

Ruth, Song of Songs, Lamentations, and Esther Esther – Part 2

Interpreting the Text:

1. Dr. Vayntrub suggests that, for Esther, being queen entails “tolerating humiliation for a greater purpose” [4:05]. Discuss this observation. Do you agree with this interpretation of Esther or Vashti’s role in the story? Why or why not?
2. Esther is sometimes called “The Book of Hiding.” Where do you see the theme of concealment showing up in this text?
3. How do you interpret the fact that God is not explicitly mentioned in this story?
4. Dr. Baden suggests that the book of Esther’s structure ultimately centers female experience [10:04], but Dr. Vayntrub disagrees. What do you think? Can Esther be read as a feminist narrative?

Applying the Text:

1. Do you see Esther as a feminist icon for us today? How about Vashti? Why or why not?
2. The story of Esther is about navigating oppression from a subordinate position. How would this story be told today using updated figures or metaphors?