

Meant to Be Series
Esther week 1 outline
Esther Ch 1 & 2
9.16.18

The Beginning: Distinctly Shaped

I. Esther Overview

A. The Background

1. Long before Esther's time, the land of Judah and Israel had been conquered, and the people (later called Jews) had been dispersed throughout the Near East by the Assyrians and Babylonians. Later the Persians absorbed nearly all these lands and people into their empire, which reached its greatest extent during the time of Esther.

2. The story of Esther takes place between the events recorded in Ezra 6 and 7. Many Jews had returned to Palestine from their exile, to reclaim the land, rebuild the temple, and restore the sacrificial system.

B. The Setting

1. The Persian monarch in the story is Xerxes (485-465 BC), also known as Ahasuerus.

2. The events in the book of Esther extend over a decade, and take place mainly in the royal city of Susa. Susa is located in present day Khuzestan Province, Iran.

C. The Theme

1. God's hand of providence and protection on behalf of His people is evident throughout the book, even though His name does not appear once!

2. Christ in Esther — Esther, like Christ, puts herself in the place of death for her people. Esther also portrays Christ's work of an Advocate on our behalf.

II. The Story Begins... (Esther Chapters 1 & 2)

A. Party Like it's 500BC (Esther 1:1-21)

B. All the Pretty Ladies (Esther 2:1-14)

C. Here She Comes... Miss Persia (Esther 2:15-18)

D. Smelling a Rat (Esther 2:19-23)

II. Performing for a Lifetime

-Like Esther, we all live in a world that judges us by our performance:

Are you performing...

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| A. In Relationships | -judged by our looks? |
| B. As a Student | -judged by making the grade? |
| C. In Sports | -judged by getting the win? |
| D. With Parenthood | -judged by our children's success? |
| E. As a Worker | -judged by making it bigger/better than last year? |

III. The Way the World Says We're "Meant to Be"

A. The world answers by saying "This is just the way it is!"

-there will be winners and losers... so play the game to win

BUT... deep down we know this isn't the way it was meant to be

-OR-

B. The world answers by saying "You're fine just the way you are!"

-just ignore it, and live how you want when you want

BUT... deep down we know we're NOT ok just the way we are

C. The world's answers leave us...

1. desperate
2. spent
3. worse off than before

THE WORLD TELLS US
WE'RE FINE JUST THE WAY WE ARE...
BUT THE GREAT NEWS OF THE GOSPEL TELLS US
TO COME JUST AS WE ARE!

IV. Who God Says We're Meant to Be"

*"For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance,
but the Lord looks on the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7*

-In the same way Esther's life points forward to Jesus, our lives point back to Jesus!

A. Jesus and God's Heart (Mk 5:21-43)

1. A woman with an issue of bleeding (vs 25-26)

a. desperate

-*"who had suffered much under many physicians"*

b. spent

- *"and had spent all that she had"*

c. no better than before

-*"and was no better but rather grew worse."*

2. Encountering Christ (vs27-29)

- a. she heard
- b. she came
- c. she touched
- d. she was healed

3. "Who Touched Me?" (vs 30-34)

- a. "Daughter"
 - belonging instead of outcast
- b. "your faith has made you well"
 - wellness in place of desperation
- c. "go in peace"
 - peace rather than exhaustion
- d. "be healed from your disease"
 - healing in the midst of a broken world

IN CHRIST WE RECEIVE
BELONGING INSTEAD OF ISOLATION,
WELLNESS IN PLACE OF DESPERATION,
PEACE RATHER THAN EXHAUSTION,
& **HEALING** IN THE MIDST OF A BROKEN WORLD.

B. From the Beginning... DISTINCTLY SHAPED by GOD (Psalm 139:11-16)

11 *If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light about me be night,"*
12 *even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is bright as the day,
for darkness is as light with you.*
13 *For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.*
14 *I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.*
15 *My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.*
16 *Your eyes saw my unformed substance;
in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.*