



# Esther

## Session 1: Who's Who?

Before reading the *Book of Esther*, watch the DVD for Session 1: Who's Who? And make notes on the characters and setting of the book. After reading *Esther*, discuss the questions below.

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1. What elements of the Jewish exile in Babylon stand out in your mind?

2. Describe the social and historical situation known as the "diaspora."

3. From Dr. Wolfe's introduction and your own reading, list any defining characteristics of the following characters:

- King Ahasuerus (or Xerxes)
  
- Vashti
  
- Hegai
  
- Mordecai
  
- Esther (or Hadassah)
  
- Haman
  
- Zeresh

4. After reading the book all the way through, what stands out in your mind about the story or any of the characters?

5. What do you think the difference is between a character and a caricature?

6. What are the implications of this session's material for your personal life? Your spiritual journey? For your local faith community?

**FURTHER STUDY:** Look up the Isaiah passages where Cyrus the Persian is referred to as Messiah: Isaiah 44.28, 45.1, and 45.13. How does this broaden your understanding of the concept of Messiah?

