

Esther



Saviour of her people

Preparation Workbook for
INTERMEDIATES
2010 Manitoulin Youth Camp

Dear Intermediate Young Person,

I am glad that you are interested in coming to the Manitoulin Youth Camp this summer, God Willing.

Our subject this year is "Esther – Saviour of her people".

This workbook is part of your pre-camp assignment. There are two components:

The first part is a special project. This is work which you can hopefully share with the other class members during the camp week.

The second part is a series of questions based the book of Esther. By completing the questions ahead of time you will have a good background for our studies during the week.

I would make the following suggestions to help you prepare for our week of studies around our theme "Esther – Saviour of her people":

1. Plan to READ the appropriate chapters & verses regularly to get familiar with them.
2. Work through the question section of the workbook, setting goals to finish on time. For example, 10-15 questions per week.

Don't get frustrated; just give it your best shot. Some of these are 'thinking' questions so don't be afraid to ask someone else for help!

3. Work on your special project, again setting goals to ensure it is completed before camp starts.

Remember, the more you personally put into this study the more you will get out of it!

May God bless you as you labour in His Word, that together at Youth Camp we might all be able to share what we have learned and be prepared for the return of Christ.

See you in July, God Willing,

Uncle Chris.



SPECIAL PROJECTS

Type 1: Oral Presentation, Essay or Seminar.

The following suggested topics would be suitable for a 5 to 10 minute presentation or seminar to the rest of the class, or an essay of about 3 typed pages.

If you choose a presentation please try to make use of maps and diagrams to enhance it. You can also make use of a computer and LCD projector if you like! Also make a one page summary of your presentation and make 40 copies of this for the other class members.

If you do an essay, please make 1 copy of it for your teacher to keep, and 40 copies of a one page summary to give to the other class members.

Some suggested topics (in no particular order):

1. A character study of one of the characters from the book of Esther. (Esther, Haman, Mordecai, The King, Vashti, etc)
2. God's Providence as seen in the Life of Esther (despite the fact the name of God never appears in the book!)
3. Faith and Courage demonstrated in the life of Esther.
4. "Enemy in the House" – dealing with our 'Haman Nature'.
5. Mordecai as a type of Christ.
6. Your choice. Contact me if you have another idea you would like to present.

Type 2: Creative Projects

Some of you may not want to do a talk or an essay and would rather let your creative energy be channelled in another direction.

There are many very dramatic scenes in this story.

Be sure you know the Biblical account very well and bring out the details and lessons. You will need to do just as much research and study for a creative project as for a talk or essay.

Here are some ideas:

1. Dramatization. Write a skit or short play based on one section or event from the life of Esther. The skit may be historical or a modern day setting based on the principles from these chapters. If possible, find a couple of friends to help you enact your play for all of us to enjoy.
2. Draw a picture or make a model from one of the incidents in Esther's life.
3. Write a short story in a modern setting, based on an incident from the life of Esther.
4. Make a crossword puzzle based on the Life of Esther.
5. Create a board game or maze based on Esther's life.
6. Write a song or poem about an incident in Esther's life.
7. Your idea. Contact me if you have a project in mind and we will discuss its suitability.

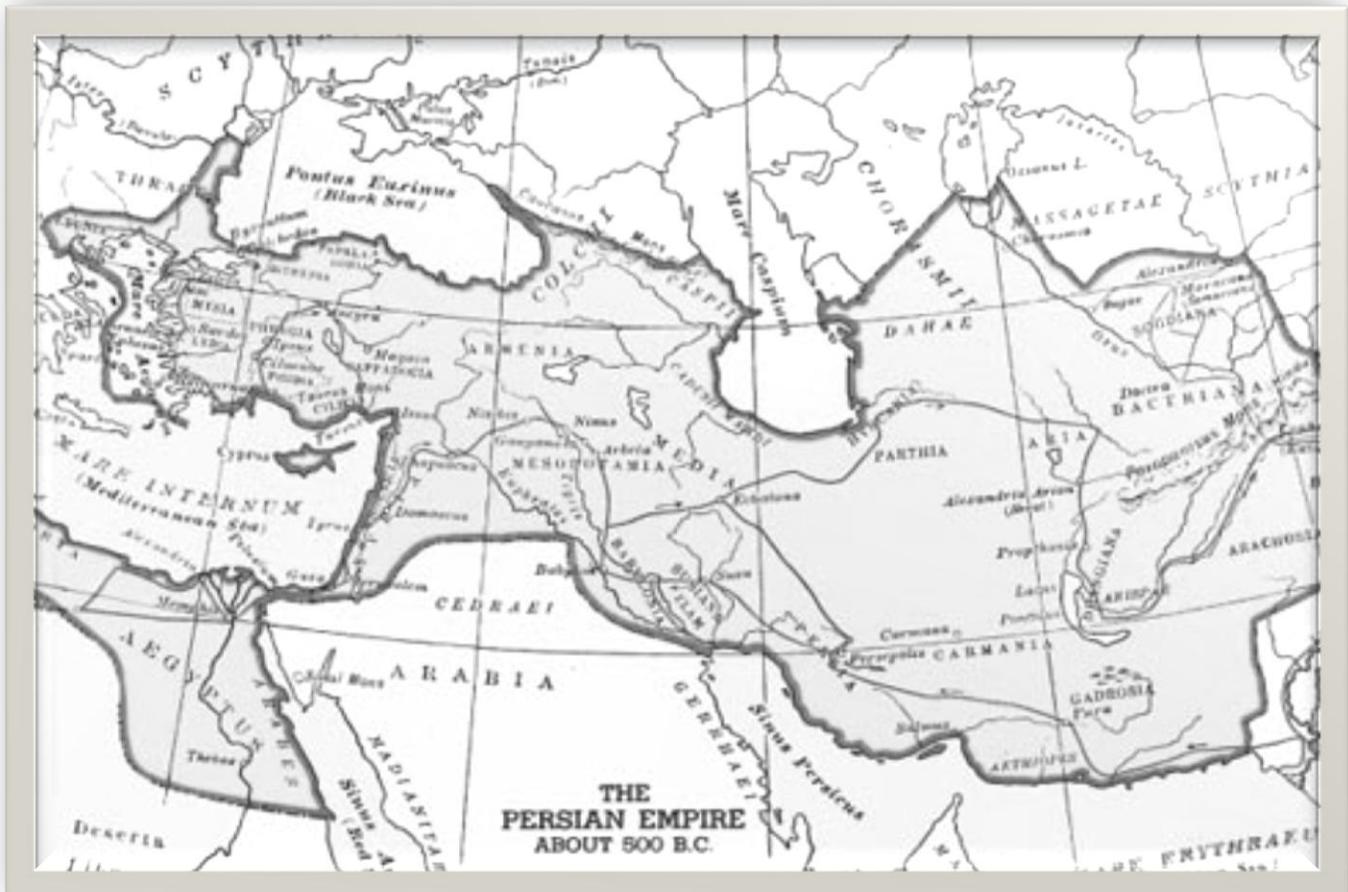
Chapter 1 – The King's Feasts and Vashti deposed

1. "The days of Ahasuerus..." (1:1) Do some research on this King and try to answer the following questions: (Look in a Bible Dictionary or Encyclopedia for help.)

- a. Was 'Ahasuerus' a name or a title?
- b. What other names/titles did he have?
- c. When did he reign?
- d. What other interesting points did you find?



2. Note the extent of Ahasuerus dominion on the map below. (1:1)
Locate/Highlight on the map: Ethiopia, India, Israel, Shushan, and Babylon.



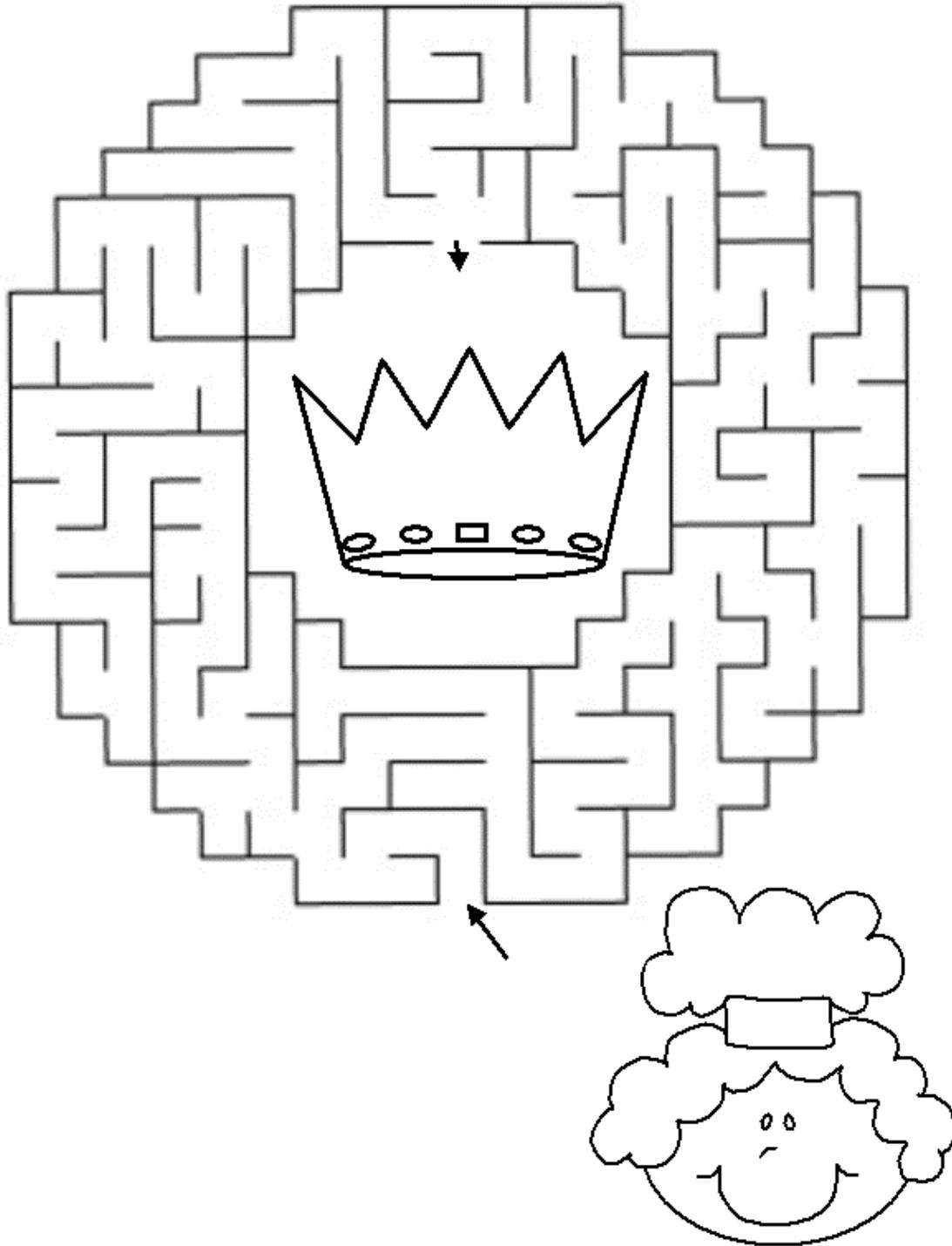
3. In the time of Esther the Kingdom had 127 provinces. (1:1) How does this compare to the time of Daniel in Dan.6:1?

4. "Shushan the palace..." (1:2) Do some research on this place, and try to answer the following questions:
 - a. By what other names was this city known?
 - b. List some significant facts about this place.
 - c. What other Bible characters lived in this place? See Neh. 1:1; Dan. 8:2
5. For how long did the feast last? (1:4)
6. "both great and small..." (1:5) What does the fact the King included everyone in this feast tell us about his character?
7. Chapter 1 verse 6 describes the beautiful garden in which the feast was held. By comparing with other versions, looking at the meaning of the words used, etc, describe the scene in your own words below:
8. From where might the golden drinking vessels have come? (1:7) Cp. Daniel 1:2 Why is this significant?
9. Describe in your words the meaning of chapter 1 verse 8. What do you think was the result of such a law?

10. Vashti made a feast 'for the women'. (1:9)
 - a. Is there any indication that the King's feast was only for men? (Re-read 1:2-8)
 - b. Why do you think Vashti held her own feast?
 - c. Where was her feast held?
11. At what point in the feast did Ahasuerus call for Vashti? (1:10)
12. 'the heart of the King was merry with wine...' (1:10)
 - a. Was the King intoxicated? Give reasons for your answer. Cp. Psa 104:15; Pro 31:4
 - b. Is drinking wine bad in all situations? Explain. Cp. Pro 20:1; 1Tim 5:23
13. How many chamberlains listed in chapter 1 verse 10?
14. Why did the King want Vashti to come to his feast? (1:11)
15. Why do you think Vashti refused the King's command? (1:12)
16. Ahasuerus' anger was intense (1:12) Was this response justified? Give reasons.
17. On several occasions the King asks counsel of his wise men. (1:13) What does this tell us about Ahasuerus? (Hint: Do you think it was common for a supreme ruler to ask advice of others?)
18. How many wise men are listed in chapter 1 verse 14?
19. The King seems very concerned with following the law (1:8, 15). What does this tell us about the King?

Esther the Queen Maze

Help Esther find her crown so she can save the Jews.



20. What should a woman/wife do if she does not agree with her husband on a matter? Cp. 1Pet. 3:1-6; Titus 2:3-5

21. What lesson do we learn from the fact that others might have followed Vashti's bad example?

22. 'that it be not altered...' (1:19) Where else do we read of such a law? Describe the circumstances. Cp. Est. 8:8; Dan. 6:8, 15

23. Do you think Ahasuerus ever regretted signing this law? (1:19) See 2:1

24. Vashti refuses to obey the King's command, and is thrust out from his presence. Who do you think she represents in the 'parable of Esther'? Hint: She was rejected for disobedience to the King. See Luke 13:25-28



25. 'every man should bear rule in his own house...' (1:22) Find other passages in the Bible that support this teaching. (Ex. 1Tim. 3:4)

26. What do you think was the main lesson for us from this chapter?

Chapter 2 – The Call of Esther

1. "the wrath of King Ahasuerus was appeased..." (2:1)

a. Why do you think he was no longer mad?

b. Why could he not just bring Vashti back?

c. What does this verse tell us about the King?



2. To what city were the young women brought? (2:3)
3. Where in the city were they taken, and under whose charge? (2:3)
4. What do we have to be like to 'please the King'? (2:4) Cp. John 15:14
5. What is significant about Mordecai's genealogy ('family tree')? (2:5) His tribe?
6. Research the facts concerning the 'captivity of Jeconiah'. (2:6) See 2 Kings 24:6
 - a. What was the year of Jeconiah's captivity?
 - b. What else was taken from Jerusalem?
 - c. Who else was taken captive then?
 - d. Where was Jeconiah taken?
 - e. How then do you think Mordecai ended up in Shushan?
7. Esther's Hebrew name was 'Hadassah'. (2:7) Research the meaning of both her Hebrew and Persian names, and comment upon anything significant.
8. How were Mordecai and Esther related? (2:7) Do you think there was a large age gap between them? Explain.

9. "fair and beautiful" (2:7)
 - a. Find other people in scripture of whom this is said.

 - b. Do you think Esther's stunning good looks were a blessing or a curse? Explain.

10. What was the role of Hegai? (2:8)

11. Why do you think Hegai was attracted to Esther, above the other girls? (2:9)

12. List the things Hegai gave to Esther, and why these things would have given her an 'advantage' over the other maidens brought into the palace. (2:9)

13. Do you think it was wise for Esther not to reveal her nationality at this time? (2:10) Explain.

14. Was Mordecai asking Esther to be deceitful by hiding the fact she was a Jew? (2:10) Explain.

15. Describe what Mordecai was doing while Esther was in the palace. (2:11)

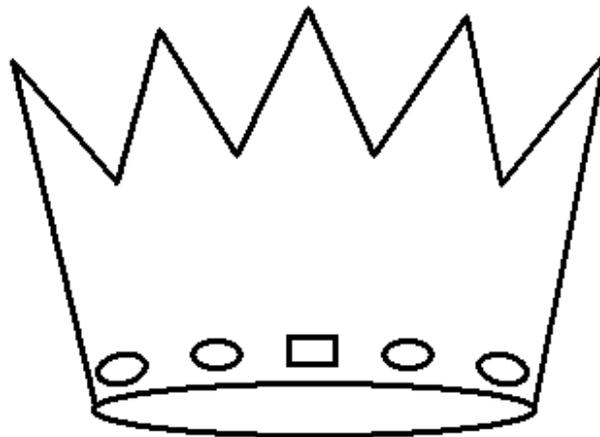
16. Describe the 'process' Esther went through in preparation to go before the King. (2:12)



Esther the Queen Word Search

I K I L L E D C P B S H H X K
C A I G I I R B E N R A O A I
H H C Q N O O A R X C A V G N
O S E E W W U D M M Y L V E G
S I G N D T E Z I N V I T E D
E W A F I R I Y S U O L A E J
N E R F O Y O V S R E Y A R P
A J U N B K W M I D E T S A F
A L O N A M A H O S U P P E R
B H C Q U E E N N W M H Y D W

beautiful
bow
brave
chosen
courage
crown
fasted
Haman
honored
invited



jealousy
Jewish
killed
king
Mordecai
permission
prayer
Queen
saved
supper

17. Esther relied totally on Hegai to give her what she needed before she went to see the King.

(2:15)

a. What does this tell us about Esther?

b. What does this tell us about Hegai?

18. Why do you think Esther found favour with 'all them that looked upon her'? (2:15)

19. How long has it been since the feasts of Chapter 1? (Cp. 2:16 and 1:3)

20. Why do you think the King chose Esther above all the other maidens? (2:17)

21. Esther continued to hide her true identity. (2:20)

a. Why do you think Mordecai insisted on this?

b. What does this tell us about the relationship between Esther and Mordecai, even after she is made queen?



22. How close were Bigthan and Teresh to the King? (2:21) Was their threat realistic? (i.e. could they have pulled off the assignation?)

23. How do you think it was possible for Mordecai to find out their secret? (2:22)

24. Mordecai receives no formal recognition or reward for saving the King's life. (2:23)

- a. What happened to the conspirators?

- b. What is done for Mordecai?

- c. How does this become significant later?

- d. What lesson do we learn from this incident?

25. What do you think was the main lesson for us from this chapter?

Chapter 3 – The introduction of Haman: the Jew's Enemy

1. "After these things..." (3:1) About how many years have passed since Esther's marriage to the King? (cp. 2:16 and 3:7)

2. Haman was an "Agagite" (3:1)

a. Who was Agag? (See 1Sam. 15:8-32)

b. Comment on the Amalekites based on the following passages:
Exodus 17:8-16

Num. 24:20

Deut. 25:17-19

3. What role did Haman play in the King's court? (3:1-2, 10)



4. Why do you think the King required all his other servants to bow down and reverence Haman? (3:2)
5. Who was first to notice that Mordecai wasn't bowing down and ask Mordecai about it? (3:3)
6. How often did Mordecai face this interrogation? (3:4)
7. Describe a situation in your life where you had to do something that was 'unpopular' because of your religious beliefs.

8. At what point did Haman actually notice Mordecai? (3:5)



9. Chapter 3 verse 6 gives us an insight into the mind of Haman. Why do you think Haman's mean and unforgiving response was so extreme? (3:6)

10. Describe in your own words what is happening in chapter 3 verse 7.

11. What day was finally chosen as Haman's 'lucky day'? (3:13)

12. Who do you think was controlling the 'lot'? (Hint: Pro. 16:33)

Unscramble the letters to find the words in our

Esther the Queen Anagram



aberv _____

acegoru _____

ehjsw _____

eenqu _____

aeprry _____

acdeimor _____

adesv _____

cnorw _____

afginst _____

aejlosuy _____

13. Does Haman ever mention the name Mordecai or the identity "Jews" to the King? (3:8-9)

14. How much money does Haman offer the King to destroy this people? (3:9) Cp. Matt. 18:24

15. How do you think he hoped to re-coup this expense? (cp. 3:13; See also 4:7)

16. What does the King give Haman to fulfill his request? (3:10-11) What does this tell us about the relationship between Haman and the King?

17. How extensive was this decree distributed? (3:12) Why is that significant?

18. Who wrote the decree? In whose name was the decree sealed? (3:12)

19. What did the decree say? Be specific. (3:13)



20. Why was there so much haste involved in delivering this decree? (3:15)

21. What does Haman do once the decree becomes 'official'?

22. Why do you think the city was 'perplexed'? (3:15)

23. What do you think was the main lesson for us from this chapter?

Chapter 4 – Mordecai's charge to Esther

1. Find other people in the Bible who 'rent' their clothes and 'put on' sackcloth. Why did they do this? (4:1) (For example: Gen. 37:34; 1Ch 21:16; Dan. 9:3)
2. Mordecai could no longer come into the King's gate. (4:2) How do you think Haman felt about that? (Cp. 3:2)
3. What information did Esther want Hatach to find out from Mordecai? (4:5) What does this tell us about Esther's knowledge of what was going on?
4. Where did Hatach meet Mordecai? (4:6)
5. Mordecai told Hatach about Haman's plan. (4:7) What piece of information does Mordecai tell him that would not have been common knowledge? How do you think Mordecai knew this?
6. Why do you think Mordecai felt responsible for Haman's plan? (Hint: Why did Haman want to wipe out all Jews?)

15. "If I perish I perish..." (4:16)

- a. What is Esther being fatalistic ('giving up on life'), or is this an expression of faith?

- b. What is the lesson for us?

16. What do you think was the main lesson for us from this chapter?

Chapter 5 – Esther before the King

1. Describe the emotion in verse 2. What was going through the King's mind? What was Esther thinking? (5:2)

2. What future event is prefigured in verses 1 and 2? (5:2) Hint: Esther had been 'as good as dead' for the last 3 days. (See 4:16)

3. Why did the King know that Esther must have had an important request? (5:3)

4. "...to the half of the Kingdom" (5:3) What did the King mean by this offer? Find another place in the Bible where this phrase is used. (For example: Mark 6:23)

5. Esther simply asks the King to come to a feast with Haman. (5:4)
 - a. What do you think the King would have thought about this strange request?

 - b. Do you think this was Esther's original plan, or was she 'chickening out'? Explain.

6. Why do you think the King acts in such 'haste'? (5:5)

7. Esther again asks the King and Haman to attend another banquet on the next day. (5:7-8)
 - a. Would this have surprised the King?

 - b. Why is Esther dragging the matter out, and not asking the King right away to save her people?

 - c. How does her 'patience' pay off? (Hint: Think of the events of the next 24 hours.)

8. Why was Haman so happy when he left the banquet? (5:9) See verse 12
 - a. What changed his mood?

 - b. What does this tell us about Haman's character?

9. Mordecai is back in the King's gate. (5:9) What does this tell us about what he is wearing (or not wearing)? (See 4:2) What is significant about that?

10. Haman 'refrained himself'. (5:10) Why do you think Haman was able to do this? (Hint: With what thought would he have comforted himself? See 3:6)

5. At that very moment Haman approaches the King's court. (6:4-5)
 - a. What does this tell us about the access Haman had to the King? (cp. 4:11)

 - b. What was Haman going to request of the King?

 - c. If the King had not been reminded about the need to reward Mordecai, how do you think he would have responded to Haman's request to execute Mordecai? (Cp. 3:10-11)

6. Haman came to ask something of the King, but instead the King asks him something. (6:6)
 - a. Why was it important for the King to speak first, before Haman made his request?

 - b. What did the King ask? (6:6)

 - c. Who was the King thinking about in his question?

7. When the King asked Haman asked about 'the man the delights to honour' (6:6):
 - a. Who did Haman think the King was talking about?

 - b. What does this tell us about Haman's character?

 - c. 'thought in his heart' (6:6) Describe the thoughts of the human heart. (See Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Jer 17:9; Mk. 7:18-23)

CRYPTOGRAM

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
15	22	9	14	7	2	1	24	25	18	11	20	8	10	5	6	17	4	16	12	23	3	13	26	21	19

____ _ , _____
 2 15 3 5 23 4 25 16 14 7 9 7 25 12 2 23 20 15 10 14

____ _ : _____
 22 7 15 23 12 21 25 16 3 15 25 10 22 23 12 15

____ _ _____
 13 5 8 15 10 12 24 15 12 2 7 15 4 7 12 24 12 24 7

____ _ , _____
 20 5 4 14 16 24 7 16 24 15 20 20 22 7

____ _ . _____ 3 1 : 3 0
 6 4 15 25 16 7 14 6 4 5 3 7 4 22 16

Directions:

This puzzle is called a Cryptogram. I've always loved doing them! At the top there is a KEY that lists all the letters from A thru Z with a box below. Each of the letters has a corresponding number.

The bottom part contains a secret phrase. Each of the blanks has a number underneath it. Fill in the letters that correspond to the numbers below the blanks to solve the phrase.

11. After being honoured with such great pomp, Mordecai simply returns to the King's gate.

(6:12)

a. What does this tell us about his character?

b. What is the lesson for us? (Hint: Compare Mordecai's character to Haman's!)

12. What does Haman do after completing the task given to him by the King? (6:12) What had he hoped to accomplish that day?

13. Haman now calls for another 'family conference'. (6:13)

a. How was his speech this time different from the last one? (See 5:11-12)

b. How is the reaction of his wife different this time?

14. Zeresh's words in 6:13 are so incredibly true regarding God's chosen people the Jews.

Verify these words from Scripture. (For example Gen. 12:3)

15. With what frame of mind would Haman have gone to the second banquet? (6:14) Compare this with his feelings in chapter 5 verse 9.

16. Think back over the events of the last 24 hours of the narrative. (From the time Esther first approached the King until now.)
- a. How would things have been different if Esther had told the King her request when he first asked (after extending his golden sceptre)?

 - b. What about if she had told him at the first banquet?

 - c. What has the King learned about Haman in the meantime?

 - d. What has the King learned (or been reminded of) about Mordecai in the meantime?
17. What do you think was the main lesson for us from this chapter?

Chapter 7 – The Enemy Exposed

1. The King again asks Esther the reason for her banquet. (7:2) Compare his words here with the previous time(s) he asked her these questions. (See 5:3, 6) Are there any differences?

2. Esther very carefully responds to the King's question. (7:3) List the 4 phrases she uses to 'set the king up' for her appeal.

3. How did her words of verse 3 'set the King up' to respond favourably to what she was about to tell him? Remember, the King was going to have to make a choice between Esther and Haman.

4. Esther now drops the 'bombshell'! List the phrases she uses to describe her plight: (7:4)

5. Why do you think Esther adds the following? "But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue" (7:4)

6. What does she mean by "although the enemy could not countervail the King's damage"? (7:4) (Check other translations)

7. Esther's words obviously hit the mark. Describe the King's emotions expressed in 7:5.

8. Again, the King doesn't make the connection between the plight of Esther's people and Haman's request in 3:8-9 (7:4-5)
How do you think this could happen – that the King is unaware of the decree Haman sent out in the King's name?

Note he says "that durst presume in his heart to do so" (7:5).
Haman had done more than 'think' about this plan – it was very much in action!

9. What would it have been about being 'before the King and the queen' that made Haman afraid? (7:6)



10. The King seems to have put all the pieces together and now sees clearly what Haman has plotted all along. What do you think made him so mad? (7:7)

11. Why do you think he went out into the palace garden? (7:7)

12. Describe the irony of Haman now pleading for his life before Esther (a Jewess)? (7:7)

13. What do you think Haman would have said to Esther at this time? (7:7)

14. When the King returned to the banquet room it says "Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was" (7:8). Describe the scene in your own words.

15. Why did they cover Haman's face after the King spoke?



16. Harbonah now speaks up against Haman and in favour of Mordecai. (7:9)
 - a. Why is he not afraid to speak up against Haman? What has changed?

 - b. How did he know about the gallows, and Haman's plan to hang Mordecai on them? (Was this plot ever revealed publicly? Recall the events of chapter 6.)

 - c. Why do you think Harbonah speaks favourably of Mordecai at this time?

17. What do you think was the main lesson for us from this chapter?

Chapter 8 – Reversing Haman's mischief

1. Why do you think the King gave Haman's house to Esther? (8:1) What did this actually mean? (See Psa. 37:34; Pro. 13:22)
2. The King now learns of the connection between Mordecai and Esther. (8:1) What would have been the impact of this revelation?
3. We again see the perfection of God's timing. How do you think things would have been different if Mordecai and Esther had revealed their relationship at the beginning of the story?
4. What does Mordecai receive from the King and Esther? (8:2)
5. Within 24 hours Mordecai goes from being on 'death row' to becoming second unto the King. (8:2) Who else in scripture experienced such a dramatic turn of events? Give a few details.

6. Why does Esther have to plead again to the King to “put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite”? (8:3) Haman was now dead. Why wasn't that enough to solve the problem?

7. Esther has risked her life a second time. (8:4) Why did the King have to hold 'out the golden sceptre' again?

8. Esther once more chooses her words very carefully. The matter still hangs in the balance, and she must influence the King. What phrases does she use to beg for mercy? (8:5)



9. Why does Esther add “For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?” (8:6)

10. Why does the King restate what he has done? (8:7) What does he say was the motivation for his actions?

11. What does the King suggest Mordecai and Esther do? (8:8)

12. Why does the King remind them that whatever is written in the King's name cannot be changed? (8:8)

13. Mordecai's writing goes out in the third month, on the 23rd day of the month. (8:9) How long was this before Haman's plan called for the destruction of the Jews? (See 3:13)

14. Compare 8:9 (Mordecai's decree) with 3:12 (Haman's decree). What do you notice about the two decrees? Why is this significant?

15. Haman's decree was still in effect, since the King's word could not be changed. Mordecai's decree allowed the Jews to defend themselves (8:13). How did this 'undo' Haman's law without going against the King's word?

Note: Even after Haman's death, his decree was still in force. A new decree needed to be written. Each Jew had to fight his own battle!

Mordecai had defeated his adversary, Haman, but now had to provide a way for each member of his community to be saved. This is like Christ, who defeated sin in his own body, and also provided a way for us to have victory – we are involved in the battle. He accomplished the victory, but we have to be engaged in the outworking of it in our own lives!

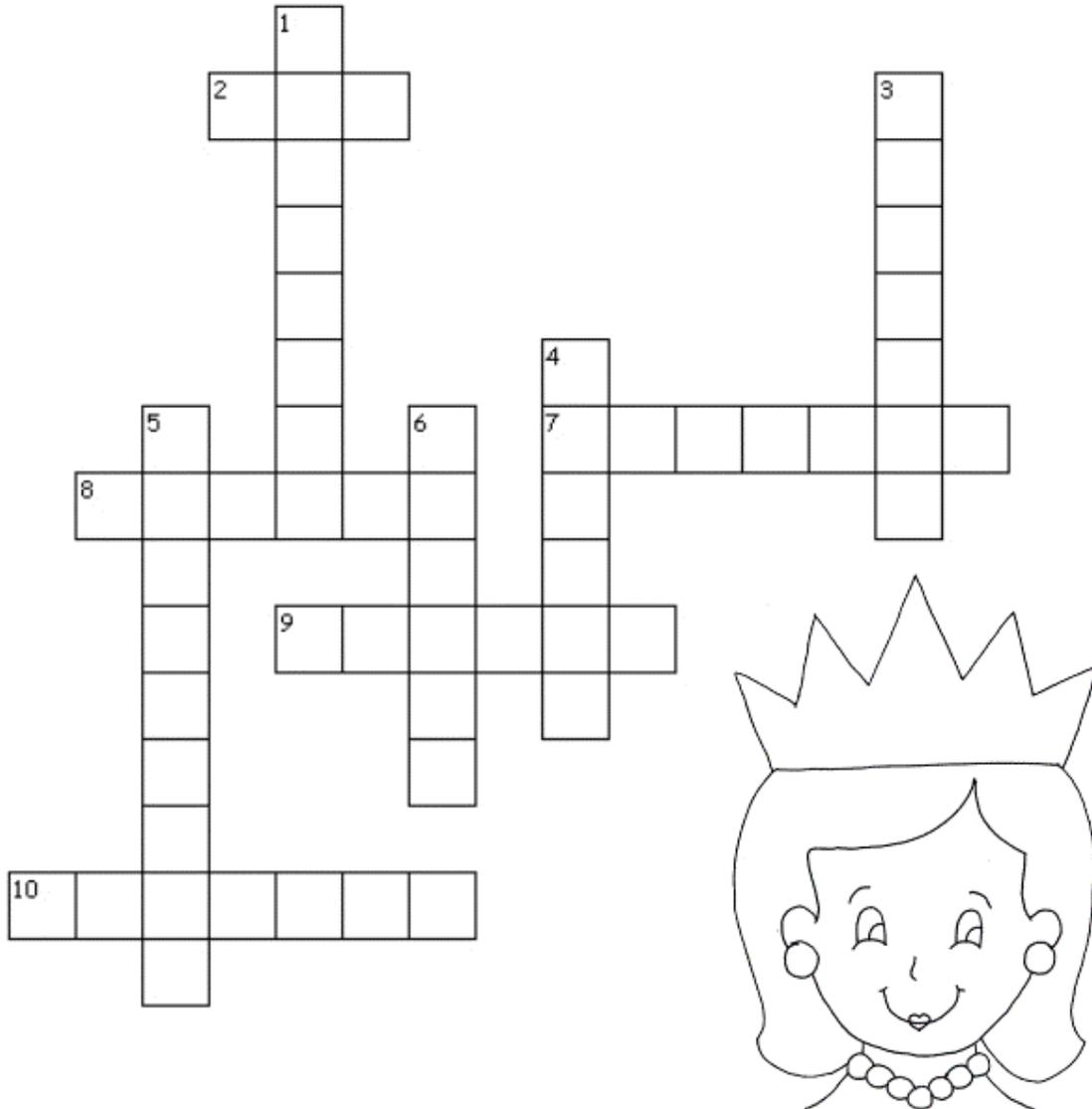
16. Contrast the reaction of the city of Shushan towards both the decrees. (Compare 3:15 and 8:15) Why is there difference?

17. Why did "many of the people of the land became Jews"? (8:17) What does this mean?

18. What do you think was the main lesson for us from this chapter?



Esther Crossword



Across

2. Mordecai refused to do this to Haman, so Haman decided to get rid of all the Jews.
7. Esther could not approach the king unless he ____ her first.
8. Haman and the king didn't know that Esther was this.
9. Esther prayed and ____ for three days before she went to the king.
10. Esther was full of this as a young Queen who wanted to do the right thing.

Down

1. The name of Esther's cousin.
3. Mordecai was ____ by the king because he saved his life.
4. Esther could've been ____ for going to the king without permission.
5. Young Esther won the king's heart because she was so ____.
6. God made Esther queen because she was ____ to save the Jews.

5. "...but on the spoil laid they [the Jews] not their hand" (9:10)
 - a. What does this tell us about the Jews motivation? (See also 9:15, 16)

 - b. How does this contrast with Haman's intentions? (See 3:9,13)

 - c. What is the lesson for us? (Note: Legally the Jews were allowed to partake of the spoil. See 8:11)

6. Why does the King recount the events of the day to Esther. (9:12)

7. What two further requests does Esther make? (9:13)

8. Haman's sons suffered the same fate as their father. (9:14)
 - a. Comment on the significance of this principle in scripture. (See Ex 20:5; Josh. 7:24; Job 27:13-15)

 - b. Can you think of any examples where the sons escape the consequences of their father's actions? (For example the Sons of Korah) What is the difference in these cases?

9. What happens on the second day of fighting? (9:15) Where does this take place?

10. What is the total number of enemies of the Jews killed in Shushan? Is there any indication that any Jews lost their lives?

Chapter 10 – Mordecai's fame

1. Chapter 10 is kind of like an appendix or epilogue of the story. Why the focus on Mordecai at this time? (10:2) How is the picture of him here different from our first introduction to him?

2. Mordecai is second only to the King. (10:3)
 - a. Who else in Scripture held this position? (For example Gen. 41:39-44)

 - b. Who is Mordecai typical of in this role? (See Psa 110:1; Mt 28:18)

3. Contrast Mordecai as 'Second in Command' to the time when Haman played that role.
 - a. Who do you think the people preferred as a leader?

 - b. What type of leader was Haman?

 - c. What type of leader was Mordecai?

 - d. Who was Haman most concerned about?

 - e. Who was Mordecai most concerned about?

 - f. What does this teach us about good leadership?

4. What do you think was the main lesson for us from the story of Esther?