

Monday Night Discipleship: Week 13

Overview:

1. Introduction to the History of Biblical Interpretation Part 2: In what ways has the church interpreted the Bible over time?
2. Longman Chapter 14 discussion:
 - a. Content: What Is Esther About?
 - b. Authorship and Date: Who Wrote Esther and When?
 - c. Genre: What Style of Literature Is Esther?
 - d. Connections: How Does Esther Connect to the Gospel?

Introduction to the History of Biblical Interpretation Part 2:

1. An overview of how the church interpreted the Bible between A.D. 500-present day:
 - a. Four Fold Meaning of Scripture (A.D. 500-1500)
 - i. What are these four levels?
 1. Literal - what the passage tells us _____.
 2. Spiritual - what the passage means allegorically about _____ and the church.
 3. Moral - what the passage teaches regarding how to _____.
 4. Heavenly - what the passage means allegorically about _____ or the eschaton
 - ii. “Indeed, much biblical scholarship in the medieval period was not true _____ but the cataloging of church fathers’ interpretations of various passages. Church tradition effectively trumped the primacy of Scripture.”
 - b. A Return to the Authority of the Bible (A.D. 1500-Present)
 - i. *Ad fontes!* - which means “[back] to the _____”
 - ii. *Sola Scriptura* - which means “the _____ alone.”
 - iii. On the shoulders of these giants, many Biblical scholars continue to _____ that the allegorical method of interpreting the Bible leads to a perversion of the text (unless explicitly intended by the authors).

- iv. Rob Plummer summarizes it well, “to understand the Bible, we must look to the sense of the author’s actual _____ according to the norms of language and grammar.”¹
- c. Anti-Supernatural Skepticism and Human Reason (A.D. 1650-Present)
 - i. In an attempt to find the historical Jesus, they conclude that supernatural events did not happen; resulting in extreme skepticism of the historical reliability of the Bible.

Longman Chapter 14 Discussion:

- 1. Content: What Is Esther About?
 - a. Esther is the last of the books of _____ in the OT canon.
 - b. The book of Esther is the only book in the Bible where _____ is not mentioned. Neither is there any mention of prayerful worship or sacrifice to Him.
 - c. The Purpose of Esther:
 - i. Purim- Esther gives an account for the origin of Purim, a Jewish festival
 - ii. God’s Faithfulness/Protection-
 - d. Outline:
 - i. The Great Banquet (Esther 1-3)
 - 1. Background of the Narrative-
 - 2. Xerxes Chooses Esther-
 - ii. The Great Threat (Esther 3-4)
 - 1. Haman’s Hatred of the Jews (3:1-6)-
 - 2. Haman’s Plot (Esther 3:7-4:17)-

¹ Plummer, Robert, Benjamin L. Merkle, *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2010), 91.

- iii. God's Great Providence (Esther 5-10)
 - 1. God Gives Esther Favor Before the King (Esther 5)-
 - 2. God's Sovereignty and Haman's Downfall (Esther 6-7)-
 - 3. God's Deliverance (Esther 8-10)-

2. Authorship and Date: Who Wrote Esther and When?

- a. Unknown Author-
- b. Unknown Date-

3. Genre: What Style of Literature Is Esther?

Historical Narrative-

4. Connections: How Does Esther Connect to the Gospel?

God Preserves His Remnant-

R.E.A.P.

Esther 7

So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. ² And on the second day, as they were drinking wine after the feast, the king again said to Esther, "What is your wish, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." ³ Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be granted me for my wish, and my people for my request. ⁴ For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have been silent, for our affliction is not to be compared with the loss to the king." ⁵ Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has dared^[a] to do this?" ⁶ And Esther said, "A foe and enemy! This wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

⁷ And the king arose in his wrath from the wine-drinking and went into the palace garden, but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that harm was determined against him by the king. ⁸ And the king returned from the palace garden to the place where they were drinking wine, as Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. And the king said, “Will he even assault the queen in my presence, in my own house?” As the word left the mouth of the king, they covered Haman's face. ⁹ Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, “Moreover, the gallows^[b] that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, is standing at Haman's house, fifty cubits^[s] high.” And the king said, “Hang him on that.” ¹⁰ So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the wrath of the king abated..”²

1. **Read aloud together**

2. **Explain by answering the three questions: What does this passage teach us about _____?**
 - a. **God:**

 - b. **Man:**

 - c. **Christ:**

3. **Ask-** What question/s would help you understand the text more fully?

4. **Pray-** Using some of your observations and questions, write out a prayer to God.

² The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Esther 7:1-10. All passages of Scripture will come from this translation unless otherwise referenced.