

# *Esther*



## *Saviour of her people*

Preparation Workbook for  
TEENS  
2010 Manitoulin Youth Camp

Dear Teen Young Person,

I am glad that you are interested in coming to the Manitoulin Youth Camp this summer, God Willing. We are very pleased to have Uncle Tim Badger as our main Teen teacher.

Uncle Tim's subject is "Esther – Saviour of her people".

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

The first is a special project which you can work on individually or in pairs. 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 me 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.

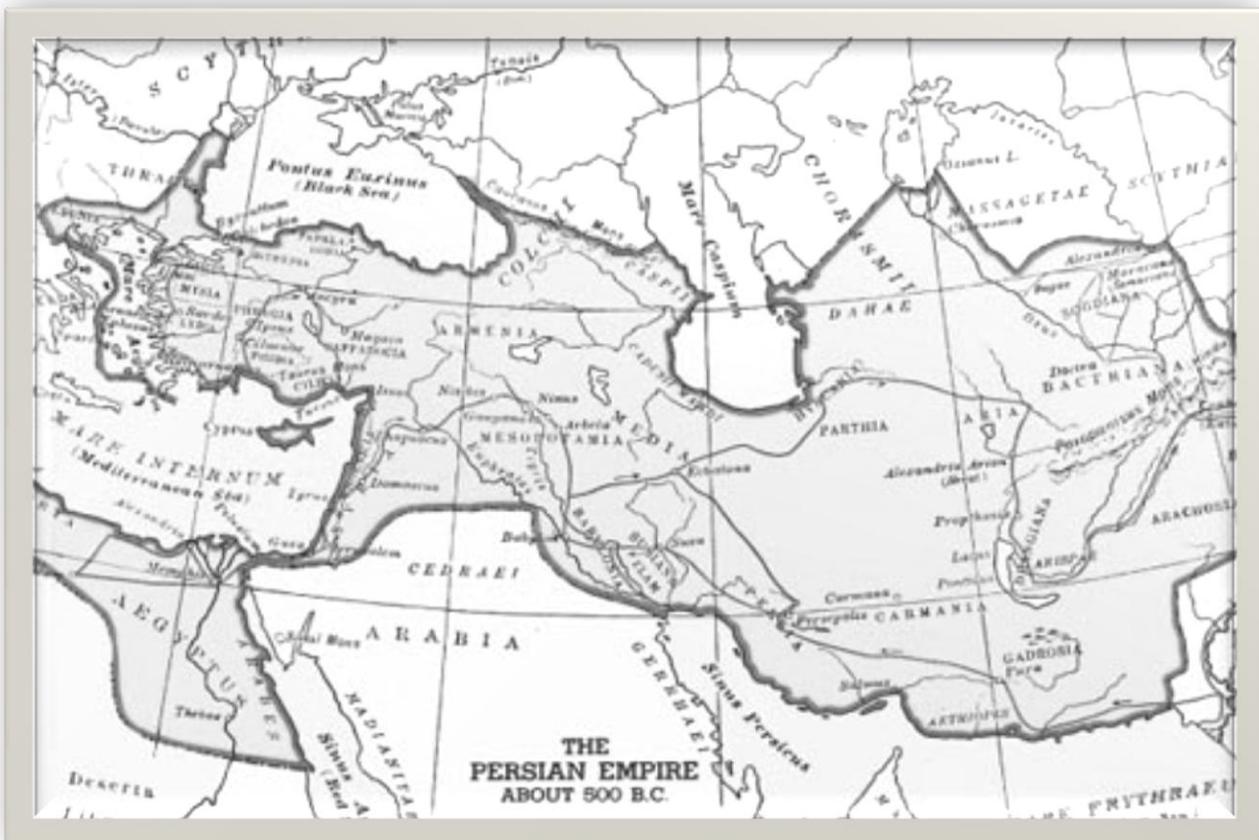
**Chapter 1 – The King's Feasts and Vashti deposed**

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. Is India mentioned elsewhere in the Bible? (1:1)
- 4. Find another passage in the Bible where is Ethiopia mentioned, and state the significance of that reference. (1:1)

5. In the time of Esther the Kingdom had 127 provinces. (1:1)
  - a. How does this compare to the time of Daniel in Dan.6:1?
  
  - b. What does this tell us about the relative timing of Esther and Daniel?
  
6. "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
  
7. Why do you think the King made a feast for all his princes and servants at this time? (1:3)
  
8. What else is known about the combined powers of Media and Persia? (1:3) See Daniel 5:28; 8:20.
  
9. For how long did the feast last? (1:4)
  
10. Why do you think the feast lasted so long? (1:4) (Hint: Do you think all the rulers of every province were together at one time at the palace for the whole length of the feast? What problems may this have posed if they were? How else might it have been organized?)
  
11. "showed the riches of his glorious Kingdom..."(1:4) Do you think the King was 'showing off' or 'bragging'? If so, why do you think he would do that? If not, for what reason was he doing this?

12. Why do you think the King had a second feast for only the residents of Shushan? (1:5)
  
13. "both great and small..." (1:5) What does the fact the King included everyone in this feast tell us about his character?
  
14. Why is it significant that this second feast lasted 7 days? (1:5)
  
15. Why is it significant that this feast was in a 'garden'? (1:5)
  
16. 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:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
17. What do you think the picture described in chapter 1 verse 6 is meant to make us think about?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
18. Why mention that all the drinking vessels were made of gold? (1:7)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
19. What do 'vessels' represent in Scripture? (1:7) See 2Cor 4:7; 2Tim 2:20-21.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
20. From where might these vessels have come? (1:7) Cp. Daniel 1:2 Why is this significant?

21. Describe in your words the meaning of chapter 1 verse 8. What do you think was the result of such a law?
22. Vashti made a feast 'for the women'. (1:9)
- Is there any indication that the King's feast was only for men?
  - Why do you think Vashti held her own feast?
  - Where was her feast held? Why is this significant?
23. At what point in the feast did Ahasuerus call for Vashti? (1:10) Why do you think he waited until this point to do so?
24. 'the heart of the King was merry with wine...' (1:10)
- Was the King intoxicated? Give reasons for your answer. Cp. Psa 104:15; Pro 31:4
  - Is drinking wine bad in all situations? Explain. Cp. Pro 20:1; 1Tim 5:23
25. How many chamberlains listed in chapter 1 verse 10? Why is this significant?
26. Why did the King want Vashti to come to his feast? (1:11) Do you think this was an inappropriate request? Explain.
27. Why do you think Vashti refused the King's command? (1:12) Was this a wise decision? Explain.

28. Ahasuerus' anger was intense (1:12) Was this response justified?
29. 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?)
30. How many wise men are listed in chapter 1 verse 14? Why is this significant?
31. 'which saw the King's face...' (1:14) What does this phrase mean?
32. The King seems very concerned with following the law (1:8, 15). What does this tell us about the King?
33. Why did Memucan think that Vashti's actions had negative implications for the whole Kingdom? (1:16-18) Do you think this was an over-reaction? Explain.
34. 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
35. What lesson do we learn from the fact that others might have followed Vashti's bad example?
36. '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

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

38. 'come no more before...' (1:19) What do you think happened to Vashti?

39. Do you think the wise men had a plan to find a replacement in mind at this time? (1:19) Explain.



40. 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

41. How important is the stability of the family unit for the thriving of an empire? (1:20) Explain.

42. The decree was published in many languages throughout the empire (1:22) Of what might this be symbolic? Mt 24:14; Mk. 16:15; Rev 10:11

43. 'every man should bear rule in his own house...' (1:22)

a. Find other passages in the Bible that support this teaching. (Ex. 1Tim. 3:4)

b. Why is this important for all people, both 'small and great'? (cp. v. 20)

44. What do you think was a key point 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. Why were only ‘fair young virgins’ sought for the King? (2:2) What is the lesson for us? Cp. Rev 14:4
  
3. Why do you think they sought maidens from ‘all the provinces’ of the Kingdom? (2:3)  
Hint: Who does the gospel message go out to?
  
4. Where in the city were the young women taken, and under whose charge? (2:3)
  
5. What do we have to be like to ‘please the King’? (2:4) Cp. John 15:14
  
6. ‘a certain Jew...’ (2:5) What do we learn about Mordecai from this, besides the obvious fact of his nationality?
  
7. What is significant about Mordecai’s genealogy? (2:5) His tribe?



13. "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.



14. To where were the maidens brought? (2:8) Describe how you think they would have felt at this time?

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

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

17. 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)

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

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

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

21. Describe the 'process' Esther went through in preparation to go before the King. (2:12) Beside each point give a 'spiritual lesson' for each stage of the preparation.
22. What kinds of things do you think the maidens would choose to 'go with her out of the house' on her night to be with the King? (2:13)
23. What was the 'second house of the women'? (2:14) What do you think it represented? (Cp. Re 2:11; 20:6)
24. What is the spiritual significance of being 'called by name'? (2:14) See Mt 25:12
25. Esther relied totally on Hegai to give her what she needed before she went to see the King. (2:15)
- What does this tell us about Esther?
  - What does this tell us about Hegai?
26. Why do you think Esther found favour with 'all them that looked upon her'? (2:15)
27. What is the significance of the 'tenth month' and 'seventh year'? (2:16)
28. How long has it been since the feasts of Chapter 1? (Cp. 2:16 and 1:3)



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

30. 'he set the royal crown on her head...' (2:17) Of what is this symbolic? See 2Tim. 4:8



31. What future event is typified in 2:18? Provide scriptural proof. Hint: The word 'release' = 'rest'. (Cp. Heb. 4:11)

32. Why is it significant that Mordecai 'sat in the King's gate'? (2:19) How do you think he got to be in this prominent position?

33. 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?

c. What is the lesson for us?



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

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

36. 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?

37. What do you think was a key point 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. Give a brief history of the Amalekites. (Cp. Exodus 17; Num. 24:20; Deut. 25:17-19)



- c. Why is it ironic that Mordecai was from the tribe of Benjamin, the same tribe as King Saul? (See 2:5)
  
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. Of what do you think Haman is symbolic? (Hint: Rom. 6:6, 12-14)
  
6. Why do you think the other servants ask Mordecai about his refusal to bow down? (3:3) (Cp. Dan. 6:4-5)
  
7. What answer did Mordecai give them? (3:4)
  
8. How often did Mordecai face this trial? (3:4) What is the lesson for us?
  
9. Describe a situation in your life where you had to do something that was 'unpopular' because of your religious beliefs.

10. Why do you think Haman was so angry? (3:5) At what point did he actually notice Mordecai?



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

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

- a. How long would this process have taken? (3:7)
- b. What day was finally chosen as Haman's 'lucky day'? (3:13)
- c. Who do you think was controlling the 'lot'? (Hint: Pro. 16:33)
- d. How did this date actually help the Jews?

13. List the claims Haman makes against the Jews in the chart below, and fill in the other columns (3:8) [The first one is done for you.]

Claim against Jews	How was the claim 'true'	How was the claim 'false'
'a certain people'	'certain' = 'united' in Hebrew. They did have a common religion, customs & traditions.	Many Jews would have abandoned their heritage and become 'Persians'.

14. Why do you think Haman never mentions the name Mordecai or the identity "Jews" to the King? (3:8-9)
  
15. How much money does Haman offer the King to destroy this people? (3:9) Cp. Matt. 18:24
  
16. How do you think he hoped to re-coup this expense? (cp. 3:13; See also 4:7)
  
17. 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?
  
18. How extensive was this decree distributed? (3:12) Why is that significant?
  
19. Who wrote the decree? In whose name was the decree sealed? (3:12)
  
20. What did the decree say? Be specific. (3:13)
  
21. This decree or law was binding on all people. (3:14) Of what do you think this law is symbolic? (Cp. Rom. 3:23; 5:12; 6:23)
  
22. Why was there so much haste involved in delivering this decree? (3:15)
  
23. What does Haman do once the decree becomes 'official'? (3:15) What does this tell us about Haman? (Cp. Gen.37:25)



4. Mordecai could no longer come into the King's gate. (4:2) How do you think Haman felt about that? (Cp. 3:2-5)
5. Why was no one allowed into the King's gate with torn clothes and wearing sackcloth? (4:2)
6. Can you find any other incidents in scripture where there was such mourning on a national scale? (4:3) (See Isa. 37:1-3) Give some details of each incident.
7. What do you think the reaction was (to the decree and to the Jews grieving) among the other nationalities in the King's domain?
8. What do you think Esther's maids told her about? (4:4) (Hint: Did she know about the decree?)
9. Why do you think Esther wanted Mordecai to change his clothes? (4:4) Why did he refuse?
10. 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?
11. Where did Hatach meet Mordecai? (4:6) Describe in your own words what that meeting would have looked like. (Visualize Mordecai's state, and who Hatach was!)
12. Mordecai told Hatach about Haman's plan. (4:7) What piece of information does Mordecai tell him that was not in the 'public domain'? How do you think Mordecai knew this?

13. How do you think Mordecai got a copy of the decree? (4:8) Why do you think he gave Hatach a copy? (4:8)
  
14. What 'secret' was about to be revealed? (4:8) Do you think Mordecai had somehow anticipated this day and had waited for this very moment to ask this of Esther? Explain. (See also 4:14)
  
15. Describe how Hatach would have felt going back and forth between Mordecai and Esther. (4:9-10, 12, 15)
  
16. Do you think Mordecai knew about the law forbidding uninvited access to the King? (4:11) Why do you think Esther tells him about the law now?
  
17. Why did the King have such a strict rule about coming into his presence? (4:11) Of what do you think this is symbolic? (See John 14:6)
  
18. Why do you think Esther had not seen the King in so long? (4:11) Of what might this be symbolic?

19. Do you think Esther thought she was safe in the King's house? (4:13) Was she? (Hint: Think about whether or not the King could change his own decrees. Cp. 1:19; 8:8; Dan. 6:8,15)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
20. Why do you think Mordecai was so confident that the Jews would be saved one way or another? (4:14)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
21. Of what 'other place' might he have been thinking? (4:14)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
22. How would this statement have helped Esther make her courageous choice? (4:14)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
23. Mordecai felt this was 'Esther's moment'. (4:14) How may it have humbled Esther to realize that her 'rise to fame' was really all about her being in a position to help others?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
24. What do you think made Esther decide to risk her life for the benefit of others? (4:16)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
25. What did Esther ask the other Jews in Shushan to do for her? (4:16) Why did she make this request?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
26. What is significant about the time period requested? (4:16)



3. 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)
  
4. Why did the King know that Esther must have had an important request? (5:3)
  
5. "...to the half of the Kingdom" (5:3) What did the King mean by this offer? Find other places in the Bible where this phrase is used. (For example: Mark 6:23)
  
6. 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.
  
7. Why do you think the King acts in such 'haste'? (5:5)
  
8. How long into the banquet do you think the King waited before asking Esther again? (5:6)
  
9. 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.)

10. Why was Haman so happy when he left the banquet? (5:9) See verse 12
  
11. What changed his mood?
  
12. 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?
  
13. Haman 'refrained himself'. (5:10) Why do you think Haman was able to do this? (Hint: With what thought would he have comforted himself?)
  
14. Why do you think Haman called his family and friends together? (5:10)
  
15. List Haman's 'accomplishments' according to his own words. (5:11-12) Do you think his family and friends enjoyed listening to this speech? Explain.
  
16. Haman is oblivious to the reason why Esther wants him at the feast alone with the King. (5:12) What does this tell us about Haman's character?
  
17. Haman has 'everything a man could want', and yet allows Mordecai's disdain for him to spoil it all. (5:13) What is the lesson for us? (Cp. Mt 16:26)

18. Why do you think Haman now goes along with the idea to kill Mordecai (5:14), when before he was unwilling to do so? (See 3:6)
19. Why do you think his wife and friends came up with this idea? (5:14) Why was Haman so pleased with the suggestion?
20. The word 'gallows' is 'tree' in the Hebrew. (5:14) Research the form of execution practiced by the Persians. Was this more like a 'hanging' with a noose, or a 'crucifixion'?
21. How high was this 'gallows'? (5:14) Why such an extreme height?

Adam Clarke's Commentary:

"Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high - The Hebrew word, which we translate gallows, signifies simply wood, a tree, or pole; and this was to be seventy-five feet high, that he might suffer the greater ignominy, and be a more public spectacle. I believe impaling is here also meant."

22. What do you think was a key point from this chapter?



**Chapter 6 – Mordecai saved, Haman humiliated**

1. "On that night could not the King sleep..." (6:1)
  - a. Why do you think the King couldn't sleep...on THIS night?
  
  - b. Do you think this was just a 'coincidence'? Or was God at work? Explain.
  
  - c. List other events in this chapter that were likely orchestrated by God's angels.
  
2. Why do you think the King asked for the records of the Chronicles to be read? (6:1)
  
3. How long ago had Mordecai saved the King's life? (6:2) (See 2:16; 3:7)
  
4. For all these years Mordecai had been denied his 'rights' for a reward.
  - a. How do you think Mordecai felt about this injustice?
  
  - b. How was his patience rewarded?
  
  - c. How would the events of chapter 6 been different if Mordecai had been 'rewarded' back in chapter 2?
  
5. Why do you think the King forgot to reward Mordecai at the time of the incident? (6:3)

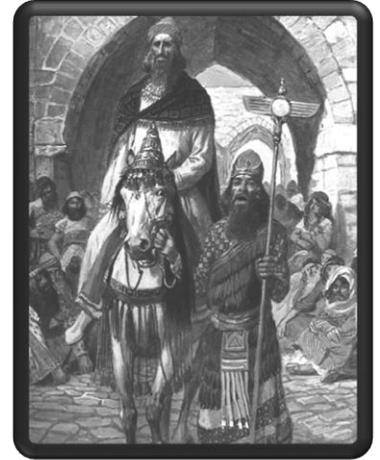
6. At that very moment Haman approaches the King's court. (6:4-5)
  - a. What does this tell us about the access Haman had to the King? (cp. 4:11)
  
  - b. What was Haman going to request of the King?
  
  - c. How is this ironic based on what the King had just been reading?
  
  - d. If the King had 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)
  
7. 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?
  
8. 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) Note: Compare this to 7:5 – what was in Haman's heart!

9. Haman comes up with a grand scheme (on the spot!) in answer to the King's question. (6:7-9)
  - a. List the things Haman suggested be done to 'the man the King delights to honour'.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Why do you think Haman wanted these things done for him?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. What insight does this give us into Haman's true ambitions?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - d. Do you think the King was surprised at Haman's suggestion?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - e. What part of his suggestion do you think Haman regretted the most later?
  
10. Describe Haman's reaction to the King's command in verse 10. (6:10) Why would Haman have to mask his true feelings before the King?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. The King describes Mordecai as 'the Jew'. (6:10) How is it possible the King was unaware of the details of the decree made in chapter 3:12-13? See also 7:5
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. Why do you think the King added "let nothing fail..." (6:10)

13. Describe the thoughts and feelings of both men mentioned in verse 11. (6:11)

a. Haman

b. Mordecai



14. 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?

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

16. 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?



20. What do you think was a key point from this chapter?



### **Chapter 7 – The Enemy Exposed**

1. Describe what you think was going through Haman's mind as he came to this second banquet of wine? (7:1) How had his mood changed since the first banquet?
  
2. 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?
  
3. Esther very carefully responds to the King's question. (7:3) Describe the significance of each phrase, remembering the importance of what she is about to reveal:
  - a. "If I have found favour in thy sight, O King"
  
  - b. "and if it please the King"
  
  - c. "let my life be given me at my petition"
  
  - d. "and my people at my request"

4. 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.

5. Esther now drops the 'bombshell'! Explain why she chooses each phrase to describe her plight: (7:4)

a. "For we are sold"

b. "I and my people"

c. "to be destroyed"

d. "to be slain"

e. "and to perish."



6. 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)

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

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

9. Again, the King seems oblivious to the seriousness of Haman's plot. He has not yet made the connection between Haman's request in 3:8-9, and Esther's description here. (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!

10. Esther calls Haman an adversary and an enemy. (7:6)
- How is each word descriptive of what Haman had done in recent days?
  - How does this expression help to determine what Haman represents?

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



12. Do you think Haman had ever been afraid in the presence of the King before? What has changed? (7:6)
13. 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)
14. Why do you think he went out into the palace garden? (7:7)

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

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

17. 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.

18. The King said "Will he force the queen also before me in the house?" (7:8)

a. What did he mean by this?

b. What was Haman trying to do to Esther? (Compare 1 Sam. 15:32 when Agag pleads for his life before Samuel!)

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



20. 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?



4. What does Mordecai receive from the King and Esther? (8:2)
  
5. What is represented by:
  - a. The King's ring? (Cp. Gen. 41:42)
  
  - b. Haman's house? (Cp. Gen. 22:17)
  
6. 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.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Mordecai and Haman have switched places. (8:2) Of what is this symbolic? (See Phil. 2:7-10)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. 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?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Esther has risked her life a second time. (8:4) Why did the King have to hold 'out the golden sceptre' again?



10. Esther once more chooses her words very carefully. The matter still hangs in the balance, and she must influence the King. Describe the significance of each phrase: (8:5)
- a. "If it please the King"
  - b. "and if I have found favour in his sight"
  - c. "and the thing seem right before the King"
  - d. "and I be pleasing in his eyes"
11. Haman was dead, but the law he initiated remained. Of what is this symbolic? (Cp. Rom. 7:22-24; 8:2)
12. 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)
13. Why does the King restate what he has done? (8:7) What does he say was the motivation for his actions?
14. What does the King suggest Mordecai and Esther do? (8:8)
15. Why does the King remind them that whatever is written in the King's name cannot be changed? (8:8)

16. Mordecai's writing goes out in the third month, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the month. (8:9) How long was this before Haman's plan called for the destruction of the Jews? (See 3:13)
  
17. Compare 8:9 (Mordecai's decree) with 3:12 (Haman's decree). What do you notice about the two decrees? Why is this significant?
  
18. What is significant about the description in 8:10 about the proclamation of the new decree?
  
19. What was the content of the new decree? (3:11-12) Be specific.
  
20. The Jews would be successful if they 'gathered themselves together'. (8:11) What is the lesson for us? (See also 9:2, 15, 16. Cp. Heb. 12:1)
  
21. 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!

22. Contrast the message the posts took to the people in 3:15 with the one here (8:14). Which message would be more pleasant to deliver? Why?

23. Why is Mordecai described the way he is in verse 15?

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

25. What does it mean "The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour"? (8:16-17) Why did this occur?

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

27. What do you think was a key point from this chapter?





7. Why do you think it specifically mentions that 500 men in Shushan were killed by the Jews? (9:6)
  
8. Why do you think it specifically mentions that Haman's 10 sons were killed by the Jews? (9:7-10)
  - a. Why mention their names?
  
  - b. Of what is this symbolic?
  
9. "...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) Cp. 1 Cor. 6:7
  
10. Why do you think a report was made to the King? (9:11)
  
11. The King recounts the events of the day to Esther. (9:12)
  - a. Why do you think he does this?
  
  - b. Why does he ask Esther what more she wants? ("now what is thy petition?")

12. What two further requests does Esther make? (9:13) Why do you think she makes these requests?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. 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?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
14. What happens on the second day of fighting? (9:15) Where does this take place?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
15. What is the total number of enemies of the Jews killed in Shushan? Is there any indication that any Jews lost their lives? What is the significance of that fact?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
16. What happened in the rest of the provinces (outside the palace)? (9:16-17)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
17. Why do you think they took an extra day of fighting in Shushan? (9:18)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
18. After the fighting it says the Jews had 'rest'. (9:16,17,18) What sort of things did the Jews do on the day of rest?

19. Another group of Jews is mentioned in verse 19. It says of them that they made the 14<sup>th</sup> day a day of “gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.”
- a. What group of Jews was this? Why are they mentioned separately?
  
  - b. Why were they so happy?
  
  - c. Why did they send portions to each other? What do you think these portions were?
  
  - d. What is the lesson for us?
20. It says their villages were “unwalled”. (9:19) This gives a clue of what these events are typical (see Ezek 38:11). Comment on the connection to the events in Esther to the events at Christ's return.
21. Why did Mordecai record all these events and publish them to all the Jews in every province? (9:20)
22. Why do you think he memorialized these events by establishing an annual feast of remembrance? (9:21-22)
23. What were the Jews to remember during this feast? What were they to do? (9:22)

24. Verses 23 to 28 summarize the key events of the story, and describe the reasons for establishing this memorial feast.
- a. Are there any details given here that we were not told of before?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Why was the feast called "Purim"?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. Who was to keep the feast?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - d. Is the feast still kept by Jews today? (You may have to do some research on this.)
25. The importance of this feast is reiterated by the fact that Esther and Mordecai took the time to 'confirm' this second letter.
- a. What do you think was the Jews reaction to receiving this confirmation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. What about the non-Jews? (9:29)
26. Why do you think these words were considered to be "words of peace and truth"? (9:30)
27. How does this 'going forth of the Law' pre-figure what Jesus Christ will do in the Kingdom? (Cp. Isa. 2:2-4)
28. The people had been 'fasting and crying'. (9:31) What was their state after the events of this chapter? What does that tell us about God's concern for his people?

29. Why was it important for this decree of Esther to be written in a book?

30. What do you think was a key point from this chapter?

### **Chapter 10 – Mordecai's fame**

1. Chapter 10 is kind of like an appendix or epilogue of the story.
  - a. Why is it that the end of chapter 9 really is the end of the story?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Why do you think chapter 10 added at the end?
  
2. The book ends with a picture of the King laying tribute upon the land. (10:1) Why does it also mention the 'isles of the sea'? (Cp. Isa. 11:11; 42:4; 60:9; Zeph. 2:11)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Why the focus on Mordecai at this time? (10:2) How is the picture of him here different from our first introduction to him? (See 2:5-7)



7. What do you think was a key point from this chapter?

8. What do you think was the main lesson for you from the book of Esther?

Summary: Find a passage in Esther to support the following:

Character	Symbolic of...	Passage
Ahasuerus	God – the supreme King over all	
Vashti	Those rejected at the judgment seat – the unfaithful	
Esther	The faithful believers who reflect the glory of the King and are accepted as the Bride	
Haman	Sin – in its' various manifestations ('human nature', persecuting powers/gov't etc)	
Mordecai	Jesus – the Saviour, given power, authority and rulership (second only to the King) after a period of suffering and identifying with his people.	

