



Context of the Book

- Why were the Jews even in Persia?
 - Ahasuerus- most historians agree that this is Xerxes (1:1-2)
 - Xerxes was the grandson of Cyrus
 - He is called God's shepherd and anointed (Isaiah 42:24-45:1)
 - Xerxes allowed Israel to go back home (2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; Ezra 6:3-5)
 - If Xerxes allowed Israel to return home, why were many Jews still there?!?!
 - It is possible that many preferred to live in a secular culture.
- God is never mentioned in this book.
 - The author wants us to realize that God is working behind the scenes.
 - The author wants us to realize that the characters had almost completely abandoned God in their thinking and their lifestyle.

When God is abandoned, life becomes confusing.

Moral confusion!

- The presence of Jews in Persia
- Vasthi's refusal of the King Xerxes' Request (1:10-12)
- Esther's willingness to join the contest for queen (2:8)
- Mordecai's command to hide Esther's nationality (2:10)
- Esther's sexual audition with King Xerxes (2:15-17)
- Mordecai's choice not to bow to Haman (3:1-4)
- Mordecai's mourning (4:1-3)

- Mordecai's conversation with Esther (4:4-17)
- Israel's mourning (4:15-17)
- Esther entering the King's throne-room (6:14-7:6)
- Slaughter of many non-Jews (9:11-19)

God is Sovereign in the Shadows (Esther 4:4-17)

- When studying the Bible, remember that we are trying to understand what message the author is trying to get across.
- He included all of these confusing moral situations, so what is he really trying to get across to us?
 - “And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”
 - Even when God's people abandon Him, He is still sovereignly working in the shadows for his glory and their good.

When life becomes confusing, God is still sovereignly working in the shadows.

God is Sovereign **in the Shadows**

- God is in control despite our failures
 - We fail in our pride
 - We fail sexually
 - We fail to trust God
 - We fail to be Godly
- God is in control despite our enemies
- God is in control despite our circumstances

Because God is still sovereignly working in the shadows, we should acknowledge Him in every step of our lives.