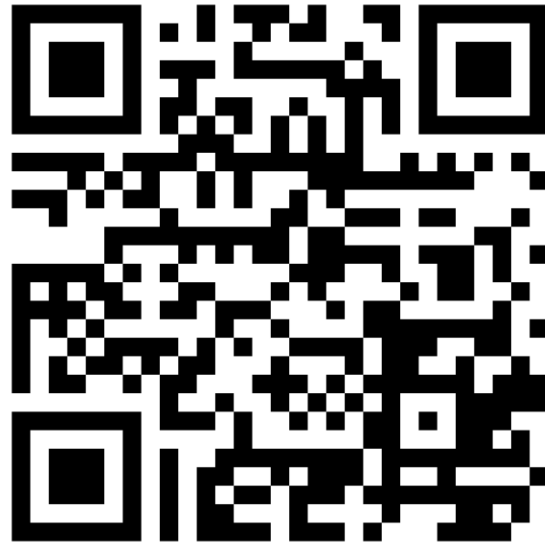


ESTHER 3



Using your phone's camera, scan this QR code and follow the link to the study notes or click the link below.

www.strengthenmyfaith.org/studynotes/esther

Esther 3:1

1 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him and set his throne above all the officials who were with him.

- ✓ Each biblical account stands with the others to form a single, continuous narrative of God's plan for man's redemption
- ✓ While we may study books individually, we cannot lose sight of the overall picture of the battle for man's soul

Esther 3:1

- ✓ We have just been introduced to Satan's pawn in his effort to destroy God's people and prevent the prophetic Messiah from entering the world
- ✓ Extending back to the first family of creation, we see Satan's attempts to prevent the birth of the One who would renew the broken relationship between God and man

Genesis 3:15

15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

✓ The first Messianic prophecy in scripture

Esther 3:1

- ✓ Early on, it seemed that Abel would be the “chosen one” and Cain killed him
- ✓ Later Joseph became the target of satanic attack as his brothers sell him and he is falsely accused and sent to prison in Egypt (we know the Messiah would eventually come through the tribe of Judah, but the “bright spots” in Israel’s history seem to be high value targets for the enemy)

Esther 3:1

- ✓ The Amalekites descend from Jacob's brother, Esau and represent the ongoing struggle between the spirit and flesh
- ✓ Joshua battled the Amalekites at Rephidim shortly after the Israelites exited Egypt and was only victorious when Moses' hands were lifted up

2. Israel's Exodus from Egypt and Entry into Canaan



1 Samuel 15:2-3

2 Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt.

3 Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all that they have. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'"

1 Samuel 15:8-9

8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive and devoted to destruction all the people with the edge of the sword.

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fattened calves and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them. All that was despised and worthless they devoted to destruction.

1 Samuel 15:13-15

13 And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, “Blessed be you to the LORD. I have performed the commandment of the LORD.”

14 And Samuel said, “What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?”

15 Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice to the LORD your God, and the rest we have devoted to destruction.”

1 Samuel 15:19-21

19 Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you pounce on the spoil and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?”

20 And Saul said to Samuel, “I have obeyed the voice of the LORD. I have gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me. I have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and I have devoted the Amalekites to destruction.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.”

1 Samuel 12:22-23

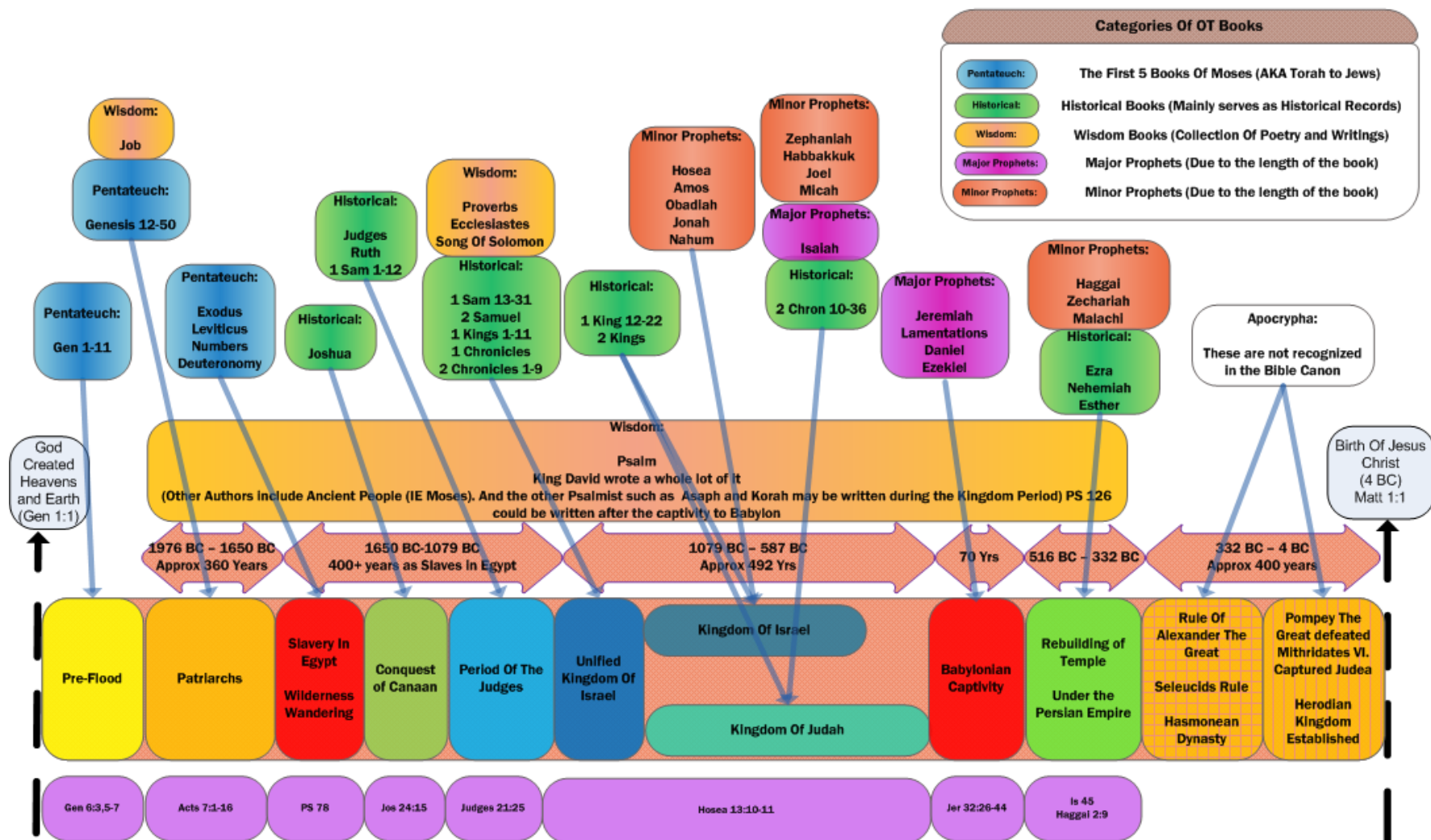
22 And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king.”

1 Samuel 15

- ✓ Haman, the Agagite would lead us to believe that he descended from Agag, the king of the Amalekites
- ✓ Mordecai, a Benjamite would be the one who would confront this enemy of the Jews and end a feud that began back in 1 Samuel 15 between king Saul and Agag

Major Periods In Old Testament History



Assumptions made:

1. All BC Dates are estimates, presented to give the reader a gauge of the time of the events
2. The period of Job is not known, but it is generally believed to be Patriarchal
3. Joel is assumed to be living in Judah when he prophesized.
4. The books are grouped using Christian way of categorizing the books of the Old Testament.

Esther 3:2

2 And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage.

- ✓ The honor given to Haman was twofold – bowing down and paying homage which literally means to raise the hands and fall prostrate
- ✓ Walter Savage Landor said, “When small men cast long shadows, it is a sign the sun is setting”
- ✓ In one of Aesop’s fables it is said, “the fool takes to himself the respect that is given to their office”

Esther 3:3-4

3 Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, “Why do you transgress the king's command?”

4 And when they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai's words would stand, for he had told them that he was a Jew.

Esther 3:3-4

- ✓ Mordecai reveals his identity as a Jew possibly as the answer as to why he would not “worship” another man
- ✓ This begs the question as to how “devout” Mordecai had lived while in Susa as the Jewish customs typically made them a peculiar people among the nations
- ✓ Dietary laws, ceremonial cleansings, and prayer would have revealed his identity long before this point

Esther 3:5-6

5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage to him, Haman was filled with fury.

6 But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, as they had made known to him the people of Mordecai, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

Esther 3:5-6

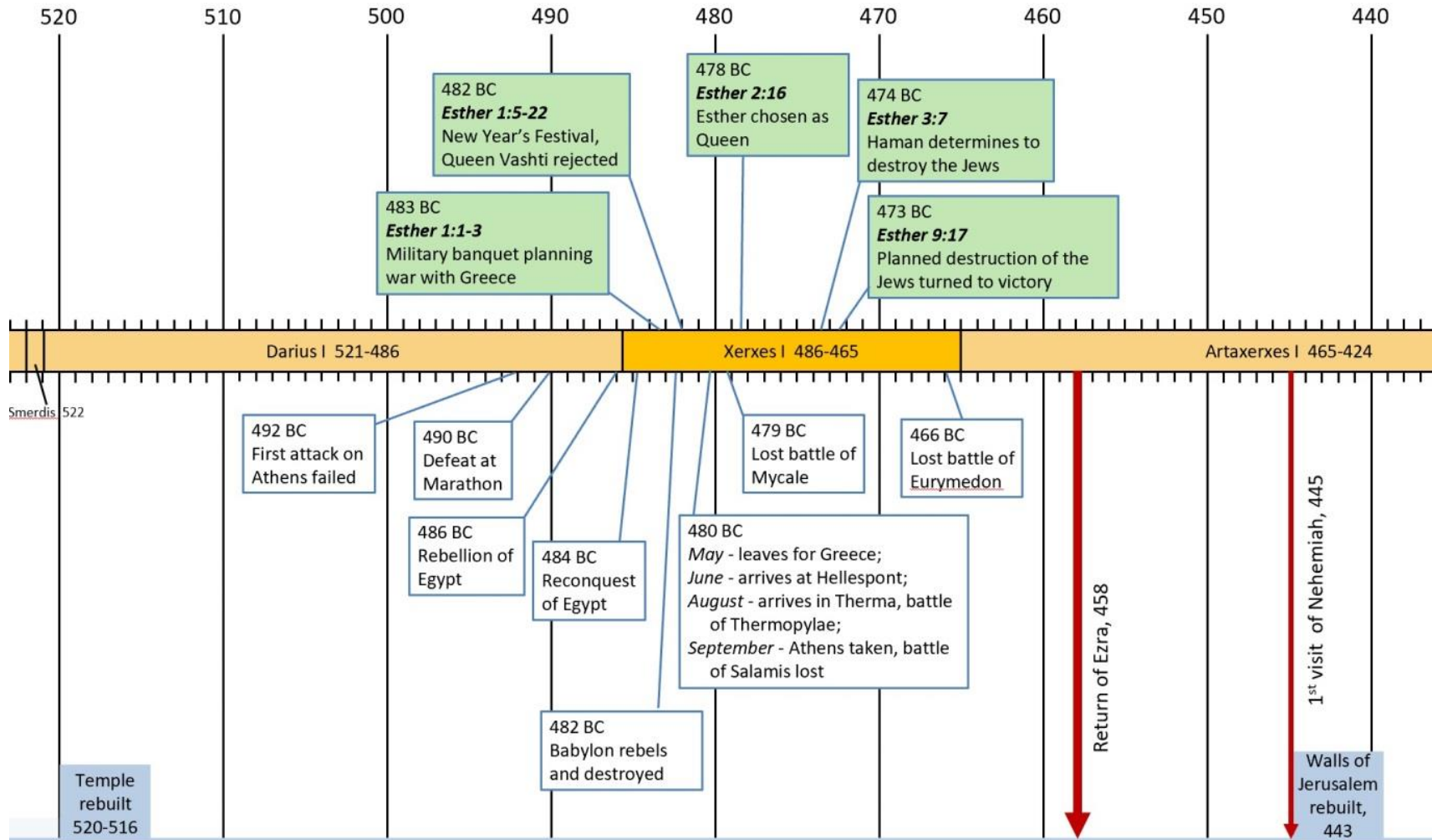
- ✓ Haman's hatred of Mordecai would spill over onto the other people sharing his heritage
- ✓ Satan's influence would be poured out on this newly appointed official in the court of Xerxes
- ✓ Satan's attempts to discredit the Jews in Jerusalem and prevent the rebuilding of the temple had failed, so his attention would be turned to a higher power, namely, the Persian king and his officials

Esther 3:7-8

7 In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that is, they cast lots) before Haman day after day; and they cast it month after month till the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, “There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so that it is not to the king's profit to tolerate them.

Setting of Esther



HAGGAI

ZECHARIAH

NEHEMIAH

EZRA

Esther 3:9-11

9 If it please the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay 10,000 talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king's business, that they may put it into the king's treasuries.”

10 So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews.

11 And the king said to Haman, “The money is given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you.”

10,000 talents of silver (estimate)

- 10,000 talents might weigh approx. 60,000 – 75,000lbs.
- 30 – 37.5 tons of silver
- Some estimate the modern worth of this sum to be approx. \$1 billion to \$3 billion
- In Greek culture 6,000 drachma or denarii (a day's wage for a labourer) would be required to equal 1 talent
- Exodus 38:24 says 29 talents of gold were collected for the construction of the Tabernacle
- Some sources state the entire Persian government would collect no more than 30,000 talents yearly

Esther 3:7-11

- ✓ Xerxes makes another rash decision based off limited information from his counselors
- ✓ Haman's description of a dangerous and seditious group of people infiltrating the entire empire appeals to the king's already suspicious nature
- ✓ Haman offers to pay an incredible sum to finance the effort to save the kingdom (although the king does not accept the payment)
- ✓ The king's signet ring and its power are handed to Haman, the enemy of the Jews

Esther 3:12-13

12 Then the king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and an edict, according to all that Haman commanded, was written to the king's satraps and to the governors over all the provinces and to the officials of all the peoples, to every province in its own script and every people in its own language. It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring.

13 Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with instruction to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods.

Ancient Signet Ring example



Sealed scroll example



Esther 3:14-15

14 A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province by proclamation to all the peoples to be ready for that day.

15 The couriers went out hurriedly by order of the king, and the decree was issued in Susa the citadel. And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was thrown into confusion.

Esther 3:12-15

- ✓ Genocide is decreed against an entire people group, yet Haman and the king sit down for a drink
- ✓ Although we hope to sympathize with the king at points within the account, we cannot excuse his lifestyle of excess and his ability to levy judgment on an entire nation without a hint of discomfort

Esther 3

- ✓ The enemy's message is sent out on the fastest horses to the far reaches of the empire
- ✓ Just as today, the enemy is earnest in sending his message and we have to be just as faithful in proclaiming the message of the gospel
- ✓ Those we love will hear a message – which message will that be?

Ephesians 6:12

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.