

6. The day of turning point

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There is no such thing as “luck” or “coincidence” in God’s vocabulary. God coordinates all the events in His sovereignty and power. Nothing happens by luck. God designates and allows each event in our lives – every single human being’s second by second event is within the knowledge of God.

So I have a favor to ask all of you. Rather than saying, “Good luck,” to somebody, say, “God bless you,” or “May the Lord’s will be done.” If your God does not operate with luck, why should you even mention it? Don’t you agree?

Chapter 6 and 7 happened within a 24 hour period. Chapter 6 starts from bedtime till the afternoon. Chapter 7 picks up from there till before bedtime.

A. THE REASON FOR THE KING’S INSOMNIA

Esther 6:1-3 That night the king could not sleep. So one was commanded to bring the book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. 2 And it was found written that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king’s eunuchs, the doorkeepers who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. 3 Then the king said, “What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?” And the king’s servants who attended him said, “Nothing has been done for him.”

The king was tossing and turning in the bed. His silk bed sheet was all wrinkled up. He just could not get comfortable to fall asleep. He was hot one moment to kick all the covers, next moment he was cold. He punched his silk goose down pillow a couple of times to make it firm. A minute later, the pillow was too firm. He laid on his back, on his sides, on his tummy. It seemed that no position allowed him to be comfortable. He counted sheep. He got tired of sheep, so he started to count goats. He got tired of goats, so he counted monkeys.

Was it the cares of state that kept the king awake? Was he worried about his finances? Did he eat too much salsa and drink too much Mountain Dew at the queen’s feast? Or, was he puzzled about the queen’s mysterious request? King Ahasuerus may have been the master of one hundred twenty seven provinces, but not a master of not even ten minutes’ sleep.

He finally sat up and hollered at his servant. “Bring me a Chronicle.” He thought the boring history book would definitely put him to sleep.

The one commanded to bring the book could have brought any one book of the records of the chronicles, but he brought one particular book. The book could be opened to any page, but it was opened to the exact page telling the story of Mordecai and how he saved the King from assassination. God guided every step along the way.

What the king didn’t realize was his insomnia was caused by God, and the Lord wanted this day to become the turning point of the Jews who lived in the Persian kingdom.

While the king couldn’t sleep, God was preparing the king’s heart to know about what Mordecai did for him five years ago. At the same time, the devil was preparing

a seven-story gallows through the Jew-hater Haman to hang or impale Mordecai next morning.

Rewards and punishments were basic to the Persian system of maintaining loyalty, and it was unusual for this kind of loyalty to the king to not be rewarded. Obviously, the Lord wanted to use Mordecai's heroism on this particular day not five years before.

Then it brings a very important question to ourselves:
Is God in charge of schedules? He most certainly is.

After befriending Pharaoh's butler, Joseph thought it would lead to his being released from prison right away. But Joseph had to wait two more years until the time God had chosen for him to become second ruler in Egypt. God had a specific day selected for the Jews to leave Egypt. The birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem occurred when the fullness of the time was come.

In the midst of a confused and troubled world today, the dedicated believer is able to say, "Our times are in Your hand" with all the confidence and find peace in God's will.

God's delay is not God's denial. More often than not, we sometimes get impatient and wonder why the wicked are prospering while the righteous are suffering, but God is never in a hurry. During the Jesus' Movement in 1970's, many born-again Christians hoped and prayed to the Lord that the rapture would happen soon. How many of you became born-again believers after 1980? If He came in around '70s, we all would be in hell by now.

We don't see and know the reason for God's patience. But He does it for our own good and for His glory.

B. HAMAN AT YOUR SERVICE

Esther 6:4-5 So the king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace to suggest that the king hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. 5 The king's servants said to him, "Haman is there, standing in the court." And the king said, "Let him come in."

I wouldn't be one bit surprised if Haman stayed up all night to supervise the construction of the gallows. Every pounding of hammer was music to his ear and every sawing noise gave him goosebumps of sheer delight. He was a major sicko.

From Haman's point of view, the earlier the hanging, the better. Mordecai's body would be on exhibition all day, and this would delight Haman and also put fear into the hearts of the Jews in the city. After executing Mordecai, Haman could be certain that everybody would obey the king's command and bow down to him.

What if Haman showed up at the king's palace two hours later? The king would have consulted with someone else. But God wanted Haman to spend all day honoring Mordecai and preparing Haman's downfall.

When you review these evidences of the providence of God, you can't help but want to praise and thank Him for the great God that He is.

C. YOUR IDEA, YOU DO IT, HAMAN

Esther 6:6-10 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."

Nobody can say, "God doesn't have a sense of humor." He truly does have a great sense of humor. He created Pastor Jack and Elder Jerry and use me as a pastor. Here we see the Lord allow Haman to come up with a great idea to honor Mordecai, his arch enemy in the way he wanted to be honored.

If what is described in Esther 6:8-9 had actually been done for Haman, it would have given the people of Shushan the impression that Ahasuerus had chosen Haman to be his successor.

The more I think about the character of Haman, the more convinced I am that he wanted the throne for himself. As second man in the empire, if anything happened to Ahasuerus, Haman was certainly in the best position to capture the throne for himself. A proud man with selfish ambitions isn't content to take second place if there's any possible way to secure first place.

In his blotted pride, Haman concluded that the king was speaking about him. After all, what other man in the empire deserved such honor from the king? After the way Mordecai had insulted him, Haman would now get double revenge: First Mordecai would see Haman honored by the king, and then Mordecai would be hanged on the gallows. Haman would then climax the day by feasting merrily with the king and queen. To him, the sky was blue and he was soaring high.

Little did proud Haman realize that, before the day would end, the situation would be completely reversed.

Proverbs 11:8 The righteous is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.

A person who is so wrapped in himself of herself, make a very small package.

I wish I could have been there to see Haman's face when the king commanded him to do likewise to Mordecai. I bet his face color drained, his jaw hit the floor, his knees got weak and his stomach was up to his throat.

D. A DAY OF DISGRACE

Esther 6:11-14 So Haman took the robe and the horse, arrayed Mordecai and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!" 12 Afterward Mordecai went back to the king's gate. But Haman hurried to his house, mourning and with his head covered. 13 When Haman told his wife

Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him, his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish descent, you will not prevail against him but will surely fall before him." 14 While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs came, and hastened to bring Haman to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

Can you imagine Haman leading the king's horse which carried Mordecai? The words probably were lodged in Haman's throat. How humiliated he must have felt and how infuriated!

The ultimate humiliation was for Haman to honor Mordecai in such a public way. Humiliation is only really humiliation when it is public. It also happened to our Savior Lord Jesus Christ. One of the aspects of crucifixion is humiliating the person who is being crucified to the maximum. The person is hung on the cross stark naked for days until he dies.

We see a great contrast here:

Mordecai who was honored by the king through Haman went back to the king's gate like nothing happened. Applause doesn't change truly humble people, because their values are far deeper. God can trust His blessings with the humble because they seek to honor only the Lord.

Haman who walked around like a peacock before, now walked around like a person who is mourning. He was humiliated, because he chose to be above everyone else.

Even if the public did bow down to him, Haman had no desire to see them, because he had been humiliated before them and he knew that they were laughing at him behind his back. Such is the difference between reputation and character. Haman was a famous man, a man of reputation, only because the king had made him so. But he was not a man of character. His reputation depended on his office, his wealth and his authority, all of which could easily be taken from him.

The Persians were a very superstitious people, and Haman's friends saw in the events of the day a "bad omen" for his future. Perhaps they were also familiar with God's covenant with Abraham in Gen. 12:3. At any rate, they saw Haman beginning to fall from his place of prominence. And this dire prediction should have brought him to the place of humility and repentance. But he didn't.

Genesis 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Haman was whiskered away to Queen Esther's second banquet.

E. APPLICATIONS

- 1) Never underestimate the extraordinary things God can do through an ordinary event.
- 2) The evils in this world are under the complete control of God. Nothing happens unless the Lord allows.
- 3) When nothing seems just, the justice of God will triumph in the end.