

A Shallow King

Scripture Reading — Esther 1:1-12

For a full 180 days he displayed the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of his majesty. — Esther 1:4

Today's reading in the book of Esther brings us to a time when Israel's people lived in exile under the rule of a foreign king, Xerxes. He ruled over the largest empire in the world at that time. He had tremendous power and wealth, but most of that was just for show. In his own family he had no respect, and he was a pushover for any adviser who had his ear. He was kind of a joke.

How would God's people live under such a king? How would they react to Xerxes' reign? Resist? Accommodate? Despair? And where was *God* in all this? When godless -rulers fill the seats of power, and worldly ways seduce many with their allure, how is God still King?

We too live in a superficial age. And some of our leaders exhibit more vainglory than sound character and wisdom. But God showed that he was up to something in the story of Esther. God's work was often behind the scenes and subtle, but God would soon show that real splendor and glory are about far more than wealth.

Exposing shallow kings and restoring peace and justice may take time, but we can be assured that God is in control. God will show himself to be the Lord of history, and he calls his people to walk faithfully and wait for his deliverance.

Prayer

O Lord, may we not put our trust in mortal kings who cannot save. Give us hope and help us to trust in you, the Maker of heaven and earth. Amen.

Written by Darrin Compagner — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/darrin-compagner>

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