

Not so LITTLE WOMEN



Week 7: VASHTI
Today's Verses:

ESTHER 1:19
ESTHER 1:1-5, 9-22
TITUS 1:12
ESTER 4:4
ROMANS 3:22-24
MATTHEW 5:43-45

Read: **ESTHER 1**

Ask/Discuss:

- What did you learn about God in this passage/message?
- What did you learn about yourself/humanity in this passage/message?
- How can we better reflect Jesus together as we live in diverse community?
- How do you feel led to foster healthy, Gospel-centered community this week?

Sermon Recap: VASHTI

Today in our Not So Little Women series, we are looking at Vashti, a Babylonian queen who was married to the Persian king, Xerxes.

- **Who is Vashti?** Xerxes had many wives and concubines; God shows us what happened to Vashti, one of the relatively unknown wives. The Babylonian rabbis cast Vashti in a negative light, saying she was a “wicked Jew-hater.” The rabbis of Erez Israel (meaning from the land of Israel) portrayed her in a mostly positive manner. They describe Vashti as a “*scion of a royal dynasty and deported herself with the proper honor and nobility.*”
- **What happened?** Almost all Jewish scholars agree that Vashti was commanded to come before King Xerxes and all of his inebriated officials wearing only her royal crown (naked). Xerxes treats Vashti like property, not like a wife. *Esther 1:12 But when the attendants delivered the king's command, Queen Vashti refused to come.* Vashti refuses to come and is most likely punished with death. The king's ego suffers a blow, and he passes laws (while intoxicated) decreeing that all women must obey their husbands.
- **What do we learn from Vashti?** Honor. She spoke and acted in accordance with her principles, and she lived and died for the sake of it. You see Vashti fulfill her role as a queen and member of the royal household until it violated honor.
- **We are to live honorably because we represent Christ. “Let your yes be yes and your no be no.”**

Jesus calls His followers to be salt and light in the world. We are meant to be honorable and trustworthy, not because that is what saves us, but because we are to be a blessing and reflect Jesus to the world. After all, we have first been blessed!

1. **We should lovingly cultivate honor in others because they are made in God's image.** In Jewish midrash, it is spoken of how Vashti tried different ways to help her husband not act dishonorably.

Vashti was most likely not a follower of God, but she shows us the truth about character. Our world tires of people who do not live with integrity. We are to offer integrity and grace to those around us—loving as God calls us to love, living as He calls us to live. Our honor is a response to His grace extended toward us.

2. **While character is important, we are saved by grace, not our morality.**

The way home for rule-breakers is the way of grace through repentance.