

The Opening Act

Esther Chapter 1

In Esther, our God is calling us to believe that even when we don't see Him, the God Who did not spare His only Son is at work, and He will keep all His promises. That is where the book of Esther comes in. It comes to us right where we are and calls us not to give in to the seductive voices of our culture. It calls us to trust that our God is at work even when we don't see Him. The book is going to do that in at least three ways:

1. The Book of Esther Exposes The Foolishness of Pursuing The Things Of The World.

Our culture loves the same things that the Persians loved: **wealth, power, pleasure, comfort, control**. Just as it did in Esther's day, our culture is constantly calling us to embrace their values; if we are honest, we have to admit that often we give in.

*But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, slanderers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ holding to a form of godliness although they have denied its power; avoid such people as these. **2 Timothy 3:1-4***

The world calls you to do whatever it takes to become more like the king. But the book of Esther comes to unmask the façade and show us the truth. In verse 12 says: **“But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command.** For 187 days, the king has been trying to impress people by showing them just how rich and powerful he is; but as the feast comes to a close, all anyone is going to remember is that his wife refused his command. **His wife isn't impressed. She sees beneath the surface, and she isn't fooled.** Suddenly, the king doesn't look nearly as powerful as he once did. The king who rules over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia can't even control his own wife.

Verse 12 says, **“At this the king became enraged, and his anger burned within him.”** The richest most powerful man in the world who has everything you could ever wish for comes to the end of 187 days of partying and feasting, and he is angry.” They tried to legislate wives to respect their husbands. Real love and respect does not happen this way.

2. The Book Of Esther Shows God Keeps His Promises Even When We Don't See Him

Why don't the Jews just give into the empires demands and allow themselves to be assimilated? Japanese proverb “The nail that doesn't stick out is much less likely to get hammered.” Mordecai remembered that there was something bigger to live for, a greater purpose.

Living in Babylon

The origins of Babylon (Babel) are with Nimrod, “a mighty one [viz. ‘one who magnified himself’] on the earth” (Gen. 10:8). The beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was the establishing of Babel. The city founded by Nimrod was renowned for its pride and rebellion; its pagan worship of false gods was the beginning of the degeneration from monotheism to polytheism (Rom. 1:18–32), and reached a climax when its inhabitants sought equality with God (Gen. 11:1–9).

God turned human ambition and ingenuity against him at Babel into chaos and confusion. Babylon is depicted as a mighty city throughout Scripture, and was frequently used by God in judgment upon other nations (Ps. 137:1, 8; Isa. 47:6; Jer. 21:2–10; 25:8–11; 27:1–12; 28:1–17; 51:7, 20–23; Ezek. 19:9; 23:11–35; 24:1–14). Although used by God in his sovereignty, Babylon will not be exempt from divine judgment for her immorality, pride, and wickedness. The city is both a prophecy and type of a religious system destroyed by God (Isa. 21:9; Jer. 50:24; 51:64; Rev. 16:19; 17:5; 18:2–3). Although the name “Babylon” is derived from the Akkadian word *babilu* meaning “gate of god,” it is an evident counterfeit of God's eternal city. The opposition to the rule of God by world powers or the exile of God's people from the land of blessing is conveyed properly through the metaphor of Babylon.

We are called to be the light of Christ to the world, not the inside walls of the church.

⁴ *You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ People^[a] do not light a lamp and put it under a basket^[b] but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:14-16*

You have to know where to resolve to draw the line

But Daniel (resolved) made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank” Daniel 1:8

3.The Book Of Esther Reminds Us That A Beautiful and Alluring The Things of This World May Seem, Jesus is Better

- Artaxerxes summoned the people to come to the feast.
- King Jesus didn't send his servants to call his bride, he left heaven and took on flesh to call her himself. (Marriage Supper of the Lamb).