

Esther 1:1-3a

Now in the days of Ahasuerus,  
the Ahasuerus who reigned  
from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces,  
in those days when King Ahasuerus sat  
on his royal throne in Susa, the capital,  
in the third year of his reign  
he gave a feast  
for all his officials and servants.

Esther 1:1-3a

Cyrus	(539-530)	
Cambyses	(530-522)	
Darius	(522-486)	Marathon, 490
Xerxes	(486-464)	Thermopylae and Salamis, 480

Esther 1:1-3a

Cyrus	(539-530)	Decree of 538
Cambyses	(530-522)	
Darius	(522-486)	Decree of 520
Xerxes	(486-464)	
Artaxerxes	(464-423)	Decree of 464
		Decree of 458
		Decree of 445

Esther takes place during  
the reign of Xerxes (Ahasuerus)  
between 483 and 473

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for all his officials and servants.

Esther 1:3b-4

The army of Persia and Media  
and the nobles and governors  
of the provinces were before him,  
while he showed the riches of his royal glory  
and the splendor and pomp of his greatness  
for many days, 180 days.

Esther 1:10-11

On the seventh day, when the heart  
of the king was merry with wine,  
he commanded... the seven eunuchs  
who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus,  
to bring Queen Vashti before the king  
with her royal crown, in order to show  
the peoples and the princes her beauty,  
for she was lovely to look at.

Esther 1:12

But Queen Vashti refused to come  
at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs.  
At this the king became enraged,  
and his anger burned within him.

Esther 1:16

Then Memucan said in the presence of the king and the officials:

“Not only against the king has Queen Vashti done wrong, but also against all the officials and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.”

Esther 1:17

“For the queen’s behavior will be made known to all women, causing them to look at their husbands with contempt, since they will say, ‘King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought before him, and she did not come.’”

Esther 1:18

“This very day  
the noble women of Persia and Media  
who have heard of the queen’s behavior  
will say the same to all the king’s officials,  
and there will be contempt  
and wrath in plenty.”

Esther 1:19

“If it please the king,  
let a royal order go out from him,  
and let it be written among the laws  
of the Persians and the Medes  
so that it may not be repealed,  
that Vashti is never again to come  
before King Ahasuerus.

“And let the king give her royal position  
to another who is better than she.”

Esther 1:20

“So when the decree made by the king  
is proclaimed throughout all his kingdom,  
for it is vast,  
all women will give honor to their husbands,  
high and low alike.”

Esther 1:21-22

This advice pleased the king and the princes,  
and the king did as Memucan proposed.

He sent letters to all the royal provinces,  
to every province in its own script  
and to every people in its own language,  
that every man be master  
in his own household...

Esther 2:3-4

“Let the king appoint officers  
in all the provinces of his kingdom  
to gather all the beautiful young virgins  
to the harem in Susa the capital,  
under custody of Hegai, the king’s eunuch,  
who is in charge of the women.

“Let their cosmetics be given them.  
And let the young woman who pleases the king  
be queen instead of Vashti.”

This pleased the king, and he did so.

Esther 2:5-6

Now there was a Jew in Susa the citadel whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjaminite, who had been carried away from Jerusalem among the captives carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away.

Esther 2:7

He was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther,  
the daughter of his uncle,  
for she had neither father nor mother.

The young woman had a beautiful figure  
and was lovely to look at,  
and when her father and her mother died,  
Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

Esther 2:8

So when the king's order  
and his edict were proclaimed,  
and when many young women were gathered  
in Susa the citadel in custody of Hegai,  
Esther also was taken into the king's palace  
and put in custody of Hegai,  
who had charge of the women.

Esther 2:9

And the young woman pleased him  
and won his favor.

And he quickly provided her with her cosmetics  
and her portion of food, and with seven  
chosen young women from the king's palace,  
and advanced her and her young women  
to the best place in the harem.

Esther 2:10

Esther had not made known  
her people or kindred,  
for Mordecai had commanded her  
not to make it known.

Esther 2:15

When the turn came for Esther  
the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai,  
who had taken her as his own daughter,  
to go in to the king, she asked for nothing  
except what Hegai the king's eunuch,  
who had charge of the women, advised.

Now Esther was winning favor  
in the eyes of all who saw her.

Esther 2:16-17

And when Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus into his royal palace in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign, the king loved Esther more than all the women, and she won grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Esther 2:20

Esther had not made known her kindred  
or her people, as Mordecai had commanded her,  
for Esther obeyed Mordecai  
just as when she was brought up by him.

Jeremiah 29:4-6

Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,  
to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile  
from Jerusalem to Babylon:

Build houses and live in them;  
plant gardens and eat their produce.  
Take wives and have sons and daughters;  
take wives for your sons,  
and give your daughters in marriage,  
that they may bear sons and daughters;  
multiply there, and do not decrease.

Jeremiah 29:7

But seek the welfare of the city  
where I have sent you into exile,  
and pray to the LORD on its behalf,  
for in its welfare  
you will find your welfare.

Esther 3:1-2

After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him and set his throne above all the officials who were with him.

And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him.

But Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage.

Esther 3:3-4

Then the king's servants who were  
at the king's gate said to Mordecai,  
“Why do you transgress the king's command?”

And when they spoke to him day after day  
and he would not listen to them,  
they told Haman, in order to see  
whether Mordecai's words would stand,  
for he had told them that he was a Jew.

Esther 3:5-6

And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury.

But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone.

So, as they had made known to him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

Deuteronomy 25:17-19

Remember what Amalek did to you  
on the way as you came out of Egypt,  
how he attacked you on the way  
when you were faint and weary,  
and cut off your tail,  
those who were lagging behind you,  
and he did not fear God.

Deuteronomy 25:17-19

Therefore when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your enemies around you, in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you shall not forget.

1 Samuel 15:3

Now go and strike Amalek  
and devote to destruction all that they have.  
Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman,  
child and infant, ox and sheep,  
camel and donkey.

1 Samuel 15:8-9

And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive  
and devoted to destruction all the people  
with the edge of the sword.

But Saul and the people spared Agag  
and the best of the sheep and of the oxen  
and of the fattened calves and the lambs,  
and all that was good,  
and would not utterly destroy them.  
All that was despised and worthless  
they devoted to destruction.

1 Samuel 15:22-23

And Samuel said,

“Has the LORD as great delight  
in burnt offerings and sacrifices,  
as in obeying the voice of the LORD?

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,  
and to listen than the fat of rams.

For rebellion is as the sin of divination,  
and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry.

“Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,  
he has also rejected you from being king.”

Esther 3:5-6

And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury.

But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone.

So, as they had made known to him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

Esther 3:8

Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus,  
“There is a certain people scattered abroad  
and dispersed among the peoples  
in all the provinces of your kingdom.  
Their laws are different from those  
of every other people,  
and they do not keep the king’s laws,  
so that it is not to the king’s profit  
to tolerate them.”

Esther 3:9

“If it please the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king’s business, that they may put it into the king’s treasuries.”

Esther 3:10-11

So the king took his signet ring from his hand  
and gave it to Haman the Agagite,  
the son of Hammedatha,  
the enemy of the Jews.

And the king said to Haman,  
“The money is given to you, the people also,  
to do with them as it seems good to you.”

Esther 3:13, 15

Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with instruction to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods...

And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was thrown into confusion.

Esther 4:1-2

When Mordecai learned all that had been done,  
Mordecai tore his clothes  
and put on sackcloth and ashes,  
and went out into the midst of the city,  
and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry.

He went up to the entrance of the king's gate,  
for no one was allowed to enter the king's gate  
clothed in sackcloth.

Esther 4:3

And in every province, wherever the king's command and his decree reached, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

Esther 4:4-5

When Esther's young women  
and her eunuchs came and told her,  
the queen was deeply distressed.  
She sent garments to clothe Mordecai,  
so that he might take off his sackcloth,  
but he would not accept them.

Then Esther called for Hathach,  
one of the king's eunuchs,  
who had been appointed to attend her,  
and ordered him to go to Mordecai  
to learn what this was and why it was.

Esther 4:6-7

Hathach went out to Mordecai  
in the open square of the city  
in front of the king's gate,  
and Mordecai told him all  
that had happened to him,  
and the exact sum of money that Haman  
had promised to pay into the king's treasuries  
for the destruction of the Jews.

Esther 4:8

Mordecai also gave him a copy  
of the written decree issued in Susa  
for their destruction,  
that he might show it to Esther  
and explain it to her and command her  
to go to the king to beg his favor  
and plead with him on behalf of her people.

Esther 4:9

And Hathach went and told Esther  
what Mordecai had said.

Esther 4:10-11

Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say: “All the king’s servants and the people of the king’s provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law – to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live.

“But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days.”

Esther 4:12

And they told Mordecai what Esther had said.

Esther 4:13-14

Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther,  
“Do not think to yourself that in the king’s palace  
you will escape any more than all the other Jews.  
For if you keep silent at this time,  
relief and deliverance will rise  
for the Jews from another place,  
but you and your father’s house will perish.

“And who knows whether you have not come  
to the kingdom  
for such a time as this?”

Esther 4:15-16

Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai,  
“Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa,  
and hold a fast on my behalf,  
and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day.  
I and my young women will also fast as you do.  
Then I will go to the king,  
though it is against the law,  
and if I perish, I perish.”

Esther 4:17

Mordecai then went away  
and did everything  
as Esther had ordered him.

Jeremiah 29:4-6

Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,  
to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile  
from Jerusalem to Babylon:

Build houses and live in them;  
plant gardens and eat their produce.  
Take wives and have sons and daughters;  
take wives for your sons,  
and give your daughters in marriage,  
that they may bear sons and daughters;  
multiply there, and do not decrease.

Jeremiah 29:7

But seek the welfare of the city  
where I have sent you into exile,  
and pray to the LORD on its behalf,  
for in its welfare  
you will find your welfare.

Jeremiah 29:10-11

For thus says the LORD:

When seventy years are completed for Babylon,  
I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise  
and bring you back to this place.

For I know the plans I have for you,  
declares the LORD,  
plans for wholeness and not for evil,  
to give you a future and a hope.

Genesis 50:20

“As for you, you meant evil against me,  
but God meant it for good,  
to bring it about that many people  
should be kept alive,  
as they are today.”

Acts 5:29

But Peter and the apostles answered,  
“We must obey God  
rather than men.”