**Lesson 12**

**Beyond the Exile**

**Esther**

I. The Introduction

A. The book is named after its principle character, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a Jewess.

B. Ezra and Nehemiah deal with the “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” which returned to Jerusalem and Judah. The book of Esther has to do with those who \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the land of captivity.

C. The book was written during the reign of Ahasuerus, King of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. Ahasuerus is the Xerses (Artaxerses) of secular history. Xerses transliterated into Hebrew is Ahasuerus.

2. He reigned from 485-465 B.C.

D. Approximately \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years takes place in the book and covers the time between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra.

II. The Keys to the Book

A. The key verse is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

B. The theme of the book is "God's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for His People."

C. There is no mention of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the book but His presence is obvious as He directs the events.

III. The Principle Characters

A. Esther D. Mordecai

B. Vashti E. Haman

C. Ahasuerus

IV. The Organization of the Book.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to God's People (chapters 1-3)

B. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of God's Servant (chapters 4-5)

C. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of God’s People (chapters 6-10)

V. The Danger to God's People (chapters 1-3)

A. The Divorce of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1)

1. The story takes place in Shushan the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

\*Shushan was one of the main \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Persian empire, 150 miles north of the Persian Gulf (see Nehemiah 1:1).

2. The great \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by Ahasuerus described in this chapter was held in preparation for his famous expedition against \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

3. The King, during the feast, summoned his queen Vashti, presumably to make a lewd display before his guests. She \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ so the king divorced her.

B. The Discovery of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (2:1-20)

1. After suffering defeat to Greece, King Ahasuerus had a beauty contest to replace Vashti as Queen.

2. Through the help of Mordecai, Esther was chosen to be the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

C. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Mordecai (2:21-23)

\*Mordecai \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ an assassination attempt against the King, and the report of this service was reported in the King's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

D. The Decree of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (3:1-15)

1. Haman was an Agagite -- possibly related to the Amalekites.

2. When Mordecai \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to bow to Haman, Haman encouraged the king to decree that the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people (the people of Mordecai) be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

VI. The Decision of God's Servant (chapters 4,5)

1. Mordecai's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to Esther (4:1-14)

"Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

1. Esther's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to Mordecai (4:15-17)

"If I perish, I perish."

C. Esther's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with Ahasuerus (5:1-8).

1. She had a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with the King and Haman.

2. She apparently lost the courage to expose Haman before the King and held a second banquet the next day.

D. Haman's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ over Mordecai (5:9-14)

VII. The Deliverance of God's people (chapters 6-10)

A. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Haman. (6-7)

1. Haman had to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mordecai.

2. Esther held the second banquet with the king and Haman. She exposed Haman's wicked plot and the king \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Haman.

B. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Ahasuerus (8-9).

1. Since a Persian King's decree could not be changed (8:8; Daniel 6:15), the decree for the Jew's massacre could not be reversed. Yet Esther did persuade the King to make another decree authorizing the Jews to resist and slay all who would attack them. Therefore, Esther \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the Jewish race from annihilation.

2. This brought about the Feast of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

a. This feast was held on the 14th or 15th day of Adar, (February-March).

b. This became one of the yearly feasts of the Jewish people.

C. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Mordecai's Fame (10).