

Remnant Life Church  
April 21, 2021  
**Esther**  
Pt 3  
Esther 1:1-12  
**“The King and Queen of Persia”**

- God’s involvement in Esther’s life is providence
  - The words means literally “to provide in advance”
    - Providence has been called *the hand of God in the glove of history*
  - It is also one of the three great facts or elements that make up the sovereignty of God as witnessed and comprehended by man
    - The first is creation – this accounts for the existence of the universe (**Gen 1:1**)
    - The second is preservation – this allows for the continuation of the universe (**Col 1:16-17; Heb 1:3**)
    - The third is providence – which accounts for the progress and development of the universe (**Ps 135:6-10; Dan 4:35**)
- Esther lived in times when it seemed as if evil had the upper hand and was going to win
- But the intervention of God is never confined to our understanding, reasoning, or comprehension
  - Moses at the Red Sea
  - Joshua at the walls of Jericho?
  - David facing a giant?
  - Daniel as he is being lowered into a den of lions
  - John, Mary, Mary Magdalene, and Martha looking up at Jesus, hanging on the cross?
- Each of these, and so many more, were confronted with situations and circumstances that defied their understanding

For Esther it was the impending genocide of her people

For Christians today it is the continual attack against biblical, Christian values that we are being told are hateful, bigoted, and racist.

Like Esther, Christians today are faced with what appear to be insurmountable odds, yet we must maintain our faith in the providence or provision of God

**READ** – **Esther 1:1-12**

### **King Xerxes and Queen Vashti**

- Xerxes, also known as Ahasuerus, was the 4<sup>th</sup> king of the Persian Achaemenid Empire
- He ruled from 486 to 465 BC.



- He is a historically verified king in the line of Cyrus (his wife's family) and his father Darius the Great
  - While his life is undeniable, there are many biblical scholars who doubt the historicity of the book of Esther
  - Several discrepancies that cast doubt on whether it happened or not
  - But the king lived and ruled within the Persian empire
  - He was known historically for his hedonistic lifestyle and excess of pleasure
  - Consider how the story of Esther begins
    - A 6-month long party has been raging for the princes, officials, military leaders, and nobles
    - Followed by a banquet that lasted a whole week for all the people in the capital city or citadel of Susa
    - Xerxes is sending for Vashti after a week of drinking and eating
    - Xerxes is in "high spirits" because of the wine...
  
- The second part of that duo is the king's queen, Vashti
  - Once again, it is not easy, though not impossible, to place this woman in historical perspective
  - According to the Midrash, a collection of Rabbinical writings that are used in support of the canonical OT Hebrew writings, Vashti was the great-granddaughter of King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon and the daughter of King Belshazzar (handwriting on the wall fame)
    - During the attack of the Medo-Persian empire in which her father was killed, it was recorded that Darius the great took her captive as a trophy
    - But took pity on her and gave her to his son for a wife
  - Because the Midrash records her as a prisoner of war she is presented as evil and vain
    - It is that type of person that most people read when she refuses to come before her husband as we read in [Esther 1:12](#)
  - But it is much more likely that the queen was holding a Persian tradition that forbade the queen from being shown publicly except in very rare occasions
  - Because of her refusal to obey the king, she is stripped of her royal responsibilities and her position is going to be given to someone else
  - It is in this frame of events that Esther makes her way to the palace of Xerxes

The King and Queen, I believe, can be seen as a type of person who is lost in the world but longing for something more

- Xerxes was known to be a fairly benevolent ruler regarding other people's religions and gods
- He was by no means a follower of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob but nor was he bent on destroying the people's belief
  - It was relatives of Xerxes that allowed the Hebrews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and walls of the city
- The queen had a true sense of duty and even modesty, holding to her convictions and she paid the price



What do we learn from these two?

- All people are subject to the will of God
- All people can and will be used to accomplish His will
  - Nebuchadnezzar
  - Pharaoh (Rameses II)
  - Philistines, Midianites, Ammonites, etc...
  
- Esther's situation looked hopeless
- Our situation, can and has looked hopeless
- God is never put off of the perfect plan of His will
- Hold to your faith and know that He is God