Introduction

- Timeline Review

Kings of the Persian Empire (minus two)				
Cyrus the Great	Cambyses II	Darius the Great	Xerxes I (Ahasuerus)	Artaxerxes I
539*–530 BC	530–522 BC	522–486 BC	486–465 BC	465–424 BC

- Disobedience or Obedience?
    - Jeremiah 29:5-7 – "Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare."
- The Providential Hand of the Lord
    - Proverbs 21:1 – "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will."

Esther 2 – Searching for the Queen

- A Couple of Jews
    - Persianization? Or Obedience?
- The Horrors of the Harem
    - "Apparently most of the girls spent only one night with the king. They moved on to the house of Shaashgaz, where they were concubines. There was no guarantee that the king would call them again, so many were confined to virtual widowhood."[1]
- Crowning of the New Queen
    - Glimpses of God
- A Plot Discovered
    - Mordecai's Influence

[1] Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, 317

Esther 3 – Offence Leads to Offense

- Understanding the Rivalry

Exodus 17:8-15	1 Samuel 15:3, 7-9	1 Samuel 9:1-2
"Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim…Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." And Moses built an altar…saying, 'A hand upon the throne of the LORD! The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.'"	"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…And Saul defeated the Amalekites…And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive and devoted to destruction all the people with the edge of the sword. 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.	"There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Becorath, son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. And he had a son whose name was Saul…"

- The Horrible Timing of Haman's Edict
    - Glimpses of God
- The Callous Nature of Evil
- The Mystery of God's Providence