Act 1: The Stage is Set (Esther 1-2): Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai & Esther

Who, What, Where, When, Why

Who: Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai & Esther
What: Esther 1-2
Where: Modern-day ________
When: 482 – 478 B.C.
Why: ________________

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>586</td>
<td>The Jews deported by the Babylonians</td>
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<td>485</td>
<td>Xerxes becomes king of Persia</td>
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<td>478</td>
<td>Esther becomes queen of Persia</td>
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Special Note
There is no mention of _____ in Esther.

Ahasuerus’ First Feast (1:1-1:4)
Donald Curtis: Moving from the Greek to the Persian to the Hebrew to the English:
Xerxes – Xshayarshan – Achashverosh – Ahasuerus.

David Guzik: At this time, Ahasuerus is planning for a doomed invasion of ____________. The Persian Empire was the largest the world had ever seen. It covered what we call today Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel; and parts of modern day Egypt, Sudan, Libya, and Arabia.

Verse 2: Shushan = the ____________ residence of the Persian kings

Ahasuerus’ Second Feast (1:5-1:8)
Verse 5: a feast lasting seven days = Donald Curtis: Nearly every event in Esther happens ____________

Vashti’s Feast (1:9)
Verse 9: Queen Vashti = Persian name meaning ________________

John Gill: Persians . . . did not allow their wives to be with them at feasts, only their concubines and harlots, with whom they could behave with more indecency.

Vashti’s Refusal (1:10-1:12)
Donald Curtis: Herodotus [a historian from this era] . . . reported that Ahasuerus had a very bad temper. Herodotus records that Ahasuerus had the River Hellespont be ________________ and ________________.
Ahasuerus’ Question (1:13-1:15)
Verse 14: Carshena [car-shin-AW, illustrious], Shethar [SHAY-thar, a star], Admatha [ad-maw-THAW, a testimony to them], Tarshish [tar-SHEESH, yellow jasper], Meres [MAY-res, lofty], Marresa [mar-sin-AW, worthy], and Memucan [mem-oo-KAWN, dignified]

Memucan’s Answer (1:16-1:20)
See Daniel 6:8 for more on the irrevocability of the ________ of the Medes and Persians

Ahasuerus’ Law Enacted (1:21-1:22)

Miss Persia Contest (2:1-2:4)
Verse 1: After these things = David Guzik: During this time, Ahasuerus [has an] unsuccessful invasion of Greece, and he comes home a defeated man wanting to cheer his heart through sensual diversions

Mordecai & Esther Introduced (2:5-2:7)
Verse 5: Mordecai = ___________ man
Verse 7: Hadassah = Jewish name meaning ___________ ; Esther = Persian name meaning ______

Esther Favored (2:8-2:9)

Esther’s Concealment & Mordecai’s Concern (2:10-2:11)

Perfumes & Preparations (2:12-2:14)
Verse 12: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women = Adam Clarke: Those who feed on coarse strong food, which is not easily digested, have generally a copious perspiration, which is strongly odorous; and in many . . . this _______ is far from being pleasant.

Esther Named Queen (2:15-2:20)
Verse 18: Treasury of Scripture Knowledge: Persian monarchs were accustomed to give their wives distinct ____________ and provinces for the purpose of supplying them with different articles of dress.

Mordecai Foils the Assassination Attempt (2:21-2:23)
Verse 22: became known = ______________, ______________, ______________

Conclusion
1. Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai and Esther really ___________.
2. Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai and Esther were not ______________.
3. Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai and Esther were used by God to complete His plan of ______________.
Act 2: The Die is Cast (Esther 3-4):
Haman's Rise, Mordecai's Despise & Esther's Advice

Haman's Rise and Mordecai’s Despise (3:1-3:6)
Verse 1: his seat: can also be translated ____________
Verse 1: above all the princes who were with him: Haman was, in effect, the king’s prime ____________
Verse 3: Donald Curtis: Why does Mordecai not bow down to Haman?

Calendars and Casting (3:7)
Verse 7: In the first month: Thomas Constable: The official casting of lots happened during the ____________ month of each year to determine the most opportune days for important events.
Verse 7: they cast Pur: poor; these were ______________ used for systematically making decisions

A Sinister Minister (3:8-3:9)
Verse 9: ten thousand talents: round weights
Verse 9: of silver:

1 talent = ________ shekels
1 shekel = ___ grams
1 gram = 1/28 ounce
1 ounce = $____

Ten thousand talents of silver would be worth approximately $______,000,000.00 as of (07/20/08)

The King’s Ring (3:10-3:11)

Law of the Land (3:12-3:15)
Verse 12: the king’s satraps: Wikipedia: the head of the administration of his ________________
Verse 12: Why would Haman have acted so early?
Verse 15: Why was the city perplexed?

Tears and Fears (4:1-4:3)
Verse 3: Where is the mention of ______?

Facing and Pacing (4:4-4:9)

Tradition’s Prohibition (4:10-4:12)
Verse 11: Jamieson-Faussett-Brown: The law alluded to was . . . adopted by the Persians, that all business should be transacted and petitions transmitted to the king through his __________________.

Man's Plans (4:13-4:14)
Verse 13: escape [slip away, be delivered]

Verse 14: Is Mordecai acknowledging God? Is Mordecai being a _________ Jew?

Contrasting Fasting (4:15-4:16)
Verse 16: Compare Exodus 12:1-6

Donald Curtis: Haman’s decree went out on the eve of the slaughter of the Passover _________. But Mordecai the Jew made no reference to this holiday of national deliverance at a time when the Jews needed deliverance! . . . Esther then called upon all the Jews in Susa to fast for three days. That period covered the time during which the Passover lamb was to have been slaughtered and _________.

Obedient and Expedient (4:17)

Conclusion
1. Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai and Esther really _________.
2. Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai and Esther were not ______________.
3. Ahasuerus, Vashti, Mordecai and Esther were used by God to complete His plan of ______________.
Act 3: The Game is Afoot (Esther 5-6): Esther's Plan, Haman's Plot and Mordecai's Prestige

The Courageous Queen (5:1-5:2)
Verse 2: golden scepter: JFB: held in the right hand, with one end resting on the ____________

The Magnanimous Monarch (Part 1) (5:3)
Verse 3: Persian kings gave their wives cities for their personal use

The Audible Appeal (Part 1) (5:4)
Verse 4: Why would Esther invite Haman?

The Quick Command (5:5)
Verse 5: Imagine a private banquet with the first ____________

The Magnanimous Monarch (Part 2) (5:6)

The Audible Appeal (Part 2) (5:7-5:8)
Verse 8: The way to a man’s heart . . .

The Heated Haman (5:9-11)
Verse 9: filled with indignation against Mordecai [This is a ______________ in Haman’s life.]

The Melancholy Minister (5:12-13)
Verse 12: Adam Clarke: __________ will ever render its possessor unhappy. . . . The soul was made for God, and nothing but God can fill it and make it happy.

The Sinister Support (5:14a)

The Completed Construction (5:14b)
Verse 14: Notice Haman never wastes _______

The King’s Chronicles (6:1-6:3a)
Verse 1: Why would he not be able to sleep after a banquet?

The Insomniac’s Insight (6:3b)
Verse 3: Esther 2:23

The Hidden Hand (6:4-6:5)
Verse 4: JFB: It is the custom for kings in Eastern countries to transact business before the sun is ____.
The Elliptical Inquiry (6:6a)

The Prideful Presumption (6:6b-6:9)
Verse 6: Adam Clarke: The royal apparel was never worn but by the king: even when the king had lain them aside, it was death to put them on.

Verse 9: David Guzik: Haman, in his childish desire to be praised and honored by all, asks for things that really matter very little, except to puff one up with pride. Haman is a tragic man who can only believe he has done well when he hears ________________. It is a good and sometimes appropriate thing to have applause here on earth, but it is tragic to live your life seeking for it.

Verse 9: Bob Deffinbaugh: Haman’s view of honor was to experience the honor of the king himself. He would love to wear the king’s clothing and ride the king’s horse. He would love to wear the king’s crown. He would love to parade about having the entire city bow down to him as they would the king. Is it not evident that Haman really would like to be the _______?

The Tables Turned (6:10)

The Public Picture (6:11)
Verse 11: Is Mordecai a ________________?

The Depressing Decree (6:12-6:13)

The Sequestering Servants (6:14)

Conclusion
David Guzik: Esther wasn't lucky to be queen; Mordecai wasn't lucky to have overheard the assassination plot; it wasn't luck or chance that made Haman enter the royal courts at this time with this heart. It was God; we don't say praise the luck! This becomes difficult, of course, when bad things happen to us. It is easy to see God's management of all things when we see good things happen. But what about the bad? Even then, we must trust God's total plan, realizing that all things work together for god to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). . . . Any one event, taken in isolation may seem to make no sense, but when we see all things working ________________, we see the ultimate wisdom of God's plan.
Act 4: The Fairer Sex (Esther 7-8): Haman’s Ordeal and Esther’s Appeal

Questions, Questions, Questions (7:1-7:2)
Verse 2: This is the ________ time Xerxes asks this question

The Deception Displayed (7:3-7:6)
Verse 4: destroyed . . . killed . . . annihilated: Esther is repeating the words of ________ in Esther 3:13
Verse 5: “Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?”
Adam Clarke: The original words. . . . “Who? He? This one? And where? This one? He? Who hath filled his heart to do thus?”

The Slippery Slope of Success (7:7-7:9a)
Verse 8: How ironic that Haman is now at the feet of a ______ when all he wanted was a ______ at his own feet
Verse 8: John Gill: It was the custom of the kings of Persia, that their servants covered the face of him the king was angry with, that he might not see his ________ any more
Verse 9: Harbonah: we met him in Esther 1:10 and he ______ have been the messenger that invited Haman

The Heated Hanging (7:9b-7:10)
Verse 10: David Guzik: Satan thought that he won by getting the crowd to crucify Jesus, but the cross turned out to be the instrument of his ____________. In the case of Mordecai and Haman, it was the guilty dying in the place of the _______________; in the case of us and Jesus, it is a matter of the innocent dying in the place of ____________.

The Property Passed (8:1-8:2)
Verse 1: Many commentators feel this was Mordecai’s promotion to prime minister
Verse 2: David Guzik: Haman . . . ends with nothing—nothing even to pass on to his family. He had climbed the ladder of success, but it was leaning against the wrong _______________!
The Nation Named (8:3-8:6)

The Statute Supplemented (8:7-8:8)
Verse 8: Bob Deffinbaugh: The king spared Esther’s life first because he loved her. And because He loved Esther, He spared those for whom she interceded—her people. God saves us for Christ’s sake, because of His love for His Son, Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ approaches the Father and intercedes for us. It is because of our Savior that we receive the blessings of ______.

The Royal Riders (8:9-8:10)
Verse 9: ______ months and ______ days after the prior letters went out in Esther 3:12

The Decree Defined (8:11-8:14)
Verse 11: the same words as Haman used in the original decree

Verse 11: Bob Deffinbaugh: The new law of Mordecai does not merely grant the Jews permission to defend themselves; it grants them permission to __________ themselves. . . . It seems the Jews were granted to kill virtually anyone they perceived to be a threat.

The Jubilant Jews (8:15-8:17)
Verse 15: Shushan rejoiced: literally, neighed as a ________

Verse 16: The Jews had light and gladness, joy and honor: David Guzik: Our salvation is not yet complete—yet we can rejoice, because of our confidence in our ________.

Conclusion (by Bob Deffinbuagh)
1. God has a ________

2. Watching God at ________ a pleasure and a wonder

3. God does what ____ cannot do

4. What a difference a ______ makes
Act 5: The Rest of the Story (Esther 9-10)

Purim and Peace

The Day Dawns (9:1-9:5)
Verse 1: overpower = have ________________ over

Verse 4: For Mordecai was great in the king’s palace, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces: see Joshua 6:27 and 1 Chronicles 14:17 for more on this concept

The Sons Slaughtered (9:6-9:10)
Verses 7-9: Parshandatha [given by prayer], Dalphon [dripping], Aspatha [the enticed gathered], Poratha [fruitfulness or frustration], Adalia [I shall be drawn up as Jah], Aridatha [the ______ of the decree], Parmashta [superior], Arisai [_______ of my banners], Aridai [the ______ is enough], and Vajezatha [strong as the wind]

The King’s Question (9:11-9:12)

The Appeal Augmented (9:13)
Why would Esther not ask for an extra ______ across all of the empire?
How does an extra day change things for the enemies of the Jews?

The Second Slaughter (9:15)

The Remainder Remembered (9:16-9:17)
Verse 17: day of feasting [feasting and ________________] and gladness [joy, pleasure]

The Celebration Commences (9:18-9:19)

The Celebration Circumscribed (9:20-9:25)
Verse 21: to establish [fulfill, confirm, ratify, impose] among them

Verse 22: from mourning to a holiday [literally, an ________________ day—a Jewish euphemism for holiday]

Verse 23: This was a _______ holiday, not a religious holiday

Bob Deffinbaugh: (1) Purim was not established by ______, but by men. (2) Purim is celebrated in a very different manner than the feasts which God has ordained.

The Celebration Christened (9:26-9:28)
Verse 26: Purim, after the name Pur [the same word as is used for Purim]
The Celebration Confirmed (9:29-9:32)
Verse 30: with words of peace and truth [stability, reliability]

The Postscript Printed (10:1-10:3)
Verse 1: And King Ahasuerus imposed tribute: Why is this the ________ mention of Xerxes?

Verse 2: Bob Deffinbaugh: Mordecai, we are told, was a great man. He was great because he was second only to the king himself in power. He was great because of his accomplishments, authority, strength, and greatness. He was great among the Jews because his fellow-Jews highly esteemed him. . . . Being great in the sight of men is not synonymous with being great in the eyes of ______.

David Guzik’s observations on the book
1. God loves a great story!

2. God will frustrate the wicked and proud

3. Though the hand of God is often hidden in human events, it is none the less active and real


Bob Deffinbaugh
We must interpret the Book of Esther in light of the ____________ Bible.

We are all too similar to Esther and Mordecai. . . . We find that this present temporal kingdom has a great attraction to us. It sometimes seems real, while the kingdom of our Lord seems distant and far-fetched. . . . Do we think that only the Jews of ancient days failed to recognize the hand of God and took credit for what God has done? We do exactly the same thing today.

Let us not leave the Book of Esther looking down our spiritual noses at Esther, Mordecai, and the Persian Jews. Let us leave the Book of Esther asking ourselves how we are like them and asking what we should do to be the people God has called us to be. Let us seek first the kingdom of God, and let all other things take a secondary place in our lives. Let us not exalt men and forget God. . . . Let us look for the ________ of God, even in the events of a secular world and through heathen officials and politicians. To God be the glory, great things He has done. Great things He ________ does and is yet to do.

Next Series: Getting to Know God (Anthromorphisms)

08/24: Introduction & Overview
08/31: Sentiment: Exploring the Emotions
09/07: Sight: Examining the Eyes
09/14: Strength: Analyzing the Arms
09/21: Smell: Noticing the Nose
09/28: Smile: Seeking the Smile