

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

Chapter 19

Audio Lesson: Old Testament Survey lesson 45



Objective: To understand the book of Esther and learn from her example.



“If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?”

—Esther 4:14

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”

—Romans 8:28

The book Esther tells the story of a Hebrew woman who married a Gentile and saved the Jewish people from genocide, preserving the ancestry of the Messiah. The Persian king chose Esther to be his queen, and when an evil plot to kill all Jews was discovered, Esther realized that she could use her influence with the king to save her people. She was extremely courageous to approach the king, but God used her faith and courage to save the Hebrew people.

One of the most important themes of Esther is the providence of God in our circumstances. God is sovereign over our lives. If we do not love Him and follow His purposes and plans, He is not obligated to cause all things to work together for our good. But if we do love and serve Him, we can trust that He will fit all of our circumstances into His good plans, even when our circumstances are painful or difficult.



1. True or false? The Exodus was the only time God delivered His people in the Old Testament.
2. True or false? The book of Esther is about a beautiful woman with ungodly character.
3. True or false? The book of Esther is a love story very similar to the book of Ruth.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. Why did Queen Vashti lose favor with the Persian king?
 - a. She refused to live with him.
 - b. She would not obey him by showing off her beauty.
 - c. She could not have any children.
 - d. She tried to kill him.
5. How did Mordecai feel when Esther was chosen for the king's harem?
 - a. He celebrated because it was a great honor.
 - b. He was confident that Esther would be chosen as the next queen.
 - c. He was grieved because the harem system was very cruel.
 - d. He no longer loved Esther because she was the property of a pagan king.
6. What did Mordecai tell Esther to do?
 - a. Let everyone know that she was a Jew.
 - b. Hide the fact that she was a Jew.
 - c. Help him plot to overthrow the king.
 - d. Assassinate the king herself.
7. How did Haman respond when Mordecai refused to bow to him?
 - a. He got the king to agree to kill all Jews.
 - b. He had Mordecai executed immediately.
 - c. He punished Esther for Mordecai's offense.
 - d. He sent all Jews back to Judah.
8. What did Mordecai believe God would do?
 - a. Deliver His people
 - b. Abandon His people
 - c. Punish Mordecai for putting the Jews in danger
 - d. Destroy the Persian kingdom
9. What characteristics did Esther demonstrate when she went in to the king? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Courage
 - b. Unbelief
 - c. Faith
 - d. Foolishness

10. How did the king respond to Esther?
- He had her imprisoned.
 - He sent her back to the harem and never saw her again.
 - He invited her to speak.
 - He welcomed her and gave her his scepter.
11. How did God demonstrate His authority over circumstances? (*choose all that apply*)
- He reminded the king of Mordecai's honor.
 - He struck Haman with lightning.
 - He let Haman get trapped by his own plan.
 - He put Esther in the right position at the right time to save the Jews.
12. What does the book of Esther teach us about how God protects His people?
- He barely saves them when He has to.
 - He saves them thoroughly and blesses them abundantly.
 - Sometimes His deliverance is too late.
 - He usually does not punish the enemies of His people.
13. How does the book of Esther reflect the commission Jesus gave His disciples?
- We are to pronounce judgment on all our enemies.
 - We risk our lives every time we come to our king in prayer.
 - We are to hide from Satan's schemes.
 - We are to take the great message of life into a world under the curse of death.



Do you believe that God can work in all of your circumstances for your good? In what ways can you show that you trust Him?

Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

—Esther 4:16

And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere.

—Mark 16:15



Thank God for His power to protect and deliver. Thank Him for where He has placed you. Ask Him to protect you from Satan's schemes, to give you the courage to stand against evil, and to give you opportunities to tell the message of Jesus to those who do not know it, those who are under the curse of death.



Going Deeper

1. What are several ways that the book of Esther demonstrates the Providence of God? (Compare Romans 8: 28.) _____

2. Does the book of Esther and the Scripture referenced above teach us that everything happens for our good or for God's good? Explain. _____

3. Was there anything good about the way Esther was conscripted to live in a harem and wait for her night with the king? Explain. _____

4. How does the experience of Esther compare with the experiences of Daniel and Joseph? _____

5. How does the experience of the wicked Haman demonstrate the Golden Rule of Jesus in reverse? (Matthew 7:12) _____

6. Relate the two decrees at the end of this story to the Great Commission of Jesus (Matthew 28: 18-20). _____

7. The last word of Mordecai when he asked Esther to deliver her people was that for such a time as this she had come to be on the throne of Media Persia. Explain your conviction that for such a time as this God has placed you where you are. _____
