



The Queen of Beauty and Courage”
Chapter 20
“The Story”



O worship the King, all
glorious above.
O gratefully sing His
pow’r and His love;
Our shield and defender,
the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor
and girded with praise.



Frail children of dust
And feeble as frail,
In Thee do we trust,
Nor find Thee to fail.
Thy mercies how tender,
How firm to the end,
Our maker, defender,
Redeemer and friend!



O measureless Might,
Ineffable Love,
While angels delight
To hymn Thee above,
Thy humbler creation,
Though feeble their lays,
With true adoration
Shall sing to Thy praise.



The Book of Esther is the telling of how God saved His chosen people through the courage of a woman.

Esther would have been her Persian name. (Star) Her Hebrew name was Hadassah . (Hebrew Myrtle)

She was an orphan of the tribe of Benjamin living with the exiles in Persia, who was raised by her cousin Mordecai, a minor government official and a covert leader of the Jewish community.



There are some key figures in the book of Esther.

King Xerxes - Also known as Ahasuerus.

Displayed his wealth for 180 days.

Threw a banquet for seven days.

When he was filled with wine on the seventh day he wanted Queen Vashti to display her beauty.

She refused, his anger burned and he was enraged.

Deposes Vashti and after a period desires to have a new queen.

Chooses Esther from the beautiful young virgins that he had assembled.



He is pleased by his new queen and she is highly favored by him, especially when she informs him of the plot to assassinate him.

Xerxes seemed to be easily persuaded. Thus Haman is able to get him to go along with his plot to rid Persia of the Jews.

As we read what happens we see how God uses this foreign king in a powerful way.



Haman – A descendant of King Agag, the Amalekite, who was an enemy of Saul, King of Israel.

Mordecai – A descendant of King Saul.

The tension between these two goes back centuries. Goes all the way back to Jacob and Esau. Amalek was a descendant of Esau.

Tension grows because Mordecai would not bow down to Haman, whose position of authority was higher than Mordecai.



Esther reveals plot to Xerxes through Mordecai, thus he gains favor with the king.

Haman plots to rid Persia of the Jews, but also wants to rid himself of Mordecai.

Haman's plot to rid Persia of the Jews once confirmed with the king was non revocable.

Had the plot succeeded, Haman would have prospered and the Jews would have been wiped out.



Esther - In Persian means star, her Hebrew name, Hadassah, means Myrtle.

She was recognized for her beauty, which caught the eye of the king.

Not only was she beautiful, but she displayed courage.

She was willing to reveal to the king the plot Mordecai had uncovered, she revealed she was a Jew and she pleaded before the king for her people.



Esther is able to change the plot by convincing the king to issue a new edict.

Rather than destruction of the Jews, more than 75,000 of their enemies were killed.

The Jews did not plunder those they killed, which was the standard practice towards those you killed.

While there is no mention of God in the book of Esther, we see the hand of God active throughout the book.



In 9:2 we read "*And Mordecai recorded these things and sent letters to all of the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far.*" Some believe that this indicates that Mordecai was the author of Esther.

Others believe that there is no mention of God because the author desired that this become an official Persian court records. The use of God's name might have prevented that.



As a result of what happened and how God provided for His people a Feast of Purim was set up.

The Hebrew word pur means "lot." The feast of Purim refers to a casting of lots, a way to preserve God's people.

To this day the Jews celebrate this feast sometime from the middle of February to middle of March. This year the feast will be celebrated on March 5.



Esther ends with these words.

"For Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Ahasuerus, and he was great among the Jews and popular with the multitude of his brothers, for he sought the welfare of his people and spoke peace to all his people."