

# Esther

## God's Silent Sovereignty

### The Foolishness of Pride

#### Esther 1:1-22

Grace Fellowship Church | Dave Wernz | June 5, 2022

**The story of Esther is unique.** God chose to reveal Himself to us in a unique way through the life of an orphaned, exiled, Jewish girl.

- A. It's one of two books in the Bible named for a woman.
- B. There is no mention of prayer, the temple, sacrifices, or celebrations.
- C. The most glaring absence is the complete omission of any reference to God.

**We must not assume God's silence is evidence of His absence!** God is obviously at work - revealing His character, fulfilling His promises, and rescuing His people.

#### I. Who is really in charge?

In Esther Chapter 1, at least one person has decided that the King of Persia is the man in charge. That one person is King Ahasuerus, the current king of Persia.

**Esther 1:1-9** *"Now in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces, <sup>2</sup> in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in Susa, the citadel, <sup>3</sup> in the third year of his reign he gave a feast for all his officials and servants. The army of Persia and Media and the nobles and governors of the provinces were before him, <sup>4</sup> while he showed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor and pomp of his greatness for many days, 180 days. <sup>5</sup>And when these days were completed, the king gave for all the people present in Susa the citadel, both great and small, a feast lasting for seven days in the court of the garden of the king's palace. <sup>6</sup> There were white cotton curtains and violet hangings fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rods and marble pillars, and also couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and precious stones. <sup>7</sup> Drinks were served in golden vessels, vessels of different kinds, and the royal wine was lavished according to the bounty of the king. <sup>8</sup> And drinking was according to this edict: "There is no compulsion." For the king had given orders to all the staff of his palace to do as each man desired. <sup>9</sup> Queen Vashti also gave a feast for the women in the palace that belonged to King Ahasuerus."*

Perhaps God gave us this clownish description of wasteful arrogance to draw attention to the foolishness and absurdity of the arrogant pride, entitlement, and self-focus that infects every human heart.

#### II. We may not be taking sin as seriously as God does.

**1 John 1:8-9** *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

We know what to do with sin:

- Confess
- Be forgiven
- Be cleansed

#### III. We're talking about the sin of arrogantly believing we deserve to be in charge.

If we are not consistently confessing, being forgiven, and being cleansed from it we will inevitably end up trapped on a hamster wheel of self-deception:

- Simultaneously convinced beyond a doubt that we are in control
- Constantly, desperately, needing to affirm that we are in charge

**Esther 1:10-12** *“On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha and Abagtha, Zethar and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, <sup>11</sup> to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown, in order to show the peoples and the princes her beauty, for she was lovely to look at. <sup>12</sup> But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. At this the king became enraged, and his anger burned within him.”*

They tell the king that every married woman in the empire will end up loathing and despising her husband by tomorrow-that the empire will tear itself apart.

#### **IV. These events are going exactly according to Plan...just not their plan.**

The question of “Who is really in charge” is so foundational - especially to Christian life.

**Look again at verse 1:** *“Now in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces,”*

You don't have to know the ancient world or even the modern world to know that the space between India and Ethiopia is only a fraction of our planet. King Ahasuerus reigned there because someone else conquered with armies, and he inherited the throne.

- **We can celebrate that our God is the reigning, undisputed, uncontested, undefeated, king of the universe.**

**Esther 1:12** *“But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. At this the king became enraged, and his anger burned within him.”*

- **If God limits, orders, controls, and knows all things, we can celebrate that nothing has ever surprised or frustrated our God.**

**Esther 1:22** *“He sent letters to all the royal provinces to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, that every man be master in his own household and speak according to the language of his people.”*

The irony that king Ahasuerus can't obey his own decree for every man to be master in his own house can actually help us celebrate that God's purposes, power, and commands are all in perfect alignment.

God's commands are advancing His purposes, and since His purposes will always be accomplished, we can be confident that we will have power to follow His commands.

- **We can practice humility by celebrating the fact that God is very good at being God.**