

**Book Study on Esther**  
**The Other Characters in the Story - Esther**

**Esther 2:7**

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**Introduction**

- Review books of the Bible: Gen – Esther
- Esther is 40 years after Ezra and 40 years before Nehemiah
- The story setting in Shushan the capital city in Ahasuerus' Persian kingdom
- Vashti, the Chaldean Queen, refused to present herself to the king and the 127 princes of the land.
- Disastrous military campaign that leaves the king depressed, counselors suggest looking for a new queen.
- The last time we studied the book of Esther we studied about Mordecai who he is, where he came from and the historical information about his background and how he ended up in Shushan at the Palace

**Let's pick up here in chapter 2 and verse 7**

**Bible**

*Est 2:7 And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.*

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

- *And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther,*
  - *Hadassah - Semitic origin - myrtle*
  - *Esther – Persian word for star*
  - Tyrwhitt regards Hadassah as the court name, by which she was known among the Persians, and Esther as her Jewish maiden name, by which she was known to her own people. But to this it may be fairly replied that she would be more likely to be known to her own people as well as to the Persians by her royal name; and most interpreters have naturally understood from the expression, he brought up Hadassah, which is Esther, that Hadassah was her early maiden name, and that she took the name of Esther when she became queen. Moreover Hadassah is of Semitic origin, and signifies myrtle; while Esther is the Persian word for star, (Greek, ἀστὴρ.) The fair and beautiful maiden was known as myrtle; the brilliant and fascinating queen was called star. The name Hadassah is, indeed, substantially identical with Atossa, mentioned by the Greek writers as the wife of Darius Hystaspes, and daughter of Cyrus, but the identity in name is insufficient to identify the Jewish virgin with one who is so clearly represented by Herodotus as both daughter of Cyrus and widow of Cambyses. (Herodotus, 3:88.)<sup>1</sup>
- *his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, -*
  - Esther was the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai, and therefore must have been Mordecai's cousin, though the Vulgate and Josephus make her Mordecai's niece: but it is safest here to follow the Hebrew.<sup>2</sup>
  - according to the former Targum, her father died and left her mother with child of her, and her mother died as soon as she was delivered of her:<sup>3</sup>
    - Targum, (Aramaic: "Translation," or "Interpretation"), any of several translations

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<sup>1</sup> Whedon, Daniel. "Commentary on Esther 2:7". "Whedon's Commentary on the Bible".  
<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/whe/esther-2.html>. 1874-1909.

<sup>2</sup> Clarke, Adam. "Commentary on Esther 2:7". "The Adam Clarke Commentary". <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/esther-2.html>. 1832.

<sup>3</sup> Gill, John. "Commentary on Esther 2:7". "The New John Gill Exposition of the Entire Bible".  
<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/esther-2.html>. 1999.

of the Hebrew Bible or portions of it into the Aramaic language. The word originally indicated a translation of the Old Testament in any language but later came to refer specifically to an Aramaic translation.<sup>4</sup>

- *and the maid was fair and beautiful;*
  - For her beauty she was brought to the king; and not without some respect to this it was that she was raised by Mordecai. This beauty was a privilege of nature; and because of the forcible battery that would be laid to it, God gives her a guarding. Esther was now in the flower of her age, and her beauty was the flower of her virtue, as Chrysippus called it.<sup>5</sup>
  
- *whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.*
  - The midrash adds that Esther's father died during her mother's pregnancy, and the latter died during childbirth (Esth. Rabbah 6:5; BT Megillah 13a)<sup>6</sup>
  - Mordecai took her to be his daughter as stated in the Hebrew text.
    - The Babylonian tradition maintains that Esther was Mordecai's wife.<sup>6</sup>
    - the midrash understands as: Mordecai took her le-bayit, that is, as a wife (BT Megillah loc. cit.). This exegesis casts the Biblical narrative in a different light.<sup>6</sup>
    - Obviously this would put a very different twist to the story however there is no biblical basis to believe this to be true. We always put confidence in the Scripture as 100% accurate.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Targum>

<sup>5</sup> Trapp, John. "Commentary on Esther 2:7". John Trapp Complete Commentary. <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jtc/esther-2.html>. 1865-1868.

<sup>6</sup> <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/esther-midrash-and-aggadah>