

Walking Through the Word

Kings and Prophets (Week 17)

Story: **Trouble in River City** (E: Beautiful Esther Becomes Queen, Haman Plans to Kill the Jews, Queen Esther is Troubled, Esther Goes to the King, The King Honors Mordecai, and Esther Pleads for Her People, p 330-338)

Location: **Esther 1-10**

Bios & definitions

King Ahasuerus: King of Persia – a.k.a King Xerxes, a Greek or Aramaic variant of that name found in many biblical translations, son of Darius; Xerxes ruled over 127 provinces from India to Cush (Esther 1:1); he displayed his great wealth and the splendor and glory of his majesty – culminating in a week long banquet; overindulged in wine and was not of clear mind when he sent for the queen, Vashti, to come to him; Xerxes consulted his experts as to what to do about her refusal

Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, Memucan: names of the wise men who were closest to the King and understood the times and were the “highest in the kingdom” (Esther 1:14); Memucan spoke for the group and suggested removal of the queen and the search for a new replacement; this was an attempt to keep all women from rebelling against their husbands and creating disrespect and discord

Esther: an attractive and intelligent young Jewish lady; both her parents died while she was young and she was raised by Mordecai, Esther’s cousin; Esther was also known as Hadassah; taken to the citadel of Susa and put in the care of Hegai to see if she was suitable to be the next queen of Persia; pleased Hegai and won his favor; provided with 7 maids and moved to the best place in the harem (she was eventually the winner of the first, *Bachelor...* she got the final rose); did not reveal her nationality and family background at Mordecai’s request

Mordecai: Jew of the tribe of Benjamin; son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, who had been carried into exile from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (Esther 2:5-7); overheard a plot by Bigthana and Teresh (two of the king’s officers who guarded the doorway) to assassinate King Xerxes; Mordecai revealed this information to Queen Esther and she passed the information to the King; when the report was proven true, Bigthana and Teresh were hanged on the gallows and Mordecai’s favor was recorded in the book of the annals

Haman: honored by King Xerxes to the highest seat of all the nobles; because of his high position and the decree of the king, all were to kneel down and pay honor to him; Mordecai refused, being a Jew, as he would only kneel to the one true King of Kings; Haman wanted to not only kill Mordecai, but all the Jews throughout the kingdom; Haman got the king’s approval and a letter was sent out that all who did not obey the king’s law would be put to death; this threatened not only Mordecai, but Queen Esther and the whole of Jewish people as well

Walking Through the Word

Kings and Prophets (Week 17)

Story: **Compassion Comes** (E: The Temple is Finished, p 338-340)

Location: **Ezra 5-6, Haggai 1-2**

Bios & definitions

King Darius: a King of Persia following Cyrus (and Cyrus' son Cambyses and the imposter Smerdis); people did not ask him for help rebuilding the temple; they had given up hope and were living in their comfortable homes

Haggai: the prophet who once again told God's chosen people that they needed to rebuild the house of the Lord rather than working on their own; the people listened and began to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, as Cyrus King of Persia had commanded earlier

Samaritans: people who questioned the work on the temple; they were forced to pay their taxes and their sacrifices for their altar

Story: **City on a Hill** (E: Ezra Teaches God's Law, Nehemiah, the King's Cupbearer, The Walls of Jerusalem Are Rebuilt, and The People Worship God, p 340-347)

Location: **Ezra 7-10, Nehemiah 1-13, Malachi**

Bios & definitions

Artaxerxes I: king of Persia, son of Xerxes; he sent out a decree that Ezra and all the Jews who wanted to return to Jerusalem could do so; they were to take silver and gold for the temple and the people in countries they passed were to give them anything they needed

Ezra: discouraged that the Jews of Jerusalem had married heathen brothers and were discouraged and did not continue to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem; he prayed earnestly for the people and urged the leaders to rebuild the walls; read the law so everyone could understand

Nehemiah: the King's cupbearer; when he heard the walls of Jerusalem lie in ruin, he asked the king if he could go to Jerusalem and inspire his people to rebuild the walls as the Lord had commanded; given permission and his arrival and words inspired the people to again begin rebuilding