

# A King and His Limited Power Part 2

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[ 0 : 00 ] Esther chapter 1. Esther chapter 1. You were there last week. I'm going to give you a brief reminder of what we talked about,!

and then we'll continue on. Esther chapter 1. I've been using a book by Paul Chappell entitled God's Got This.

And talking about Esther. Giving background on Esther. Things have been encouraging, enlightening. Looking again at the things that happened this last week.

God is in charge. Never forget that. No matter what happens. God has a plan. God has a purpose. God's fulfilling that. We'll talk some more about that today.

The fact that he is doing what he is leading to ultimately. Which is salvation for all those who will accept.

[ 1 : 07 ] And then a home in heaven. New heaven. New earth. Everything that we need for eternity. Look at chapter 1. Beginning at verse 1.

And it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus. This is Ahasuerus that reigned from India even unto Ethiopia. Over a hundred and seven and twenty provinces.

And that in those days when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom. Which was in Shushan the palace. In the third year of his reign he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants.

The power of Persia and Media. The nobles and princes of the provinces being before him. When he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom. And the honor of his excellent majesty many days.

Even a hundred and four score days. A hundred and eighty days. Half a year. This thing is going on. Verse 5. And when those days were expired. The king made a feast.

[ 2 : 05 ] Unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace. Both unto great and small. Seven days in the court of the garden of the king's palace. There were white, green, blue hangings.

Fastened with cords of fine linen. And purple to silver rings. And pillars of marble. The beds were of gold and silver. Upon a pavement of red and blue, white, black marble.

And they gave them drink in vessels of gold. The vessels being diverse one from another. The royal wine in abundance. According to the state of the king.

And the drinking was according to the law. None did compel. So for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house. That they should do according to every man's pleasure.

Father, also Veshti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house. They belonged to King Ahasuerus. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, I pray this morning that you'd help us as we do some review.

[ 3 : 07 ] And then as we move forward, Lord, that we would learn. Men think they have everything under control. Men think they are in charge. But you rule over all.

Lord, men think they get to call the shots. They think they get to come up with their own opinions and their own ways of doing things. But God is in control. Lord, help us this morning to learn.

To trust you in whatever is going on in life. May we trust you, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Last week we were talking about the fact that we were reminded of the fact that this book, over and over and over again, teaches us about God's providence.

God knowing beforehand what's going to happen. And because he knows beforehand the things that are going to happen, he's already preparing things for us. He's already putting things in place for us.

God's getting ready to restore Israel here. If he's going to restore Israel, he needs to have some things in place for them. Every ruler in the world is limited by the sovereign hand of God.

[ 4 : 24 ] They may think they can do this and that and the other thing. We've got some leaders like that all over the world. What I say goes. When it's going to happen, it's not according to me.

No. God's allowing them to do things, but God is not giving control over to them. So we're going to look at a hazardous here for a minute and review here.

First of all, the realm of his kingdom. The realm of his kingdom, his Persian power. It was finite. It was not infinite. He was not in control of the whole world like he thought he was.

I mean, he was in control of a lot of it. Geographically, we talked about last week, the fact that from India to Ethiopia, that is a big chunk of property.

And he says 127 provinces he had control over. We look at the fact that he was one of the great emperors of all time.

[ 5 : 28 ] He defeated the Greeks at Thermopylae. He had an army at Thermopylae of 100,000 soldiers and 1,000 ships. He had a standing army over the whole 127 provinces of 2.5 million people.

2.5 million. Monetarily. He had taken the wealth from all of these different countries. He had the gold and the silver and everything that they had.

And he showed this at the feast. I mean, he gave them a feast that lasted 180 days. 180 days.

Wow. He showed them all the riches of the kingdom. You know, he had this feast and he had all of his leaders there.

He had all of his princes there. He had all the important people there. And he's showing them, this is what we have. Some scholars believe that he wanted to go to war with Greece again. And so he's showing them all of this stuff.

[ 6 : 30 ] He says, we're going to go to war again. And we can afford it. We can do it. We can not be defeated. We talked about Proverbs 23. One through three.

And it is, it generally encapsulates it. It says, be careful of leaders. Be careful when they're showing off things like that. Be careful of what they're doing because they are deceitful.

When they're showing off like that, they're being deceitful about something. He's shown in all the material possessions. It describes his palace there. It tells you all the things that are going on in that palace.

And he's got all of these different, one of the things that I noticed, I don't know if you picked up on it, but in verse 7, notice it says, And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, the vessels being diverse one from another.

He has taken over. Remember when Babylon took over Israel, took over Jerusalem, they took all of the stuff out of the temple. All of the cups and all the saucers and all the other stuff, there was gold and stuff.

[ 7 : 38 ] He's done that every place that they have gone. 127. So everybody who is there says they have a different cup. Not anybody has the same design cup.

They all have a different gold cup. Think about that. You want to talk about showing off your wealth. Huh. You guys don't have to share.

You don't have to have to have the same thing. You get this cup and you know that one, you know that one, you know that one. They all had different ones. Archaeological studies have shown that Shushan was probably one of the most extravagant, one of the most unique palaces ever.

We talked about the prophecies. Daniel had prophesied. Others had prophesied what was going to happen. Persia was going to take over. They're going to be the bear that comes in and takes over.

We talked about that last week. And remember we talked about the fact that Cyrus, the first Persian emperor who took over this area, his name was mentioned 150 years before he took over in the Bible.

[ 8 : 42 ] He was going to be the one who was going to let the Israelites go back to their kingdom. Scripturally, scripturally, he says, Look, whenever you have a ruler going up against God, God wins every time.

And I gave you examples. Pharaoh, you know, Pharaoh, he lost his kingdom. He went up against Moses and against God. The ten plagues, the army coming across the Red Sea, wiped out, he lost.

Nebuchadnezzar put himself up as God. And what happened? He wound up being out in a field living like an animal. Belshazzar, his grandson, tried to set himself up as being great.

And that's when the Persians came in and took over. We need to remember, whenever it's God versus man, God wins every time. Philippians 2, 9-11.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

[ 9 : 56 ] Every knee is going to bow. Every tongue is going to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. So often we think we're in charge.

So often we think we've got it all together. God is in charge. God is giving the direction.

I don't care who's sitting on a throne. I don't care who's sitting in the Oval Office. God has no limits. He is in charge. Second thing we talked about was the revelation of this wicked ruler.

Just how bad was this guy? Well, he had a very wicked heart. We talked about in verses 10 and 11 there in chapter 1 of Esther.

It says, On the seventh day when the heart of the king was merry with wine. Notice that. Was merry with wine. He commanded those seven guys, the seven chamberlains, that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal to show the people and the princess her beauty, for she was fair to look upon.

[ 11 : 11 ] Make sure the queen puts on her crown, and then she comes in basically not wearing hardly anything. And we're going to parade her around, and you've seen all the wealth that I have. Not only that, look at this queen that I have.

Isn't she gorgeous? Isn't she something special? What husband is going to make his wife do that? What husband in his right mind is going to do that? We'll talk some more about that in a minute.

He's so drunk from all the wine that he's been drinking, he gives this illicit command. An illicit command, and it's encouraged by the alcohol. And we talked about the alcohol.

We talked about how it takes away our inhibition. It takes away the boundaries we might put up for ourselves for different things that we would do.

Proverbs 16, 32. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh the city. He says you want to be strong, you want to be a ruler, you're a conqueror, you go out and do anything.

[ 12 : 12 ] If you can conquer your own spirit, if you can keep yourself in check from anger, you are much better than a vast army. Proverbs 25, 28. He that had no rule on his spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls.

Remember, Israel marched around Jericho. The walls came down. What did they do? They marched in, took it over, no problem whatsoever. And here he says, look, a man who's in control, not in control of his spirit is the same.

He can be taken over by anything. Learn to take care of yourself and learn to keep yourself in check. Usually doing it by the fact that the Holy Spirit's living within you.

If you're a Christian, the Holy Spirit living within you will help you do that. Keep things in check. Then we talked about the alcohol. And I gave you a lot of different things.

When God sent the nation of Israel from Egypt to the promised land, he said in Deuteronomy 29, 6, Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink.

[ 13 : 17 ] Why? That ye might know that I am the Lord your God. Don't let anything come in the way of you taking your focus off the fact that I am the Lord your God. Deuteronomy 29, 6.

When he set up the priesthood, what did he tell Aaron and his sons? They were going to be the priests. They were going to be the ones who were going to lead in worship. What did he tell them? Leviticus 2, 8 and 9. And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou nor thy sons with thee.

When ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. He says, look, priest, don't you do this.

Don't you go down this path. Christians, what does 2 Peter 2, 9 say? Among the things that's talking about us, we're a certain nation, we're doing this and that and that.

We're a royal priesthood. Every Christian is a priest before God. And God said to the priest, don't do it.

[ 14 : 27 ] Don't do it. And I gave other illustrations. My favorite verse that I always use, people say, oh, it's okay. Proverbs 20, verse 1.

Proverbs 20, verse 1. Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

He says, it'll affect you. It'll change you. It'll mess up your life. Be careful of what you do. So we talked about that. And then we talked about the fact that because he had been doing that, it affected his anger.

It advanced his anger. Verse 12 there in chapter 1. And the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains. Therefore was the king very wroth, wroth, and his anger burned in him.

He was very wroth, and his anger burned in him, aided by the fact that he was drunk. Proverbs 14, 17. He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly.

[ 15 : 36 ] James 1, 20. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Whenever you see somebody losing it, see somebody going off and just having an anger fit, know of one thing for sure.

They're not under the control of the Holy Spirit. They're not being led by God when they do that. And then you put it on top of the culture that they had. The culture was a moral culture.

We talked about the fact. They objectified women. They didn't treat women the way they should have. They just were property. We make them do whatever I want them to do. It doesn't really matter.

And we still do that today. People still do that today. God said in Galatians 3, 28, There is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither bond nor free.

There is neither male nor female, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus. He says, look, it doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman. You're one in front of Christ.

[ 16 : 34 ] He treats everybody the same. Christian men should be the example of how to treat women. Christian men should go out and show the world, you want to treat a woman correctly, this is how you do it.

This is what you do. Christian husbands should treat their wives just the way they were intended to be treated, which is God gave you, your wife, treat her as a gift from God.

So be careful how you do that. Which brings me to the next part. Number three, the reasoning of ungodly men. Ungodly men are going to make decisions that are not what God would have them to do.

Obviously, they're ungodly. Again, think of the things that happened this week. God did not put that in the mind of that young man. The other things that we've seen happen this week, there were more than that.

There were other shootings and things that took place. God did not put that in the mind of people. The devil did. Man rebels against God, their reasoning becomes twisted.

[ 17 : 54 ] When man rebels against God, he does not think straight and clearly. Notice what happened here. The refusal of Queen Vashti. The refusal.

She, let me back up. Women were forbidden to go to that banquet hall. That's why there was a banquet over here for all the men and all the leaders.

And there was a different banquet over here for the ladies. Women were not supposed to go here. Remember the law on the Medes and the Persians? Once a law is made, you cannot change it.

So here's the king saying, oh, get Vashti and bring her over here. Vashti says, no, uh-uh. That's not happening. She refused. And he was angry because she did not carry out his commandment, even though she wasn't supposed to be there.

So what does he do? He has a consultation with his advisors. Here's a whole bunch of men who are advisors to this king, this emperor, who has control over 127 provinces, a quarter of the world or more, and he's asking them their advice.

[ 19 : 03 ] What do you think their advice is going to be? Whatever you say, king. Whatever you want done, because otherwise, I could wind up dead. So whatever you want, that's what we're going to do.

Look at verse 13. Then the king said unto these to the wise men, which knew the times, for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment. And next unto him was, and he lists those seven guys, seven princes of Persian media, which saw the king's face and which sat the first in the kingdom.

What shall we do unto Queen Vashti according to the law? Because she had not performed the commandment of King Ahasuerus by the chamberlains. What are we going to do about her? How are we going to fix this?

Because she has gone against the king. He's the one that's clearly wrong. He's the one who's done the wrong things. He's the one who's been drunk, but she's portrayed as the rebellious one. She's portrayed as the one who did wrong.

What do these guys say? Whatever you want, king. Whatever you want done. Yeah, we're going to do that. Yeah, so let's do this. See, they didn't want to be killed. We do the same things today.

[ 20 : 15 ] How many times have we backed down because we didn't want to be, according to today's terms, we didn't want to be canceled. We didn't want to be left out in the cold. We didn't want to be left out and people shun us because of what we believe.

There was a man who lived back in the 1500s. His name was Hugh Latimer. Hugh Latimer was a preacher, very famous preacher at the time, well known. He had an opportunity once to preach in front of King Henry VIII.

I don't know how much you know about King Henry VIII, other than little sketches of here in history, but King Henry VIII had burned down churches because he didn't like what they were preaching because usually it was against him and the things he was doing.

They were sin. He had two of his six wives killed, remember? He was basically a very brutal, very harsh ruler.

And Latimer is supposed to preach in front of him. He knows King Henry VIII is going to be in a service that he's going to carry out. And he's trying to think, what do I preach? He knew what God wanted him to preach.

[ 21 : 25 ] He knew what God wanted him to say, which was basically going to be, Henry, you're doing wrong, you're sinning. And he knew the message, if he preached it, was going to anger the king.

But Latimer also remembered something else. I'm preaching before King Henry VIII, but I'm also preaching before the king of kings and lord of lords. I will preach what he tells me to preach.

I don't care what he says. I'll do what he says. And so he preached the truth. He survived that one. But later on, he's going to preach again.

And Queen Mary is going to hear him and hear what he said about her. And she winds up burning him at the stake. But he did not back down.

He says, whatever God wants me to do, that is what I'm going to do. Whatever God is telling me, whatever the truth of God's word says, that's what I'm going to give out. Again, that's what was happening this week.

[ 22 : 29 ] So the king is going to give a command. Look at verse 21. Actually, back up to 16. Go back to 16. 16, it says this.

And Mimucan answered before the king and the princes. Vashti, the queen, had not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes and to all the people that are in all the providence of King Ahasuerus.

For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes when it shall be reported.

And King Ahasuerus commanded Vashti, the queen, to be brought in before him, but she came not. Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say, this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen, thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath.

If it please the king, let there go out a royal command from him and let it be written among the laws of the Medes and the Persians that it not be altered.

- [ 23 : 38 ] If Vashti come not before King Ahasuerus and let the king give her royal estate to another that is better than she. And when the king's decree, which he shall make, shall be published throughout all the empire, for it is great, all the wives shall give their husbands honor, both to great and small.

And the saying pleased the king and the princes and the king did according to the word of Mimican, for he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, to every man should bear rule in his house, it should be published according to the language of every people.

What is he saying? What Vashti did was an affront to the king. But not only to the king, but to all the men throughout the entire kingdom.

The wives are going to come up and rebelling. They're not going to obey their husbands. They're not going to do the things that they're supposed to do. We can't have this. Wives are supposed to be submissive to their husbands. They're supposed to do what's right.

They're supposed to do... And so they make a thing where they remove her from being queen. You know, we have so many today who still feel that same way.

- [ 25 : 01 ] And again, it's among Christian men. I'm in charge. Don't you forget it. God said... Yes, God said that men, the husbands should be the leaders of their home.

Didn't say the rulers. Said the leaders. And he said, look, husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church.

Oh, that puts a different spin on it, doesn't it? How did Christ love the church? Gave himself for it. How did Christ love the church? He did everything he could for it.

Christ loved the church. But these guys, what did they do? They came up with a vindictive command. You know, we're going to take her out of here.

We're not going to let her keep her position of queen. We're going to throw her out and not let her have any part here. Then notice there was a punitive command that went with it. We're going to, you know, throw her out of here.

- [ 26 : 09 ] And it was all done to cover up the fact that the king had done wrong. The king had acted foolishly. The king had gone in an appropriate way.

You know, throughout history, ungodly leaders, when they're put into powerful positions, so very often lose their moral compass. So often they go in a direction that is not what God would have them to do.

They make unreasonable choices. But, God is still on the throne. When these men made this foolish choice, when they did this, God still intervenes.

And this is what takes place here. Fourth thing. Notice God's ruling hand. The ruling hand of God. God says, okay, you've done this and you've done this and you've done this, but it does not negate what I want done.

Do you ever look like this week and say, where's God? Where's God? What did he do?

- [ 27 : 19 ] Where was he? Why didn't he do something? Or, doesn't God see what's going on? Doesn't he see the way our world is going?

Doesn't he see the direction it's taking? Isn't he going to do something about it? Isn't he going to do something to fix this? Isn't he going to, you know, let me say this.

God is aware of everything that has taken place. He hasn't forgotten you. He hasn't forgotten us. He loves us.

And as I've mentioned many times before, God sees the big picture. We see this. This is what happened this week. God sees this.

I don't know how many of you heard his wife speak on Friday night. It was powerful. She had a message that was something else.

[ 28 : 26 ] Proverbs 16, 25 says, there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. We try to figure everything out.

We try to call things shots. We try to think that this is the way things should go. This is what should happen. How many times have you done that? Oh, this is what God ought to do. He ought to do this, this, this, and this.

And God does nothing like that, but it works out. He does nothing like what you thought, but it's all taken care of. God has a plan.

The providence of God. We've been talking about that, the providence of God. You know, throughout this story, and this story has a whole lot of tragedies that are going to take place in it.

There's going to be a whole lot of bad things that are going to happen in it. But in the midst of it all, God is still working. God is still up in heaven, and he's working it out.

[ 29 : 30 ] And in this particular story here in Esther, he's working it out for a young Jewish orphan girl to become the queen of the largest empire on earth.

God has a plan. God is at work. and despite all the drunkenness and all the bad things that Ahasuerus does and all the foolish things that he does, God says, this girl is going to become queen in this empire.

And she's going to save about 750,000 lives when she becomes queen. She's going to be there in place so that she can have an effect on 750,000 people.

You know, I saw an illustration the other day, a story. It reminds you of how just a little thing can have such an impact.

In Sunday school, those of you in Sunday school, we've been talking about the no-name people. There was a meeting taking place with an evangelist by the name of Mordecai Hamm.

[ 30 : 43 ] Mordecai Hamm was down in the south, preached revival services and things. One day, he's preaching at an area in North Carolina. And as he's preaching, two teenage boys decided they wanted to go hear this guy.

They wanted to hear the revival service and stuff. So they make plans to go. And they walk in and they look around and the seats are full. There is no place to sit.

And so they turn around and start to walk away. There was an usher who saw that. He ran after them. He said, boys, boys, boys, come back here. Come back. I will find you two seats together.

I will get you a place to sit. You come back. So the two boys come back. He gets them the seats. They're sitting together. And they hear the message that Mordecai Hamm is preaching.

At the end of the service, those two boys gave their hearts to the Lord Jesus Christ asked him to be their savior. Those two boys, one of them you've heard of, his name is Billy Graham.

[ 31 : 49 ] The other boy, you maybe haven't heard of, his name was Grady Wilson. Grady Wilson wound up being the one who was the coordinator for all of Billy Graham's crusades and everything.

Those two men affected millions of people, gave the gospel to millions of people. Where did it start? An usher who said, I'm not letting these two get away.



They need to hear the gospel. They need to hear this message. Come in here. We'll find a place for you. See, God can use people whose names we may not know. Well, we know the name of Esther.

There's a book in the Bible about her. But she was, as I said, a young orphan Jewish girl. All kinds of things against her. But she winds up being the queen.

You know, one of the great things about this? Isaiah 55 8. Isaiah 55 8. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

[ 32 : 54 ] God says, your way is not my way, my thoughts aren't your thoughts, but watch what's going to happen. Watch how this is going to work out. Watch what I'm going to do.

Maybe you have someone in your life that doesn't follow God. Maybe it's a relative.

Maybe it's a boss. Maybe it's some other leader in your life. Maybe you've got things going on in your life and you say, this just isn't fair.

This is happening, that's happening, this isn't fair. Why are these things happening to me? In those times, remember that God is with you. He is there.

He is meeting the needs. You may not see it, as Bonnie is saying this morning, you may not see his hand at work, but trust his heart. Watch what he is doing and how he's going to take care of it.

[ 33 : 54 ] you know, you ever get discouraged? All kinds of people get discouraged about all kinds of things. When you get discouraged, can I give you a little suggestion?

Just a little bit. Change your focus. Well, this is happening and that's happening and this is happening and that. And I have Jesus for this.

this. I have Jesus for this. Jesus makes all the difference in the world. And I have him. You want to get over your discouragement?

You want to get over your anxiety? I have Jesus for this. You know, whatever situation you may be dealing with today, as I mentioned the title of the book, God's got this.

God's got this. As you go through life, we are all going to face all kinds of things.

[ 35 : 03 ] And we don't understand and we don't know why and we don't. Trust his heart. Trust his heart. God loves you.

God is working all things for the good God is taking care of you.

Trust him. Trust his heart. You know, instead of letting all the things of the world get to us, instead of letting all the things of this world come in on us and make us discouraged and make us anxious and make us all turn your heart so that you have a passion for him.

You have a passion for God and what he's going to do. Again, this week, you saw a young man who had a passion for God and he said, you know what?

No matter what happens, God's going to work it out. God's going to take care of you. Take your hymn book. Turn with me to page 371.

[ 36 : 15 ]