

## Book Study on Esther

### A Plot against the King

#### Esther 2:19-23

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#### Introduction

- Review books of the Bible: Gen – Esther
- Introduction to Hadassah aka Esther.
- Esther introduced to the Palace
- Esther prepares to see the king
- Esther Becomes the Queen

#### Let's pick up here in chapter 2 and verse 19

#### Bible

*Est 2:19 And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.*

*Est 2:20 Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.*

*Est 2:21 In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.*

*Est 2:22 And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name.*

*Est 2:23 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.*

#### Lets look a little deeper into these verses:

*Est 2:19 And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.*

#### There are 2 possible interpretations of this "second time"

- When Esther, with others, were brought to the king's house, as it was decreed above, Esther 2:2,3, which is called the second time, because they had taken this course once before, when Vashti was chosen queen. But there is no mention of any such former use; and by the manner of proposing it seems to have been a new project. Or,
- Since Esther was declared queen; for though that point was determined, the king's lust was not yet satisfied; and therefore being pleased with the former experiment, he desired another collection of virgins, whom he might make his concubines. And this seems best to agree with the following words. For it is not probable that Mordecai sat at the king's gate till Esther was queen; for till then he only walked before the court of the women's house, as is expressed, Esther 2:11.<sup>1</sup>
- Mordecai has been thought by some to have been one of the porters of the royal palace; but it is probable he was an officer of higher rank. Poole thinks he was one of the king's guard, or ministers, and that he had been advanced to this place by Esther's favour, though without any discovery of her relation to him.<sup>2</sup>

*Est 2:20 Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.*

- As not before, so neither since she was made queen, see Esther 2:10, though, according to the Targums, she was urged to it by the king himself:<sup>3</sup>
- No one interrogated her, as she had been educated as Susa, and was taken for a Persian lady, ver. 10.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Poole, Matthew, "Commentary on Esther 2:19". Matthew Poole's English Annotations on the Holy Bible. 1685.

<sup>2</sup> Benson, Joseph. "Commentary on Esther 2:19". Joseph Benson's Commentary. 1857.

<sup>3</sup> Gill, John. "Commentary on Esther 2:20". "The New John Gill Exposition of the Entire Bible". 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Haydock, George Leo. "Commentary on Esther 2:20". "George Haydock's Catholic Bible Commentary 1859.

- Her honours had not altered her manners. She was *semper eadem*,= always the same, as obsequious and observant of Mordecai still as ever.<sup>5</sup>

*Est 2:21 In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.*

- Mordecai might have been one of the officers of the king, as the gate was the place where such usually attended to await the king's call. It is not likely that he was the porter; had he been only such, Haman could have remove him at once.<sup>6</sup>
- These were two great men, who perhaps kept the door of the king's chamber; and, being either incensed at the divorce of Vashti, whose creatures they might be, or at the advancement of Esther, who they thought would in all probability raise her kinsman Mordecai above them, took disgust thereat, and so resolved to avenge themselves on the king. See Prideaux, and chap. Esther 6:2-3.<sup>7</sup>
- The Targum says that they found out that Esther had intended to use her influence with the king to get them removed from their office, and Mordecai put in their place; therefore they determined to poison Esther, and slay the king in his bedchamber. It is very likely that they were creatures of Haman, who probably affected the kingdom, and perhaps were employed by him to remove the king, and so make his way open to the throne.<sup>6</sup>
- Conspiracies inside the palace were ordinary occurrences in Persia. Xerxes was ultimately murdered by Artabanus, the captain of the guard, and Aspamitras, a chamberlain and eunuch.
- This secret conspiracy against the king's life probably arose out of revenge for the divorce of Vashti, in whose interest, and at whose instigation, these eunuchs may have acted.

*Est 2:22 And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name.*

- Josephus says that a Jew, named Barnabazus, overheard the plot, told it to Mordecai, Mordecai to Esther, and Esther to the king, in Mordecai's name; and he was registered as the discoverer.<sup>6</sup>
- The Targum states that Mordecai was indebted for his discovery to extraordinary linguistic powers, as understanding no fewer than seventy languages!<sup>8</sup>
- Josephus says that a certain Pharnabazus, a slave of one of the conspirators, betrayed them to Mordecai<sup>9</sup>

*Est 2:23 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.*

- That these two men had entered into a conspiracy to take away the king's life; full proof and evidence were given of it:<sup>3</sup>
- Were crucified; a common punishment among the Persians, especially on rebels<sup>10</sup>
- "crucified" or "impaled" the ordinary punishment of rebels and traitors in Persia.<sup>11</sup>
- Official records, made and kept by the royal scribes, and constituting a body of state papers or annals.<sup>12</sup>
- Ctesias drew his Persian history from them, and they are often glanced at by Herodotus.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Trapp, John. "Commentary on Esther 2:20". John Trapp Complete Commentary.. 1865-1868.

<sup>6</sup> Clarke, Adam. "Commentary on Esther 2:21". "The Adam Clarke Commentary". 1832.

<sup>7</sup> Coke, Thomas. "Commentary on Esther 2:21". Thomas Coke Commentary on the Holy Bible.. 1801-1803.

<sup>8</sup> The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. Used by Permission. Bible Hub

<sup>9</sup> The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2010 by [BibleSoft, inc.](http://BibleSoft.com), Used by permission [Bible Hub](http://BibleHub.com)

<sup>10</sup> Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. Used by Permission. Bible Hub

<sup>11</sup> Barnes, Albert. "Commentary on Esther 2:23". "Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible". 1870.

<sup>12</sup> Whedon, Daniel. "Commentary on Esther 2:23". "Whedon's Commentary on the Bible". 1874-1909.