

# Esther

God's Providence



# The Historical Books of the Old Testament

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6 – 8. Joshua, Judges, Ruth

9 – 14. 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles

15. Ezra The Exiles Return

16. Nehemiah Rebuilding Jerusalem

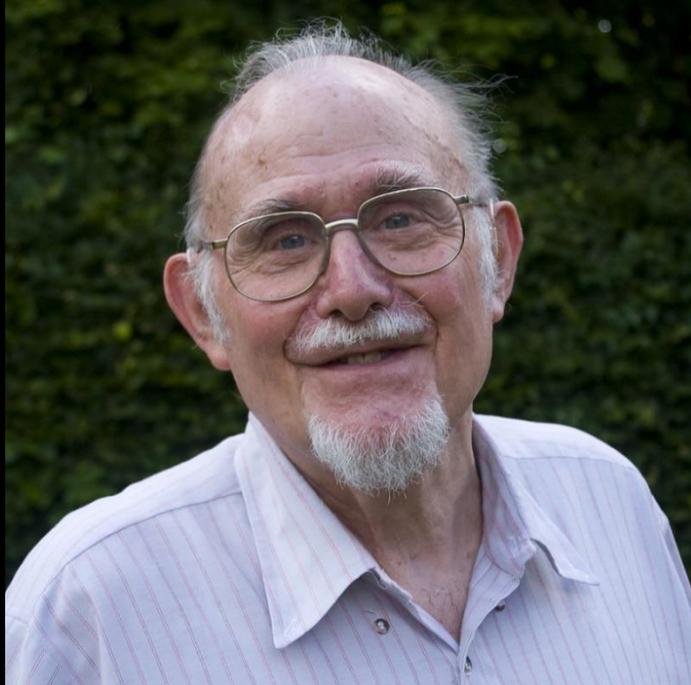
17. Esther **God's Providence**

# Esther God's Providence

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- **Esther** is set entirely in the Kingdom of Persia – or Iran.
- It is a story of God's intervention when hope was almost lost.
- Without any actual miracles, the whole story from beginning to end reveals the hand of God.

# Esther    God's Providence



*There is a basic trust in God underlying the whole book and the main characters are shown both to be dependent upon God and consciously to recognize their dependence upon Him.*

*– John T. Bendor-Samuel (1929 – 2011),  
Executive Director of Wycliffe UK,  
Specialist in African languages*

# Esther Bible Trivia Prep

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- **God** is never even mentioned, though He is present and active throughout the book.
- **Prayer** is not mentioned either, though we see God act to save His people, especially after they call for a fast.

# Esther Bible Trivia Prep

- **Esther** gives us the origin of the Jewish holiday of **Purim**.
- It is the only book in the Bible to mention that festival, though Jews everywhere celebrate it annually.

# Esther Bible Trivia Prep

- **Esther** is **one of two** books the Bible named after a woman.
- **Esther 8:9** is the single longest verse in the Bible.
- The main characters, **Queen Esther** and her older cousin **Mordecai**, appear nowhere else in Scripture.

# Esther Bible Trivia Prep

- The arch villain, **Haman**, is an “**Agagite**,” the descendant of Amalekite kings who were notorious enemies of the Jews.
- He would have made a good Nazi since he hoped to annihilate the Jews.

# Esther Bible Trivia Prep

- The tower at right is in the city of Hamadan, Iran.
- It contains two graves with Hebrew inscriptions.
- It is believed to be the tomb of Queen Esther and Mordecai.



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Providence is *“the unceasing activity of the Creator whereby, in overflowing bounty and goodwill, He upholds His creatures in ordered existence, guides and governs all events, circumstances, and free acts of angels and men, and directs everything to its appointed goal, for His own glory.”*

*– J. I. Packer, British-born Canadian theologian*

# Esther    God's Providence

1. Esther Becomes Queen                    1 – 2
2. Haman's Plot against the Jews        3 – 6
3. God Saves His People                    7 – 10

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# Esther A Side Note on Racism

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- None of us want to be confused with Haman.
- Nonetheless, we know racial tensions exist in our society.
- Christians are equipped to ease these tensions.

# Esther A Side Note on Racism

*The church inhabits a story that reframes belonging in a society of exclusion. And if we're living into the story rightly, then people who have every reason to be estranged from one another somehow find that they are becoming sisters, brothers, mothers, uncles, and cousins.*

*– David P Leong,  
Seattle Pacific University*



# Esther A Side Note on Racism

- Even to this day, our society cannot seem to deal with racial division properly.
- It's comfortable to be around people most like ourselves.
- But in Christ, these divisions can begin to disappear.

## Esther A Side Note on Racism

- All who are in Christ become members of the family of God.
- We can still hold on to our ethnicity and background, but they need not divide us from others.

# Esther    God's Providence

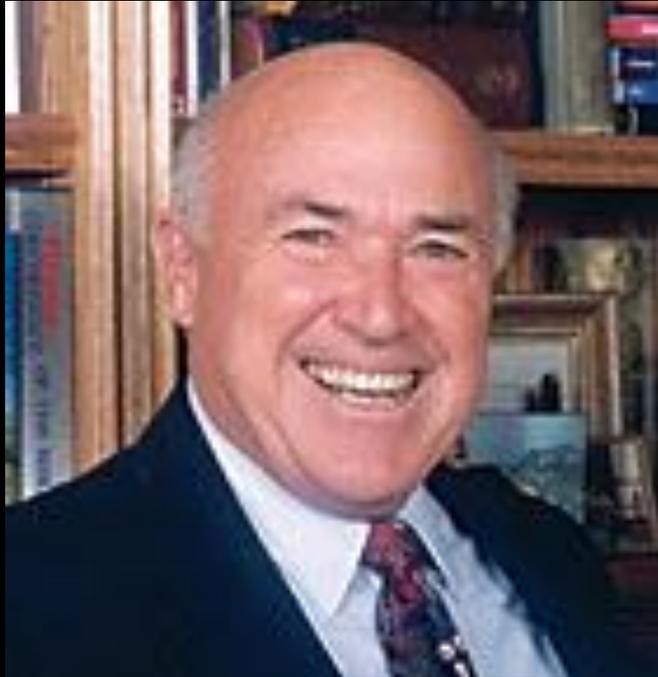
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Esther    Conclusions

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- **Esther** reminds us that we can trust God in the most harrowing of circumstances.
- It reminds us that he is always at work even when we cannot see him doing anything.

# Esther Conclusions



*The purposes of God are fascinating. He is always at work, preparing for the future. Our problem is that we don't know what the future holds; and thus, we don't understand what God is doing. Sometimes we see our immediate situation and make accusations against God, thinking that He doesn't care. But when the story is over, we always see that God is faithful.*

*– Chuck Smith (1927 – 2013),  
Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa*

# Esther Conclusions

- **Queen Esther** was placed by God in a definite place at a definite time for a definite purpose.
- We too have been placed by God here and now for God's definite reasons – **for such a time as this**.

# Esther Conclusions

- While **Queen Esther** risked her life to save her people, Jesus actually died to save his enemies.
- It is only because of Christ that we know we have a part in God's plan.

# Esther Conclusions

- **Romans 5:7-9** (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—

<sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.