

The People Rescued

Esther 3:7-9,13; 8:5,11-13,17



Key Concept

**God rescues His people
even in the face of
imminent destruction.**

**The first group of Jews
returns and rebuilds the
temple (Ezra 1-6)**

**Nehemiah returns and
rebuilds the wall around
Jerusalem (Neh 1-6)**

Today's Lesson

**Esther and Mordecai rescue
God's people from destruction
(Esther 3-10)**

**Esther is made queen of
Persia (Esther 1-2)**

**Ezra the priest returns to
Judah and instructs the
people in the law (Ezra 7-10)**

Psalm 71:1:3

1. O LORD, I have come to you for protection; don't let me be disgraced.
2. Save me and rescue me, for you do what is right. Turn your ear to listen to me, and set me free.
3. Be my rock of safety where I can always hide. Give the order to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

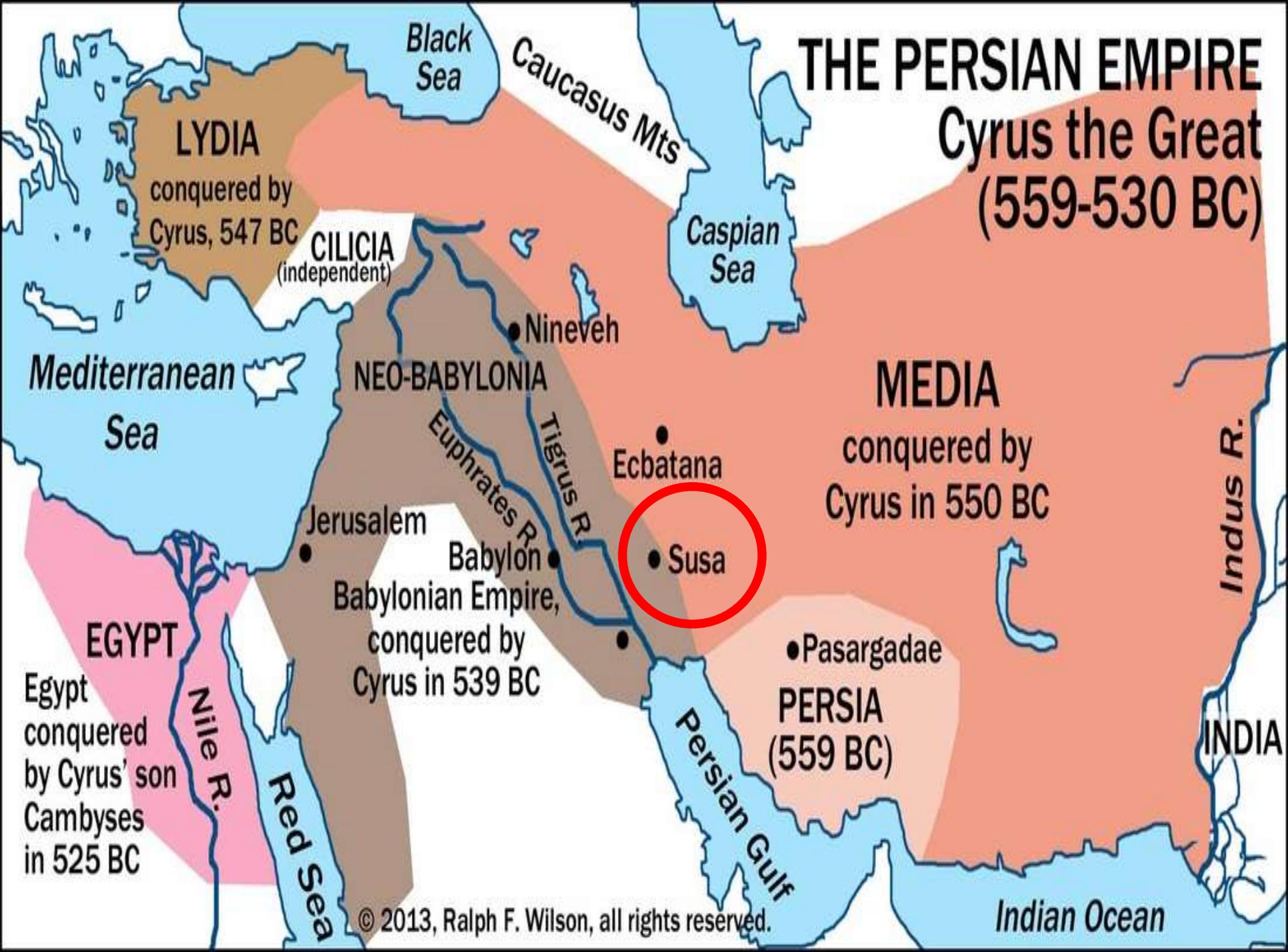


- Esther was her Persian name.
- Orphaned (at early age)
- Concealed her Jewish ethnicity
- Won favor with the king
- Exceptional beauty

- Was chosen as queen after Xerxes I deposed his first queen for disobedience
- Followed the wisdom of both Mordecai and the chief eunuch Hegai
- Displayed modesty, humility and obedience

THE PERSIAN EMPIRE

Cyrus the Great (559-530 BC)



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Ancient ruins of Persian palace near Susa







Relief of Xerxes I found at Persopolis

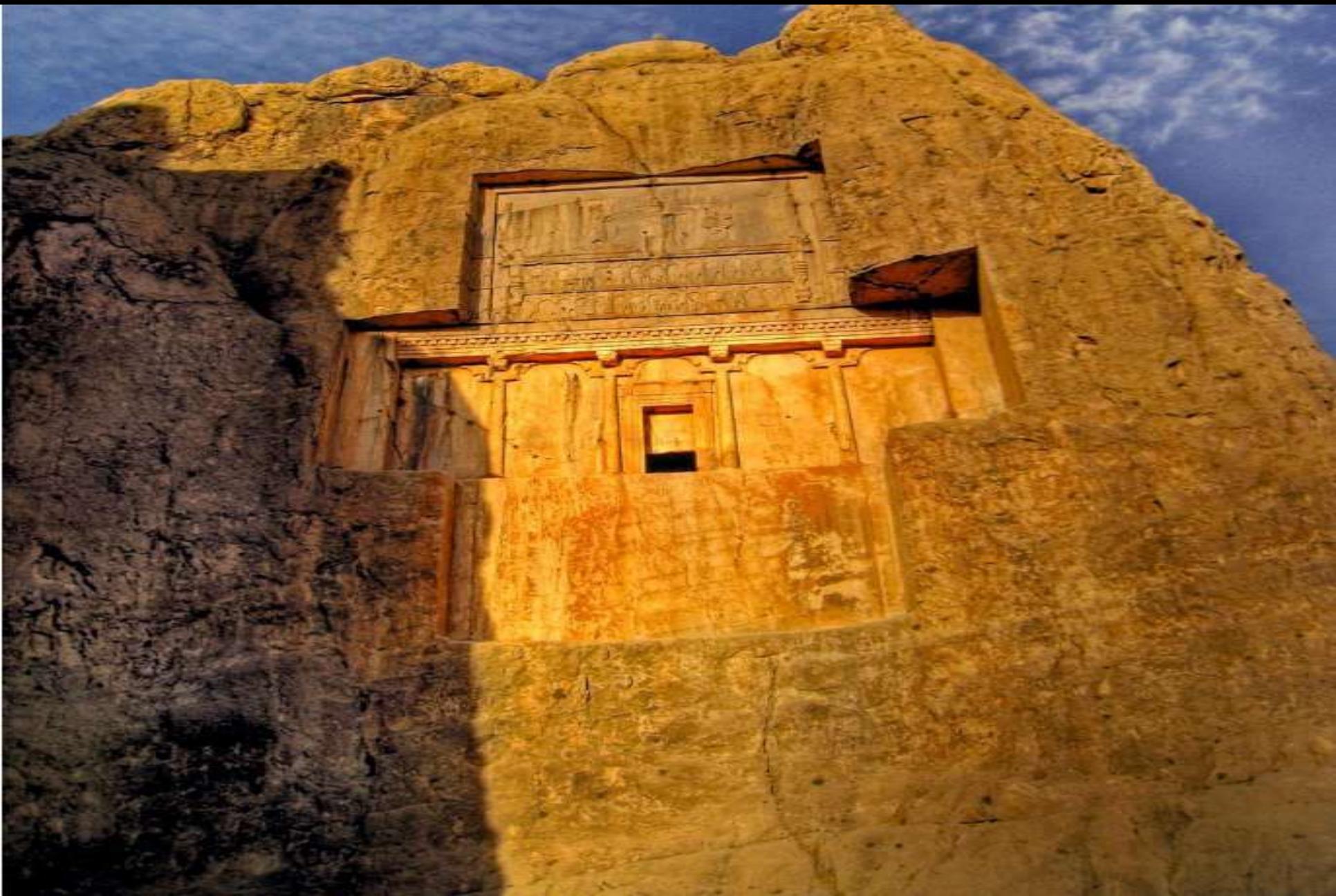


Gate of All Nations





Tomb of Xerxes I in Susa



Ruins of the palace at Susa



Scholars familiar with both the book of Esther and the ruins of the palace located in Susa have strongly suggested the author possessed intimate, firsthand knowledge, leading many scholars and traditions to point towards Mordecai or someone very close to the events as the likely author.



•What is probably the most surprising factor in the magnificent plan of how God executes his will in this story?

He always factors in sinful choices and actions in bringing His will to fruition

•(T/F) Mordecai, Esther and King Zerxes mention/reference God and how He is protecting His people a total of 12 times throughout the book

False – God is never mentioned directly or given credit

- (T/F) Haman wanted to destroy the Jews because of his pure anti-Semitic hate?
False – He was first offended by Mordecai’s disobedience and then he learned he was Jewish and a threat to his status (grand vizier)
- Queen Esther’s real name held what meaning?
**Hadassah – humility / fragrance
Esther – (Persian = “star”) Hebrew – hide or conceal (both God and her ancestry are concealed in this story)**
- What was the Persian name for King Xerxes I ?
Ahasuerus

•What is Esther's true relationship with Mordecai?

Mordecai was actually her older cousin

•Haman was a descendant of who?

Agag – King of the Amalekites

•What is the feast of Purim?

A joyous Jewish holiday celebration of salvation from Haman's plot

•Did Jesus celebrate Purim? **Very likely**
But never mentioned, many scholars believe it is reference in John 5:1 (unnamed feast)

- **Other events in the Bible where the ironic Providential hand of God is at work?**
- **Ruth – Moabite (married a Judean immigrant)**
- **Rahab – a Canaanite prostitute from Jericho**
- **Paul's persecution of Christians – 1 Tim 13-15**
- **Caiaphas - appointed by Roman's not by traditional Jewish succession**
- **Pontius Pilate – was a roman prefect, he was a professional soldier not aristocracy**
- **Nebuchadnezzar – God gave the Israelites and their nation to him Jer 27:6**
- **Haman – a descendant of tribe that should have not existed had King Saul obeyed**