

It's a mystery at times - Job 23: 3, 8-13

If only I knew where to find him; if only I could go to his dwelling!

But if I go to the east, he is not there; if I go to the west, I do not find him. When he is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him. But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.

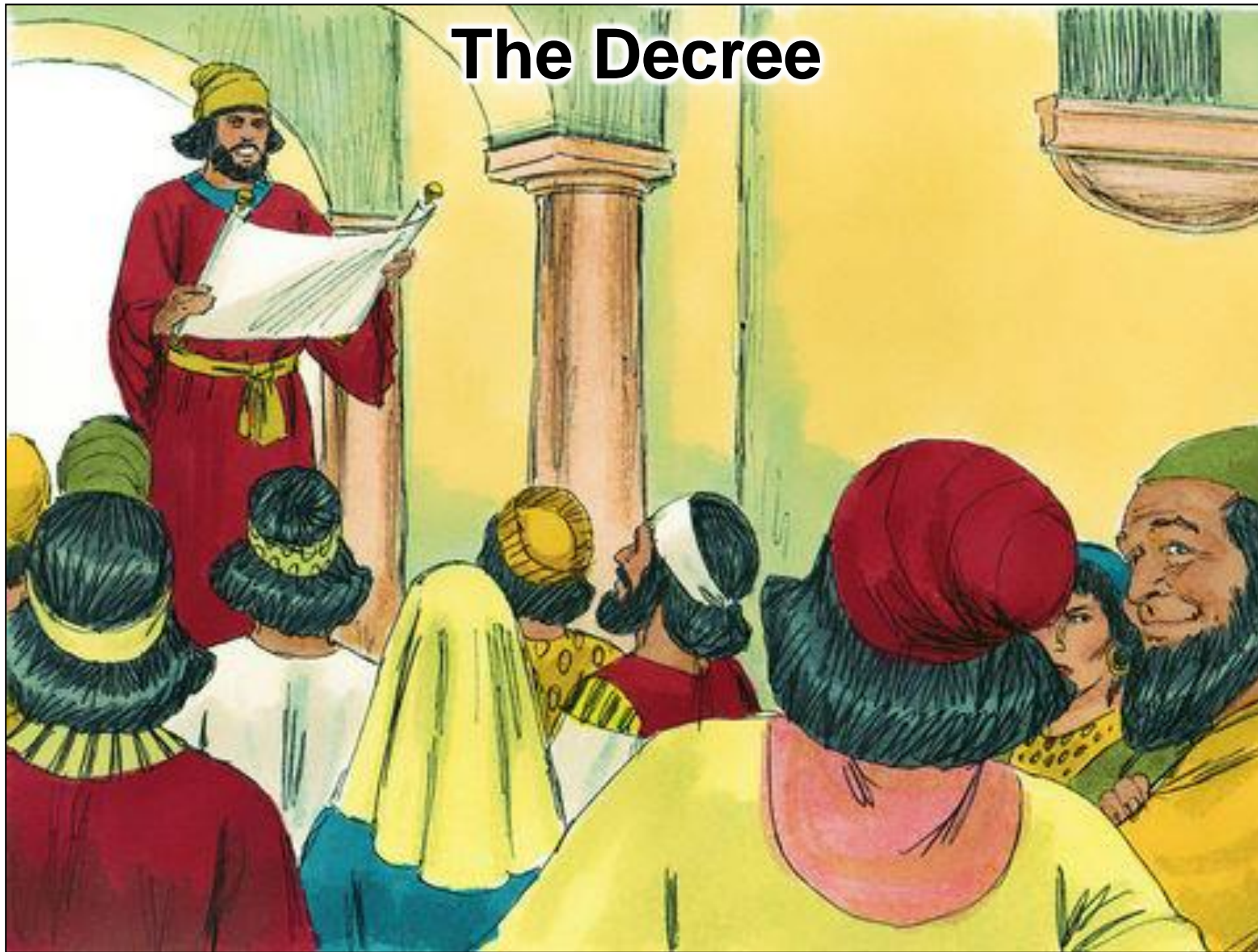
My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside. I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread. "But he stands alone, and who can oppose him? He does whatever he pleases.

Esther

Chapter 1:10-22



The Decree



“She’s fired !
I’ll find a new, obedient one.”

Esther 1: 9-22

Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the royal palace of King Xerxes.



On the seventh day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the seven eunuchs who served him--Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Carcas--



to bring before him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at.



But when the attendants delivered the king's command,
Queen Vashti refused to come.



the answer is
NO!

Then the king became furious and burned with anger.



Since it was customary for the king to consult experts in matters of law and justice,



he spoke with the wise men who understood the times and were closest to the king--Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memucan, the seven nobles of Persia and Media who had special access to the king and were highest in the kingdom.



"According to law, what must be done to Queen Vashti?" he asked.
"She has not obeyed the command of King Xerxes that the eunuchs have taken to her."



Then Memucan replied in the presence of the king and the nobles,
"Queen Vashti has done wrong, not only against the king but also against
all the nobles and the peoples of all the provinces of King Xerxes.



For the queen`s conduct will become known to all the women, and so they will despise their husbands and say, `King Xerxes commanded Queen Vashti to be brought before him, but she would not come.`



This very day the Persian and Median women of the nobility who have heard about the queen`s conduct will respond to all the king`s nobles in the same way. There will be no end of disrespect and discord.



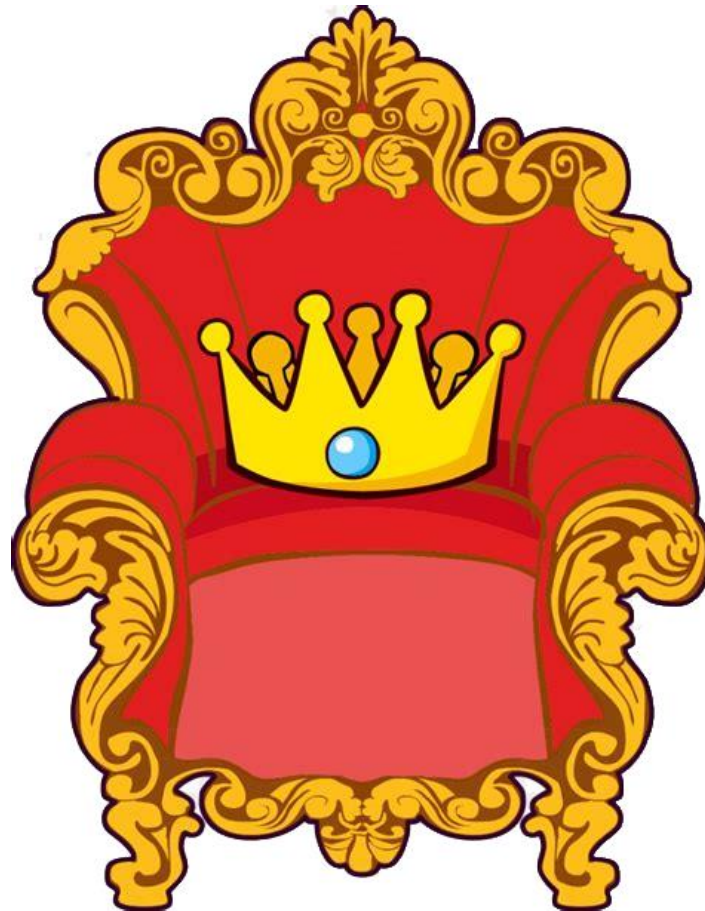
"Therefore, if it pleases the king, let him issue a royal decree and let it be **written in the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be repealed**, that Vashti is never again to enter the presence of King Xerxes.



"Therefore, if it pleases the king, let him issue a royal decree and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be repealed, that Vashti is never again to enter the presence of King Xerxes.



Also let the king give her royal position to someone else who is better than she.



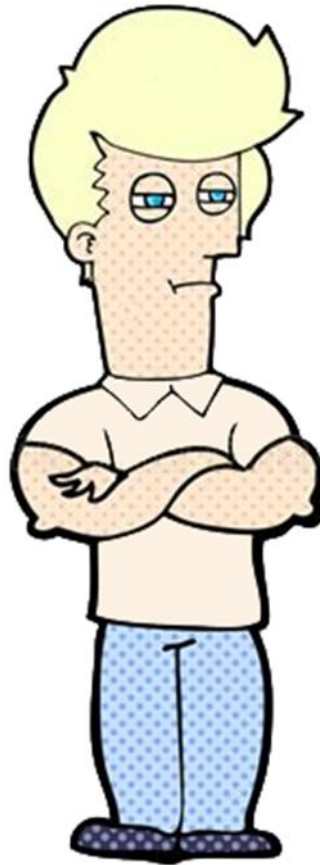
Then when the king's edict is proclaimed throughout all his vast realm, all the women will respect their husbands, from the least to the greatest."



The king and his nobles were pleased with this advice,
so the king did as Memucan proposed.



He sent dispatches to all parts of the kingdom, to each province in its own script and to each people in its own language, proclaiming in each people's tongue that every man should be ruler over his own household.



Lessons from Esther 1 Marriage in Persia?

Cf today's attacks on family and marriage

Male dominated society

Multiple wives and concubines cf. Lamech

Genesis 4:23-24 Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."

Marriage in Persia? Still the problem goes on

Easy divorce of the pharisee question

Matthew 19:3 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?"



The Bible view - one man one woman - love and respect

Matthew 19:4-6 He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."



Lessons from Esther 1

The damage that drink can do.



Ephesians 5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit ..

Lessons from Esther 1

The power of example – bad or good
And Culture effects



1 Thessalonians 1:6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

Lessons from Esther 1

The Example of marriage – Christ and his bride



Ephesians 5:31-32 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church.

**The Scene is set for the next step
in God's rescue plan**

