The Book of Esther (01) – Ahasuerus

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Ahasuerus – An image of God

When God removed His earthly seat of government from Israel (1 Chr 29:23), He placed the government in the hands of the nations (Dan 2:31–45; 5:18–19). This period of pagan rule is called **“the times of the nations”** (Luke 21:24). Thus, during this time, various pagan monarchs ruled as extensions of God’s government on earth. In the book of Esther, King Ahasuerus reigns over the known world—**“from India to Ethiopia”** (Esther 1:1). He is a picture of God, who reigns behind the scenes over the whole world (Dan. 4:17).

The Feast of Ahasuerus—A Picture of the Gospel of God's Grace

The first chapter of Esther tells us that King Ahasuerus held a banquet **for everyone, “from the greatest to the least”**(Esther 1:1–5). It is a picture of the great banquet that God has prepared for all people in the gospel of his grace (Luke 14:16). The purpose of Ahasuerus' banquet is to show **“the splendid wealth of his kingdom”** and **“the glorious splendor of his greatness.”** In the same way, the gospel shows

us **“the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus”** (Eph. 2:7–8). Just as Ahasuerus' banquet lasts “many days,” God, in His long-suffering love and mercy, extends the invitation to His banquet for many days—now for about 2000 years! The guests who accept King Ahasuerus' invitation and come to the feast are called “nobles and princes.” Thus, those who accept God's invitation to the banquet of the gospel through faith are made “kings and priests” (Rev. 1:6).

At the banquet itself, the king provided “cushions of gold and silver” for the guests to rest on (Esther 1:6–8). Silver and gold are symbols of redemption and divine justice in Scripture. They give the believer a place where he can find rest for his salvation, and as a result, he has peace with God and rest for his soul (Matthew 11:28; Romans 5:1; 8:6). In addition, there are beautifully colored hangings at this feast for the enjoyment of the guests. They hang down from above and are attached to “silver rings”: a picture of the heavenly blessings that Christians have received through salvation (Eph 1:3). Furthermore, the king gives his guests “royal wine in abundance,” which speaks of the joy that God gives to those who accept and believe the gospel of his grace (Judges 9:13; Psalm 104:15).

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