

Esther ch 1 **Queen deposed**

No mention of God but fingerprints all over book-**Providence working** yet not see or hear. Protection of Jewish people w/o evidence of nearness of God. Haman seeks to obliterate Jews. From these events **feast of Purim** 10 month Jewish calendar our March.

Changes over years but celebrated today w/ boys dressed as wicked Haman & girls Esther. Bake & give out pastries & cookies called Hamans ear. Give out gift baskets to family members & poor...like our Halloween.

God knows future so He prepares in advance. He puts right people in strategic places unbeknownst to them. He accomplishes His purposes in spite of those disrupting. Providence '**hand of God in the glove of history**'. Esther takes place during Ezra 6 & 7. Between first return of Zerubbabel and second return of Ezra.

At this time the people of God are out of the will of God & yet God's providence rules to do the purposes of God. Jews were in Persia and ignored the edict to return to Jerusalem. 50,000 did returned.

1Now it took place in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces, 2in those days as King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne which was in Susa the capital, 3in the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all his princes and attendants, the army officers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of his provinces being in his presence.

Ahasuerus a title like Caesar or Pharaoh – Greek is King Xerxes 486-464 BC, son of Darius, grandson of Cyrus Kings of Persia.

Third year of his reign 483 He had successful campaign in Egypt & won victories. Now planning invasion of Greece to be world conqueror and

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supreme ruler so he rallied his war counsel to banquet. Xerxes was erratic, boisterous & went to emotional extremes. He was an unpredictable king.

Until 550 BC Media was dominate power until King Cyrus the Great overthrew Media uniting the Persian and Median people & Persia became dominate power

4And he displayed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor of his great majesty for many days, 180 days. 5And when these days were completed, the king gave a banquet lasting seven days for all the people who were present in Susa the capital, from the greatest to the least, in the court of the garden of the king's palace. 6There were hangings of fine white and violet linen held by cords of fine purple linen on silver rings and marble columns, and couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and precious stones. 7Drinks were served in golden vessels of various kinds, and the royal wine was plentiful according to the king's bounty. 8And the drinking was done according to the law, there was no compulsion, for so the king had given orders to each official of his household that he should do according to the desires of each person.

Six month banquet for Royals, Power brokers, Influentials, Military, ending w/ 7 day feast for common citizens. Why? Herodotus *'when the king drinks all drink'* yet no compulsion.

A war counsel to go against Greece...they had lost & defeated two times 480,479 BC So Xerxes wants to impress all w/ show of unlimited resources...2000 attendees? Six months smorgasborg.

The more extravagant the banquet the greater claim to supremacy to give guest confidence in his strength and resources to defeat the Greeks.

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History records Xerxes had assembled largest army ever to the battle at Thermopylae w/ fleet of 300 ships that were destroyed in a storm. He lost the battle & in fit of madness goes to sea & beats the waves w/ his belt for destroying his fleet. He had great ability but erratic & irrational temper. *'Real men are not made by feasting, drinking, revelry and ease'*. He had an untrained & undisciplined army. Greeks had small army in numbers but elite warriors.

Thermopylae is a historical mountain pass in northern Greece, famed for the 480 BCE battle where King Leonidas and 300 Spartans made a legendary last stand against the massive Persian army. The name translates to "Hot Gates," referencing the natural sulfur hot springs still found there today

9Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the palace which belonged to King Ahasuerus 10On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, 11to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown in order to display her beauty to the people and the princes, for she was beautiful. 12But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. Then the king became very angry and his wrath burned within him.

King merry, drunk **Pr 20:1; 31:4,5** loss of judgment & loss of natural inhibitions. Josephus *'Strangers were not allowed to look at the beauty of a persons wife' especially a kings wife'*. Xerxes to parade her before a bunch of drunken men to satisfy his ego...**trophy wife**. Providence rules. Vashti in defiance as her modesty dictated refused. Social norm and etiquette says she not belong there, no law for her to obey & come.

But humiliating for king in front of guests as he prepared for his great campaign & queen not obey.

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13Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times—for it was the custom of the king so to speak before all who knew law and justice, 14and were close to him: Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media who had access to the king's presence and sat in the first place in the kingdom— 15“According to law, what is to be done with Queen Vashti, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus delivered by the eunuchs?” 16And in the presence of the king and the princes, Memucan said, “Queen Vashti has wronged not only the king but also all the princes, and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. 17“For the queen's conduct will become known to all the women causing them to look with contempt on their husbands by saying, ‘King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in to his presence, but she did not come.’ 18“And this day the ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's conduct will speak in the same way to all the king's princes, and there will be plenty of contempt and anger.

Wimpy men afraid of their wives Hen pecked, weaklings. ...got King while drunk pushed him to make decree, unchangeable.

19“If it pleases the king, let a royal edict be issued by him and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media so that it cannot be repealed, that Vashti should come no more into the presence of King Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal position to another who is more worthy than she. 20“And when the king's edict which he shall make is heard throughout all his kingdom, great as it is, then all women will give honor to their husbands, great and small.” 21And this word pleased the king and the princes, and the king did as Memucan proposed. 22So he sent letters to all the king's provinces, to each province according to its script and to every people according to their language, that every man should be the master in his own house and the one who speaks in the language of his own people.

Memucan-dignified henpecked---head of house--in heaven