



☆ ☆ Commentary ☆ ☆

Ezra and Nehemiah tell the story of the Jews who returned to Jerusalem after their 70-year captivity in Babylon. The book of Esther deals with Jews who stayed in Persia during the reign of King Ahasuerus. Even to this day, Jews celebrate the salvation God brought through Esther, a young orphan girl, at the Feast of Purim.

Esther never mentions God Himself, yet God's providence is woven throughout the entire book. Think of all that God arranged in the story of Esther:

- God arranged for the noble Queen Vashti to lose her place.
- God arranged for a competition to replace Queen Vashti.
- God arranged for Esther to enter the Queen competition.
- God arranged special favor for Esther among the other women.
- God arranged for Mordecai to have access to both Esther and the affairs of the kingdom.
- God arranged the lot that was cast to give 11 months warning before the evil event (Esther 3:12-13).
- God arranged that the decree command that the Jews be killed by private hands, instead of by the army of Persia – which would have been much more difficult to stop.
- God arranged that Haman restrain his anger and not kill Mordecai immediately (Esther 5:10).
- God arranged for Esther to delay her request; first asking for a banquet with the king and then another banquet.
- God arranged for Haman's anger to come to a peak on one particular day.
- God arranged for King Xerxes to have a sleepless night and order a certain book to be read.
- God arranged for Haman to enter the outer court at just that time.
- God arranged for the Jews to have victory.
- God arranged for Mordecai to create the festival celebrating the Jews victory.
- God arranged all things, so that not only will all the Jews be ultimately protected, but also so that both Mordecai and Haman would get what was coming to them.

God's hand in history never rules out our actions. God's will is accomplished even with our freedom to choose. The actions of Esther and Mordecai were critical to the preservation of their people.

God, in His perfect wisdom, allows His people to be tested – sometimes severely. Servants of God aren't protected from every trial because suffering is part of God's design for good.

The book of Esther reveals some very powerful truths, great wisdom for today and an understanding that God works in mighty ways on behalf of His people.

Adapted from commentary by David Guzik ©2006.

