

## QUESTIONS FOR RUTH LESSON 1

### RUTH 1:1 – 22

#### NAOMI RETURNED FROM MOAB TO BETHLEHEM

1. In our best manuscripts, there are four paragraphs in Ruth chapter one. On the chart below, write a title of seven words or less for each paragraph.

1:1 – 5	
1:6 – 14	
1:15 – 18	
1:19 – 22	

2. What evidence can you find in the text to indicate the time in which this story took place?
3. Read Judges 21:16-25 and then Ruth 1:1-5. What observations can you make on the basis of this reading?
4. In Ruth 1:1-5, the author sets the stage for the entire story.
- Ruth 1:1, 2, form the background for the entire book. Make a list of the pieces of information the author provides in these verses.
  - In a Bible Dictionary or Bible helps section, look up the word "Ephrathite" and "Ephraimite." What is the difference between the two?
  - In 1:3, the author tells us that Elimelech died. How well would this family be able to sustain itself without Elimelech at the head of it?
  - In 1:4, 5, the author gives us several pieces of information:
    - Why does the author identify the fact that Mahlon and Chilion had married Moabite women?
    - What does it add to our understanding when the text says that they lived in Moab about ten years when Mahlon and Chilion died?
    - In 1:5, the author indicated that Mahlon and Chilion died, and then indicated that Naomi "was left without her two sons and her husband." What is the significance of this awkward repetition?
5. In Ruth 1:6-14, the author describes Naomi's return from Moab to Bethlehem.
- In 1:6, the author indicated that Naomi heard that "the LORD had come to the aid of his people."
    - What does the author tell us in this quote?
    - There was food available in Moab. Why would Naomi decide to return to Bethlehem at this time?
  - In 1:7, 8, the text clearly states that the women started on the trip before Naomi suggested that Ruth and Orpah go back to their families.
    - Why would Naomi not suggest this before they started the journey?
    - Naomi urged Orpah and Ruth to return to their "**mother's tent.**" Why would she do that?
    - In 1:8-10, there are hints about the relationship between Naomi and her daughters-in-law.
      - What are the hints?
      - What do these hints tell you?
  - In 1:11, Naomi again urges Orpah and Ruth to return to their original families.
    - What questions does she ask the two women?
    - What did she say to Orpah and Ruth through these questions?
  - In 1:12, 13, Naomi a third time urges Orpah and Ruth to go home.

## Questions for Ruth and Esther

- (1). What reasons does Naomi give?
- (2). Why was it harder for Naomi than it was for Orpah and Ruth?
- (3). In 1:13, Naomi said, "It is more bitter for me than for you."
  - (a). Describe the emotional tone Naomi employed in this statement.
  - (b). How does Naomi explain this statement?
- e. In 1:14, Orpah and Ruth responded to Naomi's third attempt to urge them to return.
  - (1). How did Orpah respond?
  - (2). What does this response mean?
  - (3). How did Ruth respond?
  - (4). What does this response mean?
6. In 1:15-18, the author described Ruth's response to Naomi's entreaty to go home, as Orpah had done.
  - a. In 1:15, Naomi made her final plea for Ruth to return home.
    - (1). Put yourself in Naomi's position as she urged Ruth, for the third time, to return to her family.
    - (2). How would you feel as you urged Ruth to leave?
    - (3). How did Naomi describe Orpah's actions?
    - (4). What did these actions mean?
  - b. In 1:16, 17, Ruth responded to Naomi's more urgent appeal.
    - (1). Put yourself in Ruth's position as she responded to Naomi's fourth plea.
      - (a). What would your emotions be?
      - (b). What hint is there of the relationship between Ruth and Naomi?
    - (2). Ruth made six affirmations in her response to Naomi's plea.
      - (a). What are these affirmations?
      - (b). What does Ruth mean by these affirmations?
    - (3). Ruth concluded her six affirmations with an oath.
      - (a). What was the oath?
      - (b). What does the oath mean?
      - (c). Why was the oath necessary?
  - c. In 1:18, the author described Naomi's response to Ruth's affirmations and oath.
    - (1). What was Naomi's response?
    - (2). What was the basis of Naomi's response?
    - (3). What action did Naomi take?
7. The author described the arrival of Ruth and Naomi in Bethlehem in 1:19 -22
  - a. Read 1:19 several times. Think of yourself as one of the women who met Naomi and Ruth when they arrived at Bethlehem.
    - (1). What would you **feel** when you saw Naomi?
    - (2). What would you **feel** when you saw Ruth?
    - (3). What would you **think** when you said, "Can this be Naomi?"
  - b. In 1:20, Naomi responded to her family and former neighbors greeting.
    - (1). How did Naomi **feel**?
    - (2). Put Naomi's reply into your own words. Try to include an understanding of her emotions as she responded.
    - (3). Explain what she meant when she said, "The Almighty has made my life very bitter."
  - c. In 1:21, Naomi gives further explanation of her feelings about her condition. She said, "I went away full, but the LORD brought me back empty."
    - (1). To whom does she ascribe responsibility for the abundance with which she left Bethlehem?
    - (2). To whom does Naomi ascribe responsibility for the impoverished condition in which she returned to Bethlehem?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (3). How do you understand Naomi's view of her life?
  - (4). Why does Naomi repeat her questions, "Why call me Naomi?"
  - (5). What does "The Almighty has brought misfortune upon me" add to Naomi's previous statement, "The LORD has afflicted me"?
- d. In 1:22, there is a summary statement about the arrival of Naomi and Ruth in Bethlehem. Read this verse very carefully.
- (1). Compare the picture of the arrival of Naomi and Ruth in Bethlehem, as reported in 1:22, with the report in 1:19. What observations can you make?
  - (2). Notice the way the author speaks of Ruth - "...Accompanied by Ruth, the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law." What purpose is served by these additional identifications?
  - (3). The author indicated that Naomi and Ruth arrived in Bethlehem "as the barley harvest was beginning." What information does this provide for us?
8. Review chapter one and record everything that it tells you about God.
9. Review the chapter again.
- a. What does it tell you about Ruth?
  - b. What does it tell you about Naomi?
10. What does this say about the way you want to live your life from this point forward?

## QUESTIONS FOR RUTH LESSON 2

### RUTH 2:1 – 23

#### RUTH GLEANED THE FIELDS OF BOAZ

1. In our best documents there are four paragraphs in Ruth, chapter two. On the table below, write a title of seven words or less for each paragraph.

2:1 – 7	
2:8 – 13	
2:14 – 16	
2:17 – 23	

2. In Ruth 2:1-7, the author described Ruth's gleaning in the field of Boaz.
- Ruth 2:1 gives information about the position of Boaz in the clan of Elimelech.
    - How does the author describe Boaz' position?
    - Read verse one several times. Write this verse in your own words in such a way that you explain the author's apparent duplication "a relative on her husband's side, from the clan of Elimelech."
    - What did the author mean when he said, "... a man of standing"?
  - In 2:2, the author reminds us that Ruth was a Moabitess.
    - Why would that be necessary?
    - Why would Ruth need to request permission from Naomi to glean in the harvest fields?
    - Study Naomi's reply - "Go ahead my daughter." What did you learn from this response?
    - What did Ruth mean when she said, "...behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor?"
  - In Ruth 2:3, the author said, "as it turned out..." What could he mean by this statement?
  - In 2:3, the author reminds us, again, that Boaz was from the clan of Elimelech.
    - Why would he repeat this information?
    - What does this add to our knowledge?
  - In 2:4, Boaz greeted his reapers.
    - Study Boaz' greeting. What does it tell you about him? About his faith?
    - What does this greeting tell you about his relationship with his reapers?
  - In 2:5, Boaz asked his servant in charge about Ruth. Study his question. What, if anything, do you find that seems unusual?
  - In 2:6, 7, the foreman gave Boaz a full report about Ruth.
    - What did the foreman tell Boaz?
    - How did the foreman describe Ruth's conduct in the barley field?
3. In Ruth 2:8-13, the author described Boaz' invitation to Ruth to glean in his fields.
- Read 2:8 several times.
    - How would you describe Boaz' feelings as he gave this invitation?
    - If you were Ruth, how would you feel when you received this invitation?
    - Look at the invitation Boaz offered Ruth. Why would he give these specific instructions/invitations?
  - In 2:9, Boaz gave Ruth yet another gift/instruction.
    - What were his instructions?
    - Think of yourself as one of the other widows gleaning in this field. How would you feel?
  - In 2:10, Ruth responded to the kindness of Boaz.

## *Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (1). What did Ruth do?
  - (2). What did these actions mean?
  - (3). What did Ruth say?
  - (4). What do these words tell you about her response to the kindness of Boaz?
  - d. In 2:11, Boaz answers Ruth's question from 2:10.
    - (1). What answer did Boaz give?
    - (2). Study the things Boaz said about Ruth. Why would these be important to him?
  - e. In 2:12, Boaz sought a blessing from God for Ruth.
    - (1). Boaz petitions God for two separate blessings for Ruth. What is the difference between the two blessings in this verse?
    - (2). What is the significance of the words of Boaz, "...the God of Israel under whose wings you have come to take refuge"?
  - f. In 2:13, Ruth responded to the blessing of Boaz.
    - (1). There are two parts to Ruth's response in this verse. Read her first response again. What do you think of when you read it?
    - (2). As you read the second part of Ruth's response, think of yourself in Ruth's place.
      - (a). How would you feel?
      - (b). What would you be thinking?
4. In 2:14-16, Boaz extended his friendship to Ruth.
- a. Read 2:14 several times.
    - (1). If you were Ruth, what would the invitation of Boaz say to you?
    - (2). Observe Ruth's actions in this verse. What does this tell you about her?
  - b. In 2:15, 16, Boaz gave his harvesters instructions concerning Ruth.
    - (1). List each instruction Boaz gave.
    - (2). If you were Ruth, how would you feel as you listened to these instructions?
    - (3). If you were one of the other gleaners, how would you feel listening to these instructions?
5. In 2:17-23, Naomi listened to Ruth's report and offered Ruth her advice concerning the gleaning.
- a. In 2:17, the author described Ruth's gleaning activities on a given day. Read the verse carefully and record each piece of information you find in the verse.
  - b. In 2:18, there appears to be some confusion.
    - (1). Read the verse carefully several times.
    - (2). Describe, in your own words, the author's report of Ruth's activities in this verse.
  - c. In 2:19, Naomi responded to the large amount of grain Ruth had gleaned that day.
    - (1). Naomi asked Ruth two questions. If you were Ruth, how would you feel if you gave the response that she gave?
    - (2). In 2:19, Ruth responded to Naomi's questions. If you were Ruth, what would you be thinking as you gave the responses that she gave?
  - d. In 2:20, Naomi did three things:
    - (1). Identify the three things Naomi did.
    - (2) Explain, in your own words, the statement Naomi made in this verse.
  - e. In 2:21, Ruth responded to Naomi's announcement that Boaz was a relative.
    - (1). Describe Ruth's response.
    - (2). Describe Ruth's feelings as she responded to Naomi's statement.
  - f. In 2:22, Naomi responded to Ruth's rehearsal of the statement by Boaz.
    - (1). Compare 2:22 with 2:21 and 2:8.
    - (2). What did you find?
    - (3). What was Naomi trying to do in 2:22?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (4). Read Naomi's suggestions to Ruth very carefully.
  - (a). What did Naomi suggest?
  - (b). What was Naomi's major concern in making these suggestions?
  - (c). What does this tell you?
- g. In 2:23, Ruth responded to Naomi's suggestions by actions rather than by words.
  - (1). How would you describe this response?
  - (2). What does this tell you about Ruth?
6. Review chapter two with these questions in mind:
  - a. What does this chapter tell us about Naomi?
  - b. What does this chapter tell us about Ruth?
  - c. What does this chapter tell us about Boaz?
  - d. What does this chapter tell us about the relationship between Ruth and Naomi?
7. Every part of a Biblical historical book reveals something about the nature of God. Reflect on chapter two. What does it reveal about the person and character of God?

## QUESTIONS FOR RUTH LESSON 3

### RUTH 3:1 - 18

#### NAOMI SEEKS A HUSBAND FOR RUTH

1. On the table below, give a title of seven words or less for each paragraph of Ruth, chapter three.

3:1-5	
3:6-13	
3:14-18	

2. In Ruth 3:1-5, Naomi raised the issue of a kinsman-redeemer for Ruth.
- a. Look carefully at 1:1; 2:1 and 3:1.
    - (1). What observations can you make on the basis of this study?
    - (2). What does this tell you about the makeup of the book of Ruth?
  - b. Read Ruth 3:1 again.
    - (1). What was Naomi trying to do?
    - (2). What consequences would this have for Naomi?
    - (3). What does this tell you about Naomi?
  - c. If you have access to a Bible dictionary or Bible encyclopedia, read what it says about a kinsman-redeemer. What did you learn?
  - d. In 3:2, Naomi asked Ruth a question about the relationship of Boaz to Naomi's family.
    - (1). Why would Naomi ask Ruth such a question when she already knew the answer?
    - (2). Where could Ruth possibly have gathered the information to answer Naomi's question?
    - (3). What was the purpose of Naomi's question?
  - e. In 3:2, Naomi mentions two words that may need clarification.
    - (1). What is a "threshing floor"?
    - (2). What is involved in "winnowing"? Why was it done?
  - f. In 3:3, 4, Naomi instructed Ruth to initiate the Levirate law.
    - (1). Using your Bible dictionary, explain the Levirate law?
    - (2). Put yourself into Ruth's position as Naomi gave these instructions. How would you feel?
    - (3). Naomi told Ruth not to let Boaz know she was there until he was finished eating and drinking. Why would she give this instruction?
  - g. In 3:5, Ruth responded to Naomi's instructions.
    - (1). How did Ruth respond?
    - (2). What does this say about Ruth?
3. **In 3:6-13, the author described Ruth's trip to the threshing floor.**
- a. Why would Naomi send Ruth to the threshing floor in order to initiate this process?
  - b. In 3:7, the author described the way Ruth followed Naomi's instruction.
    - (1). The author described Boaz' situation by saying, "When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits..." What did he mean?
    - (2). Why would Boaz "lie down at the far end of the grain pile"?
    - (3). What did the author mean when he said, "Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down"?
  - c. Read 3:8 carefully.
    - (1). Put yourself in the place of Boaz. How would you feel?
    - (2). What would you think?
  - d. In 3:9, both Ruth and Boaz speak.

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (1). Boaz had seen Ruth and knew all about her. Why would he say, "Who are you?"
  - (2). Ruth answered Boaz, "I am your servant." Both Ruth and Boaz knew she was not his servant. In view of this fact, why would she make such a statement?
  - (3). Ruth also made a request of Boaz, "Spread the corner of your garment over me." What did she mean?
  - (4). Ruth concluded her statement by saying, "Since you are a kinsman-redeemer." What do these words add to her request?
  - e. In 3:10, 11, Boaz responded to the request of Ruth.
    - (1). He began his response with a blessing. He said, "The LORD bless you." Why did he say "LORD" rather than "God" or some other name for God?
    - (2). Boaz again referred to Ruth as "my daughter." Why would he do that when she was not his daughter?
    - (3). Boaz also said, "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier."
      - (a). To what did Boaz refer when he said, "This kindness"?
      - (b). To what did Boaz refer when he said, "That which you showed earlier"?
    - (4). Boaz urged Ruth "Don't be afraid." Why would this admonition be necessary?
    - (5). In these verses, Boaz made a promise to Ruth.
      - (a). What was the promise?
      - (b). What escape did Boaz leave to protect himself in the keeping of this promise?
    - (6). Boaz closed verse 11 by evaluating Ruth's reputation.
      - (a). What was her reputation?
      - (b). In view of what you have studied so far, what would give the city elders such an impression of Ruth?
  - f. In 3:12, Boaz explains a situation to Ruth.
    - (1). Study this brief verse carefully.
    - (2). What does Boaz mean, "...I am near of kin, there is a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I"?
    - (3). Study Boaz' presentation of the information in verse 12. What does this tell you about Boaz
    - (4). Naomi grew up in Bethlehem and knew all about everyone. In view of this fact, why would she send Ruth to Boaz when she knew quite well that there was a nearer kinsman-redeemer than he?
  - g. In 3:13, Boaz explained the process that must take place.
    - (1). Boaz said it would be cared for in the morning. Certainly Naomi knew the Levirate law. Why would she send Ruth to Boaz at night rather than when the elders met?
    - (2). In this verse, Boaz made a second vow to Ruth.
      - (a). Compare the two vows - 3:13 and 3:11. What observations can you make about the two vows?
      - (b). In view of these verses:
        - [1]. What observations can we make about Boaz?
        - [2]. What observations can we make about the relationship of Boaz with Ruth?
      - (c). What did Boaz mean when he said to Ruth "I vow that as surely as the Lord lives, I will do it"?
    - (3). In this story, Boaz shows real concern for Ruth's welfare and reputation. In view of this, why would he make the very risky suggestion that she "lie down **until the morning**"?
4. In 3:14-18, the author described Ruth's return to Naomi.
- a. In 3:14, Ruth lay down at the feet of Boaz, but got up before dawn to go home. Why would she not go home when she discovered that Boaz was not the nearest kinsman?
  - b. Boaz said, "Don't let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor."
    - (1). What did Boaz mean by this?
    - (2). Why should it not be known?
    - (3). If it was so wrong for a woman to come to the threshing floor, then why did this righteous man urge Ruth to stay until the morning? Why did Naomi send her there in the first place?
  - c. In 3:15, Boaz filled Ruth's shawl with barley.
    - (1). Why did he do this?



*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (2). What did this mean?
  - (3). After Boaz helped Ruth put the load of barley on her back, the text says, "then he went back to town." Where did Ruth go?
  - d. In 3:16, Naomi asked a question and Ruth answered.
    - (1). Study Naomi's question carefully.
      - (a). What did she really want to know?
      - (b). What does this tell you about Naomi?
    - (2). Study Ruth's answer just as carefully.
      - (a). What difference would this make?
      - (b). What does it tell you about Ruth?
  - e. In 3:17, Ruth continued her report to Naomi.
    - (1). What was the significance of the six measures of barley?
    - (2). Why would Boaz tell her not to return to her mother-in-law empty-handed?
  - f. In 3:18, Naomi gave Ruth advice about how to proceed in view of recent events.
    - (1). What was her advice?
    - (2). What was the basis of this advice?
    - (3). What does that tell you?
5. Review Ruth, chapter three.
- a. What does it tell you about Ruth?
  - b. What does it tell you about Naomi?
  - c. What does it tell you about Boaz?
6. Review Ruth, chapter three again.
- a. What does this chapter tell you about God?
  - b. In view of what you observed about God in chapters one and two, are there any surprises in your observations about God in chapter three?

## QUESTIONS FOR RUTH LESSON 4

### RUTH 4:1 - 22

#### BOAZ MARRIES RUTH

1. In our best documents of Ruth, chapter four, there are four paragraphs. On the table below write a title of seven words or less for each paragraph.

4:1-6	
4:7-12	
4:13-17	
4:18-22	

2. In Ruth 4:1-6, Boaz sought to provide kinsman relief for Naomi and Ruth.

- a. In 4:1, Boaz went to the town gate. What explanation can you suggest as the reason he had to go there?
- b. In 4:2, why did Boaz take ten elders to participate in this experience?
- c. In 4:3, the author quotes Boaz as saying that Naomi was selling some land. Why would she be doing this? What did you learn from this?
- d. Boaz said, in 4:4, "I thought I should bring the matter to your (the kinsman-redeemer's) attention..." Why did he feel he should do that?
- e. In 4:3, Boaz spoke of Elimelech as "our brother." What did he mean by that remark?
- f. In 4:3, 4, Boaz spoke of "buying" the land and also of "redeeming " the land."
  - (1). What difference can you find between the two statements?
  - (2). Why was Boaz so concerned about redeeming the land?
- g. In 4:5, Boaz seemed to change the issue at hand.
  - (1). Compare Boaz' statement in 4:3, 4, with that in 4:5.
  - (2). What issue was Boaz discussing in each passage?
  - (3). What difference, if any, does this make?
- h. In 4:5, Boaz talked about maintaining "the name of the dead with his property."
  - (1). What did he mean?
  - (2). Why was that important?
- i. In 4:5, the author reminds us, once again, that Ruth was a Moabitess. Why was this so important?
- j. In 4:4, the kinsman-redeemer, spoke of the land saying, "I will redeem it." In 4:6, however, he changed his mind and said, "I cannot do it."
  - (1). What was responsible for his change of mind?
  - (2). From the texts involved, what can you determine concerning his motive?
  - (3). What difference would this make?
- k. In 4:5, Boaz reminded the kinsman-redeemer that when he bought the land, "You acquire the dead man's widow." The kinsman-redeemer was a Jew and knew the law very well. Why would Boaz have to remind him of this?

3. In Ruth 4:7-12, Boaz purchased the land and secured Ruth as his wife.

- a. Ruth 4:7 explains an ancient Jewish tradition. What does this tell you about the recipients of this book?
- b. The author said, "Now in earlier times..." What does this tell you about the times in which this book was written?
- c. In 4:8, the kinsman-redeemer told Boaz, "Buy it yourself." Why would he have to do this?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- d. In 4:9, 10, Boaz announced that the ten elders and the crowd who were present were "witnesses" of his action. The ten Elders were all the witnesses that Boaz needed. What could be added by the presence and witness of the visitors "in the gate"?
  - e. In 4:9, 10, Boaz talked about his efforts to make sure the man's name did not disappear. Millions of people have died and their names disappeared. Why was this one so different?
  - f. In 4:9, 10, as Boaz announced that he was buying the land and taking Ruth as his wife, he made two stipulations:
    - (1). What were the stipulations?
    - (2). What difference would this make?
  - g. When the legal arrangements of the sale were completed, the people "in the gate" wished blessings upon Boaz:
    - (1). What were their blessings?
    - (2). What difference would these blessings make in the life of Boaz?
    - (3). What blessing did these people seek for Boaz when they compared his wife with Rachel and Leah?
    - (4). What were they saying when they requested that his family be like that of Perez?
4. In Ruth 4:13-17, Ruth gave birth to Obed.
- a. In 4:13, The author mentions, again, that Ruth became Boaz' wife. Why would this be so significant?
  - b. In 4:13, they ascribed Ruth's conception to God's enabling.
    - (1). What does this tell you about God?
    - (2). What does this tell you about the author's understanding of God?
  - c. In 4:14, the village women praised God and ascribed to Him the fact that He did not leave Naomi without a kinsman-redeemer.
    - (1). In view of who Boaz was and what he had done, what did the women mean by this statement?
    - (2). In view of the scriptural instructions against pride, how should we understand their desire that Obed "become famous throughout Israel"?
  - d. In 4:15, they continued to describe their prayer to God concerning Boaz' actions on behalf of Ruth. Why would the women make such a petition?
  - e. In 4:15, the women made some startling statements about Ruth. Read the verse carefully.
    - (1). What did the women say about Ruth?
    - (2). What did they mean by these statements?
  - f. In 4:16, the author made some remarks about Naomi that seem somewhat casual.
    - (1). What did he say about her?
    - (2). What did he mean by these statements?
    - (3). If you were Naomi, how would you feel about this situation? What would go through your mind as you performed these duties? How would you see yourself?
  - g. In 4:17, there are three sentences.
    - (1). How do these sentences relate to each other?
    - (2). In this verse, the village women said, "Naomi has a son." Everyone knew that this was Ruth's son. Why would they say the boy was Naomi's son?
    - (3). In the second sentence, it says, "They named him Obed."
      - (a). Who is they?
      - (b). What problem, if any, do you see in this quotation? Why?
    - (4). The author said, "He was the father of Jesse, the father of David."
      - (a). What is the importance of this sentence in the paragraph?
      - (b). Beyond the facts relating to the lineage, what was the author trying to tell us?
5. In Ruth 4:18-22, the author identified the lineage of David beginning with Perez.
- a. Why would the author use the lineage of David's as the ending of the book of Ruth?

### *Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- b. In 4:18, the author begins with Perez. He was the son of Judah. Why would the author begin with the lineage of Perez rather than Judah?
  - c. In the second part of 4:18, the author indicated that Perez was the father of Hezron."
    - (1). In a Bible Dictionary, Bible Encyclopedia or Concordance, look up all the information you can about Perez and Hezron.
    - (2). What did you find?
  - d. In 4:18, the author indicated that Hezron was the father of Ram. Often a lineage is traced through the eldest son of the family.
    - (1). Is that true in this instance?
    - (2). Why?
  - e. In 4:19, the author also indicated that Ram was the father of Amminadab. Look in the Bible Dictionary, a Bible Encyclopedia or Concordance for more information about Amminidab. What did you learn?
  - f. In 4:20, we learn that Amminidab was the father of Nahshon. Look in the three references previously mentioned to find information about Nahshon.
    - (1). What did you learn?
    - (2). What difference does this make?
  - g. In 4:20, the author tells us that Nahshon was the father of Salmon. Again, look at your Bible Dictionary, Bible Encyclopedia and Concordance for information about Salmon.
    - (1). Who was Salmon?
    - (2). How does this information help us understand the book of Ruth?
  - h. In 4:21, you will discover that Salmon was the father of Boaz. Turn to your reference books again to learn what you can about Boaz.
    - (1). What position did Boaz hold in the life of the community?
    - (2). What did you learn about Boaz otherwise?
  - i. In 4:21, we are reminded that Boaz was the father of Obed.
    - (1). What can you learn from the Bible Dictionary and Concordance about Obed?
    - (2). Having previously discussed the Levirate law and its purpose, why does our author now refer to Obed as the son of Boaz?
    - (3). If Obed's mother, Ruth, was a Moabitess, can we consider him to be Jewish?
  - j. In 4:21, the author states that Obed was the father of Jesse. There is a considerable amount of information about him in your reference books. How does the information about Jesse impact our understanding of the book of Ruth?
  - k. In 4:21, we are reminded that Jesse was the father of David. Read about David in your reference books.
    - (1). In what way does this information strengthen our understanding of the book of Ruth?
    - (2). Study 4:18-22 again. What reasons can you think of for the author to stop the lineage with David? Why didn't he continue with Solomon and the other kings?
  - l. In a story about a Moabitess named Ruth, why would the author conclude the book with a listing of the genealogy of David.
6. Review chapter four again.
- a. What did you learn about Ruth?
  - b. What did you learn about Naomi?
  - c. What did you learn about Boaz?
  - d. What did you learn about God?
7. Now review the whole book of Ruth.
- a. What did you learn about Ruth?
  - b. In what way has Naomi taken on more personality for you through this study?
  - c. How has Boaz "come to life" for you as a result of this study?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- d. Review your discoveries about God from each chapter. Aside from the narrative information concerning the characters in this book, it gives us some major insights into the person and character of God. What did you learn about God?
8. Each book of the Bible has a single message to share with us. Identify the one message God has shared with you through the book of Ruth.
9. If you were the author of the book which we now call "Ruth," what title would you give the book?

## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 1

### ESTHER 1:1 – 22

#### VASHTI REFUSED THE KING'S COMMAND

1. There are three paragraphs in Esther chapter one. On the following table, write a summary of seven words or less for each paragraph.

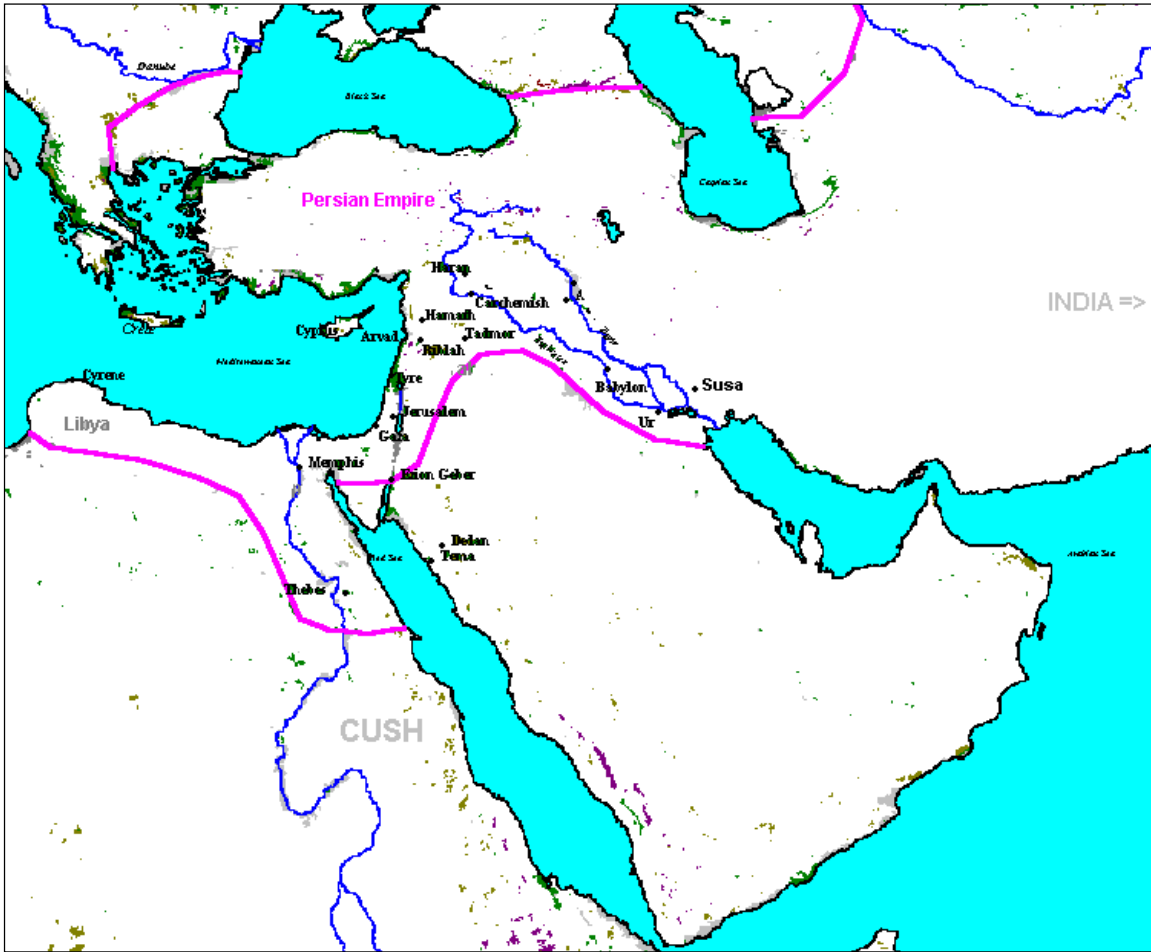
1:1-8	
1:9-12	
1:13-22	

2. In 1:1-8, a great feast was held by Xerxes, the king.
- a. 1:1, 2, give us some information about the Medo-Persian empire.
    - (1). Think carefully about the statements in 1:1, 2. What did you discover?
    - (2). Look at the map of the empire on page 16. What observations can you make about the empire?
  - b. In 1:3, 4, the author described an unbelievable banquet.
    - (1). Study these verses carefully.
    - (2). The text indicates that this feast took place in the third year of Xerxes' reign. Why would this be important?
    - (3). What would be the purpose of a feast lasting 180 days?
    - (4) When people show off their wealth, in our time and culture, we are offended. What would be the value of Xerxes doing such a thing?
  - c. In 1:5, the king gave another feast.
    - (1). How was this feast different from the other?
    - (2). What was the importance of the second feast?
  - d. In 1:6, the author described the decor of the "gardens." Why would this be important to this study?
  - e. In 1:7, the author described the golden vessels from which the guests drank.
    - (1). What is the value of having cups made of gold?
    - (2). What does it add to tell us that the design of each cup was different?
    - (3). What is the author trying to convey to us?
  - f. In 1:8, the king directed that each guest be allowed to drink in his own way.
    - (1). What does this mean?
    - (2). What does this tell you about the king?
3. In 1:9-12, the king commanded that Vashti appear at the banquet wearing her crown.
- a. In 1:9, Queen Vashti also made a feast for the women.
    - (1). What would be the reason for having a separate feast for the women?
    - (2). Might this be part of Xerxes' plan behind the feasts he conducted?
  - b. In 1:10, 11, the author described the party that lasted too long and celebrated too much.
    - (1). What did the king do?
    - (2). What reason was given for this action?
    - (3). What does this mean?
  - c. In 1:12, Vashti responded to the command of the king.
    - (1). What was her response?
    - (2). How did the king react to this response? Why?
4. In 1:13-22, the king gave an official reaction to Vashti's response.
- a. In 1:13, Xerxes consulted with his wise men.
    - (1). What does this tell you about the king?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (2). Why would the king consult political advisors about a family disagreement?
  - b. In 1:14, the author identified the seven advisors to the king.
    - (1). Why might this be important?
    - (2). What did the author say about that?
    - (3). What does this description mean?
  - c. In 1:15, Xerxes confronted his legal advisors with the question which troubled him.
    - (1). What was his question?
    - (2). If you were one of these advisors, how would you feel? Why?
    - (3). What hint, if any, did the men have concerning what the king had in mind?
  - d. In 1:16, Memucan answered the king.
    - (1). What does the fact that Memucan answered tell you?
    - (2). To what extent did Memucan answer the king's question? Why?
  - e. In 1:17, Memucan continued his response.
    - (1). What does 1:17 add to Memucan's response in 1:16?
    - (2). In what way does this verse answer the king's legal question?
  - f. In 1:18, Memucan described the consequences of this entire event.
    - (1). What did he predict would happen?
    - (2). Was that a reasonable prediction?
  - g. In 1:19, Memucan finally made a recommendation.
    - (1). What was it?
    - (2). He was very specific. Why was that necessary?
    - (3). What did he recommend for Vashti?
    - (4). In view of the law, was this a reasonable suggestion?
  - h. In 1:20, Memucan made a prediction concerning the outcome.
    - (1). What was his prediction?
    - (2). Was it a reasonable prediction?
  - i. In 1:21, Xerxes responded to the recommendation of his advisors.
    - (1). What did he do?
    - (2). What does this tell us?
  - j. In 1:22, action was taken to carry out the advice of the seven wise men.
    - (1). What did they do?
    - (2). What message was conveyed to the provinces?
    - (3). What is the importance of using the native tongue of each people?
5. Reflect on the entire chapter. What, if anything, does this chapter tell us about God?

Questions for Ruth and Esther



The Persian Empire from India to Cush



## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 2

### ESTHER 2:1 - 23

#### ESTHER BECAME QUEEN

1. There are six paragraphs in Esther chapter two. On the following table, write a summary of seven words or less, for each paragraph.

2:1-4	
2:5-7	
2:8-11	
2:12-15	
2:16-18	
2:19-23	

2. In 2:1-4, the search for a new queen began.
- In 2:1, the author gave an inkling of the king's emotional response to the situation with Vashti.
    - What was that response?
    - How would you describe that response?
  - In 2:2, the advisors to the king made an unusual suggestion. What was the suggestion? Why would this be a good way to find a queen?
  - In 2:3, 4, the plan was detailed for the king. Setting aside our outrage at such a system, if you were one of these young women, in that cultural setting, how would you feel about this?
3. In Esther 2:5-7, there is a brief parenthesis about Mordecai and Esther and their relationships within the family.
- In 2:5, 6, the author gave some detailed information about Mordecai.
    - What information did he give?
    - What did you learn from this information?
  - Think carefully about the author's statements about Esther in 2:7.
    - What does it tell you about Esther?
    - What does this tell you about Esther's family?
4. In Esther 2:8-11, the author described Esther's entrance into the harem of Xerxes.
- In 2:8, 9, the author described the process by which the women were chosen to be presented to the king.
    - How would you describe this process of choice?
    - 2:9 describes how Esther was treated. What special attention did she receive? Why?
  - In 2:10, there is an aside which tells us something of Esther's relationship with Mordecai. What does it tell us?
  - In 2:11, the author tells us something of Mordecai's relationship with Esther. What did you learn about this relationship?
5. In Esther 2:12-15, the author described Esther's preparation to be presented to the king.
- In 2:12, the author gave more information about the preparation process.
    - What did he tell us?
    - Why would this be important?
  - In 2:13, a special privilege was described for each young woman.

## *Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (1). What was it?
  - (2). Why would this be a special privilege?
  - c. In 2:14, the author identified one of the cold realities of harem life.
    - (1). How would you describe it in your own words?
    - (2). Set aside your prejudices for a moment and try to think as these young women thought. What would have gone through your mind in this situation?
  - d. In 2:15, the author described that day when Esther was to be presented to the king.
    - (1). How did the author identify Esther here? Why?
    - (2). What does he say about Esther?
    - (3). What do we learn from this?
6. In Esther 2:16 - 18, Esther was crowned as queen.
- a. In 2:16, the author identified the time when these events took place.
    - (1). What information does he give us?
    - (2). What can we learn from this report of the time?
  - b. In 2:17, the author reported the choice of Esther by Xerxes.
    - (1). Read the verse carefully. What pieces of information does the author give us?
    - (2). What did you learn?
  - c. The author described Esther's coronation in 2:18.
    - (1). Record each piece of information in the verse.
    - (2). Study the list. How was life in Medo-Persia changed for this brief time?
7. In Esther 2:19-23, the author described a brave deed on the part of Mordecai.
- a. In 2:19, the author wrote of Mordecai. Read the verse again, carefully.
    - (1). What does this reference to Mordecai tell us?
    - (2). What difference would this make?
  - b. In 2:20, the author described Esther's relationship to Mordecai now that she is the queen.
    - (1). What is that relationship?
    - (2). How is that important to the story?
  - c. In 2:21, 22, the scene shifts to an all too common experience in the life of kings.
    - (1). What did the author describe?
    - (2). How did Mordecai respond?
    - (3). What are the implications of Mordecai's actions?
    - (4). Why would Mordecai choose to report the incident in the way he did?
  - d. In 2:23, there is a description of the official response to Mordecai's revelation.
    - (1). How did the king respond?
    - (2). What did the king fail to do?
8. Review the chapter again. What do you discover concerning the action of God in this book, though His name does not appear in the book ?

## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 3

### ESTHER 3:1 - 15

#### HAMAN GOT XERXES TO DECREE DEATH TO JEWS

1. There are three paragraphs in Esther chapter three. On the following table, write a summary of seven words or less for each paragraph.

3:1-6	
3:7-11	
3:12-15	

2. In Esther 3:1-6, the author described Mordecai's refusal to honor Haman.
- In 3:1, Xerxes honored Haman above all other leaders of the empire. On the basis of the previous chapter, what was the basis for this honor?
  - In 3:2, the author described the honor Haman received from officials.
    - Why would the king decree that everyone in the empire bow down to Haman?
    - Notice the contrast in the verse.
      - What is the contrast?
      - How can we explain this contrast?
      - What does this situation say about Mordecai?
  - In 3:3, the other officials complained to Mordecai.
    - What was their complaint?
    - What did they NOT complain about?
    - What was the basis of their complaint?
  - In 3:4, the minor authorities of the empire continue to badger Mordecai.
    - What was their complaint?
    - Why would Mordecai refuse to comply?
    - Why did the minor officials go to Haman?
    - What was their presentation to Haman?
  - In 3:5, Haman checked out the complaint of the officials.
    - Read the verse carefully. From the way it is written, what does it tell you about previous situations?
    - What does this verse tell you about Mordecai?
    - What does this verse tell you about Haman?
  - In 3:6, there is an insight into the workings of Haman's mind. What do you see?
    - What options did Haman consider?
    - On what basis did he make his choice?
3. In Esther 3:7-11, Haman set about to deceive Xerxes concerning the Jews.
- In 3:7, Haman used the Pur.
    - What is the Pur?
    - Why was Haman using it?
    - What does this tell you about Haman?
    - What were the consequences of this procedure?
  - In 3:8, Haman approached Xerxes concerning the Jews.
    - What did Haman do?
    - What did Haman recommend?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (3). What did you learn about Haman from this verse?
  - c. In 3:9, Haman made an offer to the king.
    - (1). What was Haman's offer?
    - (2). What incentive did Haman offer?
    - (3). What reason did Haman offer for the incentive?
  - d. In 3:10, the king responded to Haman's offer.
    - (1). What was Xerxes' response?
    - (2). What implications can you draw from this response?
    - (3). What was the meaning of this response?
    - (4). The author identified Haman, in this verse, as he had several times before. Why?
  - e. In 3:11, Xerxes continued his response to Haman.
    - (1). What did he say?
    - (2). What can we learn from this statement?
4. In Esther 3:12-15, Haman issued the letters to kill the Jews.
- a. In 3:12, Haman began carrying out the king's instructions.
    - (1). Why did the author tell us that it was written in the languages of each people?
    - (2). Why did the author tell us that it was written in the king's name and sealed with his seal?
  - b. In 3:13, the author identifies the content of the letters.
    - (1). What were the instructions?
    - (2). When was this to happen? Why was so much time given before the date?
  - c. In 3:14, the author indicated who received the letter.
    - (1). Who were the recipients?
    - (2). Why was it given to so many people?
    - (3). Haman could have made this a military operation, exclusively. Why didn't he?
  - d. In 3:15, there is a serious contrast.
    - (1) What two things were contrasted?
    - (2). Explain what the author meant by his statement in this verse?
5. Read the chapter again. Where do you see the actions of God in this chapter?

## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 4

### ESTHER 4:1 - 17

#### ESTHER AGREED TO GO TO THE KING

1. In Esther chapter four, there are four paragraphs. Write a brief summary of seven words or less for each paragraph.

4:1-3	
4:4-8	
4:9-12	
4:13-17	

2. In Esther 4:1-3, Mordecai discovered a plan to kill all the Jews.
- In 4:1, when Mordecai learned of Haman's edict, he did something unusual.
    - What did he do?
    - What did it mean?
    - For whose benefit did he do this?
  - In 4:2, Mordecai went one step farther with his actions.
    - What did he do?
    - What was the purpose of this?
  - In 4:3, the author gave a summary of the Jewish reaction throughout the empire.
    - What was the reaction?
    - Why did they do this?
3. In Esther 4:4-8, Mordecai charged Esther to go to the king.
- In 4:4, Esther was told of Mordecai's actions.
    - How did she react?
    - What did her actions mean?
    - Why did she send people to Mordecai?
    - Why didn't she go to him?
  - In 4:5, Esther sent Hathach on a mission to Mordecai.
    - What was the nature of this mission?
    - Why was it undertaken ?
    - What does this tell you about Esther?
  - In 4:6, 7, Hathach went to Mordecai for an explanation.
    - What could this encounter mean to Hathach?
    - What did Mordecai tell him?
    - What did this mean?
  - In 4:8, Mordecai urged Hathach to do two things:
    - What were the two things?
    - Why would Mordecai choose these two things rather than some others?
    - What would be involved if Esther complied with Mordecai's instructions?
4. In 4:9-12, Hathach carried messages between Mordecai and Esther.
- What did Esther instruct Hathach to say?
  - What problem did Esther see with Mordecai's instructions?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- c. What reason did Esther give for her position?
5. In Esther 4:13-17, Mordecai chided Esther and Esther responded to his firm stand.
  - a. In 4:13-14, Mordecai responded to Esther's objections.
    - (1). What was his message to Esther? State this in your own words.
    - (2). This response identifies Mordecai's belief. How would you describe it?
    - (3). Mordecai gave Esther a challenge. What was it? How reasonable was it?
  - b. In 4:15, 16, Esther replied to Mordecai's challenge.
    - (1). What was her reply?
    - (2). What were the prerequisites she required?
    - (3). Why were these important to Esther?
    - (4). In your own words, describe Esther's view of her situation.
  - c. In 4:17, Mordecai responded to Esther's prerequisites.
    - (1). What was his response?
    - (2). What did he do?
6. Read the chapter again. Where do you see the hand of God at work here, even though the name of God is not found in the book?

## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 5

### ESTHER 5:1 - 14

#### ESTHER RISKED EVERYTHING TO TAKE HER STAND

1. In Esther chapter five, there are three paragraphs. On the following table, write a summary of seven words or less for each paragraph.

5:1-4	
5:5-8	
5:9-14	

2. In Esther 5:1-4 Esther invited both Xerxes and Haman to a wine banquet.
- In 5:1, Esther went to the throne room as she promised.
    - How was she dressed? Why?
    - What is the importance of the position of the king?
  - In 5:2, the king noticed that Esther was there.
    - What was his response?
    - This was an unusual response. Why?
    - What did Xerxes do when he saw Esther?
    - What did this mean?
  - In 5:3, the king recognized Esther.
    - What offer did Xerxes make?
    - What limitation did Xerxes make on his gift? Why did he do that?
  - In 5:4, the queen replied to the king's question.
    - What was her reply?
    - As you read this request, what goes through your mind?
3. In Esther 5:5-8, Esther restated her request.
- In 5:5, Xerxes hurried Haman to the party.
    - Think about this for a moment. What is wrong with that scene?
    - What was the avowed purpose of the hurried trip?
  - In 5:6, Xerxes presses Esther for an answer to his question.
    - What did he want to know?
    - Compare Xerxes promise with that which he previously made. What did you find?
    - Xerxes spoke of both a "petition" and a "request." What, if any, is the difference between the two?
  - In 5:7, 8, Esther made her request.
    - Esther prefaced her request with two conditions. What are they?
    - What do they mean?
    - What was her request?
    - How would you describe this request? Was it a wise thing to do?
4. In Esther 5:9-14, Haman bragged and built the gallows.
- In 5:9, you can see a contrast in the moods of Haman.
    - What were the two moods?
    - What caused both moods?
    - What does this tell you about Haman?
  - In 5:10, the author described Haman's response to the disturbing scene.

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (1). What did the author say he did? What does that mean?
  - (2). Haman did something unusual. What was it?
  - (3). In the last half of the verse, Haman did something important. What was it?
  - c. In 5:11, the author described the gathering.
    - (1). Specifically, what did Haman do?
    - (2). How would we describe such activity in our culture?
    - (3). Why would he do such a thing?
  - d. In 5:12, Haman continued his presentation to his guests.
    - (1). What did he tell them?
    - (2). What impression was Haman hoping to make on his guests?
    - (3). If you were one of the guests, what would your impression be?
  - e. In 5:13, there is a sudden emotional turn.
    - (1). What was that turn?
    - (2). What was responsible for it?
    - (3). What does this say about the enduring quality of position?
  - f. In 5:14, Haman's wife and friends offered a solution.
    - (1). What was their solution to Haman's problem?
    - (2). Study the verse carefully. What was their suggestion that this would do for Haman?
    - (3). What does this say both about the guests and Haman?
5. Again, read the chapter carefully. What evidence do you see of the activity of God in the chapter?



## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 6

### ESTHER 6:1 - 14

#### MORDECAI WAS FINALLY HONORED

1. In Esther chapter six, there are two paragraphs. On the following table, write a summary of seven words or less for each paragraph.

6:1-9	
6:10-14	

2. In Esther 6:1-9, Haman was caught in a trap of his own making.
- In 6:1, the king had a problem.
    - What was the problem?
    - How did Xerxes solve the problem?
  - In 6:2, Xerxes made an important discovery.
    - What was that discovery?
    - How did Xerxes discover that information?
  - In 6:3, Xerxes struggled with his discovery.
    - What question did he ask?
    - How did the king respond afterwards?
  - In 6:4, the king changed his line of questioning.
    - To what did he change it?
    - Xerxes had a visitor in the night. Who was he?
    - What did he want?
    - What would have been wrong with this?
  - In 6:5, Xerxes invited Haman into the throne room.
    - What happened?
    - What is the problem with this?
    - What time of day was this?
  - In 6:6, the king questioned Haman.
    - Why was this unusual?
    - What did Xerxes ask Haman?
    - What did Haman assume from this question?
  - In 6:7, 8, Haman answered the king's question.
    - What did Haman say to the king?
    - Does this remind you of anything?
  - In 6:9, Haman continued to answer the question of the king.
    - What did this answer tell the king?
    - Do you see any problem with this?
3. In Esther 6:10-14, the author describes Mordecai's exaltation and Haman's mourning.
- In 6:10, the king responded to Haman.
    - What did he do?
    - What would Haman gather from this?
    - If you were Haman, how would you respond to the king's decision?
  - In 6:11, Haman was busy carrying out the wishes of the king.
    - What did he have to do?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (2). How would this affect Haman?
- (3). How would people understand this situation?
- c. In 6:12, Mordecai responded to the king's choice.
  - (1). What did Mordecai do?
  - (2). What does this tell us about Mordecai?
  - (3). The verse also describes Haman's response. What was it?
  - (4). How did he express it?
- 4. Reread the chapter carefully. Record places in this chapter where you see God at work even though His name is not mentioned.

## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 7

### ESTHER 7:1 - 10

#### HAMAN HANGED ON HIS OWN GALLOWS

1. There is only one paragraph in Esther chapter seven. On the following table, write a summary of seven words or less.

7:1-10	
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2. In Esther 7:1, 2, Xerxes and Haman came to the banquet with Esther.
- We have discussed the way Esther addressed Xerxes. Look carefully at these verses.
    - How did Xerxes address Esther?
    - What does this tell you?
  - What did the king have on his mind? Why?
  - Notice the way the king prefaced his question.
    - What did he do?
    - Compare 7:2 with 5:6. What did you discover?
3. In 7:3, Esther identified both her petition and her request.
- What was her petition?
  - What was her request?
  - Notice the way Esther prefaces her remarks to Xerxes.
    - How did she preface her remarks?
    - What did this tell you about Esther?
  - Esther framed her request and petition in a certain way.
    - How did she frame this petition/request?
    - Why would she do this?
4. In 7:4, Esther spells out the generalized statement of her request given in verse three.
- How did she describe it?
  - Compare the emotional tone of Esther's words here with other statements she made previously.
  - Esther used three different words to describe the pending tragedy.
    - What were these words?
    - Why were three different words necessary?
  - Esther, also, identified a less traumatic situation.
    - What situation did she identify?
    - What did she say about it?
    - What purpose is served by this reference?
5. In 7:5, Xerxes responded to Esther.
- How did he respond?
  - What was the emotional tone of his reply?
6. In 7:6, Esther identified the predator.
- Read her response carefully. With what three words did she identify her enemy?
    - What does each word mean?
    - Why would three descriptive words be necessary?
  - How did Haman respond to her words? Why?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

7. In 7:7, both Xerxes and Haman reacted to Esther's statement.
  - a. Think carefully about what the king did.
    - (1). What did he do?
    - (2). What were the implications of this action?
    - (3). What would Esther gather from this response?
  - b. Think carefully about Haman's response.
    - (1). What did he do?
    - (2). What did he fail to do?
    - (3). Evaluate the wisdom of his thinking?
8. In 7:8, Haman acted upon his reaction to Esther's surprising attack.
  - a. What did he do?
  - b. What good could this do him?
  - c. How did Xerxes evaluate Haman's actions?
  - d. How did Xerxes express his shock?
  - e. "They," (apparently the guards), did something.
    - (1). What did they do?
    - (2). Why did they do it?
    - (3). What did it mean?
9. In 7:9, the king's guard, Harbona, spoke up.
  - a. What did he say?
  - b. Why would he say this?
  - c. What was his suggestion?
  - d. What was Xerxes' response?
  - e. There is a hint, in this verse, of just how strongly Xerxes felt about his command. What is that hint?
  - f. Harbona identified Mordecai in a specific way.
    - (1). How did he identify Mordecai?
    - (2). What did this mean?
10. In 7:10, the author described the death of Haman. Notice the way the author described the hanging.
  - a. What implication can be drawn from the way the author reported Haman's death.
  - b. The author, also, described Xerxes' response to the execution. Describe this response in your own words.
11. Read the chapter again. Record the places in this chapter where you see the hand of God at work without the mention of His name.

## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 8

### ESTHER 8:1 - 17

#### MORDECAI GIVEN HONOR AND POWER

1. There are four paragraphs in Esther chapter eight. On the following table, write a summary of seven words or less for each paragraph.

8:1, 2	
8:3-8	
8:9-14	
8:15-17	

2. In Esther 8:1, 2, the author described Mordecai's elevation to the position of viceroy.
- In 8:1, the author made two reports.
    - What is the significance of giving Haman's property to Esther?
    - Why would the author include the report of Mordecai coming to the throne room?
  - In 8:2, Mordecai was honored.
    - What honors did he receive?
    - What does each honor mean?
    - Why would Esther receive the gift of Haman's estate and immediately turn it over to Mordecai's care?
3. In 8:3-8, Esther pleaded for Israel again.
- In 8:3, Esther made a very emotional plea before Xerxes on behalf of the Jews.
    - What did Esther beg Xerxes to do?
    - What problem can you sense with Esther's request?
    - In view of this problem, why would Esther make such a request?
  - In 8:4, the king responded to her petition.
    - What did he do?
    - What did this mean?
  - In 8:5, Esther prefaced her petition with four different conditions.
    - What were these conditions?
    - What petition did she make?
    - Put yourself in Xerxes' position as she made this petition. What would happen to you as she made the petition?
  - In 8:6, Esther concluded her petition with two questions.
    - What were the questions?
    - What did she mean by these questions?
    - What difference would these make to Xerxes as he considered her petition?
  - In 8:7, Xerxes responded to Esther's unusual petition.
    - What did he say?
    - What did this have to do with her petition?
    - What message was Xerxes giving to Esther and Mordecai?
  - In 8:8, Xerxes continued his response to Esther and Mordecai.
    - To whom is Xerxes speaking in this verse?
    - What instructions did he give?
    - What explanation did Xerxes give? Why?

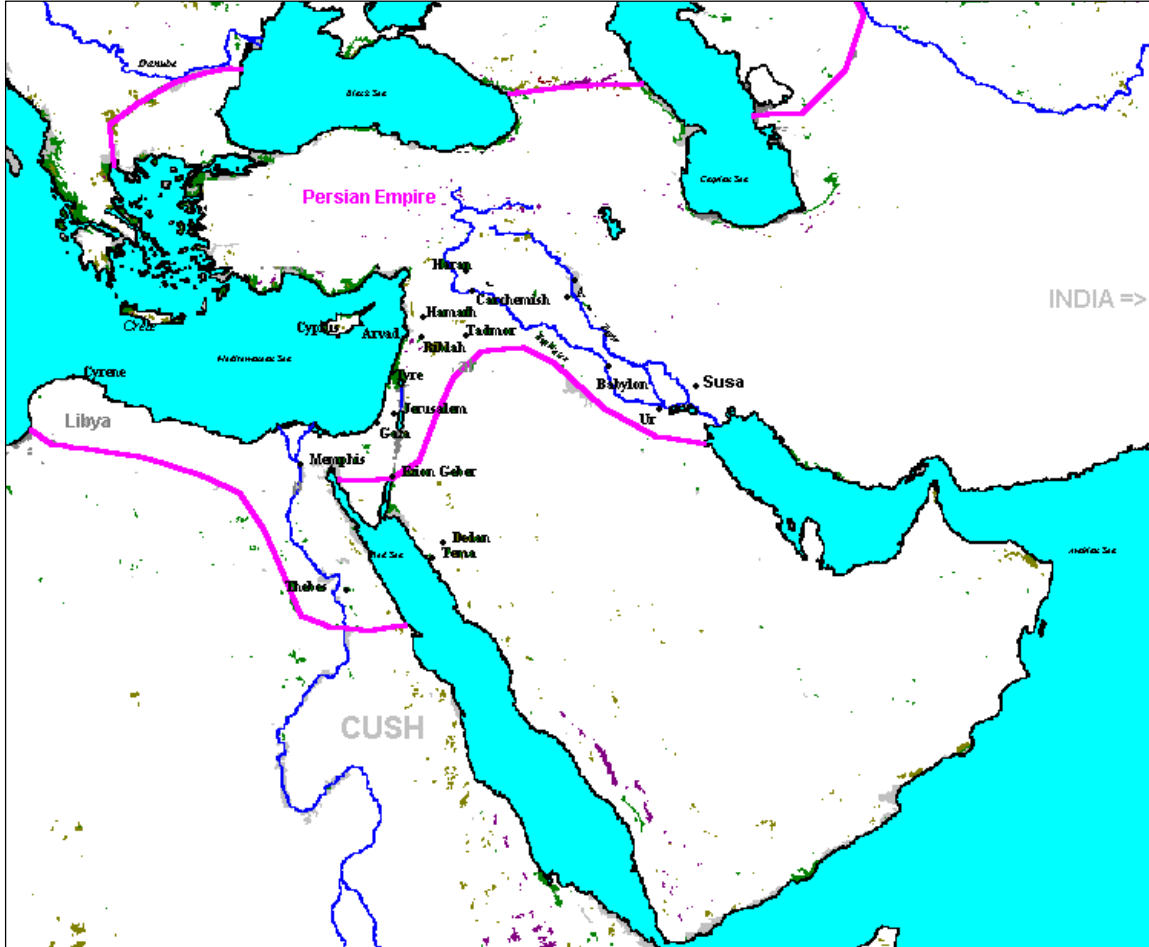
*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (4). How would you evaluate Xerxes response to Esther and Mordecai?
4. In Esther 8:9-14, Mordecai wrote to the Jews throughout the empire.
- a. In 8:9, the author described the preparations that were made for Mordecai to carry out the instructions of Xerxes.
    - (1). The author gave the date on which this was done. Why was this important?
    - (2). The author identified the areas to which this order was to be sent.
      - (a). Where was it sent?
      - (b). Why was this important?
    - (3). Why would the author identify the languages in which the order was to be written?
  - b. In 8:10, the author described how Mordecai carried out the king's order. Why was this important information?
  - c. In 8:11, the author described the content of the order Mordecai sent to the Jews.
    - (1). What did he write to them?
    - (2). What three things could the Jews do which had been forbidden them in the past?
    - (3). The edict gave the Jews permission to "destroy, kill and annihilate..."
      - (a). Why would Mordecai feel the necessity to use all three words?
      - (b). What does one of these words indicate that the other two do not?
      - (c). Think carefully about this edict. What were the implications of this letter?
  - d. In 8:12, the edict identified the date on which the Jews were empowered to defend themselves. Think carefully about the implications of this fact.
    - (1). Why would Mordecai choose this date?
    - (2). Why did he not choose a date much earlier?
    - (3). Why did he not choose a later date?
  - e. In 8:13, the author identified the way the edict was sent out. Look carefully at the verse.
    - (1). What does this verse add to our understanding.
    - (2). What are the implications of the way this was handled?
  - f. In 8:14, the author described the courier's carrying of the edict to the provinces.
    - (1). Chronologically, what is the relationship of the issue of the edict in Susa to the sending of the edict to the 127 provinces?
    - (2). What difference could this make?
5. In Esther 8:15-17, Mordecai was honored and the Jews began to celebrate.
- a. In 8:15, the author described the way Mordecai was honored.
    - (1). Describe the way Mordecai was honored?
    - (2). What is the significance of the fact that he wore robes of certain colors?
    - (3). What is the significance of the large golden crown?
    - (4). The text describes Mordecai's royal robe along with a fine linen robe. What was the difference?
    - (5). What does all this mean?
    - (6). What does the color of Mordecai's robes have to do with the celebration in Susa?
  - b. In 8:16, the author described the kind of celebration this was for the Jews.
    - (1). Explain the words he used to describe this celebration?
    - (2). What does this tell us?
  - c. In 8:17, the author described the response of the Jews to the receipt of the edict from Mordecai.
    - (1). What was there in the edict that would give rise to this kind of celebration?
    - (2). How do you account for the celebration in view of the fact that they were going to have to fight for their lives?
    - (3). In this verse, the author also gave us some surprising information.
      - (a). What was this information?

Questions for Ruth and Esther

(b). How can you explain this situation?

6. As we come to the close of the chapter, review what you have learned. Again, record the ways you see God in action in the chapter though His name is not mentioned.



The Persian Empire

from India to Cush

## QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 9

### ESTHER 9:1 - 32

#### HAMAN'S SONS HANGED ON HIS GALLOWS

1. There are six paragraphs in Esther chapter nine. On the following table, write a summary of seven words or less for each paragraph

9:1-10	
9:11-16	
9:17-19	
9:20-25	
9:26-28	
9:29-32	

2. In Esther 9:1-10, the author described the Jews destruction of their enemies.
- a. In 9:1, the author described a shocking event.
    - (1). What was that event?
    - (2). What is the significance of the specific date this happened?
    - (3). Put yourself in the place of Haman's friends. How would you feel?
  - b. In 9:2, there is a description of the Jews' response to this situation.
    - (1). How did they respond?
    - (2). Compare 9:2 with the king's edict, as listed in 8:11. What did you find?
    - (3). How can you account for this?
    - (4). If you were Xerxes, what would you do in light of this situation?
  - c. In 9:3, in view of the first royal edict that commanded the provincial leaders to kill the Jews, how do you account for their actions described here?
  - d. In 9:4, the author described the reputation of Mordecai.
    - (1). What was that reputation? Why?
    - (2). How does one become more powerful when he is already second in command of the kingdom?
  - e. In 9:5, there is a report of the Jews' experience in self-defense.
    - (1). What did the author say?
    - (2). What does this mean?
    - (3). Explain each phrase of this verse in your own words.
  - f. In 9:6, the author reported the results in Susa.
    - (1). Why did he list the results in Susa separately?
    - (2). What does this tell us?
    - (3). If you were Xerxes and received this report, what would you think?
    - (4). What would you do?
  - g. In 9:7-10, the author identified the ten sons of Haman that were killed. What reason can you find for listing their names here?
  - h. In 9:10, the author carefully reported that though the Jews killed their enemies, they did not plunder anything of their property. Why was this important?
3. In Esther 9:11-16, Esther made an unusual request.



### *Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- a. In 9:11, The author indicated that the report of the number killed in the palace, or "citadel" was given to Xerxes immediately. What was the importance of this action?
  - b. In 9:12, Xerxes told Esther of the number of people who were killed in the palace. Put yourself in Xerxes' place. What would you feel? How would you deal with this situation?
  - c. In 9:13, Esther made a very unusual request.
    - (1). Why would this be necessary?
    - (2). What good would this do?
    - (3). Again, put yourself in Xerxes position and record how you would respond to Esther's request concerning the sons of Haman.
    - (4). What problem do you see with this request?
  - d. In 9:14, the king responded to Esther's request.
    - (1). What was his response?
    - (2). What benefit did this have?
    - (3). How would the officials of the government respond to Xerxes' action?
  - e. In 9:15, the Jews took action against their enemies again.
    - (1). What did they do?
    - (2). Why would this be necessary?
    - (3). What would be the lasting value of this action?
  - f. In 9:16, the author reported how the Jews throughout the empire responded to Mordecai's edict.
    - (1). What happened?
    - (2). How would this affect the Medo-Persian people?
    - (3). What is the startling event in this report?
    - (4). The author again reported that the Jews took no plunder. What difference would this make?
4. In Esther 9:17-19, the Jews declared a feast and a celebration.
- a. In 9:17, the author gave a summary of two different situations.
    - (1). What are the two situations?
    - (2). How do they relate to each other?
  - b. In 9:18, 19, the author gives an explanation.
    - (1). How did the author explain this situation?
    - (2). What does this tell you?
    - (3). The text speaks specifically of the giving of presents. How is this related to the situations with which they were dealing?
5. In Esther 9:20-25, Mordecai issued a command.
- a. In 9:20, 21, what was the nature of Mordecai's command?
    - (1). What are the implications of Mordecai issuing this kind of command?
    - (2) What are the side-effects of Mordecai's command?
    - (3) Why was it important for the people to make this a perpetual celebration rather than a one time act?
  - b. In 9:22, the author described the celebration in more careful detail.
    - (1). Why would it be important to give presents of food to each other?
    - (2). What does giving gifts to the poor have to do with this celebration?
    - (3). In what way was their sorrow turned into joy?
  - c. In 9:23, the Jewish people responded to the command of Mordecai.
    - (1). What does this tell you about Mordecai?
    - (2). What does this tell you about the Jewish people?
    - (3). On what basis would the Jewish people obey Mordecai, a civil leader, on a matter which was spiritual in nature?
  - d. In 9:24, the author identifies Haman as he had several times previously.

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- (1). Why did the author identify Haman in this fashion again?
  - (2). What does Haman have to do with the establishment of this religious holiday?
  - (3). Why did they talk about the casting of the "Pur"?
  - e. In 9:25, the author portrays Xerxes as being fully supportive of the retaliation against Haman. Why would Xerxes want Haman's sons to be hanged also?
6. In Esther 9:26-28, the author gave an explanation of Purim.
- a. In 9:26, the author explained why the name Purim was used. What was the relationship between the name "pur" and the struggle which was highlighted in this book?
  - b. In 9:27, the people took it upon themselves to celebrate this feast regularly.
    - (1). Why was the date important?
    - (2). Why were the details so important to this observance?
    - (3). What was it that made this observance mandatory?
  - c. In 9:28, great care was taken to carry on this celebration without interruption.
    - (1). Why would this be so important?
    - (2). What does this tell us about Mordecai?
7. In Esther 9:29-32, there is a very unusual event recorded.
- a. In 9:29, Esther and Mordecai wrote a letter.
    - (1). Why would Esther be involved in the writing?
    - (2). What was the purpose of this letter?
  - b. In 9:30, 31, there is a description of the content of the letter.
    - (1). Why was this letter necessary?
    - (2). What did the letter accomplish?
  - c. In 9:32, Esther issued a decree.
    - (1). Where did Esther get the power to make a decree?
    - (2). What was the content of her decree?
    - (3). Why would it be important for Esther to make this decree, rather than Xerxes?
8. Review chapter nine again. List the places and events where you see the hand of God at work, though His name is never mentioned.

**QUESTIONS FOR ESTHER LESSON 10**

**ESTHER 10:1 - 3**

**XERXES HONORED MORDECAI**

1. In Esther chapter 10 there is only one paragraph. On the following table write a summary of seven words or less for this paragraph.

10:1-3	
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2. Read 10:1 very carefully.
- a. Why would the author use the word "tribute" when speaking of citizens of the kingdom?
  - b. The author also spoke of "distant shores." What shores might he be talking about?
3. In 10:2, the author spoke of the rising power of Mordecai.
- a. The author does not describe what "his (Mordecai) acts of power and might," could include. In view of what we have seen, what might be included in this general reference?

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*

- b. The author mentioned that the acts of Mordecai were written in the book of "the annals of the kings of Media and Persia." What problem, if any, can you see with this statement?
4. In 10:3, the author continued with his description of the reputation of Mordecai.
  - a. How does the author describe Mordecai's position?
  - b. What reasons does he offer for this situation?
  - c. What does this tell you about Mordecai?
5. Review your study of this brief closing chapter of the book of Esther. Though God is not named in the chapter, record the places where you see the hand of God at work in the lives of these beleaguered people.

*Questions for Ruth and Esther*