

Providence in Glory & Honor - Esther 6:1-13
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

The world often seems upside down, especially for those who believe in Christ and are seeking righteousness. The most successful people seem to be those who are most prideful and despise God, His people, and His ways the most. Evil seems to reign and those who are poor and marginalized are discarded. Furthermore, in our fallen world it often seems as if trusting in and following Christ leads to nothing but heartache and disaster. God is silent, distant, and uninvolved, and there seems to be no hope. As chapter six of Esther opens this is exactly where Esther, Mordecai, and the people of God sit. Yes, Esther is the queen, but so far she has not even revealed to the king that she is a Jew. And yes, she has resolved to tell the king that she is a Jew and therefore among those who Haman's genocidal law condemns. But as she threw her first banquet she pushed the announcement back a day. Haman though, went out rejoicing as he considered his own importance and glory, prideful that he was the king's most important leader and that he alone was invited to a banquet with the king hosted by the queen. Yet, on the way home he saw Mordecai again and noticed that he did not bow to him as a god nor was he even afraid, and this turned Haman's disposition. His wife and friends gave him some bad advice which he followed. So as the sun set a 75 foot high gallows was being built for Mordecai and Haman's plan was to go in to the king, first thing in the morning and announce to the king his desire to execute Mordecai before the banquet. Catch that, by the time "tomorrow" that Esther hosts her banquet the first announcement to be made is that her cousin and functional daddy will be dead. It will be too late. So the sun went down on the darkest possible day.

"On that night the king could not sleep (v. 1)." That seems like a random verse, but oh, it is so much more than that. **"On that night!"** We are not told if the king struggled with insomnia, nor what caused it on the natural order of things. Did he eat bad pizza or have a lot of big decisions on his plate? Did some other woman scorn him? What we do know is that on that night, that night, the king could not sleep, and the whole book of Esther pivots on the insomnia of the King. This is important in our reading and understanding the central message of the story. If the book pivoted on the brave stance of Mordecai he would be the hero. Let's say he didn't bow, and therefore all the rest of the Jews followed, it got noticed by a few people, who reported that to the king, and the king realized this was the same Mordecai who saved his life, well then we would praise brave resistance to the oppressive powers for the rescue of the Jews. Or imagine it was the amazing cooking and eloquence of Esther, so that after his belly was full and the king had a few drinks in him heard the brave and bold plea of Esther for Mordecai and her people. In that case we would applaud the hero Esther. But as it stands, Esther chickened out and the sun set. Or what if King Xerxes had his "repentance and faith moment" as he saw the errors of his way signing that horrible law, repented in wisdom, and set things straight. Then we will be praising this man instead of seeing him as the wicked king that he is. Nope, none of this. The whole story hinges on the reality that on that night, the king could not sleep. He asks his servants to read the Chronicles of his own accomplishments and glory to him. Fun bedtime reading, right? Page after page of the king's activity and accomplishments written down. The king has now reigned for over a decade, so these books are getting pretty full. But they just happen to grab a certain volume and turn to a certain page sharing a certain date, the day that Mordecai saved the king's life by exposing an assassination plot by the guys who guarded his door. And at this moment, in the middle of trying to sleep by hearing the story of his own accomplishments he hears the name of Mordecai and remembers that nothing was done to honor Mordecai, that guy, who Haman plans to hang on the gallows in a matter of minutes. And it just so happened that just about that time Haman shows up in the courtyard of the king with a matter he hopes to discuss with the king before this amazing banquet Esther is about to throw that must be in his honor, right? Ironic isn't it.

You can read the rest of this chapter to find out exactly what happened, but the point of the story is beautiful. Evil will not have the last say, God will rescue His people and bestow the

honors of grace, all the honors laid out in Romans 8 on His chosen and loved people. Nothing can stop it. We know this because of the story of insomnia in Esther, and we know this because of the cross of Christ. The story of Esther is the story of God's great reversal, and His providence over glory and honor. But this is only a small picture of the greater story, the story explained by Pastor S. M. Lockridge in his Easter poem, *It's Friday, but Sunday's Coming*, which includes:

It's Friday
 The disciples are questioning
 What has happened to their King
 And the Pharisees are celebrating
 That their scheming
 Has been achieved
 But they don't know
 It's only Friday
 Sunday's comin'

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Exodus 4	Exodus 5	Exodus 6	Exodus 7	Exodus 8	Exodus 9	Exodus 10

Reading from this past week: Esther 6:1-13

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Esther 6:14-7:10

Family Worship

Song - *In Christ Alone*

https://youtu.be/tVHo4QQ_X3k

Gospel Project

Story: Sin spread to people.

Big Picture Question: What does it mean to sin?

Answer: To sin is to think, speak, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.

Scripture: Genesis 4-5

New City Catechism

Question #40: What should we pray?

Answer: The whole Word of God directs us in what we should pray.

Verse: Ephesians 3:14-21

Scripture

Esther 6:1-13

*Do you ever feel as if God has forgotten you and that the darkness and evil are winning?

*How does this story remind us that God is the hero?

*When do we actually realize God's plan in our lives? (Answer - generally, it is after events have happened)

*What can we do to demonstrate our trust in God's providence when life is hard and we are afraid and hurting?

Prayer

*Pray that God would help you trust in him when it seems as if the wicked are winning and your life is hard.

*Pray for Pastor Eric and our worship team.