7. The major things to watch in Esther are these, in my opinion:

> How evil works
>> How God works
>>> How God's people should be employed
>>>> How God's people react to His blessing

8. We will move, then to the book of Esther, and if you read along with me, or ahead of me, it will be to your advantage because the Scripture is the important part of our work.

MESSAGE # 3: The Feast of Ahasuerus: Esther 2:2-12

I. Introduction:

Welcome to another session in our continuing study of the Book of Esther. Having noticed a lot of introductory material we are ready to begin our study of the book proper...we know that the setting is in the Persian empire and the time is the early part of the fifth century BC. I should note that my English Bible readings are from the King James version although I compare with other translations and at times go Hebrew myself. If there is any critical point in translation difference, I will try to point it out but this is not a course in translation principles but, hopefully, is a study of the content of the book. Our first study then in is chapter 1:1-12, the great feast of Ahasuerus.

II. Comments on the Text.

1:1...the character and area of rule of Ahasuerus. He is Xerexes I and his rule is enormous. By the time this book opens he has conquered Egypt and is planning an enormous attack on Greece that will see some military successes but eventual defeat in his total intention.

1:2...he had his throne in Shushan, a location in Southwest Persia where Darius I had also had a palace. (This site has been excavated following its discovery in 1851 and is the source of many examples of Persian grandeur and architecture.)

1:3...a feast in the third year of his reign----one of the two datable notes in this book. It may have been given in celebration of his victory over Egypt or in anticipation of his attack on Greece...that he was showing the power of his empire to all the loyal princes, etc., is significant but does not decide the matter. He fled Greece in 480 after the battle of Salamis and this would appear to have had to been before that.