



Book
— **By** —
Book
—



WELCOME

OUR GOAL

To encourage you to read at least one book of the Bible each month, so that you may better understand who God is and where you fit into His story.

BIBLE STUDY METHOD

- **OBSERVATION:**
What does the text say?
- **INTERPRETATION:**
What does it mean?
- **APPLICATION:**
What did I learn that should affect my life?

YOU ARE HERE – OLD TESTAMENT

Five major sections:

- Law (Genesis – Deuteronomy)
- History (Joshua– Esther)
- ▶ **Poetry (Job– Song of Solomon)**
- Major Prophets (Isaiah – Daniel)
- Minor Prophets (Hosea – Malachi)



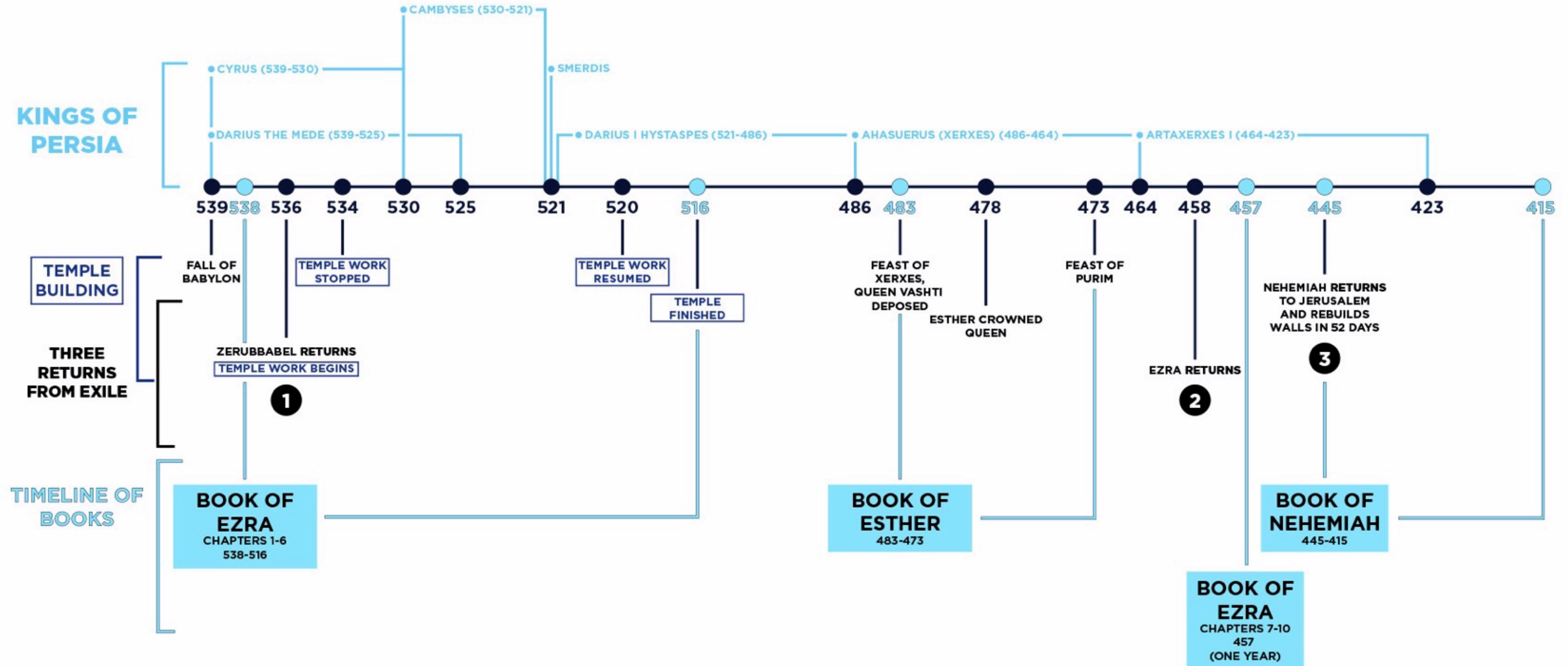
REVIEW



ESTHER

COURAGE & OBEDIENCE

TIMELINE OF EZRA, NEHEMIAH, & ESTHER





PEOPLE & PLACES



theharvestatearthsend.com

Babylon

• Ecbatana

Media

• Babylon

• Susa

• Jerusalem

• Pasargadae

Persia

Memphis •

Egypt





CHAPTER ONE

KING XERXES (AHASUERUS)

Ruled from Susa over all of the Perian Empire (127 provinces)

Gave a huge banquet for all his nobles, officials and military officers

This banquet was a culmination of 180 days of celebration.

The banquet lasted seven days and wine was served with no limit

At the end, when everyone was intoxicated, the king sent for Vashti

QUEEN VASHTI (AMESTRIS?)

Was married to King Xerxes

Hosted a banquet for the women at the palace

Refused to come to the King's Banquet when summoned

THE QUESTIONS:

What must be done?

What does the law provide?

What might happen if you do nothing?

THE ANSWERS:

What might happen if you do nothing?

Women everywhere will begin to despise their husbands.

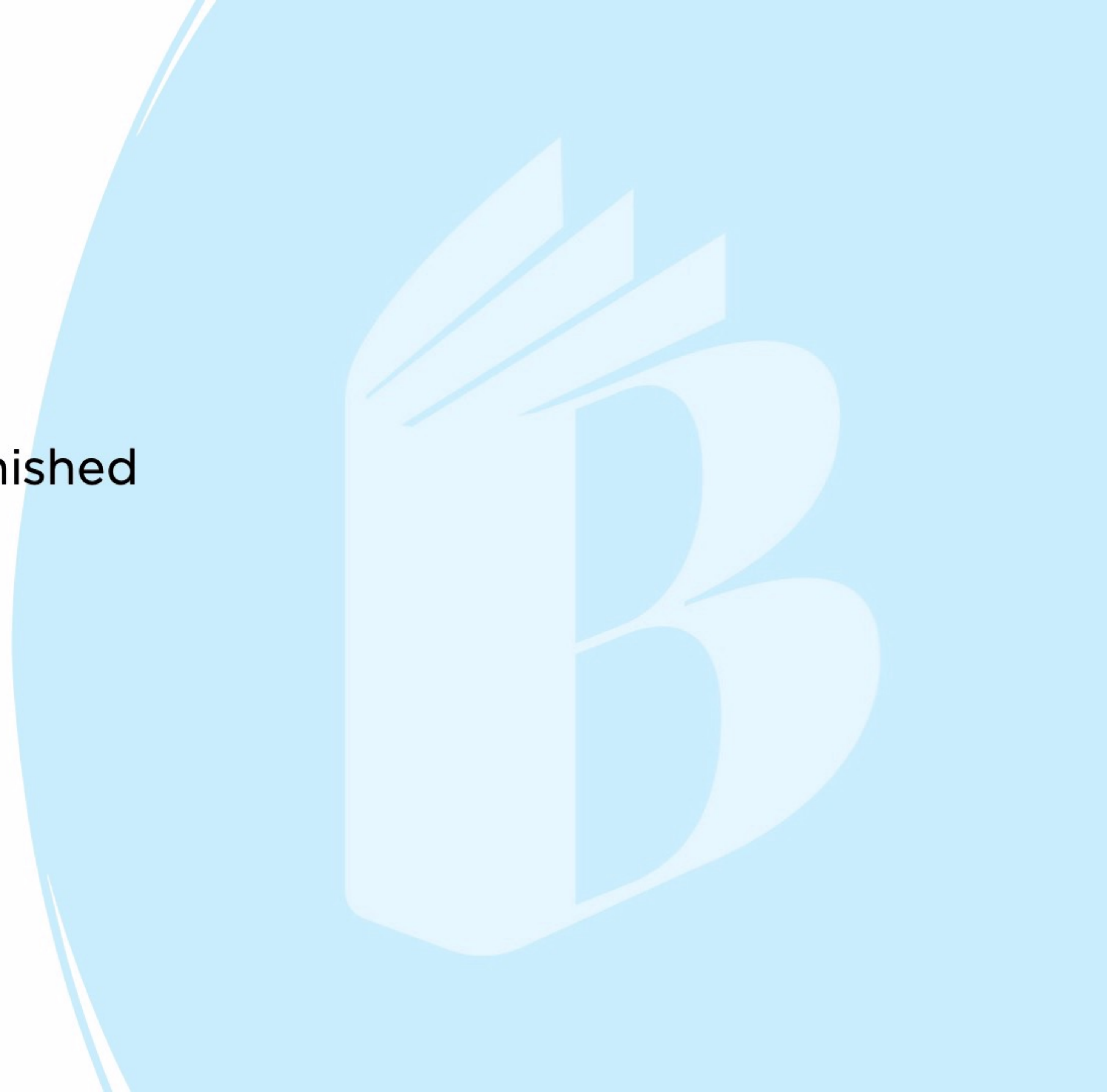
There will be no end to their contempt and anger

THE ANSWERS:

The recommendation:

Queen Vashti forever banished

Pick a new queen



THE PREDICTION:

As a result, husbands everywhere will receive proper respect from their wives.



CHAPTER TWO

NOT MAD ANYMORE

The search begins for a new queen.

Agents sent to every province to find beautiful young virgins

The king found this plan appealing

MEET MORDECAI

- A Jew from the tribe of Benjamin
- His family was exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar
- Lived in Susa
- He had a beautiful young cousin, Hadassah (Esther), who was adopted into his family when her parents died.

MEET ESTHER (HADASSAH)

- An orphan (daughter of Abihail, Mordecai's uncle)
- Lived with her cousin, Mordecai, who raised her as a daughter
- Beautiful in form and face
- Was taken to the King's harem as a result of the decree
- Hegai, who was in charge of the Harem, was very impressed and treated her kindly, giving her a special menu and beauty treatments.

- Mordecai checked on Esther every day during her time at the palace.
- Mordecai advised her not to reveal her nationality.
- When it was Esther's turn, she won the heart of the king and was crowned queen.
- Another banquet and a public holiday

MORDECAI, THE HERO

- Mordecai overheard a plot to assassinate the king and sent a warning through Esther.
- The two would-be assassins were executed
- Mordecai's deed was recorded, but not rewarded



CHAPTER THREE

MEET HAMAN

He was an Agagite (Agag was king of the Amalekites)

The king made him the most powerful official in the empire.

Became infuriated that Mordecai would not bow down to him

Hatched a plot to destroy Mordecai as well as all the Jews

THE DECREE

All Jews – young and old, must be killed, slaughtered and annihilated on March 7. The property would be taken by those who killed them.

Mordecai and all the Jews reacted with mourning, fasting and weeping.

TIMELINE NOTE

This is the twelfth year of King Xerxes' reign (3:7)

9 years earlier was the banquet of Vashti's rebellion (Esther 1:3)

7 years earlier Esther became Queen

ESTHER'S ASSIGNMENT

- Mordecai sent word to Esther that she should go to the king to beg for mercy.
- She hesitated.
- Mordecai points out two things:
 - Her life is already in danger from the decree
 - If she doesn't go, God will send someone else

ESTHER'S REQUEST

“Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die.”

Esther 4:16

GROUP TALK

Can you describe a time in your life when you were given an assignment, maybe an opportunity, that overwhelmed you?

How did you respond?

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

- The king invited her in and offered her anything she wanted.
- She asks for the king and Haman to come to a banquet she has already prepared.
- During that banquet, the king probes again for Esther's request.
- She invites them to come back the next day.

HAMAN'S PINNACLE OF PRIDE

- Haman is so proud of his new honor, being invited to banquets prepared by the queen and accompanied by the king.
- He brags to his friends and relatives, but complains about this one thing that spoils his elation – Mordecai.
- His wife and friends suggest he needn't wait for the decree to take care of this irritation, just get the king to execute him tomorrow.

THE KING'S INSOMNIA

- The king can't sleep, so he calls for someone to read the book of history to him.
- When he hears the story of Mordecai stopping the assassination plot, he wonders what they did to recognize his heroism.
- Why did Haman happen to be in the court of the palace so late at night?

HAMAN SEES ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY

- Since he's handy, the king asks Haman how to honor someone who truly pleases him.
- Haman assumes this honoree is himself, so he goes all out.
 - A ride on the king's horse, wearing the king's robe, lead by one of the king's most noble officials, shouting as they go, "This is what the king does for someone he wishes to honor!"

IT BACKFIRED!

- All of which, the king commands him to do for Mordecai.
- After which, he hurried home, dejected and humiliated
- When he tells his wife and friends what happened, they suggest he might want to give up opposing Mordecai.
- Before that conversation is over, the king's chauffeurs arrived to take Haman to the second banquet prepared by the queen.

WHAT SHE REALLY WANTS

- The king asks Esther again what she wants.
- She asks for her life and the life of her people to be spared.
- Who would do such a thing?
- Haman is shocked, scared and now facing the folly of his pride.
- The king steps out to the garden to cool off.
- Haman fell on Esther's couch, begging for mercy.
- That scene doesn't fly well with the king when he returns.

WHAT SHE REALLY WANTS

- Haman is taken away for execution
- The king gives Esther the property of Haman
- Mordecai is brought in and given the signet ring previously worn by Haman.
- Esther appoints Mordecai to be in charge of Haman's property

BUT WHAT ABOUT MARCH 7?

- Whatever has already been written in the king's name and sealed with his signet ring can never be revoked.
- The King tells Mordecai to send out another decree, giving the Jews authority to defend themselves against anyone who attacked them on the previously designated date – March 7. (8:11)
- When the new decree was issued, the people of Susa were filled with joy and the Jews were honored everywhere.

BUT WHAT ABOUT MARCH 7?

- When March 7 came, both decrees went into effect.
- The enemies of the Jews still hoped to overpower them. (9:1)
- The nobles, officers, governors, and royal officials helped the Jews. (9:3)
- The decree giving the Jews the authority to defend themselves was extended for a second day.

SORROW TURNED INTO GLADNESS

- At the end of those two days, a new celebration was added to the calendar, The Festival of Purim.
 - The festival would include:
 - Feasting and gladness
 - Exchanging gifts of food
 - Presents to the poor
 - Note: There is a fasting day before the feasting day.

MORDECAI, THE PM

- Mordecai was appointed as Prime Minister, second only to the king.
- He was held in high esteem because he worked for the good of his people, and spoke up for the welfare of their descendants.

GROUP TALK

What is your favorite part of this story and what do you see that might change your perspective on your life or the lives of those you love?

The background is a light blue gradient. On the right side, there is a large, stylized number '6' in a slightly darker blue. Inside the upper curve of the '6', there is a white icon of an open book with several pages fanning out. The text 'NEXT BOOK' is centered horizontally across the middle of the image.

NEXT BOOK

NEW SECTION
BOOKS OF POETRY

Job – Song of Solomon



Hope in Times of Great Suffering
Songs that give voice to our worship
Prayers that express our heart
Psalms that Preserve History & Predict the Future
A Treasury of Wisdom for Living
The Folly of Living for Worldly Pursuits & Pleasure
A Love Story



JOB

MANKIND'S LIMITED PERSPECTIVE

Behind the Scenes in God's Court

A Complement from God

When Life Blows Up

Who Needs Friends?

Trying to Make Sense of What We Don't Know

Who is God?

When God Sets Things Straight

GOAL FOR THIS MONTH

Read Job at least once.
(There are 42 chapters.)

Be sure to make notes of any insights you gain
as you read and study along with
any questions you encounter.

WANT MORE NOTES?

newspring.org/bbb



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