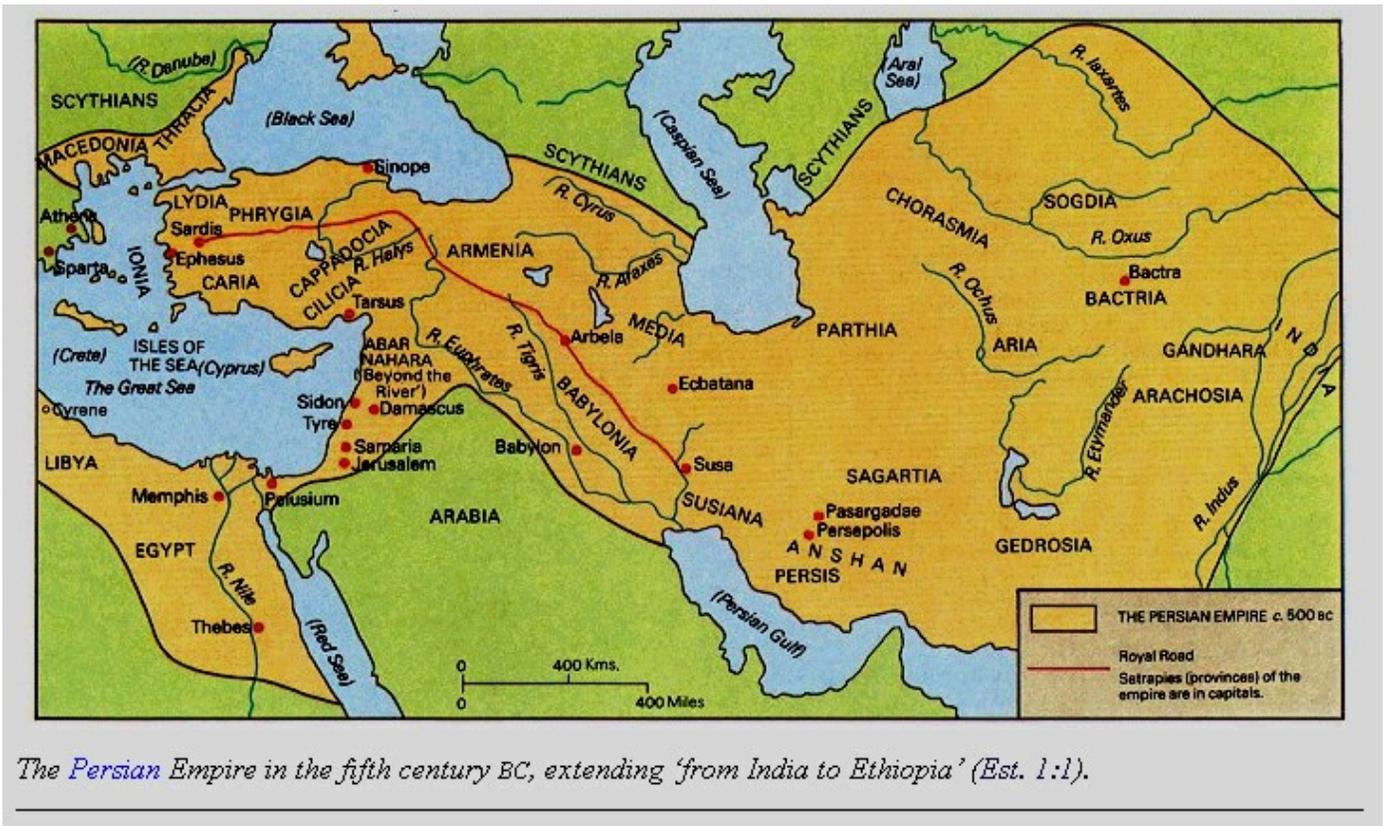


ESTHER

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING



(During this period, 3 great world battles were fought – Salamis, Thermopylae and Marathon – and 2 famous men died – Confucius and Buddha)

THEME: *God's Providential Care, Despite . . .*

OUTLINE:	Chapter 1	Vashti Deposed	} Plot
	Chapter 2	Esther Selected	} Planned
	Chapter 3	Haman Offended	} (<i>Threat</i>)
	Chapter 4	Esther's Dilemma	}
	Chapter 5	Esther's Banquet	}
	Chapter 6	Mordecai Honoured	}
	Chapter 7	Haman Hanged	} Plot
	Chapter 8-9	Jews Delivered, Deliverance Remembered	} Foiled (<i>Triumph</i>)
	Chapter 10	Mordecai Exalted	}

The 'NO' features of **Esther**:

- No *direct mention of God*.
- No *offer of prayers or sacrifices*.
- No *quotations of Scripture*
- No *giving of thanks to God for deliverance*.

The frequent occurrence in **Esther**:

1:3, 9; 2:18; 5:4; 6:14-7:2; 8:17; 9:17-22 → *Feasts, feasts, more feasts!*

The *similarity* of the Jews and Gentiles in Esther:

In truth, we could hardly distinguish the Jews in exile and the Gentiles next to them.

How should we view *Mordecai*?

From 2:5,6,8,10,20, it would appear that Mordecai is a clever man, but not necessarily a godly man. The fact that he allowed Esther to participate in the "choose-the-queen" contest, which involves sexual immorality, reveals his moral viewpoint. While one may argue that he has no choice in this matter, the fact that he instructs Esther to hide her real identity (she is a Jew) is highly revealing. Why would he do that?

How should we view *Esther*?

From 2:8,9,10,16-17, 20, it would appear that Esther is no better. She accepted her uncle's instruction to hide her real identity without any protest. However, later on in chapter 4, when she was urged to step out and rescue the Jews (an act that will reveal her identity), she protested vehemently!

LESSONS

Mordecai is not the hero, neither is Esther the heroine. The real hero is God! He works behind the seen and behind the scene, to effect salvation for His undeserving people!!

Key verse: *For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14)*

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