



MID-CENTURY FLEMISH HANDWOVEN BIBLICAL TAPESTRY WITH ESTHER AND AHASUERUS

\$4,200

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Decorate a wall or a staircase with this colorful large antique biblical tapestry. Handwoven in Belgium, circa 1950, the colorful wall piece depicts a climactic moment from the Biblical account of the Purim story, with Queen Esther, a Jew, approaching her future husband and ruler King Ahasuerus (Persian King Xerxes I); under threat for her life, she was requesting the king to reverse a plan set in motion by his advisor to commit genocide against the Jewish people during the Persian diaspora. It is a pivotal moment in both the Jewish and Christian heritages. The tapestry depicts the Queen with her two female servants holding her dress as she carries a glass of wine, demonstrating their setting at a feast. The king sits on his throne with two male servants behind him to hear her out, with a small dog at their feet and large buildings in the pyramid or ziggurat shape behind them all. The almost square tapestry is in excellent condition with rich colors, and a canvas was added in the back for better preservation. In the biblical book named after her, Esther is a young Jewish woman living in the Persian diaspora who finds favor with the king, becomes queen, and risks her life to save the Jewish people from destruction when the court official Haman persuades the king to authorize a pogrom against all the Jews of the empire. Written in the diaspora in the late Persian/early Hellenistic period (fourth century B.C.E.), the Book of Esther is a Jewish novella that deals with the enduring issues of preserving Jewish identity and ensuring survival amid cultural pressures and hostile enemies in a foreign land. Esther is described in all versions of the Book of Esther as the Jewish queen of a Persian king Ahasuerus. In the narrative, Ahasuerus seeks a new wife after his queen, Vashti, refuses to obey him, and Esther is chosen for her beauty. The king's chief adviser, Haman, is offended by Esther's cousin and guardian, Mordecai, and gets permission from the king to have all the Jews in the kingdom killed. Esther foils the plan, and wins permission from the king for the Jews to kill their enemies, and they do so. Her story provides a traditional background for Purim, which is celebrated on the date given in the story for when Haman's order was to go into effect, which is the same day that the Jews killed their enemies after the plan was reversed. Measures: 90.5" W x 86" H.