

THE STORY

THE BIBLE AS ONE CONTINUING STORY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

CHAPTER 20 – THE QUEEN OF BEAUTY AND COURAGE

DISCUSSION OF GENERAL QUESTIONS

- ❶ What is God saying?
- ❷ For what does this section lead me to give thanks? (See God's grace and promises!)
- ❸ What sins does this section lead me to confess? (See God's expectations for his people)
- ❹ For what does this section lead me to pray? (As you ponder the Word, what needs of heart and life for yourself and others come to mind? Consider every word you read as an invitation to turn it into a prayer you speak back to your Lord!)

Key Events: the events of Esther and Mordecai and the plot to destroy the Israelites during the reign of the Persian King Xerxes

DIGGING IN

- 1) The book of Esther is unique when compared to all of the other books of the Bible. It is unique because of what is *not* found anywhere in the book: the name of God. This fact has led some to believe that the book does not belong in the canon of Scripture. What might be our response to such a claim?
- 2) What was King Xerxes's dilemma with queen Vashti? How did his royal advisors suggest Xerxes fix the problem?
- 3) Explain Haman's role in the story. How might his ethnic background have influenced his feelings toward the Jewish people and especially Mordecai?

- 4) Haman had an unquenchable desire for vengeance. What happens when a grudge or desire for revenge takes hold of a person?

- 5) How did Esther demonstrate her faith in the face of catastrophe? (pg 282)

- 6) Mordecai had told Esther: “Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?” God puts us in the right place at the right time to carry out his will and purpose. How is this a comforting truth to the Christian?

- 7) What most surprised you of all the twists and turns of the story of Esther? What do we learn about God and his providence from the story?

- 8) **Agree/Disagree:** If you believe in God, your story will always have a happy ending.

Chapter 21: Rebuilding the Walls

Bible Reference: Ezra 7; Nehemiah 1-2; 4; 6-8; Malachi 1-4