



1

The Mystery Of The Book

- No mention of the name of God
- No prediction Of the LORD
- Not one word is said about worship or faith
- Not one word is said about heaven or hell; there is NOTHING religious about the book
- It's an incredible story but....

Why is in the Bible??

- [The name **YHVH** is hidden "underneath the text" in multiple ways...]

2

Esther 1:1

*This is what happened during the time of **Xerxes** the Xerxes who ruled over 127 provinces stretching India to Cush:*

- His Persian name was Khshayarsha, which is Ahasuerus in Hebrew and Xerxes in the Greek
- His father was Darius I, and his grandfather was Cyrus the Great
- He reigned for 21 years leading enormous armies v. Greece
- "India to Cush" are the extreme boundaries of the empire

3

Esther 1:2

At that time King Xerxes reigned from his royal throne in the **citadel of Susa**.

- 200 mi east of Babylon and capital of Persia
- The palace was also the residence for:
 - Darius who authorized the rebuilding of the Temple
 - Xerxes, Esther's husband
 - Artaxerxes, who authorized Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem (triggers 70 year prophecy)

4

The Citadel of Susa

- William Loftus in 1852 found inscription of Artaxerxes II:

"My ancestor Darius (521-485 B.C.) built this palace in former times. In the reign of my grandfather (Artaxerxes I, 465-425 B.C.) it was burned. I have restored it."

- Someone who wrote this years later probably would not have known about the citadel which gives more evidence that the writer had to be an eyewitness to the events.

5

The Citadel of Susa

- Dieulafoy, a Frenchman, carried on the excavations in 1884 and located the remains of:

- the "king's gate" 4.2
- the "inner court" 5.1
- the "outer court" 6.4
- the "palace garden" 7.7
- one of the dice ("Pur") for lots 3.7

6

Esther 1:3

and in the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials.

The military leaders of Persia and Media, the princes, and the nobles of the provinces were present.

7

Herodotus

The Father of History

- Greek historian, Herodotus, wrote about these banquets in his book, *History*. He writes that Xerxes was entertaining these leaders about a possible invasion into Greece.
- Xerxes' father, Darius I, had invaded Greece and was embarrassingly defeated at the Battle of Marathon in 490. He had prepared to return to Greece and get revenge but died in 486 B.C.)
- Xerxes was looking to avenge his father and expand the empire.
- Herodotus claimed that Xerxes planned to invade all of Europe and "reduce the whole earth to one empire".

8

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9

Herodotus

The Father of History

"My intent is to throw a bridge over the Hellespont and march an army through Europe against Greece, that thereby I may obtain vengeance from the Athenians for the wrongs committed by them against the Persians and against my father."

Herodotus, The History, Book VII

- The king's uncle, Artabanus, was completely against the plan, but the king wouldn't listen and successfully convinced the princes and political leaders to follow him.
- According to Herodotus it took Xerxes four years to get ready for the invasion he launched in 481.
- The 180 days were most likely planning sessions in which all the governors of the provinces were being prepped for the war
- He will marry Esther four years later in the 7th year of his reign

2:16

10

Esther 1:7

Wine was served in goblets of gold, each one different from the other and the royal wine was abundant, in keeping with the king's liberality.

11

Esther 1:9

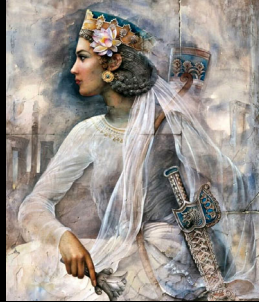
Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the royal palace of King Xerxes.

- The name Vashti means "beautiful woman"
- According to the writings of the Rabbi's she was the granddaughter of Nebuchadnezzar

12

Amestris?

- The only wife of Xerxes known to the Greek historians was Amestris, the daughter of Otanes, one of the seven conspirators
- Xerxes probably married her before he ascended to the throne; at this time they had a son that was about 7 years old
- That son would become Artaxerxes, the one who gives Nehemiah the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and triggering the 70th Week Prophecy of Daniel



13

Esther 1:10-11

On the seventh day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the seven eunuchs who served him - Mehuman, Birth, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Caras -

to bring before him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at.

14

Esther 1:13-14

Since it was customary for the king to consult experts in matters of law and justice, he spoke with the wise men who understood the times

and were closest to the king - Carthana, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memucan, the seven nobles of Persia and Media who had special access to the king and were highest in the kingdom.

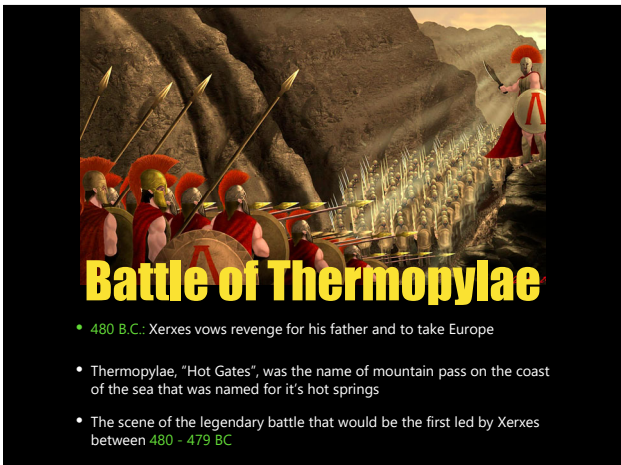
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16



17



18



Battle of Thermopylae

- Athens and Sparta form an alliance to defend their country and agreed to make a stand against the invading Persians at Thermopylae

- In those days, it was about a 50 foot wide pass

- Herodotus recorded that Xerxes had assembled an army of 2.6 million men to come against the Greeks who had 7,000.

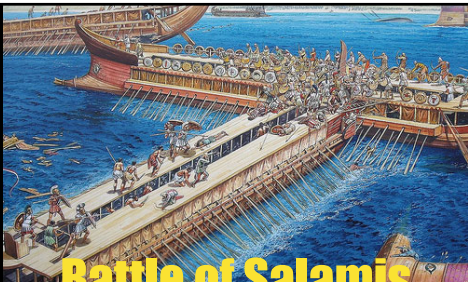
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Battle of Thermopylae

- The battle has become the stuff of legend because of its leader Leonidas and 1,400 men including the famous 300 Spartans.
- The Greeks were betrayed by a local shepherd who approached the Persians offering to show them a mountain pass that would allow them to surround the Spartans from behind.
 - Leonidas would send most of his men to escape while the 300 held them off

20



Battle of Salamis

- Xerxes sent in 400 ships into the bay, but the naval fleet of Greece backed up further into the bay, drawing them in further.
- Once the Persians were trapped they rammed and smashed the Persian fleet as Xerxes watched his navy be destroyed.
- There would be one final battle to attempt to conquer Greece at the Battle of Plataea; Xerxes lost so bad they gave up and returned home.

21

"All power, all authority comes from God"

Romans 13:1

- Pharaoh learned this the hard way Egypt *Ex. 7:3-5*
- Nebuchadnezzar had to learn this the hard way in Babylon *Dan. 3-4*
- Belshazzar learned this the hard way with the "writing on the wall" *Dan. 5*
- Sennacherib learned it the hard way at the gates of Jerusalem *Isa. 6-7*
- Herod Agrippa I learned it as he died, eaten by worms *Acts 12:20-23*
- America might be learning this today *Rom. 1:18-32*

22

Esther 2:1

Later when the anger of King Xerxes had subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what he had decreed about her.

- Xerxes invaded Greece with an army of 2,000,000 and came home with 5,000.
- It was after his return from this disaster that Esther was chosen as his queen.
 - 478 B.C.; he will live another 13 years
 - She will live into the reign of her stepson, Artaxerxes, and **Nehemiah's** request to rebuild Jerusalem
 - [Study **Daniel's 70 Weeks Prophecy** for the AMAZING significance]

23

Esther 2:5

Now there was in the citadel of Susa a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, named Mordecai son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the **son of Kish**.

- Saul was the son of Kish, from the tribe of Benjamin
 - Josephus records that Esther was from the royal family

24

Shimei

A Lesson In Letting Your Critics Curse You

- 2 Samuel 16: David Escapes From Jerusalem

"As King David approached Bahurim, a man from the same clan as Saul's family came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out.

He pelted David and all the king's officials with stones, though all the troops and the special guard were on David's right and left.

As he cursed, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you murderer, you scoundrel! The LORD has repaid you for all the blood you shed in the household of Saul, in whose place you have resigned.

- Abishai, one of the Mighty Men wanted to behead him
- David believed it was the LORD's doing?

- "Let him curse, for the LORD has told him to."

25

Esther

- "Esther" is from the word that means "to hide" or "something hidden"

- She was a Jewish girl named Hadas'sah (the myrtle)

- She was the daughter of Abigail, a Benjamin. Her family was one of the ones who elected not to return to Jerusalem when Cyrus allowed the captives to go back home.

- She lived with her cousin Mordecai, who held some office in the Citadel of Susa under the Persian king Xerxes.



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Esther 2:8

*When the king's order and edict had been proclaimed, many girls were brought to the citadel of Susa and put under the care of **Hegai**. Esther also was taken to the king's palace and entrusted to Hegai, who had charge of the harem.*

- "Hegai" shows up in Herodotus' book, *Histories*, as an officer for Xerxes

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Esther 2:16

*She was taken to King Xerxes in the royal residence in the tenth month, the month of **Tebeth**, in the seventy year of his reign.*

- "Tebeth" shows up only once in Scripture and would be our end of December and first of January

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Mordecai Uncovers A Conspiracy

Esther 2:19

When the virgins were assembled a second time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate.

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Esther 2:21

During the time Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthana and Teresa, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, became angry and conspired to assassinate King Xerxes.

- "Guarded the doorway" made this guys major insiders, with close proximity to the king.
- Xerxes later on actually was killed through a conspiracy formed by Artabanus, the captain of his guard, and Aspamatrix, his chamberlain.

30

Esther 2:23

And when the report was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were **impaled on poles**. All this was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the kings.

- "Impaled on poles" - This was the invention of Crucifixion
- A record of this assassination plot was written in the annal of the king, an official court record.

Esther 6:1-2

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Bible Bootcamp

Taking Your Bible Seriously!

Next Week

• The Wrath Of The Amalekite

- Study [Esther 3 & 4](#)
- The introduction of the Villain of the story: Haman
- Haman's background: [1 Samuel 15](#)
- This thread goes all the way back to Genesis and involves an important ancestor of Mordecai

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