happens to be excited to approach the king early the next morning

It just so happens that the previous night, the mighty king could not sleep and it just happens that he had a book brought to him and it just happens that the section read recounts Mordecai's deed

The king just happened to ask if Mordecai had been rewarded and his attendants just happened to know the answer.

Back to Haman, he just happens to enter the king's presence when the king is pondering how to honor Mordecai

Later, the king just happens to reenter the room when Haman is pleading for mercy with Esther in a way that could be misconstrued

The gallows that Haman built for Mordecai just happen to be ready when the king wants to hang Haman