

Title: Esther and the Christian

Text: Esther, chapter 10

Main Point: Reasons Christians should use the book of Esther to mature in their faith.

Date: 7/ 12 /2026

Series: The Book of Esther

ESTHER AND THE CHRISTIAN: INTRODUCTION

Today we finish our series in the book of Esther. I titled today's sermon "Esther and the Christian." I hope that the series is more than the Sundays we shared. I desire the book to be usable in Christian practice. Otherwise, our series has not accomplished much.

Although Christians use the New Testament as their final authority, the Old Testament offers much to help us faithfully practice our faith. Beginning with Jesus, who explained that all the Old Testament was about Him: " 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?' And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24:25-27)

Likewise, the New Testament writers cited the value of the Old Testament for their audiences:

"It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of the function and influence of the OT in the NT. There are quotations of or allusions to the OT in every NT writing except Philemon and 2 and 3 John. It is quoted with introductory formulas ('it is written') and without. Paraphrases and allusions appear; sometimes the allusions comprise no more than a word or two. In other places the NT reflects OT themes, structures and theology. The NT writers appeal to the OT for apologetic, moral, doctrinal and liturgical reasons. The evangelists seek in various ways to show how Jesus understood Scripture, fulfilled Scripture, and was clarified by Scripture. The OT is represented even more prominently in the writings of Paul and in Hebrews.

Of more importance than its use in the NT is the theology of the OT. The OT's view of God, of humanity, of covenant, of the election of Israel and of judgment forms the presupposition that underlies the theology of Jesus, his disciples, and the writings of the NT. Apart from the OT the NT would make little sense. Explicit quotations of the OT, as well as the numerous allusions, provide only a partial indication of the foundational function the OT plays in the theology of the NT. Careful consideration of the function of the OT clarifies at many significant points the foundational doctrines of the NT." (C. A. Evans, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 72-73.)

Further, Hebrews 11 uses Old Testament figures to challenge and mature New Testament Christians. Paul claims in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 that the wilderness wanderings are examples for Christians.

My point: Christians should deepen their understanding of the Old Testament to serve God faithfully. The book of Esther is no exception.

I do believe wisdom is required when considering how to use Esther. Some of Esther's moral decisions are questionable: she married a Gentile king, showed no mercy toward Haman, appears to have lived a secular life largely, initially refused to help her people, and authorized the plunder of her enemies. Still, she risks her life to save her people. I believe it is important to parse the good from the bad when discussing the book and avoid making all-encompassing statements.

ESTHER AND THE CHRISTIAN: APPROACHING THE BOOK

1. As Christians approach the book of Esther, they should consider the priority they give to the Bible.
 - 1.1. 3 John 2: “Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.” (Emphasis mine)
 - 1.2. 2 Peter 1:3-4, “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.” (Emphasis mine)
2. Further, Christians should cultivate self-awareness of their tendency to rationalize the Bible.
 - 2.1. *Living by the Book* (Howard G. and William D. Hendricks) offers salient advice for practicing biblical principles. Christians should be cautious to avoid superficial obedience in pursuit of substantive life-change. In superficial obedience, Christians “apply biblical truth to areas where [they are] already applying it, not to new areas where [they are] not applying it.” (*Living by the Book*, 293) Also, “Most of us have a built-in early-warning system against spiritual change. The moment truth gets too close, too convicting, and the alarm goes off, and we start to defend ourselves.” (*Living by the Book*, 293)
3. Christians understand that the Bible is not intended to be a history book; nevertheless, it locates itself in history rather than in fiction.
 - 3.1. 10:1, “King Ahasuerus imposed tax on the land.”
 - 3.2. 10:2, The events were recorded in “the Book of the Chronicles.” I agree we no longer have this book. Nevertheless, those who determined to keep Esther in the Bible would have known of its existence and the truth of its message. The Bible has survived thousands of years because of its truth, not falsehood.

ESTHER AND THE CHRISTIAN: EVERYDAY LIFE

1. Christians, in times of suffering, turn to Esther for confidence that God is working despite the physical evidence to the contrary. It appeared that God was silent while the Jews suffered, facing annihilation. Yet, Esther makes clear that God was planning their future deliverance, although they did not know it at the time.
 - 1.1. The biblical principle: “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).
 - 1.1.1. One example: You pray for years about a difficult adult child, and it seems God is silent; Esther informs you otherwise.
 - 1.1.2. A second example: You are overwhelmed by your current circumstances. You cannot find a “fix.” Esther reminds you that God is at work in your emotional confusion even though you do not sense His presence.

2. Esther is a helpful book for Christians tempted to believe evil is stronger than God.
 - 2.1. The biblical principle: “All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he [God] does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, ‘What have you done?’” (Daniel 4:35). God has the final word.
 - 2.2. If you were to take away all news sources and only read the Bible, I suspect your worldview of evil would drastically adjust. Here are a few facts to support my point from common news outlets. (<https://letter.ly/negative-news-statistics/>)
 - 2.2.1. Sensationalist stories form 95% of media headlines nowadays.
 - 2.2.2. Negative media reports or statistics attract 30% more attention.
 - 2.2.3. 26.7% of people exposed to negative news go on to develop anxiety issues.
 - 2.2.4. 63% of kids aged 12–18 say that watching the news makes them feel bad.
 - 2.2.5. Approximately 90% of all media news is negative.
 - 2.2.6. Recent studies reveal that an alarming number of Americans check the news hourly.
3. Many Christians use the word sovereignty. However, I suspect many do not know what it means to claim that God is the absolute sovereign. Esther helps in understanding God’s sovereignty. As you read the book, you experience God ordering His outcome for His people, despite the attempts of evil to do otherwise.
 - 3.1. The biblical principle: “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)
 - 3.2. “Esther reveals God’s sovereignty through a series of interconnected events that appear coincidental but ultimately serve God’s purposes. Esther’s exceptional beauty leads the king to choose her as queen; Mordecai happens to uncover an assassination plot and has his loyalty recorded in royal archives; when Esther approaches the king uninvited—an act punishable by death—she finds favor and is allowed to speak. (J. I. Packer, Wayne Grudem, and Ajith Fernando, eds., ESV Global Study Bible (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 673–674.)
 - 3.3. “Most crucially, the king’s insomnia on a particular night prompts him to have historical records read aloud, which leads him to discover that Mordecai had never been rewarded for his earlier service, and he immediately determines to honor him—with Haman himself forced to carry out this public recognition.” (Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988), 42–43.)
 - 3.4. “The narrative ultimately demonstrates that God quietly yet sovereignly works on behalf of his people, overruling and thwarting the schemes of those who would destroy his chosen people and working all things toward their ultimate good.” (J. I. Packer, Wayne Grudem, and Ajith Fernando, eds., ESV Global Study Bible (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 673–674.)

4. Finally, Esther explains how God's sovereignty combines with human agents.
 - 4.1. The biblical principle: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."
(Ephesians 2:10)
 - 4.2. God is working behind the scenes in Esther. Yet, in the visible present, Esther and her cousin Mordecai act out their convictions. They suffer, face anxiety, and risk death to help their people, all the while God is moving circumstances for His intended outcome. God, then and now, uses human instruments to accomplish His will.
 - 4.2.1. Is God wanting to use you?
 - 4.2.2. Are you willing to fully surrender to His will for your life?