

The Curse Reversed: God's Surprising Work in the Book of Esther
February 13th, 2022
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When the World Seems Big and God Seems Small (Esther 1:1-22)

1. Seeing the Hidden Weakness of Worldly Kingdoms

2. Seeing the Hidden Work of God's Kingdom

For Further Thought and Discussion:

Getting Started:

1. What was helpful to you in this week's sermon? What didn't you understand?

Going Deeper

2. How is King Ahasuerus described at the beginning of the book (1:1-2)? How is his kingdom portrayed (vv. 3-9)? What is Ahasuerus' goal in throwing such lavish parties (see v. 4)? How is the inherent weakness of his kingdom exposed in the proceeding narrative (see vv. 10-22)?
3. What are we to make of Vashti's refusal (vv. 10-12)? Why does she refuse the king's request? What does this reveal about Vashti? What does it reveal about the king?
4. How are the king's advisors portrayed (see vv. 13-22)? What is humorous about the advice they give to the king?
5. How does the author depict the status of women in the Persian Empire? How does this shape our expectations regarding Esther, and her ability to effect change in this society?

Application:

6. How does this passage help us when we feel intimidated by the dominant ideologies of our culture? What insights does it offer? Which of these were helpful to you? Why?
7. How do we see God's "*behind the scenes*" work in this passage? Which of these examples was most encouraging to you? Which spoke most directly to your situation? Why?
8. What's one thing you can do this week to apply this message?