

The Feast of Purim

Did you know...?

- The feast of Purim is a celebration of things that occurred in which book of the Bible?

Esther

- Esther is one of only two books in the bible that doesn't mention...?

God

- The other book is...?

Song of Solomon

- Purim means...?

Lots... so the Feast of Purim is otherwise known as the Feast of Lots (as a remembrance of how Haman cast lots to choose the day he would destroy the Jews... yet this became the day of their deliverance)

What's it all about?

- ▶ Purim is a celebration of the events found in the book of Esther - particularly the deliverance of the Jewish people from their enemies

For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

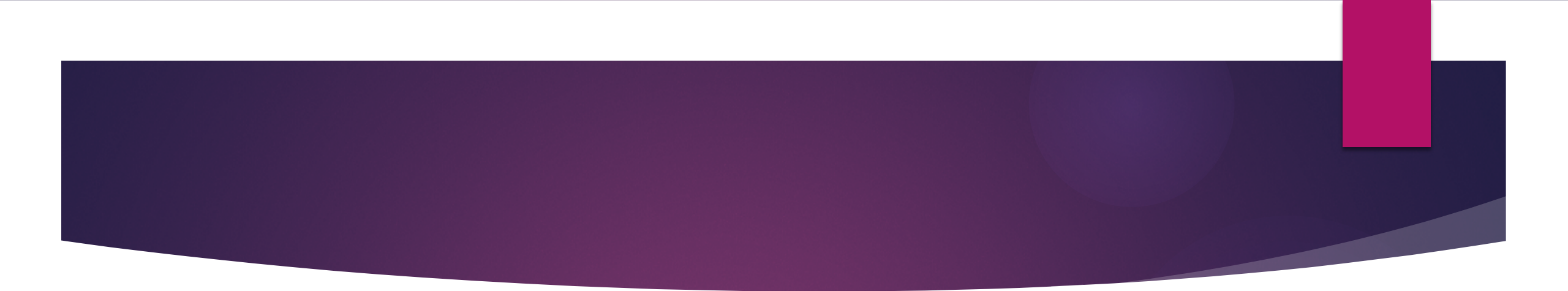
Esther 4:14

The Book of Esther

Set in Persia - the Jews had been taken into captivity previously by the Babylonians so at the time of the book of Esther were displaced from their homeland

Main characters:

- ▶ **Mordecai**- Esther's cousin, raised her as his own, saved the king's life by overhearing a plot, refuses to bow down to Haman, is honoured by the king (much to Haman's dismay)
- ▶ **Haman**- given a position of high standing (similar to a prime minister), hates the Jews (Mordecai would not bow down to him) plots to destroy all the Jews.
- ▶ **King Ahasuerus**- the Persian king, tricked into signing a decree to kill all Jews
- ▶ **Esther**- Raised by her cousin Mordecai, Chosen as new queen, risks her life to save her people

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- ▶ During the celebration some observances are
 - ▶ The book of Esther is read
 - (Read to remember the and celebrate the events, when read people boo and hiss to cover the name of Haman)
 - ▶ Gifts of money are given to those who are in need
 - ▶ Gifts of food are also given
 - ▶ A feast is held

Some Purim traditions are...

- ▶ It's usually a lively and fun time
- ▶ People dress up in fancy costumes
 - possibly in remembrance of when the King dressed Mordecai in the Royal Robes
 - possibly because Esther hid her true identity as a Jew until it was time to plea for her peoples cause
- ▶ Eat three cornered pastries
- ▶ Some people fast on the eve of Purim
 - in remembrance of Esther fasting and praying before going before the king

20 And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both nigh and far,

21 To stablish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly,

22 As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.

23 And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them;

24 Because Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, **and had cast Pur, that is, the lot**, to consume them, and to destroy them;

25 But when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

26 Wherefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur. Therefore for all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them,

27 The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail, that they would keep these two days according to their writing, and according to their appointed time every year;

28 And that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed.

God's working for the good of those who love him!

- ▶ To fully understand Purim and the deliverance that is celebrated, the story of Esther is well worth the read!
- ▶ It shows us a dire situation, seemingly hopeless that God not only delivers his people from, but also gives them victory in!
- ▶ His name might not be directly mentioned but it is a wonderful example of how we can trust that God is able to deliver us from what ever we are facing!
- ▶ We live in a broken world, bad things happen, and sometimes we face things in our lives that are really hard and seem impossible but the bible tells us God works all things together for the good of those that love him

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28