# "The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 74"

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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



#### The Biblical Design of Gender, Part 74

#### **Esther 4:14**:

14 For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

Our takeaway point in this series on the Biblical Design of Gender is that God has designed man as the cooperative coalition of husband and wife so that man can successfully achieve the objective that God has given us to exercise dominion over the earth, developing wisdom and knowledge in preparation for further responsibility in our eternal life.

Last week, our topic was the connection between idolatry, harlotry and sexual immorality. We discussed the example of the prophet Hosea, whom God instructed to marry a wife that did not have sterling moral credentials.

This week, we are going to begin by talking about a wife that was not guilty of moral turpitude, but of a different kind of disobedience to God's instructions.

The episode begins in the palace of the king of Persia, who was regent over a vast kingdom that stretched from India to Ethiopia, and who was giving a feast for his noblemen as part of a national celebration, in which the king displayed the riches of the kingdom. As the exhibits were viewed, the food was eaten and the wine flowed, the king decided to display his most precious treasure. **Esther 1:10-11** tells us:

10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, 11 to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she was beautiful to behold.

Let me make it clear that the king was not asking the queen to come out wearing ONLY her crown; the king expected the queen to wear her royal finery with her crown. The king only actually intended to display the queen's flesh to the kingdom from the neck up. Thus, the king was both surprised and displeased by

the queen's response. **Esther 1:12** records:

12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command brought by his eunuchs; therefore the king was furious, and his anger burned within him.

Now, you already know that which I am going tell you. It's in the Bible; the relevant passage of Scripture is **Ephesians 5:22–24**:

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

My friends, I would like to introduce a distinction. In my opinion, **Ephesians 5:22-24** is not a commandment; it is an instruction. And you may ask; "What's the difference?"

Well, a commandment has a penalty attached to it, while an instruction does not. The violation of a commandment is a sin, and the wages of sin is death. But instructions tell us how to get things to work properly; the violation of an instruction does not have a penalty attached to it.

Most computer equipment comes with installation instructions. But if you install the equipment contrary to the instructions, there is no penalty; the equipment manufacturer will not come to your house and give you a spanking. However, the equipment may not work properly, and may not perform the task for which you bought it.

Similarly, God instructs wives that the best way to operate a husband is to submit to him. Now, it's a free country; you don't have to follow God's instructions, but to do so is the best way to make a husband work properly, as the Persian queen soon found out.

I make this argument to counter the argument that God's Word is biased towards husbands. God's Word is not biased; **Ephesians 5:22-24** is simply an instruction that tells wives the best way to get that which they want from their husbands.

After the queen's refusal to submit, the king met with his counselors, listened to their advice and followed it. In **Esther 1:18–20**, the king's counselors said:

18 This very day the noble ladies of Persia and Media will say to all the king's officials that they have heard of the behavior of the queen. Thus there will be excessive contempt and wrath.

19 If it pleases the king, let a royal decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it will not be altered, that Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she.

20 When the king's decree which he will make is proclaimed throughout all

his empire (for it is great), all wives will honor their husbands, both great and small."

Things don't work properly when they are operated contrary to the instructions, as the queen found out. The king exercised his option to deny the ex-queen any future consideration because of her failure to submit. The exqueen was under the misconception that her position as queen was a permanent position, but in life, there is no such thing as a permanent position.

Every position, regardless of how permanent that we may think that it is, is, to some degree, contingent upon performance, and everyone can be fired. During my lifetime, a President of the United States left office voluntarily before completing the term for which he was elected to avoid being impeached. The prestige of the position notwithstanding, poor performance will only be tolerated for so long before the incumbent is replaced.

So after firing the ex-queen, the king held a competition to replace her. **Esther 2:2–4** tells us:

2 Then the king's servants who attended him said: "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king;

3 and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the citadel, into the women's quarters, under the custody of Hegai the king's eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given them.
4 Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This thing pleased the king, and he did so.

The qualification to enter the queen replacement contest was virginity, as I mentioned during our discussion last week about promiscuous young women that choose to be unpaid whores. Not only did the king not want anyone singing "She Used to Be My Girl" at his next wedding, the king also did not want his next bride bringing any emotional or physical problems to the royal bedroom.

Israel's persistent idolatry is the reason that the Persian king's marital troubles are a Biblical topic. God allowed the Assyrians and the Babylonians to defeat and deport the Israelites out of the Promised Land. Then God allowed the Persians to defeat both the Assyrians and the Babylonians, taking over the territory into which the Israelites were deported.

Since the Israelites lived in Persian territory, some of the beautiful young virgins that were brought to the queen competition were Israelites. And the king selected one of the Israelite young women, Esther, to be his new queen. Since the Old Testament is the history of the Israelites, a Persian queen who was an Israelite qualifies to be part of Biblical history.

Esther curried favor with the selection committee by being submissive. **Esther 2:8–9, 15** tells us:

8 So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at Shushan the citadel, under the

custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women.

9 Now the young woman pleased [Hegai], and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for [Esther] from the king's palace, and [Hegai] moved [Esther] and her maidservants to the best place in the house of the women.

15 Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.

Esther cultivated the custodian, sought his counsel, and then submissively auditioned before the king in the manner that the custodian advised. The custodian had been a member of the royal household long enough to know that which the king preferred in a wife.

Esther's wise uncle Mordecai, who parented her during her formative years after she was orphaned, taught her submissiveness. Esther, being a beautiful, well prepared, submissive and intelligent young woman with the ability and willingness to follow instructions, won the heart of a king that had recently had a negative experience with a wife that chose to be independent.

Shortly after Esther's coronation, Mordecai came upon information about a plot against the king, and instructed Queen Esther to warn him. Esther submissively complied, as **Esther 2:21–23** records:

21 In those days, while Mordecai sat within the king's gate, two of the king's eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, doorkeepers, became furious and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

22 So the matter became known to Mordecai, who told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name.

23 And when an inquiry was made into the matter, it was confirmed, and both were hanged on a gallows; and it was written in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

Queen Vashti was hostile and uncooperative, refusing to present her regal beauty for the king's pleasure. Queen Esther submitted to the advice of the custodian, displaying herself to the king in the best possible light to become queen, and then thwarted the plot against the king by submitting to her uncle. Esther had her uncle's heart, and, along the way to her becoming queen, she gained both the heart of the custodian of the women and the heart of the king. Esther captivated these men by presenting her visually pleasing personal presence and by submissively following their suggestions, which are the Biblical instructions for women seeking to obtain the love of men.

God's instructions for male/female relations are not exclusively for women. God has instructions for men as well. **Ephesians 5:25, 28** says:

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

This instruction explains why Mother's Day is a much bigger celebration than Father's Day. A husband is admonished by God to love his wife, and the most effective way for a husband to show love to his wife is to publicly recognize the contribution that she has made to his life. Wives most feel important and thus most loved when they receive public expressions chronicling their value and their husband's love. That's why days celebrating wives, such as weddings and Mother's Day, are generally large productions.

Boys and young men that do not have wives generally do have mothers, who have submitted themselves in order to care for the needs of their child. I can not think of an act that calls for a person to submit more of themselves than the act of giving birth. Not only that, but after the physical birth process is complete, the mother is responsible for the physical and emotional development of the child that she has brought into the world.

In our last lesson, to which you can listen or read at familylifebc.com, I chronicled the unique physical and psychological characteristics of a mother that bonds her to her children, especially when they are unable to take care of themselves.

1John 4:19 tells us of Jesus:

#### 19 We love Him because He first loved us.

And if we love Jesus because He first loved us, we must certainly love our mothers for the same reason. Those mothers that have performed the dual role of submitting to a husband and caring for children are worthy of double honor.

The instructions for male/female relationships in **Ephesians 5:22-28** are both sequential and reciprocal. Sequential meaning that, in the normative case, as a husband's confidence that his wife will be submissive to him increases, his love for her will grow and develop. Reciprocal meaning that, in the normative case, male/female relationships depend upon each partner reciprocally providing the Biblical response, either submission or love, to the other.

As our takeaway point tells us, God has designed man as the cooperative coalition of husband and wife so that man can successfully achieve the objective that God has given us to exercise dominion over the earth, developing wisdom and knowledge in preparation for further responsibility in our eternal life.

Without cooperation between spouses, the coalition falls apart, as we see that a lack of cooperation destroyed the relationship between the king and the first queen. And don't forget that the coalition can fall apart. This episode is recorded in the Bible for a reason. It is an instruction.

But things looked much better for the king and his new submissive Queen Esther until the king appointed a new counselor. **Esther 3:1–2** records:

1 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and set his seat above all the princes who were with him.

2 And all the king's servants who were within the king's gate bowed and paid homage to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai would not bow or pay homage.

Those of us who are Bible readers know that God rescued the three Hebrew captives in Babylon from death in the fiery furnace when they refused to bow down to the statue that the King Nebuchadnezzar constructed. Mordecai was emulating their example in this episode. And Mordecai found himself in a similar situation as Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego, except that rather than Haman throwing Mordecai into the fiery furnace by himself, Haman schemed to put all of the Israelites in the furnace with Mordecai. Esther 3:6, 8–9 tells us: 6 But [Haman] disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for [the king's servants] had told him of the people of Mordecai. Instead, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus—the people of Mordecai.

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws. Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain.

9 If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who do the work, to bring it into the king's treasuries."

The king agreed, and Haman published the decree that on the 13th day of the 12th month, the royal treasury would pay those that followed the king's command to kill the Israelites and seize their possessions.

When Mordecai read Haman's decree, Mordecai instructed Esther to speak to the king about the pending execution of the Israelites. But Esther, being a submissive wife to the king, hesitated. She explained her hesitation to Mordecai, in **Esther 4:11**:

11 "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days."

Esther was the beautiful, ceremonial queen that graced the king's side on state occasions, but she was certainly not the king's only female refreshment. And since the great feast was completed and there were not any state occasions on the calendar, Esther's regal services had not been requested by the king for a month.

And people did not just go in to see the king because they wanted to. You

could not call to make an appointment, and if you decided to just drop by, that might be the last drop that you ever made.

But the urgency of the moment overrode even Esther's submissiveness to the king and the law. **Esther 4:13–14** records:

13 And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. 14 For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

The three Hebrew boys in the book of Daniel took the chance that God would intervene on their behalf. **Daniel 3:16–18** tells us:

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.

17 If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king.

18 But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."

Now, it is Esther's turn to take the chance that God would intervene on her behalf. So she admonished her countrymen to call on God. **Esther 4:15–16** records:

15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai

16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

Esther is not going to see the king for a frivolously irrelevant reason; Esther has a serious, life and death matter in mind. However, it is good for Esther's chances that she has a track record of being submissive, because it is much less likely that the king would execute a submissive queen than an annoying one. As the sequential segmentation of the Scripture in **Ephesians 5** indicates, when a wife is submissive, her husband's love for her grows and develops.

So when the time of prayer and fasting were completed, Esther gathered her courage and acted to save her people by stimulating her husband's love for her. **Esther 5:1** records:

1 Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.

Remember the first queen that would not dress in her royal finery for the king's pleasure? Esther learned from the first queen's negative example, and

wore the royal garments that the king found most attractive as she disobeyed the law and approached him. Esther did not want the king thinking about her breach of the law when he saw her, but rather about her personal attractiveness that influenced the king to make her the queen in the first place.

Feminine wiles are given to wives to make a husband like putty in his wife's hands. A husband can go to work and have a terrible day, be financially stressed and have all kinds of trouble. But coming home to a seductive, submissive wife can relieve him of all of his troubles and all of his cares, without actually changing his situation. And that is the reason that wives are constructed in the way that they are.

**Genesis 2:23–25** gives us the first mention of a husband concentrating on the attractiveness of a wife, as it says:

23 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

A wife can distract a husband from the troubles of this world by reminding him, visually, of **Genesis 2:24.** Esther's plan was to do so.

And when the king saw the beautiful Esther in her royal robes, her transgression of the law was not that which came to his mind, as **Esther 5:2–3** records:

2 So it was, when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, that she found favor in his sight, and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther went near and touched the top of the scepter.

3 And the king said to her, "What do you wish, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given to you—up to half the kingdom!"

When a wife reminds a husband of **Genesis 2:24**, the gifts just keep on coming. Ladies, if your Mother's Day celebration is not all that you think that it should be, you might want to keep this little fact in mind for next year. And the sexual seduction of a husband by a wife to achieve her objective is Biblical, because at creation, in **Genesis 2:24**, God Himself invented it.

The one that tells wives they should argue and fight with their husbands to get their way rather than submit to and seduce their husbands to get their way, is not God, but is the devil. Seduction and submission are fun and effective; they make for a happy marriage, and the devil wants you to have the opposite. The devil loves divorce, because, in **Malachi 2:16**, God says that He hates divorce.

So, the lesson from your college women's studies class that seducing a husband is beneath a wife is straight from the pit of hell. And also contrary to that class, God does not tell unmarried women to seduce their boyfriends, have their



boyfriend's children or move in with them outside of wedlock. **Hebrews 13:4** tells us:

### 4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed [meaning sexuality <u>in</u> marriage is] undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

Satan has endeavored to turn sexual seduction and pleasure completely upside down. He tells wives that they are "liberated" if they deny their husbands and single women that they are "liberated" if they have sex with their boyfriends, which is the exact opposite of that which God decrees.

"Liberation" is liberation from God's morality and good sense. And we, like fools, fall for it. 70% of the babies born in our community are born out of wedlock.

So frilly lingerie, titillation, seductiveness, sexual playfulness and sex are to be used by wives for the pleasurable manipulation of their husbands, as **Genesis 2:24** tells us that a husband shall be joined to his wife, not his girlfriend, or the lady down the street.

And, the concept in **Genesis 2:24** is both sequential and reciprocal. Not only is the husband to keep himself only to his wife, but **1Corinthians 7:5** tells us:

5 Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

The one that breaks up marriages and incites men to be adulterous and women to withhold themselves is Satan. So, a husband ought not commit adultery, while a wife ought not commit deprivation. God's instructions to married couples are sequential and reciprocal.

Esther was seducing her husband, the king. The king was ready to give Esther half of the kingdom, which is more than I think Tiger gave his ex-wife. But Esther was still at work, because she wanted the king to rescind a law that, by law, could not be changed. So Esther, having used her sensuality, decided to use her other feminine wile to get her husband to do that which she wanted. In **Esther 5:4**:

4 So Esther answered, "If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come today to the banquet that I have prepared for him."

My mother must have been one of Esther's counselors, because Esther was pulling out all the stops. Seduction followed by a meal. What more can a man ask for? What more can a king ask for? What more can anyone ask for? The king was being played, and played well, as he thought that he hit the jackpot.

So the king and his boy Haman went to Esther's banquet, and after they had well eaten and drunk, the king asked Esther, once again, to tell him her request. **Esther 5:7–8** records:

7 Then Esther answered and said, "My petition and request is this: 8 If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleases the king to



grant my petition and fulfill my request, then let the king and Haman come to the banquet which I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king has said."

Esther wants the king's nose so wide open that she can drive her carriage through it. The king is looking forward to the next day, so much so, that he is spending a sleepless night. He decided to catch up on the news, and the chronicle reader read of Mordecai revealing the plot to kill the king. And the king determined that Mordecai had not received a reward for his service. **Esther 6:6–10** records:

- 6 So Haman came in, and the king asked him, "What shall be done for the man whom the king delights to honor?" Now Haman thought in his heart, "Whom would the king delight to honor more than me?"
- 7 And Haman answered the king, "For the man whom the king delights to honor,
- 8 let a royal robe be brought which the king has worn, and a horse on which the king has ridden, which has a royal crest placed on its head.
  9 Then let this robe and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that he may array the man whom the king delights to honor. Then parade him on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him: 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!' "
- 10 Then the king said to Haman, "Hurry, take the robe and the horse, as you have suggested, and do so for Mordecai the Jew who sits within the king's gate! Leave nothing undone of all that you have spoken."

Haman was coming to get the king's permission to hang that same Mordecai the Jew on the 75 foot high gallows that he had had constructed for the purpose. But Haman did not anticipate that the king would instruct him to honor Mordecai. Haman was dismayed, but he had to follow the king's instructions.

While honoring Mordecai, Haman made himself feel better by concentrating on being honored himself at the queen's banquet. After Esther's great meal, the king again asked Esther for her request. **Esther 7:3–8** records:

- 3 Then Queen Esther answered and said, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request.
- 4 For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king's loss."
- 5 So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?" 6 And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman!" So Haman was terrified before the king and queen.



7 Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine and went into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king.
8 When the king returned from the palace garden to the place of the banquet of wine, Haman had fallen across the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, "Will he also assault the queen while I am in the house?" As the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

They covered Haman's face because they knew the jig was up. The king immediately commanded that Haman be hung on the gallows that he constructed to hang Mordecai.

And a request from Esther, the attractive, virtuous, submissive queen, ultimately had more influence over the king and the kingdom than did the second in command to the king, the self-aggrandizing, scheming counselor Haman.

After dispatching Haman to the afterlife, the king made Mordecai his chief counselor in place of Haman, and gave Mordecai the authority to deal with the situation. Mordecai did that which he thought was correct to rectify the situation. **Esther 8:10–11** records:

10 And [Mordecai] wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed it with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses bred from swift steeds.

11 By these letters the king permitted the Jews who were in every city to gather together and protect their lives—to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, both little children and women, and to plunder their possessions,

When the day came, the Jews were successfully able to defend themselves against their enemies, because of the good queen Esther, as **Proverbs 31:10–12** tells us:

10 Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.

11 The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain.

12 She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.

And so, on this Mother's Day, we thank those virtuous wives that have used submission and seduction to manipulate and mold us, their husbands, and have used their physical bodies to bring our children into the world and have used their emotional resources to comfort our children and cooperate with us to raise strong boys and virtuous girls into adulthood, as **Proverbs 31:28–31** tells us:

28 Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her:

29 "Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all."

30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.



31 Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.

Along with seduction and submission, Esther depended on God. A Godfearing wife in our generation relies on Jesus Christ, as **John 3:16–17** tells us: **16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.** 

So let us all submit to the King, that is, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ, and keep His commandment to cement our marriages, as **John 13:34–35** says:

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Thank you dear, and have a Happy Mother's Day...

Pastor Darryl R. Curtis Family Life Baptist Church