

Bible and the Headlines: Pandering

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February 11, 2026

Jeffrey Epstein died in 2019. His primary co-conspirator, Ghislaine Maxwell, has been in jail since 2020. It is a testament to the enormity of his evil that he is still making headlines six years later. The recent release of files held by investigators has drawn attention to the fact that Epstein was not alone in his appetites. This week it is the men who asked the convicted pedophile to use his influence on their behalf who are the news.

New York Post on January 30 announced, “Jeffrey Epstein Scouted Women for Giants Owner Steve Tisch, New Emails Released By DOJ Claim: ‘Working Girl?’” The article contains excerpts from emails exchanged between Epstein and Tisch in 2013. In one exchange Tisch wanted to know if the target of his attention was a professional sex worker so he asked Epstein, “Working girl?” . . . to which Epstein responded incoherently: ‘Nwver.’” From the cited emails, Tisch appeared to take Epstein’s suggestions to obtain his prey.

The Associated Press on February 1 published, “Former Prince Andrew Can’t Escape Epstein’s Shadow as New Documents Reveal Details about Friendship.” The brother to King Charles features in photos and emails released to the press. Quoting a BBC correspondent who read these documents, “What was he thinking when Epstein offered him a 26-year-old Russian very beautiful lady to have dinner with? . . . Should I do this?’ Nah. He says, “That would be absolutely lovely.” The photos are even more damning than the emails.

On February 9th, The Guardian featured, “Epstein Was Not Ostracized for His Crimes. To Some Powerful Men, He Became Even More Appealing.” This piece looks at Epstein’s services sought by elites after his 2008 conviction for pedophilia. The article’s author notes, “The powerful actively approached Epstein for sexual and romantic advice, and saw him as a thrower of “wild” parties.” About the woman one of these power brokers was seeking, Epstein told the man, “She is doomed to be with you.”

Pandering to powerful men’s appetites is also found in Holy Scripture. The Book of Esther begins with a king who is seeking to add to his harem. His advisors tell the sovereign, "Let a search be made for beautiful young virgins for the king. Let the king appoint commissioners in every province of his realm to bring all these beautiful young women into the harem at the citadel of Susa” (Est 2:2-3). Among the women taken to the king is a young Jewish girl named Esther. In this instance, the predator becomes the prey as Esther used her access to the king to save the Jews from an official who sought their destruction (Est 8:7-8).

Like King Charles in modern England, King Solomon had a brother who used his access to the throne to seek favors from a young woman. Solomon’s brother Adonijah used Solomon’s mother to make his request. “She said to Solomon, ‘I have one small request to make to you; do not say, No, to me.’ The king said, ‘Say on, my mother, for I will not say, No, to you.’ And she said, ‘Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother for a wife’” (1Ki 2:20-21). King Solomon rescued Abishag from this predator by having Adonijah executed (1Ki 2:25).

The world would be a much better place if those in power, instead of encouraging the Epstein’s in our midst, would dole out to panderers the fate of Adonijah.