

VIA EMMAUS:

A CHRIST-CENTERED WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE

Esther: Seed Warfare (19)

OVERVIEW

Author	Unspecified. Mordecai? Someone who had access to Persian records (3:12-15; 8:8-14; cf. 10:3) Someone who is aware of Genesis 3:15 and the story of the competing seeds
Setting	485-464 BC in Susa, the capitol of Persia – <i>Not Jerusalem</i> Principle: <i>History and Written Interpretation go together</i> <i>Beware of critical theories to date writing hundreds of years later</i>
Theme	Human: <i>Esther the Queen risks her life and rescues her people</i> <i>The Origin of Purim – Celebrated to this day by the Jews</i> Divine: God is faithful to his people; he does not abandon them The seed of the serpent cannot destroy the seed of the woman (3:1) (1) <i>God's Sovereignty precedes, initiates, and governs human responsibility (Prov 21:1)</i> (2) <i>Man's Responsibility is never denied, ignored, or removed</i> (Prov 16:9; Isa 10:5-19; Matt 2:1 = Micah 5:2; Matt 11:25-28; Acts 2:23; 4:27-28)

THE EXTERNAL VERSUS THE ETERNAL

Esther 1	Ahasuerus (1:1-9) <i>Incredible power, wealth, and earthly pleasure</i> <i>Broken marriage, unable to lead his wife, vindictive, unwise</i>
	Vashti (1:10-22) <i>Incredible beauty, position, desirable</i> <i>Discontent and quickly cast away</i>
Esther 2	Esther (2:1-18) <i>Without parents and in Susa a 'despicable' Jew</i> <i>Loved, beautiful, virgin, humble, obedient</i>
	Mordecai (2:19-23) <i>Cares for his younger second cousin</i> <i>Gives wise instruction & counsels her as she is with king</i> <i>He learns of an assassination plot and saves the king</i>

The exalted will be humbled; the humble will be exalted!

THE CONFLICT OF THE SEEDS

Esther 3	The conflict is introduced – Haman (the Agagite) vs. Mordecai (the Kishite) – 1 Samuel 15 Mordecai is unwilling to bow to Haman Haman declares war on the seed of the woman
Esther 4	The conflict causes suffering and threatens God's seed The people of Israel fast, weep, and pray for God to deliver them (4:1-3) Mordecai sends word to Esther to approach the king (4:4-14) Esther calls for prayer and fasting and agrees to risk her life for her people (4:16)

- Esther 5 The conflict calls for a spirit-filled deliverer**
 Esther displays courage, wisdom, and grace (5:1-8) – *The Spirit of Christ clothes Esther*
 Haman displays greed, hubris, and hatred (5:9-14) – *The Spirit of the Antichrist*
This is an excellent chapter to compare with our own life. Do we resemble Esther/Haman?
- Esther 6 The conflict turns in Israel's favor**
 God interrupts Ahasuerus's sleep; the law is read; Ahasuerus honors Mordecai
 Mordecai receives more honor than Joseph (6:8-11); points to Jesus (Zech 9:9; Matt 21:5)
 Haman's pride is crushed as his enemy is exalted -- *Philippians 2:11*
 Two heads – Mordecai's head is honored (6:8) + Haman's head is crushed (6:12-13)
- Esther 7 God saves Israel through boldness of Esther and defeat of the enemy**
 Esther makes her gracious request (7:1-6) + Haman begs for his life but it's too late (7:7-10)
- Esther 8 The Seed of the Woman Inherits the Serpent's Abode**
 Haman's home is given to Esther (8:1) + Mordecai rules over the home (8:2) – *The Signet Ring*
 The edict to kill the Jews is still in effect and must be stopped (8:3ff)
What an incredible picture of the already/not yet! Foreshadows the crushing of the serpent and yet the ongoing need to overturn the effects of his pernicious work in the world.
- Esther 9 Armageddon Anticipated**
 The "reversal" instructs us how God works in the world (9:1)
 God's people destroy the enemies of God – the seed of the woman wins! (9:2ff)
 Read in light of "seed warfare" – we see how the King's verdict anticipates God's verdict (9:25)
 The Feast of Purim is explained (9:20-32)

THE END OF THE STORY

- Esther 10 Mordecai is the prince of peace – one who is honored, exalted, popular, and peacemaking (10:3)**

LESSONS

Divine Providence

- (1) **Unexpected Favor & Opportunities** – The downfall of Vashti (1:10-22); Esther in beauty contest (2:1-18); Mordecai honored (6:7-13)
- (2) **Chance encounters** – Mordecai overhearing a murderous conspiracy (2:19-23); King's insomnia (6:1-3); Haman's visitation to Ahasuerus (6:6); King's encounter with Haman (7:8)
- (3) **Humble Recognition** – Haman's wife is fearful of Mordecai *the Jew* (6:13); Mordecai recognizes the significance of the hour (4:14); Esther requests prayer and fasting (4:16)

Human Responsibility

Trusting God and Seeking to Prosper in the Land (cf. Jer 29:4-7)
 Risk-taking based on trust in God and fear of disobedience (Esther 4:14-16)

The Use of Wickedness

God uses the marital problems of King Ahasuerus and Vashti to save his people (1:10-22)
 Haman's plot to glorify himself results in honoring his enemy (6:6-13)
 Haman's plot to destroy his enemy results in his own death (5:9-14; 7:7-10)

God gets the most glory & We get the most joy when we experience His Timely Reversal – Esther 9:1