

7. A happy semi-ending

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We all like happy endings whether it is a movie, novel, or real life. We want to see that the bad guys get punished for their bad behaviors and good guys win. That is why when we see our current twisted judicial systems, we get angry. But then again it is nothing much different than the ancient time. It is no wonder why the Bible says that judges should not favor any side.

Any good writer knows that to make the movie or book more dramatic, he has to add some difficulties and obstacles against good guys to overcome. Our God is the Author of our lives and faith. While He writes our lives according to His will, He doesn't write it dramatic for the sake of some silly movie awards or nice comments from those 'know-it-all' movie critics. But rather He does it to train us, to shape us and to mold us into the image of His Son Jesus. Is it easy to go through difficulties? Absolutely "NO!" Is it worth it? Absolutely "Yes!"

In chapter 6, Haman was humiliated by his own request for the person whom the king delighted to honor. He thought it was him so he made the best request he possibly could get away with. But it turned out that it was for his arch enemy Mordecai the Jew. It just about killed him in every way. In addition to that, his wife and friends told him, "You are done, finished, over, so dead." What an encouragement he got from these people! It was the banquet time, so he was promptly taken to the palace for a dinner with the king and queen. He didn't know it would be his last meal.

Even though there are only ten verses in this chapter, there are two very important principles we can learn from: God's timing, not ours; sowing and reaping. Let's hear them from the Lord.

A. WHAT IS YOUR WISH, QUEEN ESTHER?

Esther 7:1-2 So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther. 2 And on the second day, at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!"

Haman was still depressed on the way to the banquet, but he realized that he needed to change to stand in front of the king and queen. If he was really smart as he wanted others to believe, he should have repented from his evil behavior, but he chose not to. He thought he was safe.

God's patience today is an opportunity for people to repent and be right with God. But it seems that it goes from bad to worse each and every day.

A couple night ago, when the State of California started to allow gays and lesbians to get married, it was a scene from the pit of hell. A teenager was interviewed. She told the reporter with a smile that she now gets to have two moms. Somehow they think that if there is a God, He is a loving God and He would give His thumb-ups to their so-called civil union. It is not a civil union, but a carnal union. It is plain sick.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

Ever since the first banquet, Ahasuerus had been anxiously waiting to hear the queen's petition.

B. THE QUEEN'S PLEA

Esther 7:3-5 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?"

When Esther pleaded to her king husband, she started to focus on her own life for his immediate and undivided attention.

A few years ago, the gullible king Ahasuerus listened to his male chauvinist advisers and ended up deposing his queen. Afterward, he regretted doing that. He was not about to make the same mistake with Queen Esther. It is no wonder why his anger flared up.

As the king sat there in her presence and beheld her beauty, her words moved him. "What monster would want to kill the queen? Who is going to be next after killing her? Me?" At the same time he was perplexed in what she said, "My people? She is not a Persian?"

The king was not the only one who was asking that question in his heart at the banquet. Haman was asking the same question in his heart, "Who is the queen's people?" But somehow from the things that happened, Haman became more and more uncomfortable.

I am sure that by now, the queen had teary eyes in front of her king husband. We all know that there is not one single husband who can stand in front of his wife's teary sad and pleading eyes. All the husbands say, "Amen!"

Ahasuerus was smart enough to figure out that Queen Esther was a Jewess and he had unwittingly consented to her murder of all the Jewish people in his kingdom as well as his own wife.

C. THE KING'S RAGE

Esther 7:6-8 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.

Can you imagine the facial expression of Haman if he still had any? I am sure that his face was as pale as a dead man. He couldn't even breathe and all of his blood stopped flowing in his veins. His teeth started to chatter in fear. His knees gave in.

In an absolute monarchy, the king was considered as a god and could not do anything wrong. If there was something wrong in his actions and decisions, he had enough people to blame. Since he'd been had by Haman, it is natural for the king to put the blame on Haman the slime.

Haman knew what kind of wrath the king has and there was no way he could turn the king's anger from himself except begging for mercy to the queen. In the face of disaster, the arrogant bully becomes a whining coward. It shows a true character of the person.

Haman was not a giant. He was only a midget full of pride and hot air. Humpty Dumpty Haman is falling. And all the king's horses and all the king's men will not be able to put his life back together again.

In his desperation, Haman probably grabbed the queen's robe. What a paradox! Haman had been furious because a Jewish man wouldn't bow down to him, and now Haman was prostrate before a Jewish woman, begging for his life! Then the king walked in. Haman thought, "This is not good. How can it go worse from here?" Well, it can and it will.

Assaulting the queen is a capital crime. Forget about the conspiracy, attempted rape charge of the queen will be on his rap sheet. This is just not Haman's day.

D. WHAT GOES AROUND, COMES AROUND

Esther 7:9-10 Now Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the king, "Look! The gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good on the king's behalf, is standing at the house of Haman." Then the king said, "Hang him on it!" 10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's wrath subsided.

Harbonah the eunuchs was ever so eager to let the king know that Haman has a gallows to hang Mordecai. I am sure that Haman gave Harbonah that look, "Shut up, you idiot. You are not helping me here."

Haman found his end on the same instrument he had intended for the death of Mordecai. He was caught in his own trap against Mordecai. God often works this way. The greatest example of this was when satan thought that he won by getting the crowd to crucify Jesus, but the cross turned out to be the instrument of his defeat.

The death of a substitute satisfied the wrath of the king. In the case of Mordecai and Haman, it was the guilty dying in the place of the innocent. But in the case of us and Jesus, it is a matter of the innocent dying in the place of guilty.

E. SOWING AND REAPING

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Hosea 8:7a "They sow the wind, And reap the whirlwind."

Haman sowed anger against Mordecai, and he reaped anger from the king. Haman wanted to kill Mordecai and the Jews, and the king killed Haman.

The Bible shows many examples of this simple principle. Yet we are not learning:

- 1) Jacob killed an animal and lied to his father, pretending to be Esau. Years later Jacob's sons killed an animal and lied to him, pretending that Joseph was dead.
- 2) Pharaoh gave orders to drown the Jewish baby boys in Exodus 1, and 80 years later the Egyptian army was drowned in the Red Sea in Exodus 14.
- 3) David secretly took his neighbor's wife and committed adultery, and David's own son Absalom took his father's concubines and openly committed adultery with them.
- 4) David killed Bathsheba's husband, and three of David's own sons were slain: Amnon, Absalom and Adonijah.

5) Saul of Tarsus encouraged the stoning of Stephen. When he became Paul the missionary, he was stoned at Lystra.

The sooner we learn this principle, the sooner we keep ourselves out of troubles.

But let's keep in mind that this law of sowing and reaping also applies to doing what is good and right.

Galatians 6:8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

No good deed done for the glory of Jesus Christ will ever be forgotten before God. No loving word spoken in Jesus' name will ever be wasted. If we don't see the harvest in this life, we'll see it when we stand before the Lord. Even a cup of cold water given in the name of Christ will have its just reward.

F. GOD'S INTERVENTION AT HIS TIMETABLE

Wouldn't that be great if all of evil actions by people were judged right away?

Wouldn't that be great if all of our good deeds were rewarded right away?

The problem with that "immediate consequence and reward systems" doesn't involve the mercy and grace of God, it can turn to "What-is-in-it-for-me" attitude rather than service to our God.

We as Christians don't always do right things. When we do bad things, we are glad that the Lord has a lot of patience with us.

We all have experienced and will experience God's silence. It seems that our prayers don't go any further than the ceiling. We feel that God turns His deaf ears to us or He no longer loves us.

You might even feel like you are swimming around and around in a large lake that is filled with a thick fog. You cannot see anything – no horizon, no landmarks, no lights along the shore. You lose all sense of direction. You panic and start to swim one direction. Then you turn to swim in another. All you can hear was your frantic water splashing and your own voice, nothing else.

Job had the same experience. He was stricken with poverty out of blue, lost all ten children, physically ill, disheartened wife and accusing friends. But the worst part of all was the silence of God.

"What happened to God?" we wonder. To us, everything evolves around time. No matter how strong or powerful or influential you are, you are bound by time. We schedule things the way we want them to be, but our God is not limited by our schedule.

The sooner we realize that we cannot put our God in our timeline, the better we are in trusting Him, depending on His awesome sovereignty and omniscience. While we see one frame of our lives at a time, our God sees the whole thing at once and makes the things in the way He wants, because He knows the best.

G. APPLICATIONS

1) While we wait upon the Lord, let's not make so much noise in prayers that we cannot hear His answer.

His answer may not come in the way we expect. We must be intent on hearing it and sensitive to His voice. One thing is for sure, we might think we are lost or God is lost, but He sees us and knows exactly what we are doing and thinking.

2) The workings of our God are related to our cries but unrelated to our timeline.

While we are waiting, let's look beyond the present situation. We will be amazed how it will help us bear the pain.

3) Every word we speak and every action we do has rewards and consequences.