



International Baptist Church Eindhoven

Your Christian Family Away From Home

GOD'S PROVISION THROUGH IMPERFECT PEOPLE

Esther 1

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

- An intriguing story!
- Written to explain Purim
- Author is unknown
- God is not mentioned once, yet providentially present
- Story is set in Susa, capital of Persian empire
- Not about good people saving Jews from certain genocide
- In it we see life as we know it
- But about a good God accomplishing His saving work through imperfect people



KING XERXES (VS 1-2)

- Also known as Ahasuerus
- In his mid thirties
- Reigned from 486-464 B.C
- Kings were considered gods
- Received empire on silver platter from his father Darius



THE PERSIAN EMPIRE (VS 1-2)

- 127 provinces
- Multiple nations, cultures, religions and languages
- Capital city: Susa (modern Iran)
- God is also working outside of Jerusalem!
- From Sudan to Pakistan to Greece. The point is: it is huge and Xerxes is very, very powerful!



XERXES'S BOASTING (VS 3-9)

- 6 months to show off all his riches, might and fame
- a 7 day long, all inclusive, all you can eat and drink feast!



XERXES'S BOASTING (VS 3-9)

Why such extravagant feasting?

- '... to show the riches of his royal glory' (vs 4)

This is like: 'everyone, come and see the glory of the king. He's high, exalted and seated on his throne. People from all nations: come to give glory, honor, praise and worship to Xerxes the great'

- Sound familiar?
- We believe that the glory belongs to another King, right?
- But wait... are we not all (a bit) like Xerxes?



XERXES'S DRUNKENNESS (VS 10-12)

He could control anybody except for himself

- He gets drunk
- Gets his eunuchs to 'get Queen Vashti' ... to show her off as his trophy... (would he have done this when sober?)
- Do we use our spouses or ... as trophies?
- She refuses (is this disobedience to king and husband?)
- Ephesians 5:22-33
- But instead of admitting it is wrong (repenting) he... gathers friends around him who agree with him...



XERXES'S SENSITIVE EGO (VS 13-22)

Xerxes was trapped in his own ego

- **Should have sobered up and think it through**
- **Instead he gets his friend to agree with him**
- **They exaggerate the situation**
- **And advise to dispose of Queen Vashti and to send out a decree to encourage all the men to start acting like him...**

What an evil man!

But wait.. when was I justifying myself by gathering people around me who agreed with me?



JESUS IS A BETTER KING WITH A GREATER KINGDOM!

As long as faulty and sinful people sit on the throne there will be a broken kingdom.

The good news is that there's another king above king Xerxes!

The Almighty servant King Jesus:

'Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.' (Eph. 2:5-8)



JESUS IS A BETTER KING WITH A GREATER KINGDOM!

- Xerxes is the son of Darius – Jesus is the son of God
- Xerxes used his power to abuse, Jesus uses His power to serve
- Xerxes is being served, Jesus is serving
- Xerxes killed his enemies, Jesus died for them to save them
- Xerxes sat on a throne in Susa, Jesus sits on a throne in heaven
- Xerxes's kingdom ended, Jesus's has no end
- Xerxes died, Jesus rose again
- Xerxes threw a huge banquet, Jesus is preparing an even bigger one

We are citizens of a greater Kingdom with a better King!



International Baptist Church Eindhoven
Your Christian Family Away From Home