

ESTHER

AN OVERVIEW

Purpose

To demonstrate Yahweh's sovereignty and His loving care for His people.

Author

Unknown. Possibly Mordecai (see 9:29). Perhaps Ezra or Nehemiah because of the similarity of the writing style.

Date

Esther was written approximately 470 BC in Persia after Esther became Queen in 479 BC.

Audience

The people of Judah during the captivity.

Setting

Esther tells how a Jewish girl became the queen of Persia and saved her people from a plot to destroy them. She is assisted in this by Mordecai, her cousin and guardian. Although Esther follows Nehemiah in the Bible, its events are about 30 years prior to those recorded in Nehemiah.

Special Features

Esther was written to explain the origin of the Feast of Purim and to ensure that it would be observed by all future generations of the Jewish people.



Key Verses

“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? ... Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.” (4:14,16b ESV)

“And in every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his edict reached, there was gladness and joy among the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many from the peoples of the country declared themselves Jews, for fear of the Jews had fallen on them.” (8:17 ESV)

Key People

Esther, Mordecai, King Xerxes I, Haman.

Key Place

The king's palace in Susa, Persia.