Ring of Truth daily devotion

Ring of Truth provides 366 daily 'proofs' that the Bible is consistent throughout from Genesis to Revelation and relevant for our lives today!

12 April

Esther 1:12

But when the attendants delivered the king's command, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger.

Temper tantrums and 'spitting the dummy' are not what kings should succumb to.

As I mentioned before, the events of the Book of Esther took place between the reigns of Darius and Artaxerxes, i.e. between 486-465 BC. Commentators often want to exclude the Book of Esther from the Holy Scriptures (because it doesn't mention God), but it is interesting that even today, the Jews re-enact Esther each year at Purim. In a way, this feast celebrates redemption from the first holocaust.

Queen Vashti gets a bad press, but quite frankly, to me, she appears to be a woman of some considerable moral integrity. Rulers and kings are not exempt from the need for integrity and morality any more than anyone else. All Xerxes wanted to do was to show off his wife for all his mates to ogle at and lust after. No wonder she didn't want to 'play ball'.

We should all be very grateful to Queen Vashti. She had moral integrity and the courage to carry out her convictions, regardless of the consequences and pain to herself. We could do with a few more like her today. If women were less worried about becoming 'equal' with men and being treated like them, and were more concerned about moral integrity and not pandering to men's immoral desires, we would have a different society.

Anyway, we need to be very grateful to Vashti for taking her stand because:

1) It made the men think for once and

2) It allowed Esther to come on the scene.

King Xerxes seems to be a very weak king to me. Indeed, history records that he was cruel, capricious, and sensual. He sounds a bit like King Herod of Jesus' day, doesn't he?

The king had a problem. He had inherited a large kingdom. God had blessed, first Cyrus and then Darius, so by the time Xerxes came to power, it was a vast empire.

Darius had also set up an extensive and efficient communications system. Just as we see today, that can be both good and bad. Good in that we can know what is going on very quickly and efficiently, but bad in that everyone else knows it too. This is particularly true of bad news, which always seems to travel faster.

The queen had disobeyed the king. Everyone would hear about it rapidly and it would not only affect the king's status but every husband, as he too was 'king' of his family. This was a crisis of mega national and cultural proportions.

What can we do? We can't change our morals, so we will have to get rid of the challenge. Easy - get rid of the queen and get another.

Why do we always get rid of our consciences instead of changing our behaviour in favour of righteousness?

Tell me, who are you actually more like - Xerxes or Vashti?