

“On the Way” 365 Bible Reading Plan

ESTHER 1

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The book of Esther is an amazing story of the sovereignty and providence of God in caring for His people, exiled from their land because of disobedience in generations past; and the LORD’s faithfulness to the promises He made to Abraham and his descendants. Oddly, the word “God” or the name of God is never mentioned in the book. This could be the primary reason the book of Esther was the last of the books of the Old Testament to be canonized (to measure up), that is, fit the very strict parameters of being included as the “Word of God.”

The book covers the time frame of 486-465 B.C. which is the period of the reign of King Ahasuerus, known as Xerxes in the Greek language. His father was Darius. Most likely the events recorded in Esther took place early in his reign around 483-473 B.C. The palace would have been in Shushan during this period of Persian rule. The expansive territories over which King Ahasuerus ruled are mentioned, “one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India to Ethiopia.” The book opens with the description of a great feast given by the king and the refusal of his queen, Queen Vashti to honor the King’s request to show off her beauty and the royal crown that no doubt was impressive. Vashti’s refusal brought the

wrath of the king upon her. The king sought wisdom and counsel from his advisors and wise men. He was told that her refusal to honor him was such a reproach that if not dealt with properly, the women of the kingdom might take this as a signal for them to dishonor their husbands and set a bad precedent. When asked what should be done so this would not happen in the kingdom, the wise men advised him to make a royal decree, that could not be altered, that Vashti be deposed, and another woman be sought to take her place. The plan seemed pleasing to the king and it was acted upon in haste. This hasty decision as will be seen, brought sorrow and sadness to the king before long and this was what God used to get a place prepared for a young Jewish lady ready to take the throne who we know as Esther.

Prayer and Action Steps

God often uses unusual circumstances to move people in and out of places of prominence so His will is accomplished. LORD, help me to trust your providence always. You rule and overrule.

Date _____ Scripture _____

- *Read the chapter. If you have time, read it again.*
- *Highlight, underline or circle the Key Verse or Verses of the chapter.*
- *Ask yourself these questions as you read through the chapter.*

Is this historical narrative, analogy, metaphor, allegory, or some other element of speech or communicating truth?

Does the passage teach a Biblical Precept; that is, tells you something to be, do or act? _____

What is the Context? Old Testament? New Testament? What is the writer speaking or writing about? To whom is he writing?

Are there principles in this chapter that if followed, would require me to change my attitudes or actions? _____

Is this a clear passage of Scripture (can only be interpreted one way)? Or could the passage be interpreted legitimately, in two or more ways, according to grammar and context?

Does the passage give a Biblical Pattern that is followed here and other places in the Bible? _____
