

GREG'S NOTES

A NEW BEGINNING TEACHING OUTLINES

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FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Esther 1

The story of Esther unfolds almost like a fairytale except there are no fairies, no mermaids, and no unicorns. Fairytales are not true; this story is actual history. In this story, a beautiful orphan girl living in basic poverty is chosen by God to win a beauty contest and become a queen. Enter, an evil man that plots her destruction and that of her people. Because of her courage, she saves a nation and the people live happily ever after.

The plot in Esther reveals the plans of God's providence, with each progressing scene a sign of God's sovereignty.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES

1. **The King's Feast.** After a seven-day feast, we find King Xerxes "in high spirits because of wine" and calling out for the queen to come out and display her beauty. The contrast of what's about to happen builds tension to show just how improbable the events to come will be (verses 1–9).
2. **The Queen's Refusal.** The Persians were big on appearance. But Queen Vashti refused to come out before the king and put herself on display; she acts in a way that is contrary to what one would expect at that time (verses 10–12).
3. **The King's Response.** The character of the king and the culture of the kingdom provide a historical context by which later events would be understood. Huge events were set in motion by seemingly insignificant circumstances and decisions (verses 13–22).
4. **The Providence of God.** Vashti's vacancy and Esther's opportunity are arranged by God's sovereignty. God is working through human history—in this story through a carnal king and providential queen—to save His people.

RELEVANT REMINDERS

- God sees things before they happen. The Book of Esther is guided by the providence of God and so are our lives. And the way He did it in this book reminds us of Jesus, the One it all points to.

APPLICABLE ACTIONS

In this story, God is quietly but directly working, moving and rearranging events, and changing minds. God is in control of your life and He will accomplish His purposes for you in His time. The Bible says, "He makes all things beautiful in His time," not before and never after.