

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history
2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²
2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² *Ibid*, pp. 64-65.

³ *Ibid*, pg. 65.

Pivotal Circumstances
Esther 1:1-22
January 17, 2012

- I. Historical Background
 - A. Babylonian Exile
 - 1. Judah – Southern Kingdom
 - 2. Displaced people
 - 3. God’s promise
 - B. Overthrow of Babylon
 - 1. Cyrus II (Cyrus the Great)
 - 2. Some Jews returned
 - 3. Most did not
 - C. Line of Succession
 - 1. Cyrus the Great succeeded by his son, Cambyses II
 - 2. Murky royal succession
 - 3. Darius I comes to the throne
- II. King Xerxes Introduced – Esther 1:1-2
 - A. Beginning
 - 1. “This is what happened...”
 - a. Hebrew – “Wyhy...”
 - B. Vastness of the Empire
 - 1. Smaller entities

2. Persia and its empire

C. Xerxes I – 486-465 B.C.

1. What's in a name?
2. Where the Esther story fits in

III. The Great War Council of 483 B.C.

A. Big Party

1. Six months of "recruiting"
2. Difficult to maintain loyalty and support
3. Party for everyone

B. Picture Being Painted

1. Description
2. Picture of opulence
3. Display of power and glory

C. Irony

1. First readers
2. Foreshadowing

IV. Queen Vashti – Vv. 9-12

A. Historical Issue

1. Herodotus

2. Solutions
 - a. Herodotus was wrong

 - b. Xerxes had more than one wife

 - c. Vashti could be a transliteration of Amestris

 - d. The author is using a literary device

B. The Situation

1. High Spirits

2. Calls for Vashti

3. Wearing the royal crown

C. Vashti's Response

1. She refuses

2. Embarrassment to the King

D. Xerxes' Response

1. Burns with anger

E. Backdrop

1. A picture of the Persian court and its king

- F. Interpretation: Exemplary Approach
 - 1. Using characters as examples
 - 2. Ambiguity

- G. Purpose of the Portion of the Story
 - 1. Portrait of a king
 - 2. Tell us about God's providence

- V. How Do You Solve a Problem Like a Vashti – Vv. 13-22
 - A. Consultation – Vv. 13-14
 - 1. Wise men?
 - 2. Understood the times

 - B. A New Law – Vv. 15-20
 - 1. "According to the law..."
 - 2. Vashti
 - 3. A better queen
 - 4. Irrevocable law
 - 5. Memucan manipulates Xerxes

 - C. Irony – Vv. 21-22

 - D. Humor
 - 1. Dark comedy

VI. Conclusion

A. God is at work

1. Redemptive history

2. Dr. Karen Jobes – “Like Xerxes long ago, modern kings, presidents, and rulers make decisions from purely political motives. Like Vashti, people today unwittingly make decisions that have long-reaching consequences far beyond what they could have foreseen. These events may be completely secular and perhaps made by people who give Christ no thought. Nonetheless, through them God is moving all of history forward to accomplish all that must happen before the return of his Son, Jesus Christ, the true King of kings.”¹

B. God is in Control

1. Karen Jobes – “Name whichever empire, nation, or government you wish as the mightiest, the greatest, and the most powerful, the King of the universe sits high above on his throne, laughing at the impotence of even the greatest of nations...Through invisible and inscrutable means, God continues to move all of history to fulfill his covenant in Jesus Christ. He alone truly is the King of kings. The one who opposes Christ the King opposes God.”²

2. “To be in Christ is to be on the winning side of history, to be victorious even in the face of life’s greatest threats.”³

¹ Jobes, Karen. *The NIV Application Commentary on Esther*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press. 1999, pg. 76.

² Ibid, pp. 64-65.

³ Ibid, pg. 65.