

## Book Study on Esther

### The Kings Remorse

#### Esther 2:1-4

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### Introduction

The last time we studied the book of Esther we studied about King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) and how he had a huge party and there was drinking and reveling, in the process he demanded Vashti the queen present herself only wearing the crown. Because she rejected his command. Under the advisement of Memucan the king declared into law that Vashti the queen could no longer come before him, and that she would no longer be queen.

- Review books of the Bible: Gen – Esther
- Esther is 40 years after Ezra and 40 years before Nehemiah
- The story setting in Shushan the major city in Ahasuerus' Persian kingdom
- Vashti, the Chaldean Queen, refused to present herself to the king and the 127 princes of the land.

### Let's pick up here in chapter 2 and verse 1

### Bible

*Est 2:1 After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.*

*Est 2:2 Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, Let there be fair young virgins sought for the king:*

*Est 2:3 And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hege the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given them:*

*Est 2:4 And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.*

*Est 2:5 Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;*

*Est 2:6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.*

### **Lets look a little deeper in these verses:**

*Est 2:1 After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.*

- He remembered Vashti — With grief and shame, that in his wine and rage he had so severely punished, and so irrevocably rejected, so beautiful and desirable a person, and that for so small a provocation, to which she was easily led by the modesty of her sex and by the laws and customs of Persia.
- But the king was in love with her and could not bear the separation, and yet by the law he did not have the power to be reconciled to her; so he grieved at not being able to obtain his desire.<sup>1</sup>
- Living in regret:

<sup>1</sup> <http://josephus.org/Esther.htm#virgnSearch>

- Will Depress you and cause you to experience negative emotions
- Will Distract you and cause you to neglect the things you should be doing
- Will Destroy you with guilt of what you have done

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- The Persian monarch could legally choose a wife only from six noble families (Herodotus, 3:, 84). But, of course, in the exercise of absolute power, he could break through this restriction; and in existing circumstances, irritable, and depressed by the disastrous issue of his expedition into Greece, he was urged by his politic counselors, who were desirous of diverting his mind from gloomy reflections, to search the kingdom for a queen.<sup>2</sup>
  - Consumed with a military campaign against Greece.
  - two million men and four thousand ships.
  - he had a canal dug across the Isthmus of Actium near Mr. Athos,
  - He also built bridges on the campaign<sup>3</sup>
  - He then attacks Athens and in a fury burns it to the ground as its people flee
  - Battle of Salamis then takes place
  - Gathers his war council and was faced with two options (the bad omens)
    - Starve them out
    - Attack from the sea with his navy
    - In the end he decided to attack with the navy and he did not win
    - He goes back home and leaves a General their to finish the war, who a year later gets defeated.
    - The remainder of the army gradually make it home, in extremely poor shape.
    - Nebuchadnezzar's Image:
      - Head of GOLD - Head of Gold BABYLON
      - Breast and Arms of SILVER - Chest of Silver MEDO PERSIA
      - Thighs of BRASS - Thighs of Brass GREECE
      - Legs of IRON - Legs of Iron ROME
      - Feet of IRON and CLAY - Feet of Iron and Clay EUROPE
      - The Destroying STONE The Destroying Stone KINGDOM OF JESUS AND GOD
- In the despotic countries of the East the custom obtains that when an order is sent to a family for a young damsel to repair to the royal palace, the parents, however unwilling, dare not refuse the honor for their daughter; and although they know that when she is once in the royal harem, they will never see her again, they are obliged to yield a silent and passive compliance.
- On the occasion referred to, a general search was commanded to be made for the greatest beauties throughout the empire, in the hope that, from their ranks, the disconsolate monarch might select one for

<sup>2</sup> Jamieson, Robert, D.D.; Fausset, A. R.; Brown, David. "Commentary on Esther 2:1". "Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible - Unabridged". <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jfu/esther-2.html>. 1871-8.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ancient.eu/Xerxes\\_I/](https://www.ancient.eu/Xerxes_I/)

the honor of succeeding to the royal honors of Vashti.

- The damsels, on arrival at the palace, were placed under the custody of "Hege, the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women," that is, the chief eunuch, usually a repulsive old man, on whom the court ladies are very dependent, and whose favor they are always desirous to secure.<sup>2</sup>
- This could not be done without much trouble and charge to the king. Two or three years are spent in gathering, purifying, and preparing these choice virgins for the impure bed of this heathen prince, while he is following the chase of his ambition, in the wars of Greece.<sup>4</sup>
- What these were we are told in Esther 2:12; oil of myrrh, and sweet odours. The myrrh was employed for six months, and the odours for six months more, after which the person was brought to the king. This space was sufficient to show whether the young woman had been chaste; whether she were with child or not, that the king might not be imposed on, and be obliged to father a spurious offspring, which might have been the case had not this precaution been used.<sup>5</sup>

*Est 2:4 And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.*

- Its amazing how God can use the foolishness and shortcomings of man to carry out His will.
- The king did not know it, Mordecai did not know it, Esther did not know it, but God was at work.
- We need to recognize a few things about this:
  - The world does not look for God at work
  - We can't always see when and where God is at work.
  - We must be ready to embrace God's work when it is obvious for us to be a part of it.

Next time we are going to meet a man who lives this out.

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<sup>4</sup> Trapp, John. "Commentary on Esther 2:3". John Trapp Complete Commentary. <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/jtc/esther-2.html>. 1865-1868.

<sup>5</sup> Clarke, Adam. "Commentary on Esther 2:3". "The Adam Clarke Commentary". <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/esther-2.html>. 1832.