

God's Providence:
The Story of Esther

"Then Mordecai bade them return answer unto Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then will relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy father's house will perish: and who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Esther 4:13-14

Reminder

- **Ecclesiastes 9:1** *"For all this I laid to my heart, even to explore all this: that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God."*
- **Ecclesiastes 3:11** *"Man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end."*

Reminder

- **Deuteronomy 29:29** *"The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."*
- Therefore we *"walk by faith, not by sight"* (2 Corinthians 5:7), we *"Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, And lean not upon thine own understanding: In all thy ways acknowledge him, And he will direct thy paths."* (Prov. 3:5-6)

King Xerxes "Ahasuerus"

- **Made up of 127 provinces**
- **Jews scattered as result of Babylonian captivity (2:5-6)**
- **Reigning King of Persia (486 – 465 BC)**

Background

- **483 BC royal feast given in Shushan**
- **Lasted 180 days**
- **Women being entertained by Queen Vashti.**
- **King sought to parade Vashti's beauty after becoming "merry with wine."**
- **Queen refused the order**
– **Esther 1:12, 19**

New Queen

- **Process took four years. (2:15-20)**
- **Esther is chosen – not yet revealed her Jewish heritage. (2:10)**
- **Each woman prepared for one year. (2:12)**
- **Then each spent one night with the King.**
- **Those not chosen placed with king's concubines**

Mordecai

- Served as the king's gatekeeper
– Esther 2:5-7
- Revealed plot to the Queen about assassination attempt on the king
– Esther 2:19-23
- Would not bow down and give homage to Haman. (3:2)

Haman

- Served as the king's Prime Minister
– Esther 3:1-2
- Devised a plot to kill all the Jews
– Esther 3:6-9; cf. Genesis 12:1-3
– Note Mordecai's faith in God. (4:14)
- King consents to the plot
– Esther 3:10-15

Step #1

- Esther's commitment.
– Esther 4:13-17
- Mordecai's insistence for her to go before the king
- Esther's choice
- Esther's noble character
- A special banquet
– Esther 5:4

Step #2

- Events the night before the banquet
– Esther 5:9-14 Haman's pride / Plot to hang Mordecai
- King could not sleep and asked the chronicles be read
– Esther 6:1-3; cf. 2:21-23
- King's question to Haman
– Esther 6:4ff
- Haman forced to honor Mordecai
– Esther 6:7-12
- Wife's statement
– Esther 6:13

Step #3

- The 2nd banquet
– Esther 6:14-7:1
- Esther reveals her request to the king
– Esther 7:3-6
- Haman pleads for his life
– Esther 7:6-8
- Haman hanged on his own gallows
– Esther 7:9-10

Step #4

- Mordecai given Haman's position
– Esther 8:1-2
- What about the decree?
– Esther 8:3-6 Esther again risks her life.
- King sends out a new decree
– Esther 8:8-10
- Jews given permission to defend themselves
– Esther 8:11-17

Can We See God in All of This?

- An orphan taken by Mordecai (2:7)
- What if she was taken into the home of other relatives instead?
- What if Esther revealed her identity to the king other than when Mordecai had instructed?
- How did Mordecai happen to be the man of wisdom and intelligence involved in this plan?

Can We See God in All of This?

- How did Mordecai happen to even be alive at the time to be appointed to Prime Minister?
- How come the king had trouble sleeping and asked for the chronicles?
- How did the king happen to hear about Mordecai saving his life?
- How did it happen that until now the good deed of Mordecai had been overlooked?
- How did a young Jewish orphan become Queen over a world empire?

Can We See God in All of This?

- Though never named in the book, God is there ... in every chapter and every verse; in every event we have looked at, all to the bringing about of good for His people.
- "...and who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" **Esther 4:13-14**

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