

# The Watford Word

[www.watfordchurchofchrist.org](http://www.watfordchurchofchrist.org)

## What's on

Wednesday 03 May, 7:30PM - Watford Teaching Meeting: 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 14:33-40 -- "Women should remain silent in the churches"? <https://iccmissions-org.zoom.us/j/97718981449?pwd=QUV0K25jUERmUU03NU0yOE9ibU50Zz09> Meeting ID: 977 1898 1449. Passcode: 999912 Please read the passages mentioned above and think about their meaning. You might find these questions helpful:

- i. If Paul accepts women praying and prophesying in the assembly (11:5), why would he call on women to be silent (14:34)?
- ii. What *could* his instructions mean, and what could they *not* mean?
- iii. The church had problems with unity and a lack of love. Why are 1 Corinthians 12 & 13 in between chapters 11 & 14, and how do they help us interpret the tricky passages?

**Sunday 07 May - service, 10:30AM. Ruth & Boaz.** Malcolm speaking

**Sunday 14 May - service, 10:30AM. Jesus and the women who supported his work.**

**Sunday 21 May - service, 10:30AM. Jesus and the Samaritan woman.**

**Sunday 28 May - 10:30AM. Jesus, Mary & Martha.**



## Coronation Weekend: 7th May

The coronation gives us a good excuse to bring food to church, eat together and celebrate the King of Kings!

Simon and Patricia Palmer have taken on the task of coordinating everything (thank you!). We have gone for cold food as a simpler option this time. Here are their suggestions:

**Salad options:** Salad 🥗 bowls. Rice salad. Pasta salad. Potato salad

**Sandwiches; Quiches; Crisps**

**Chicken options:** drumsticks 🍗 / Satay skewers, nuggets for the kids (big and small!)

**Platter options:** Salami, ham, beef and cheese (camembert, brie) with baguettes.

**Dips:** Hummus, mayonnaise, coleslaw, thousand island etc.

**Cocktail extras:** Cocktail sausages, pork and vegetarian, cheese cubes, olives, cherry tomatoes.

**Dessert option:** Cakes, cup cakes, Trifle

**Other items:** Decorations/ bunting/ cutlery etc. Plastic or wooden cutlery, plastic bowls, cups, paper plates serviettes. Union Jack/ coronation flags and bunting.

## AIM UK&I

The Old Testament Survey module took place recently. If you missed it, but would like to join in and watch the recordings, please speak to me or email [courses@aimukandireland.com](mailto:courses@aimukandireland.com). The website [www.aimukandireland.com](http://www.aimukandireland.com) contains more information.

## Watford Media

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj9Qa8D9zumJZdoAtARDUww>

Podcast: <https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-aiinq-raef90>

## Esther & Mordecai

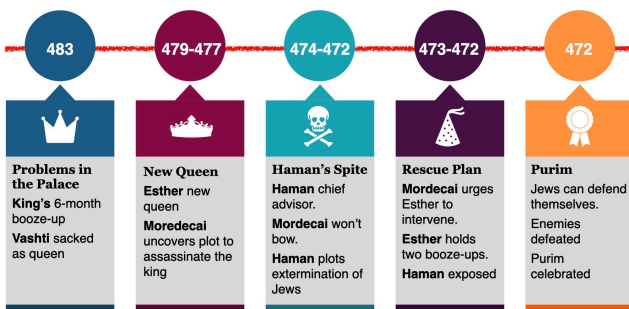
The focus of today's lesson is Esther & Mordecai.

### Background to the context of Esther

Today's video can be found here: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/esther/>

Some of the exiled Israelites have returned from Babylon to Israel, but many have remained. Esther and her cousin Mordecai are among those.

### Esther Timeline



### Outline of the Book

- A. Queen Vashti's Fall (1:1-22)
- B. Esther's Rise as Queen (2:1-18)
- C. Mordecai Uncovers a Plot (2:19-23)
- D. Mordecai's Refusal to Bow to Haman (3:1-6)
- E. Haman's Plot to Destroy Mordecai (3:7-15)
- F. Mordecai Appeals to Esther for Help (4:1-17)
- G. Esther Appears Before Xerxes (5:1-8)
- H. Haman Plans to Hang Mordecai (5:9-14)
- I. Mordecai Honoured (6:1-14)
- J. Haman Exposed and Executed (7:1-10)
- K. Xerxes' Edict (8:1-17)
- L. The Jews Defeat Their Enemies (9:1-19)
- M. The Establishment of Purim (9:20-32)
- N. Mordecai's Greatness (10:1-3)

### Background to the main characters

**King Xerxes I:** Also known as King Ahasuerus. King of Persia in the 400s BC, ruling from the capital Susa, east of Babylon and north of the Persian Gulf. "[He] ruled over 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush" (Esther 1:1). *"He invaded Greece with more than 2,000,000 soldiers. Only 5,000 returned. Leonidas, with his famous 300, arrested his progress at the Pass of Thermopylae."* *Easton's Bible Dictionary*

**Queen Vashti:** Her name mean 'beautiful', 'desired'. Queen before Esther.

**Queen Esther:** Her original name was Hadas'sah (the myrtle). Her name was changed to Esther, 'star', when she entered the palace.

**Mordecai:** Son of Jair, of the tribe of Benjamin. Cousin to Esther and adoptive father after her parents died. An official in the Royal court.

**Haman:** He is called an "Agagite," (possibly descended from the Amalekites, the bitterest enemies of the Jews).

### Oddments in the Book of Esther

God is not mentioned. Why is this? Perhaps because the author wants to lead us to our own faith-reading of the text, rather than imposing it. Also, consider why Esther would proclaim a fast unless it was to invoke the help of God?

### Traditional interpretation

Esther demonstrates the perfect attitude of a submissive woman by her obedience to the advice of Mordecai and sets an example for godly women in the way they should act towards men — especially in the church.

### Alternative interpretation

Esther & Mordecai work together in partnership according to their situations. They give each other 'commands' according to their convictions (4:12-14; 15:17). Both act courageously and faithfully, serving as an example of trust in God. What do you think the key lesson is from the working relationship between Deborah and Barak? Also, what does this tell us about God? *"The fact that in the OT it is men who go to war does not give us God's prescription for the family. In the OT men are protectors; so also, as occasion arises, are women... Abigail protects her husband and the men in her household from a violent death (1 Sam. 25). Rahab protects the male spies (Josh. 2). An unnamed woman protects the people of Thebez from being burned to death (Judg. 9:50-55). The unnamed 'wise woman' of Abel Beth Maakah protects the men and women of her city from an invading army (2 Sam. 20). Esther protects her people, the Jews, from being massacred (Esth. 2:19 - 9:19)."* *Bartlett, Andrew. Men & Women in Christ*

Esther and Mordecai both display faith, bravery, integrity, resourcefulness, intelligence and wisdom. The difference between them is not their gender, but their circumstances dictated to them by their contemporary political-societal situation. What do you think?

Malcolm