

Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xiii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Feminist Reading of the Bible	7
1.1. Issues involved in Biblical Hermeneutics	8
1.2. Definition of Feminism	9
1.3. Brief History of the Development of the Different Feminist Readings	10
1.4. Feminist Hermeneutics	14
1.5. Feminist Hermeneutical Approaches	16
Summary	25
Chapter 2: The Historical, Political, and Social Background of the Book of Esther	27
2.1. Introduction: The Book of Esther	27
2.2. Background of the Book	33
Summary	39
Chapter 3: The Search for the Hidden Identity of Vashti and Esther: An Exegetical Study	41
3.1. Identity of Women	41
3.2. Exegetical Study of Selected Texts	46
3.3. Interpretation of the Identity of Vashti	55

3.4. Exegetical Study of Esther 2:1-17	63
3.5. Interpretation of the Identity of Esther	71
Summary	77
Chapter 4: Socio-Cultural Constructions of Women's Body: Its Implications for Re-Reading the Identity of Vashti and Esther in Today's Context	79
4.1. The Understanding of Identity	80
4.2. The Concept of Women's Identity	80
4.3. Socio-Cultural Norms as Instruments in Formulation of Identity	82
4.4. Women as Body	85
4.5. Identity of Women as a Commodity	89
4.6. Problems of Identity of Women as Body	91
4.7. Powers of Violence, Position in Relation to Identity	94
4.8. The Construction of the Identity of Esther and Vashti	97
4.9. Implications for Re-Reading the Identity of Vashti and Esther in Today's Context	99
Summary	101
<i>Conclusion</i>	103
<i>Bibliography</i>	107