

Subject: *Who Is Really In Charge?*

Scripture: *Esther 5:1-14*

There is no panic in Heaven, only plans. It has been said that our emergencies are God's opportunities, and that is true. But it is also true that every emergency is our opportunity to trust God and watch Him work. Sometimes we can see what He is doing and sometimes we can't see, but we know that He is working behind the scenes. Such is the story of Esther. God's hand is behind the scenes working things out according to His purpose and plan.

As chapter 5 begins, this is a royal setting. Everything about it is royal. Esther put on her royal clothes. She was in the royal palace, and entered to see the king on his royal throne, to make a royal request of his royal highness. But far above and beyond this king, the King of heaven and earth is sitting on His throne. We know who is really in charge.

ESTHER'S PETITION (5:1-8)

The king saw Esther in all her royal beauty and he welcomed her and asked her, "What is it that you want and I will give it to you, even up to half of my kingdom." That was a pretty bold thing to say. It reminds me of the lady who said: "After I married my husband he became a millionaire." Her friend asked, "What was he before you married him?" "He was a multi-millionaire."

- Esther had courage

She and her maidens fasted and prayed for three days. Mordecai also fasted and prayed. This was the time for action. She went into the king without being invited.

- Esther received grace

The king showed her favor and held out his golden scepter which meant he accepted her in his presence, and we know why. ***Proverbs 21:1*** *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*

- Esther chose the right time

God gave her wisdom to know how to make her big request. She invited the king to a banquet. Now everybody knows that the quickest way to a man's heart is through his stomach and Esther knew that the king loved banquets. And God gave her wisdom to know the right time for her request. She kept him in suspense. God knew that during the something would happen in the meantime that would change the whole situation and prepare the king for her request. Timing is so important: 1) the wrong action at the wrong time = disaster; 2) the right action at the wrong time = resistance; 3) the wrong action at the right time = a mistake; and 4) the right action at the right time = success. We depend on God for the right timing.

- Esther is a picture of a praying Christian

Esther was the bride of the king, and so are we. The King of heaven promises to hold out His golden scepter to us. ***Hebrews 4:16*** *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* God's promise to sinners is "whosoever" (Jn. 3:16) and God's promise to His children is "whatsoever." ***John 14:13*** *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

HAMAN'S PRIDE (5:9-14)

- Haman was boastful

He bragged about the three things that many people brag about: his riches, his family, and his position as Prime Minister. And he told everybody about his invitation to dine with the king and queen. If Haman had only known what the Bible says about pride.

Proverbs 16:18 *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.*

Proverbs 29:23 *A man's pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.*

- Haman was bitter

He hated Mordecai and was irritated because he would not bow before him. You can tell the size of a man by the things that irritate him. If it takes little things to irritate him, he is a little man. If it takes big things to irritate him, he is a big man. His family and friends suggested that he build a gallows 75 feet high to hang Mordecai and he liked that idea, so he decided to build it. **Proverbs 21:24** *Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.*

- Haman is a picture of the Antichrist

He is described as an adversary and an enemy of God's people. Four times he is called "the enemy of the Jews." He rose to power quickly. He boasted of his power. He planned to exterminate all the Jews, and he used his political power to do it. Antichrist comes to power in the Tribulation called "the time of Jacob's trouble." While he was at the height of his career, he was defeated and doomed. The Bible says that the destruction of the Anti-Christ will be sudden.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE (6:1-14)

God is on His throne and He is working all things and events for our good and His glory. We see the king's restless night, his request, his reading, and his reward.

- God works behind the scenes

Providence may be described as the hand of God in the glove of history. God is working in ways we don't see and can't even imagine. He provides for us even when we don't know it. This has been called the mystery of God's providence. John MacArthur said, "Throughout history, God has more readily operated behind the scenes than in plain sight. God's fingerprints are all over Esther's story. His superficial absence points to a deeper presence. The events in Esther give us a model for hope when God works in less than obvious ways in our lives." Sometimes God works in obvious ways, but even more often in unseen ways.

- God uses little things to work out His plans

A good title for chapter 6 would be: "What a Difference a Day Makes." Here we read about a king who could not sleep and a deed that could not be forgotten. God used a history book as a wake-up call instead of a sleeping pill. It was God who made the king sleepless, and it was God who made the king hear about Mordecai saving his life some five years earlier. God makes big doors swing on little hinges.

- God's plans and His people cannot be defeated

God has incredible ways of making evil plans backfire. He is more interested in timing than in time. He is never in a hurry and He's never late. While Haman was planning Mordecai's death, the king was planning Mordecai's promotion. Haman came to the king's palace at the wrong time and for the wrong reason. The rest of the story tells us how Mordecai was exalted

and Haman was humiliated and even executed. **Proverbs 18:12** *Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.* **Romans 8:31** *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

Who is really in charge?

It's not the Persian king Ahasuerus. It's not hateful Haman. And it's not Esther or Mordecai. It is God Himself. He is the sovereign King who does all things well. He is the King who does the right thing at the right time.

Is God in charge of your life? That's the question you must answer, and only you can answer that question.