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FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS!



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*This Bible study was written by
Rev. Matt Goodsell
(Assistant North American
Global Director)*

ALL SCRIPTURE QUOTES ARE TAKEN FROM
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CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY • JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI



Welcome to the Missouri State Capitol for the 102nd Legislative Session in which you have been chosen and ordained by God to represent the constituents in your district. You will succeed within this institution through God alone with help from others such as your competent office staff.

Romans 13:1, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”

Whether you are a veteran lawmaker, freshman, or capitol staff member it is always a truism that if we are walking in step with God’s will for our lives then we are walking in submission and obedience to His purposes for good government.

GOAL – This week we dive into the book of Esther in the O.T in the hope that every political leader and staff member would sense the prodigious responsibility and calling in their role in instituting good government for the people of Missouri.

INTRODUCTION – As a brief overview the book of Esther documents the journey of one brave woman whose life began under hardship for Esther was adopted by her cousin Mordecai after her parents had died. In 2:7 her tragic beginning receives double mention, perhaps to invoke sympathy, but also to draw attention to the majesty, power and love of God who can use anyone and the circumstances of their life to fulfil His supernatural purposes in this sinful world.

You are of immeasurable worth in the eyes of God!
(See Luke 12:6-7, 24, Romans 5:8 & 1 John 4:10).

The writer’s central purpose was to record the origin of the annual festival of Purim (a Jewish festival during the 13–15th days of the month of Adar: 9:26-32) and to keep alive for later generations the memory of the great deliverance of the Jewish people during the reign of King Xerxes. This is indeed another example preceding the greatest deliverance offered to the eternal blessing of all mankind.

Colossians 1:13-14, “For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Another parallel to a recurring Biblical theme (*light over darkness / Psalm 27:1 & John 1:5*) is that throughout much of the story the writer highlights the ongoing conflict of Israel with the Amalekites. The Amalekites are viewed as the epitome of all the powers of the world arrayed against God’s people. Christians are in a battle today, but it is not physical one but a spiritual one for as Paul writes we are ***“against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm” (Eph. 6:12)***. Christians serving at the Capitol in whatever capacity are in constant spiritual warfare and thus it is essential that one be spiritually equipped for that battle. But know this, the war has already been won through our Savior Christ Jesus. In Esther, the adversary Haman as a last-ditch effort attempts to annihilate Israel after it had already been released from captivity, but that effort fails due to the faithfulness of God. It is true today that the adversary of mankind, the Devil, tempts God’s people in many ways but we stand on God our Solid Rock.

Sponsors – HOUSE: Rep. Ben Baker, Rep. Richard Brown, Rep. Cheri Toalson Reisch, Rep. Adam Schnelting. **SENATE:** Sen. Bill Eigel, Sen. Mike Moon & Sen. Rick Brattin (*The views expressed in each Bible study are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study Sponsor.*)





STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful people regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential through faith in Christ alone. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of the life and they that are lost unto resurrection on damnation. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus.

"I am happy to support the excellent work of Ralph and Danielle Drollinger and Capitol Ministries".



— DR. WAYNE GRUDEM,
THEOLOGICAL & BIBLICAL STUDIES,
PHOENIX SEMINARY, ARIZONA

1. QUEEN VASHTI DEPOSED

"Therefore, if it pleases the king, let him issue a royal decree and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be repealed, that Vashti is never again to enter the presence of King Xerxes. Also let the king give her royal position to someone else who is better than she." (1:19)

The removal of Queen Vashti pivoted in her open refusal to join the King upon his command on the final day of a 7-day banquet that followed a 180-day display of his wealth and glory. (Theologians suggest this may have been a time of planning for the military campaign against Greece; 480–479 b.c.) **"The king became furious"** (be in a state of strong displeasure, with a focus that an action of anger often follows). He judiciously consulted the wise men, the seven nobles of Persia and Media (v.13). Regarding these advisors we are told they had special access to the king (v.14). Memucan gave an answer that pleased the king and the judgement hinged on the ensuing disrespect that would be imitated by others. Be aware of the cultural context here.

➔ *Political Leaders benefit from the wise counsel of other believers.*

2. GOD'S FAVOR ON ESTHER

"Now the king was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, and she won his favor and approval more than any of the other virgins. So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti." (2:17)

The timeline of events places the Greek wars between Vashti's removal in the 3rd year of his reign and Esther's crowning in the 7th year of his reign. Perhaps Xerxes **"remembered Vashti"** (v.2:1) because he was sorry for his former decision or at least desired to have her again. But he had made an irrevocable decree. The personal

attendants picked up on this and suggested a course of action (v.2).

➔ *Pay attention to your staff for they can attune to your emotions.*

In 2:4, Xerxes followed their advice to find a "beautiful young virgin" to replace Vashti. In v.5 we are introduced to Mordecai who was the great grandson of Kish, **"who had been carried into exile from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon"** (v.6). In v.7 we are introduced to Hadassah (Heb), Esther (gentile) who is described as *"lovely in form and features"*. Beauty is a gift from God and in this case it was used by God for the good of His people.

➔ **NOTE:** Great worth to God is **"the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit"** (1 Peter 3:4).

In v.9, after being forcefully taken according to the King's order and edict (v.8), she was placed under the authority of Hegai. Commentators speculate about how many girls were brought but the Jewish historian Josephus said there were four hundred. Immediately, she won Hegai's "favor", the one in charge of the harem (v.9). Esther's beauty was overpowering, even to a eunuch. The word "favor" is *hesed*, which can also refer to covenant loyalty or "kindness". This reveals God's hand upon Esther raising her ever closer to the master plan God had for her. We see this type of grace extended many times throughout Scripture. (See Abel/Gen. 4:4, Noah/Gen. 6:8 Joseph/Gen. 39:4, Lot/Gen. 19:19, Moses/Exodus 32:11, Ruth 2:10).

IF YOU ARE AN ELECTED OFFICIAL THEN GOD'S FAVOR IS UPON YOU...BUT HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?

2:10, 20 – The main plot of the story (Haman's intent to destroy the Jews) relies on Esther's Jewish identity being secret. There is no attempt to explain why Mordecai did not want Esther to disclose her

relationship to him or to the Jewish people. We may surmise that Mordecai was concerned about prejudice against Esther, based on either her family or her nationality, or both. Mordecai remains influential in Esther's life, and she respects his wishes. Obviously Christians today are always commanded to share the good news of salvation in the Cross of Christ and reveal who they are.

*"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect."
(1 Peter 3:15)*

As a concerned parent he is able to check on Esther every day (2:11) while she had to complete 12 months of beauty treatments (2:12) before seeing the king. And when it was her turn she won the favor of everyone who saw her including the king who then made her Queen. Now Xerxes' abuse of power is evident in the demise of so many innocent women for his physical pleasure. Even today those who have no fear of God sometimes can satisfy their desires without limit. (See Proverbs 8:13 & James 1:14)

➔ *Practice self-control in all areas (Prov.25:28 & 2 Cor. 6:12).*

3. A CONSPIRACY IS FOILED

"But Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai." (2:22)

2:21 – Mordecai was "sitting at the king's gate" when news of this plot reached him. It's noted that throughout the Near East, law cases and official matters were handled near the gate area. Therefore, that Mordecai was there suggests that he was an official of some sort. Some have suggested that after Esther became Queen she had Mordecai appointed as a magistrate or judge, or a lesser position in the elaborate hierarchy of Persian officials.

Thus, Esther was able to show her appreciation for Mordecai's help and also make it possible to maintain close contact.

➔ *Speak up against evil and bring into the light what is in the dark!
(see Ephesians 5:11)*

For such a time as this, Mordecai was placed where he needed to be in order to hear about the assassination plot, an event that later God would use mightily.

And the ironic contrast between the unrewarded merit of Mordecai and the unmerited reward of Haman with no stated reason is noted.

➔ *Serve Missouri with all your energy and leave the honoring in the hands of Almighty God.*

Judgment for the two conspirators against the King was hanging which in Israelite and Canaanite practice meant that they were impaled, a gruesome execution (2:23).

4. HAMAN'S DEVOUS PLAN

"Destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews—young and old, women and children—on a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods." (3:13)

Haman's sinful desire to not just kill Mordecai but to annihilate the Israelites (3:6) originates with his pride. This was first revealed when Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor and in 5:11 when he boasted/recounted to his wife and friends about his wealth, many sons and the honor given to him by the king. *Prov. 16:18 reads "Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall." But God "gives grace to the humble." (Prov. 3:34-NKJV)*

➔ **FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS** God desires you to be humble!

When Haman speaks to Xerxes and suggests a plan of despicable action to annihilate the Israelites it is worthy to note that the King did not consult any counsel or speak to any wisemen. *Failure 101 in office!*

RALPH & DANIELLE DROLLINGER



The first ministry was established in 1996 to legislators and constitutional officers in California at the Sacramento State Capitol. That exemplar ministry was duplicated in many other states. In 2010, Ralph Drollinger established the first national ministry in Washington, D.C. where he began a weekly Bible study to U.S. Representatives. In 2015, a separate ministry was planted for U.S. Senators, and in 2017, a ministry was created to Members of President Donald Trump's White House Cabinet which, reportedly, is the first of its kind in more than 100 years. Capitol Ministries has also created discipleship Bible studies to the political leaders of 24 foreign nations on four continents. Capitol Ministries Local Government is a fairly new endeavor that has an objective of creating ministries to the estimated 500,000 local city and county leaders in the more than 40,000 incorporated communities in the United States. Capitol Ministries' long-term vision is to create 200 ministries in 200 foreign nations; 50 ministries in 50 state capitols; ministries to all three branches of government in Washington, D.C.; and 10,000 ministries in 40,000 neighborhoods across America. **We stay away from politics and concentrate on the hearts of leaders.**



VERSES OF THE WEEK

ESTHER 4:14

*“For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position **for such a time as this?**”*

JEREMIAH 1:4-5

“The word of the Lord came to me, saying, ⁵ “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”



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Jesus Christ in the political
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 Capitol Ministries MO

 Matt Goodsell



Capitol Ministries®

Rev. Matt Goodsell

107 Brian Lane

Ashland, MO 65010

660.238.4341 Cell/Text

matt.goodsell@capmin.org

www.capmin.org/missouri

5. FOR SUCH A TIME IS THIS (4:14)

When the King’s edict and order was received the Jews responded with great mourning, fasting, weeping and wailing (4:3) and this included Mordecai (4:1). It was then that Esther sent Hathack to find out what was troubling Mordecai. In v.8 after hearing of the edict Mordecai challenged Queen Esther to go into the king’s presence. But for this to happen without Esther losing her life, the king would need to extend the gold scepter for she was not summoned (v.11). **Mordecai’s response is in 4:14...**

At this point Esther calls on a 3 day fast before entering the Kings presence and declares *“I will go to the king even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”* (4:16)

➡ ***“Be Strong and Courageous in Office!” (See Joshua 1:9)***

6. ESTHER’S LIFE ON THE LINE

*“When the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, she obtained **favor** in his sight; and the king extended to Esther the golden scepter which was in his hand.”* (NASB 5:2)

God’s favor continues to be poured out into the life of Esther that has a very distinct purpose: demonstrate the faithfulness, grace & protection of God to His chosen people. Esther goes on to ask that the King summon Haman so that they could both attend a prepared banquet (5:4), where her request would further be that they attend another banquet the next day (5:8).

7. RAGE, HONOR, HANGING & AN OVERRULED EVIL

Haman *“was filled with rage against Mordecai”* (5:9) because he saw him at the king’s gate and he neither rose nor showed fear. Rage is a strong feeling of displeasure, hostility, and antagonism and is to be avoided (“Sin is crouching at your door”/Gen 4:7). His wife Zeresh and all his friends told Haman to have gallows built and ask the King to hang Mordecai on it the next day. However, that night because the king could not sleep he read some of the book of the Chronicles and how Mordecai had saved his life (6:2). The King asked Haman, *“What should be done for the man the king delights to honor?”* (6:6) In his pride he assumes the king is referring to himself. After Haman described an elaborate honoring scene for himself, he must have almost fell over when the king exclaimed, *“do just as you have suggested for Mordecai the Jew”* (6:10). At the 2nd banquet Xerxes again offers *“up to half the Kingdom”* (7:2, 5:3) to Esther who requests not material things but that her life be spared and that of her people. They had been *“sold for destruction”* upon which the king replies, *“Who is he? Where is he—the man who has dared to do such a thing?”* Esther’s answer was short and exact, **“An adversary and enemy! This vile Haman!”** By announcing Haman as the guilty person, she revealed her Jewishness. Haman must have felt doomed immediately because he realized the king’s favorite wife also was a Jew. Now it was the king who was in a rage, *“The king said, “Impale him on it!” ¹⁰ So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai.”* (v.9b-10}. Haman’s plots and lies had finally come to an end and through another edict by the King the previous edict and to annihilate the Jews was overruled.

➡ ***As an elected official you are called “For Such a Time as This” to maintain good government for the people of Missouri.***