

ESTHER 1-6

WEEK IN REVIEW + FAMILY GUIDE



WEEK IN REVIEW

We head to the book of Esther, where we clearly see the hand of God at work all over this story. The key idea for this book is **providence**. Providence means God is guiding what happens, even when we don't see it. Did you know that God is not mentioned once in the book of Esther? However, God's handprints are all over it. He is in control and working, even when we don't see it. We see in Esther the threat of the Jews in chapters 1-4, and the triumph of the Jews and their protection in chapters 5-10. The story begins in Persia. There is a king named Xerxes (also spelled Ahasuerus), who throws the party of all parties. For 180 days, the king shows off his wealth and power and strength to the kingdom. At the end of this, he had too much to drink and orders his wife to come out so that he can show her off to everyone. His wife was named Queen Vashti, and she refused to do what the king asked.

As a result of the Queen's disobedience, King Xerxes ordered for her to be replaced with a new queen. What the king did was hold a beauty pageant to find a replacement for Queen Vashti. He chose a young woman named Esther. Esther was Jewish and she was adopted because her father and mother had died. She did not reveal her family background, because Mordecai (her cousin who raised her) asked her to do so. There is a plot to kill the king, but Mordecai reports it and this was recorded. There is an evil man who is an official named Haman. Haman had a plot to kill the Jews, and the king agrees to do this on a chosen day.

Mordecai hears about this plot and urges Esther, who is in a position of power, to do something about it. Mordecai tells her, "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" Esther chose to have **courage** and approach the king. Courage is choosing to do what is right even when you feel scared. Esther invites the king and Haman to a banquet. That night, the king can't sleep and orders his royal records to be read to him. He realizes that Mordecai wasn't rewarded for saving his life. Haman came in to ask the king for permission to kill Mordecai, but before he asks, the king has Haman put on a parade to honor Mordecai! What a plot twist! We will see God's protection of His people continue to play out throughout the rest of the book.

FAMILY GUIDE

BIG IDEA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is at work, even when we can't see it!
KEY STORIES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esther Becomes Queen • Haman's Evil Plan • For Such a Time as This • Esther's Courageous Request • Mordecai Is Honored
KEY VERSES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esther 4:14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ "And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" • Esther 2:17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ "The king loved Esther more than all the women, and she won grace and favor in his sight." • Esther 6:11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ "So Haman took the robe and the horse, and he dressed Mordecai... and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor."
WORDS TO KNOW:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ God is guiding what happens, even when we don't see it. • Courage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Choosing to do what is right even when you feel scared.

Reflection Questions

1.	What led to Esther becoming Queen?
2.	How would you have felt if you were in Esther's position?
3.	How do you see the hand of God at work in this book so far?