



BAPTIST CHURCH

## **The Book Of Esther For Such A Time As This**

**“Sermon Two—God Is Always Working In Our Lives”  
Esther 1:1-2**

### **Introduction**

Last week we began our walk through the book of Esther.

Last week we discovered:

### **The Central Theme Of Esther**

The book of Esther is a story that describes how God utilizes individual people in specific circumstances to carry out His plans to accomplish His purpose and advance His Kingdom on the earth.

The Central Them of Esther is found in **Esther 4:14** “. . . Who knows, perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this.” CSB

Last week we discovered:

### **The Context Of Esther**

The book of Esther was written during the reign of King Xerxes the son of Artexerxes sometime between 470-424 BC.

King Xerxes reigned over the Persian Empire for 21 years from 486—465 BC

The book is named “**Esther**” because Esther had great faith to Trust God and stand before King Xerxes on behalf of the Jewish people.

Last week we discovered:

## The Main Characters

King Ahasuerus also known as Xerxes

Queen Vashti

Haman

Mordecai

Esther

Today we are going to discover: God is always working in our lives.

## Scripture

These events took place during the days of Ahasuerus, who ruled 127 provinces from India to Cush.

<sup>2</sup>In those days King Ahasuerus reigned from his royal throne in the fortress at Susa. CSB

## Quote Of The Day

“God is weaving a tapestry and each of us is a thread in His masterpiece!”  
— Pat Kilby

Esther is a true story that reveals God Is Always Working in our lives for His Glory and our good!

Esther is a true story that reveals God’s Divine Providence.

Esther is a true story that reveals **God HAS BEEN working in our life, God IS WORKING in our life, God WILL CONTINUE to work in our life.**

The Book of Esther begins with this phrase— **“These events took place during the days of Ahasuerus”**

What we know from this phrase is this— a series of significant events took place in the reign of Xerxes and there is much to learn from these events.

In the Book of Esther there are several SIGNIFICANT EVENTS that took place.

These significant events reveal how God has been working in the past, how He is working in our present to accomplish His Plans and Achieve His Purpose in the future!

## **SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE BOOK OF ESTHER**

1. Queen Vashti Banished As Queen— Esther 1
2. Esther Becomes The New Queen— Esther 2
3. Mordecai Saved The King— Esther 2
4. Mordecai Would Not Bow To Haman— Esther 3
5. Haman Hated Mordecai And He Sought To Annihilate The Jews From Persia— Esther 3
6. Mordecai Appealed To Esther— “Perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this” Esther 4:14
7. Mordecai Was Honored By The King— Esther 6
8. Esther Appealed To The King— Esther 7
9. Haman Was Executed— Esther 7
10. The Jews Were Victorious— Esther 8-9
11. Esther, Mordecai and the Jewish people in the Persian Empire were blessed and their lives were spared.

From these Significant Events we understand **“God is weaving a tapestry and each of us is a thread in His Masterpiece!”**

**As God is weaving a tapestry in our life we can see at least four principles at work in our lives:**

**Four Principles that reveal how God is always working in our Lives:**

- 1. The events of the past connect us to the present moment we live and have significant influence on our future.**
- 2. God Is Sovereign— He Makes The Rules**
- 3. Humanity Has The Freedom To Make Choices—**
- 4. The Choices We Make Have Consequences—**

We know God is always working in our lives:

- 1. The events of the past connect us to the present moment we live in and have significant influence on our future.**

The events recorded in the Book of Esther took place beginning in the third year of the reign of King Xerxes— Ahasuerus.

**Every story has a story—**

**In reality the Story began** in 1446 BC and is recorded in **Exodus 17:8-16** At Rephidim, Amalek came and fought against Israel. <sup>9</sup>Moses said to Joshua, “Select some men for us and go fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the hilltop with God’s staff in my hand.” <sup>10</sup>Joshua did as Moses had told him, and fought against Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. <sup>11</sup>While Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, but whenever he put his hand down, Amalek prevailed. <sup>12</sup>When Moses’s hands grew heavy, they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat down on it. Then Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other so that his hands remained steady until the sun went down. <sup>13</sup>So Joshua defeated Amalek and his army with the sword. <sup>14</sup>The Lord then said to Moses, “Write this down on a scroll as a reminder and recite it to Joshua: I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek under

heaven.” <sup>15</sup> And Moses built an altar and named it, “The Lord Is My Banner.” <sup>16</sup> He said, “Indeed, my hand is lifted up toward the Lord’s throne. The Lord will be at war with Amalek from generation to generation.” CSB

**Deuteronomy 25:17-19** “Remember what the Amalekites did to you on the journey after you left Egypt. <sup>18</sup> They met you along the way and attacked all your stragglers from behind when you were tired and weary. They did not fear God. <sup>19</sup> When the Lord your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, blot out the memory of Amalek under heaven. Do not forget. CSB

The Story continued in 1025 BC and is recorded in **I Samuel 15**

**I Samuel 15:1-3** Samuel told Saul, “The Lord sent me to anoint you as king over His people Israel. Now, listen to the words of the Lord. <sup>2</sup> This is what the Lord of Hosts says: ‘I witnessed what the Amalekites did to the Israelites when they opposed them along the way as they were coming out of Egypt. <sup>3</sup> Now go and attack the Amalekites and completely destroy everything they have. Do not spare them. Kill men and women, children and infants, oxen and sheep, camels and donkeys.’ ” HCSB

**I Samuel 15:32-33** Samuel said, “Bring me Agag king of Amalek.” Agag came to him trembling, for he thought, “Certainly the bitterness of death has come.” <sup>33</sup> Samuel declared: As your sword has made women childless, so your mother will be childless among women. Then he hacked Agag to pieces before the Lord at Gilgal. HCSB

The Story culminates in Esther with **Haman the Agagite**— In 483 BC in the third year of the reign of King Xerxes Haman the Agagite comes on the scene.

**Mordecai would not bow to Haman— Esther 3:1-4**

Mordecai knew the history of God’s people, Mordecai knew the Amalekites were cursed by God because of what they did to God’s people coming out of Egypt.

Mordecai knew that Haman was a descendant of King Agag— King of the Amalekites and he did not bow to Haman the descendant of Agag.

### **Haman hated Mordecai and he hated the Jewish People— Esther 3:5-6**

Haman also knew the history of the Jewish people, he knew that King Agag a former king in his family had been hacked to pieces by Samuel the Prophet. Haman hated the Jewish people and wanted to exterminate them!

“When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down and show him honor, he was enraged. Haman knew who Mordecai’s people were, killing only Mordecai was not enough. Haman’s rage and hatred for Mordecai led him to want to destroy all Mordecai’s people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.”

Haman was so bitter toward Mordecai and the Jewish people he approached King Xerxes with a plan to exterminate Mordecai as well as the entire Jewish population in Persia. Haman also told King Xerxes he would place 375 tons of silver into the royal treasury. 375 tons of silver in today’s economy would be approximately \$37,000,000.

**Esther 3:8-9** “Then Haman informed King Ahasuerus, “There is one ethnic group, scattered throughout the peoples in every province of your kingdom, keeping themselves separate. Their laws are different from everyone else’s and they do not obey the king’s laws. It is not in the king’s best interest to tolerate them. ʘIf the king approves, let an order be drawn up authorizing their destruction, and I will pay 375 tons of silver to the officials for deposit in the royal treasury.” CSB

### **Bitterness fueled by pride can escalate to resentment and uncontrollable anger that has the potential to wreck our life.**

**Bitterness**— Anger, frustration and disappointment fueled by an unforgiving spirit leads to resentment.

**Ephesians 4:31-32** “Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup>And be kind and

compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.” CSB

Bitterness, like a cancer was eating Haman alive and ultimately destroyed him.

**What does bitterness, resentment and anger unchecked really look like?**

**It looks like Carl Ericsson:**

In June of 2012, Carl Ericsson, a 73-year-old South Dakota man, was sentenced to life in prison after admitting to the murder of a former high school classmate. Friends and family members were shocked that the once-successful insurance salesman seemed to snap. Ericsson had been married to his wife for over 44 years.

But after the murder, Ericsson's secret finally came out. For over 50 years he had simmered with a belated grudge: He was still mad about a classmate who had once pulled a jock strap over his head during a high school locker room prank. Norman Johnson, the classmate and murder victim, was a star athlete on the track team. Ericsson was a student sports manager. According to Ericsson's confession, on one occasion Johnson put a jock strap on Ericsson's head, humiliating him and planting the seed of resentment that would continue to grow for over half a century. Apparently, throughout their lives, Norman Johnson continued to outshine Ericsson. Prior to his murder, Johnson had competed in college football, earned a degree, and then taught and coached at his alma mater for more than three decades.

After holding the grudge for over 50 years, Carl Ericsson rang Johnson's doorbell and shot him dead. Ericsson told a judge, "I guess it was from something that happened over 50 years ago. It was apparently in my subconscious." During his sentencing, Ericsson turned to Johnson's widow and apologized, saying, "I just wish I could turn the calendar back."

Citation: Cameron Smith, Bizarre S.D. murder caused by resentment over 50-year-old locker room jockstrap prank," Yahoo Sports Prep Rally blog (6-18-12)

**Bitterness is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.**

## **What are some steps we can take to resolve bitterness, resentment and anger in our life?**

Often times bitterness, resentment and anger comes from feelings where we have been harmed by someone intentionally or not.

Resolving bitterness, resentment and anger is a process, that takes time and patience.

### **Seven Steps We Can Take To Help Us Resolve Bitterness, Resentment And Anger:**

Steps we can take to help resolve bitterness, resentment and anger:

#### **1. Recognize And Acknowledge Our Feelings:**

Resolving Bitterness, Resentment and Anger comes from recognizing we and feeling Recognize and accept that you are feeling bitter. Subduing our emotions can lead to greater resentment over time. It's important for us to be honest with ourselves about how we feel.

**Psalm 55:22** "Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken." CSB

**John 14:27** "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful." CSB

Steps we can take to help resolve bitterness, resentment and anger:

#### **2. Identify The Source Of Bitterness Resentment And Anger:**

Reflect on who or what is causing our feelings of bitterness and why.



Understanding the root cause of our bitterness can provide clarity and help in the healing process.

**Hebrews 12:14-15** “Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness—without it no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup>Make sure that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no root of bitterness springs up, causing trouble and defiling many.” CSB

Steps we can take to help resolve bitterness, resentment and anger:

### **3. Practice Forgiveness:**

To practice means to put into effect.

Forgiving others is difficult.

**We must remember**—Forgiving people who have wronged us is for our benefit and leads to freedom from the burden of bitterness, resentment and anger.

**Matthew 6:11-15** When Jesus was teaching His disciples to pray said this: “And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup>And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. <sup>14</sup>“For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. <sup>15</sup>But if you don’t forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses.” CSB

Steps we can take to help resolve bitterness, resentment and anger:

### **4. Establish And Maintain A Spirit Of Gratitude**

Having a spirit of Gratitude helps us focus on the positive aspects of our life. Gratitude changes our perspective and minimizes our feelings of bitterness, resentment and anger.

**Psalms 100:4-5** “Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless His name. <sup>5</sup>For the Lord is good, and

His faithful love endures forever; His faithfulness, through all generations.”  
CSB

**I Thessalonians 5:16-22** “Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray constantly, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. <sup>19</sup> Don’t stifle the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Don’t despise prophecies, <sup>21</sup> but test all things. Hold on to what is good. <sup>22</sup> Stay away from every kind of evil.” CSB

Steps we can take to help resolve bitterness, resentment and anger:

## **5. Find Healthy Ways To Express Our Feelings**

Expressing our emotions in healthy and positive ways can help us process and reduce feelings of bitterness, resentment and anger.

We can express our emotions through prayer, writing in a journal, reading qualified books on the matter, talking with a close friend or if need be seek help from a qualified christian counselor.

**Philippians 4:6-7** “Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” CSB

Steps we can take to help resolve bitterness, resentment and anger:

## **6. Create Healthy Boundaries:**

Creating Healthy Boundaries helps protect us from people or situations that trigger bitterness. Creating Healthy Boundaries helps maintain emotional wellbeing and prevents further hurt.

**Proverbs 4:3-6** “Guard your heart above all else, for it is the source of life. <sup>24</sup> Don’t let your mouth speak dishonestly, and don’t let your lips talk deviously. <sup>25</sup> Let your eyes look forward; fix your gaze straight ahead. <sup>26</sup> Carefully consider the path for your feet, and all your ways will be established.” CSB

Steps we can take to help resolve bitterness, resentment and anger:

## 7. Pray and Meditate On Scripture

Prayer and Meditation on Scripture helps us focus on His Word. When we focus on Scripture we hear His voice and receive His Wisdom. Satan speaks lies to us, causing confusion and cultivates bitterness, resentment and anger.

Praying and meditating on Scripture brings spiritual and emotional balance to our lives and brings inner peace.

**Psalm 1:1-3** “How happy is the one who does not walk in the advice of the wicked or stand in the pathway with sinners or sit in the company of mockers! <sup>2</sup>Instead, his delight is in the Lord’s instruction, and he meditates on it day and night. <sup>3</sup>He is like a tree planted beside flowing streams that bears its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.” CSB

Start here next week

The Book of Esther records the showdown between the power of God, His Eternal Word and the foolish notions of an arrogant fool!

**As we look at this story and make application to our life we need to examine our past and ask ourselves:**

What significant events in my past are shaping my future? Good and Bad

As we examine our past we need to embrace our past and with God’s help make adjustments—

As we examine our past we need to learn from our past but we must not let our past define us nor should we continue to live in the past!

We know God is always working in our lives:

## **2. God Is Sovereign— He Makes The Rules**

Haman was a powerful man in the most powerful Kingdom in the world the Kingdom of Xerxes King of Persia.

However, Haman was ignorant, and foolish to think he could exterminate the Jews.

**Haman was Ignorant because he did not know the Word of God.**

In **Genesis 12:1-3** The Lord said to Abram: Go out from your land, your relatives, and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, I will curse those who treat you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you. CSB

God made a promise to Abraham and his descendants— **GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES**

**Numbers 23:19** God is not a man who lies, or a son of man who changes His mind. Does He speak and not act, or promise and not fulfill? HCSB

**Haman was Foolish because of his pride— Haman thought his position, authority, influence, wealth and power were greater than God's power.**

**Job 9:4** God is wise and all-powerful. Who has opposed Him and come out unharmed? CSB

**Knowing that God is sovereign and He makes the rules we would do well to read the Scripture so we can know the rules and live according to them!**

**Isaiah 40:8** The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word of our God remains forever.” CSB

We know God is always working in our lives:

### **People Have The Freedom To Make Choices—**

**From the beginning of time God has allowed humanity to make our own choices.**

**Genesis 3, Joshua 24:15**

Esther is story that reveals the importance and power of our choices.

**King Xerxes made a choice to objectify his wife— Queen Vashti— before the officials of the kingdom.**

To objectify means— to degrade the status of a human being to a mere object.

**Queen Vashti made a choice and she refused the kings command and as a result she was no longer the Queen.**

Which is more important to us— personal dignity and self-worth or a prominent position without personal dignity and or self worth.

**Mordecai made choices**

**Haman made choices**

**Esther made choices**

Find Scripture about wisdom—

We know God is always working in our lives:

**The Choices We Make Have Consequences—**

We can choose to follow God's rules or not!

\*\*\* IGNORANCE— NOT KNOWING THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT AN EXCUSE.

Every choice we make has consequences whether good or bad!

One of God's Sovereign rules is gravity— it does not change

Shellbi Anderson, 26, of Ada, said she knew the “split second” her feet left the overpass that she had “made the worst decision of (her) life.” That decision has since had far-reaching consequences.

Around 4:30 p.m. June 9, authorities began receiving calls about a body lying face-down in a northbound lane of U.S. Highway 377/state Highway 99— the body was Anderson. Moments before, in a state of desperation, Anderson stepped over the guardrail and jumped more than 20-feet to the hard pavement below.

“I remember falling and looking down as I fell, thinking ... this is gonna hurt,” Anderson said Tuesday morning from her hospital bed. “I remember hitting the ground and having my breath knocked out of me and not being able to feel my legs.”

In the time since her arrival at OU Medical Center, Anderson has undergone three surgeries and has at least three more to go. The impact shattered bones in both feet, toes and ankles, broke her pelvis and severely damaged her L3 vertebra. “It could've been way worse, that's for sure,” she said. “Life just got the best of me. This town we live in is consumed with drugs and I've battled addiction since December, but (I've) been clean since May 5.”

“Suicide was the motive, but the moment I stepped off I instantly regretted it and tried to grab the railing,” Anderson said. She said she felt her fingertips touch the railing, but it was too late.

“If I could turn back the clock, I would never have stepped off that bridge.”

Citation: [Carl Lewis Ada News June 9, 2017](#)

God is sovereign and the rules DO NOT CHANGE!

Every choice we make has consequences! CHOOSE WISELY

**2 Timothy 2:15** Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed, correctly teaching the word of truth. CSB