5. Animated Versions. One might add, as somewhat of a double epilogue, first, that there have been several animated versions of this tale. One – "Queen Esther," from 1992, is part of the series *The Greatest Adventure: Stories from the Bible* (episode 12, US, 1985–92). Ron Rifkin does the voice of Mordecai, and the episode was written by Karen Eccles Wright. The 30-minute story is framed with two young archaeologists and their still younger assistant falling through a hole at an archaeological site and locating a door that takes them through time to the Persia of Xerxes (where everyone speaks perfect English and Mordecai has a long white beard and a Fu Manchu moustache). A second – inexplicably set in Babylon, not Persia – appeared in 1993; it is a 22-minute work, part of a twelve-episode series of *Animated Stories from the Bible* (episode 6, US, 1992–95), directed by Richard Rich, and written by Brian Nissen, in which Mordecai's voice is that of Ivan Crosland. The 2014 animated *Purim: The Lot* (US), written and directed by Moshe Khusid, is an unfortunate rendering, which one can only imagine was made for small children with its unbearably slowly-read and tendentious narration.

6. Musicals. Second, there have also been musicals, one of which was filmed in video in 2006. Written by Dennis Agle, Jr., who co-directed with Aaron Edson (who also wrote the music), *Esther and the King: Musical Adventures in Faith* (US) is framed within an outer carapace: a young girl, Amelia, who is looking for courage to ask the Latino family manservant to come to church with her family. To inspire her, her mother tells her the story of the courageous Esther – her version of it, that is, with an array of details that miss the biblical text in various ways. Vashti is missing completely, in fact, but Mordecai (Marvin Payne) is there to play his enabling role. The final book to find its way into the Hebrew biblical canon becomes a prop for a Christian story – teaching about the importance of fasting and praying – and whatever the serious elements, they are transformed into song, often enjoyable and often silly.

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See also → Ahasuerus; → Esther (Book and Person); → Exile; → Haman; → Holocaust; → Nebuchadnezzar; → Purim; → Purim-shpil

More, Hannah

Hannah More (1735–1833) was a prolific writer and Evangelical philanthropist in Britain. Born on February 2, 1735 to parents Jacob More and Mary Grace in Stapleton near Bristol, she was the fourth of five daughters. In her early years, More was provided a good education by her father and a local girls' boarding school. After teaching at that same school, More became engaged to William Turner in 1767. Turner postponed the wedding three times before More broke it off, Turner providing her with an annuity to pursue her literary career. Her career was nurtured by her association with playwright David Garrick (1717–1779) who helped publicize her early plays, and the Blue Stocking society. After her success in London, More continued writing throughout her life and eventually founded twelve schools in Somerset to educate the lower classes. More's essays, poetry, and tracts champion causes such as education for the lower classes, anti-revolutionary sentiments, Christian morality, the education of women, and Abolition. She died at the age of eighty-eight on September 7, 1833 in her home at Clifton.

As an Evangelical writer and philanthropist, More used the Bible to encourage moral reform and Christian principles for her audience. In her Somerset schools, the Bible was used to imbue Christian values on her pupils while teaching reading skills. More started each day with prayers from her Cheap Repository Tracts and Bible classes with a focus on the parables, Gen 1–3, and the Psalms (Mallor: 224). More's emphasis on Gen 1–3 was aimed to "establish them [her pupils] in the doctrine of the fall of man" (ibid.). This biblical theme of original sin is consistent throughout More's writing, the sinful nature of humanity providing a platform for More to assert the importance of a Christian education (Demers: 124).

More portrays many role models in her writing, including fictional characters in the Cheap Repository Tracts and biblical characters. In *Sacred Dramas* (1782), More retells several OT stories as plays. In her retelling of David and Goliath (1 Sam 17), More tells her audience that David exhibits "modesty, humility, courage, and piety; virtues not only admirable, but imitable; and within the reach of every Reader" (1782: vii). More also creates a model figure out of Paul in *An Essay on the Character and Practical Writings of Saint Paul* (1815), claiming that the purpose of this work is to "bring forward Saint Paul's character as a model for our general imitation" (1819: ix). Overall, More's literary use of the Bible is to reform her audience by reminding them of their sinful condition and providing examples from the Bible to imitate. More's writing is significant to biblical reception history as it showcases how the Bible was used by British Evangelicals to encourage moral reform.

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More, Henry

Henry More (1614–1687) was an English philosopher, theologian, and poet, and the most important member of the Cambridge Platonists, a group of 17th century thinkers associated with the University of Cambridge. More accepted the developments of Galilean science, Cartesianism, and atomism, and sought an alternative to the faltering philosophical foundation of Aristotelianism by looking to the Platonic tradition, viewed through the framework of Renaissance perennial philosophy. More's Christian apologetics argued for the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the veracity of Christian ethics in light of the atheistic, mechanistic, and fatalistic conclusions drawn from the thought of Spinoza and Hobbes.

The interpretation of the Bible figures prominently in More's defense of Christianity. He maintained Christianity's rationality, not because it could be axiomatically or evidentially demonstrated, but because it was in accord with both human reason and biblical revelation. For More, both Protestant enthusiasm (More 1656) and rationalistic atheism (More 1653a) threatened this rationality in mutually reinforcing error: "For the Atheist's pretence to Wit and natural Reason … makes the Enthusiast secure that Reason is no guide to God: And the Enthusiast's boldly dictating the careless ravings of his own tumultuous Phansy for undeniable Principles of Divine knowledge, confirms the Atheist that the whole business of Religion … is nothing but a troublesome fit of over-curious Melancholy" (More 1656/1662: 1–2). The Bible, More maintained, combated both narrow reason and irrationality by communicating expanded divine reason, articulated rationally through symbolic and allegorical form.

The content and form of scripture meant that it could not be reduced to logical abstraction or understood as an expression of voluntarist omnipotence. Instead, the Bible articulated its own philosophy of reason, "couched somewhere continually under the Letter of History as a more Inward Mystical Meaning thereof" (More 1664c: 483–89). More's allegorical approach was shaped by Philo and Origen, and by his own philosophical method, which used poetry to express his version of Christian Platonism (More 1642; 1647). Obscurity and mystery in scripture, More argued, was not obscurantist, but indicated knowledge so removed from human capacity that it required a figurative veil (More 1664a). His three-fold allegorical reading of Gen 1 claimed to identify "Theorems of *Natural Philosophy* and *Metaphysicks*," including improvements upon Cartesianism (More 1653b: 127). He later developed a method for the critical analysis of prophecy, including a dictionary of "iconisms," or symbols (More 1664b).

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More, Thomas

Sir Thomas More (1478–1535) was born, raised, and lived nearly his entire life in the city of London. He spent some of his adolescent years as a page in the household of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor under Henry VII. As a young man, More studied for two years at Oxford and was later a brief resident of the London Charterhouse. Despite these early indications of preparation for a religious career similar to his mentor Morton, and notwithstanding his continued pursuit of serious, devout study throughout his life, More instead chose to live out his piety within the public sphere. He studied law at Lincoln's Inn and rose through the legal and political ranks of Henry VIII's London court to the eventual appointment of Lord Chancellor in 1529.

More is best known for his early *Utopia* (1516), a work noted for its originality and unorthodox (within both More's own oeuvre and the broader political and social environment) presentation of an "ideal" society. However, his most notable and mature engagement with scripture is found in his works produced after the publication of *Utopia*. Following the paper battle between Henry VIII and Martin Luther (More is sometimes believed to have been at least a redactor, if not a primary author, of Henry's 1521 "Defense of the Seven Sacraments"), a steady stream of polemic literature against the Re-