

Message #19

Esther 10:1-3

There is a very powerful statement about God found in I Samuel 2:6-8:

“The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up. The LORD makes poor and rich; He brings low, He also exalts. He raises the poor from the dust, He lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with nobles, and inherit a seat of honor; for the pillars of the earth are the LORD’S, and He set the world on them.”

There is another very powerful statement about God found in I Chronicles 29:11-12:

“Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; thine is the dominion, O LORD, and thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all. Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone.”

These statements are powerful statements about God that testify of His sovereignty. Although many people avoid the subject of God’s sovereignty, it is very real and very present.

The sovereignty of God is a great mystery. A person may choose to obey God, in which case God will sovereignly bless them. A person may choose not to obey God, in which case God won’t sovereignly bless them. However, regardless of what a person chooses to do, he will never beat God. God does what He wants, when He wants with whomever He wants and if ever there is a record of this, it is the book of Esther.

When the book of Esther began, there was a powerful Persian king who was married to a Persian queen. His number two man was a Persian who was his best friend and drinking partner. In the Persian kingdom were many Jews, who weren’t even initially interested in obeying the Word of God and doing the will of God. Haman eventually issued an edict to exterminate the Jew and God sovereignly stepped in and by the time the book of Esther ends, over 75,000 Persians are dead, a Jew is queen and a Jew is the number two man in the world. Esther is an amazing testimony of God’s sovereignty in caring for His own.

WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE, GOD WILL HAVE ACCOMPLISHED HIS SOVEREIGN WILL BY DESTROYING HIS ENEMIES AND BY ELEVATING HIS FAITHFUL SERVANTS AND BY PRESERVING HIS PEOPLE.

Whether or not one obeys God has nothing to do with whether or not one will beat God. No one will beat God for He is absolutely sovereign. In the end His purpose will stand. In the end His faithful people will wind up on top. When all is said and done, God will have accomplished His perfect will.

TOPIC #1 – The king taxes the land and sea. **10:1**

There has been much discussion among commentators as to why the information exists in **verse 1** or what it has to do with the story of Esther. We must assume God wanted this included in the context of Mordecai being elevated.

Mordecai, now being in the number two position, apparently had the responsibility to help the king replenish his financial situation. We may recall that Haman's plot to exterminate the Jew would have added 10,000 talents of silver to the king's treasury (3:9). It was also Haman's plan to seize their possessions as plunder (3:13). There is no question that getting rid of the Jews would have been temporarily, financially profitable for the Persian Empire.

The Jews purposely did not take the "plunder" of the Persian people (9:10, 15, 16). Most could not contribute large sums of money to the king's treasury. Apparently Mordecai helped the king see another way to get the necessary funds; rather than hostile plundering, through a peaceful taxation. Josephus says Mordecai was assisting the king in his governmental decisions (*Complete Works of Josephus*, p. 242).

There are two very practical lessons to be gleaned from this verse:

- 1) God prospered King Ahasuerus because he supported and defended his people.
- 2) Taxation was a peaceful and positive method of meeting financial needs.

TOPIC #2 – The king and Mordecai are recorded in history. **10:2**

The book of Esther began discussing the wealth and power of the king and it ends the same way (1:1-8/**10:1-2**). The only difference between the beginning and the ending is the inclusion of Mordecai. When the book begins, the focus is on the king and his greatness; when it ends it also includes Mordecai and his greatness.

Here is one of the most amazing, sovereign miracles of God in the annals of history. Mordecai is considered great in Persian history by the nationals, some of whom he destroyed.

When a person puts God and His Word first, he is destined for great things.

I wonder if our name will go down as being a great man or woman of God. I wonder if people will remember our stand for God and His Word in our world. The entire Persian world knew of Mordecai. They knew of his faithfulness and they knew of his impact. He goes down in history as being a highly elevated and greatly used servant of God.

TOPIC #3 – Mordecai is highly honored by the Jews. **10:3**

Fact #1 - He was second only to the king. **10:3a**

The key to success in any environment—whether school, job or family—is to stay true to the Word of God and stand for the Word of God. In the end those who are faithful will be those who are blessed, elevated and esteemed.

Fact#2 - He was great among the Jews. **10:3b**

There is no question that Mordecai was a true hero of Israel. He laid his own life and the life of his own daughter, Esther, on the line. He stood for Israel when no one else stood. Now he was a hero. The Jews deemed Mordecai as a great man of God.

What is it that makes a person a hero? What makes a Joseph or David or Daniel or Mordecai? They were all willing to stand for God when no one else would. They were all willing to refuse to buckle to the pressure. They were all willing to risk all for the will of God and that is what eventually makes one a great man or woman of God.

Fact #3 - He was avored by the Jews. **10:3c**

The word “favor” means that the multitude of people were delighted by Mordecai. He was a great delight to most (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 778). The word “multitude” indicates that a great and large number of people were delighted by Mordecai, but apparently not all (*Ibid.*, p. 753).

Most of Mordecai’s kinsmen delighted in Mordecai, but there were a few who were apparently jealous of his position and power.

(Reason #1) - He saved the lives of his people. 8:9-11

(Reason #2) - He sought the good of his people. **10:3d**

(Reason #3) - He spoke for the welfare of his people. **10:3e**

The word “welfare” is the famous Hebrew word “shalom” meaning peace. Mordecai always used his position to keep things peaceful for Israel. He was always looking out for their welfare, trying to keep it so that they could live life with an absence of strife.

One obvious question is why didn’t “all” of his kinsmen delight in him? Why were there a few who apparently didn’t delight in a man who had done and was doing so much for them?

Although the text does not specifically say, we may assume that some were jealous and envious of the esteemed position and power that Mordecai had. Some were so colored by the great level of his success that they apparently missed the greatness of Mordecai and his ministry.

No matter how many wonderful things he had done, no matter how many wonderful things he was doing, there were some who didn't favor him.

But the truth is their perspective didn't matter. They were the ones out of step with God. God was accomplishing His sovereign will. He was destroying His enemies and He had elevated His faithful servant. It really didn't matter what anyone thought, for God had accomplished His sovereign purpose and He had used Mordecai and Esther.

Ladies and gentlemen, God is a sovereign God. He can sovereignly use us and bless us and He will if we will purpose to be faithful to Him. But even when we aren't, He is still sovereign, He is still caring for His own and He will still accomplish His will. That is the story of Esther!

Practical Questions

1. Will we go down in history as having been a hero for God and His Word?
2. Will we willingly submit ourselves to the sovereign will of God?