

JULY 3RD 2005: Overview of OT: Esther: God's Anonymous Miracles: 2:1-18

I want you to think for a moment....something happened recently....felt u had no control
 A sudden sickness.....The closure of an ATM.....Too few check outs open
 Put off work.....Had to transfer.....Someone u care about dies
 Car won't start and you are late....Computer dies.....

I'm convinced.....wouldn't be one person.....couldn't come up with something
 Because there is an uncertainty about earthly life.....that affects us all

There is One however.....who is above all the uncertainties of life

And that is Almighty God
And what the Bible proclaims.....is that if you commit your life into.....
 whollyand out of love for Him who first loved you

Then He will cause all things to work together for GOOD....FOR you
 That's your eternal good.....But also the greater good that He can work thro you
 As part of the Body of Jesus....here on earth

That doesn't mean that you will avoid the consequences of bad decisions
 But that in the uncertainties of life **You** have one who is TRUSTWORTHY....
 Even when every circumstance seems to suggest otherwise

THE STORY OF ESTHER.....GIVES US AN INCREDIBLY RICH EXAMPLE
 OF THIS HAPPENING

Esther didn't have the greatest start to life
 She was a Jewish girl.....living in a land where her people were strangers....
 And she ...was an orphan

Little did she know..... that it would be the decision.....of the Queen
 That would change her life dramatically

So the first happening....in this whole chain of events...that God used for the good of...

1. QUEEN VASHTI'S DEMISE

Historians tell us.....King of.....was attempting to gee up....his leaders..commanders for a great battle with Greece.....**So he** threw this massive party.....got drunk (v10)

Up to this point... showed off vast wealth of his kingdom...spendour glory..his majesty **Now** he decides he must show off his queen.....**SO** he orders Vashti.....

She says NO.....He is sure that this will give such a bad example to ...wives...that **So he takes the crown....**bans her from.....and proclaims an edict.....women will respect

This leads on to EVENT TWOESTHER'S SELECTION

For soon the King is lonely for his queen....and as he can't have Vashti His personal attendants propose a beauty quest

And Esther is one of those selected

(Chariots of Fire.....God made me fast !!!! God made her beautiful)

EVENT THREE.....Had happened before....but suddenly became vital for Esther MORDECAI'S PROTECTION

When her parents had died....Mordecai own daughter.....Instilled within her faith

He also it seemed.....official position.....enabled him to sit at the gate.....Therefore when she needed.....He was already in a place.....keep an eye on her

4. ESTHER'S ELEVATIONI said before that God had made Esther beautiful

He has also given her an internal beauty.....made everyone love her

2:9 tells us that she won the favour of the guy in charge of the harem.....and he gave her The end of v15 says that; “Esther won the favour of everyone who saw her”

And the 2:17 tells us...included the king....set a crown on her head.....

5. MORDECAI'S LOYALTY.....

It wasn't really a big thing.....**Mordecai**.....heard two of the Kings guards.....

It was all recordedin the kings presence

But no one did anything about thanking.....

Little did he know what impact that would have later on.....Save his life

6. HAMAN'S ELEVATION AND MORDECAI'S STAND

for the first time....read about this character Haman

The king elevates him to a place of top honour.....

Get the feeling that Haman....an arrogant and greedy man.....is after much more

The other officials at the palace gate.....knelt down before Haman....

but not Mordecai.....**His faith** as a Jew would not allow him....to bow b4 anyone but

What a testing time for Mordecai

Esp seeing the other Royal Officials.....told Haman.....just to see what would happen....

7. HAMAN'S DASTARDLY PLOT....

A flow on from Mordecai's stand.....and the knowledge that he was a Jew...

Unleashed in Haman something that was pure evil

A plot to destroy all the Jews in the land.....And he manipulated the king....

Until became a royal decree

Where ...it could have been asked.....was God now ????

Way in front of the action !!!

8. ESTHER'S POSITION AND IT'S POTENTIAL

When Mordecai heard.....in absolute grief and anquish.....Turned up at the gate in...
 Eventually he was able to communicate.....whole sad story to Esther

And with the story....the main challenge.....of this whole book

You are the one.....who has been placed.....in a position.....**Potential** to save
 Out of everybody in the whole Kingdom.....you have the best chance of surviving
 If you dare to approach the king without being invited to do so

(now there was a law in that kingdom.....)

IT is now...becomes clear....what God had been doing....

He had organised.....for this moment

In fact**Mordecai says to Esther in 4: 14.....**

Can you imagine the pressure on Esther.....

In that time of great uncertainty.....she had to put her whole trust in God

So she called for everyone to join her....3 days of fasting and prayer...wise move...B4

9. THE SCEPTER RAISED

On the 3rd day....after all that fasting and praying...Esther approaches.....and he lifted

10. ESTHER'S DELAYS

she has got the king's attention.....but she doesn't immediately blurt out....I'm a Jew
Instead she simply invites the king and Haman.....And then invites them to another...

3 times the king asks...before she tells him

And we may well ask....what caused this young queen...to act in such a way ??
 And surely the answer relates to the 3 days.....That Esther is following that voice in...

For altho she did not realise it.....

That delay led to Haman becoming even more incensed with....To the point that he built
 And planned that on the very next day.....earlyhe would ask for...

BUT GOD HAS ANOTHER PLAN IN PLACE

11. THE KING'S INSOMNIA

That very night....the king unable to sleep.....so he ordered the account of his reign
 And of all that could have been read.....it was the record of the attempted assassination
And how an official....called Mordecai....but not been rewarded

12. HAMAN'S EAGERNESS

After building that gallows....Haman was so eager to get permission
 He was at the Palace when they opened the gates
So when the King.....looking for someone to reward Mordecai.....It was Haman..there

13. MORDECAI HONOURED

God never forsakes His people
 Haman planned honour for himself.....death for Mordecai
 God turned it around the other way

When the king asked Haman.....

What should be done for the man the king delights to honour.....Haman thought.....

And he came up with honours that were fantastic

And then had to lead the horse.....as mordecai rode it.....receiving those very honours

**IT WAS ABOUT HERE THAT HAMAN WAS GETTING THE MESSAGE
YOU DON'T MESS WITH GOD'S PEOPLE**

14. THE KING'S DISTRESS

At the second banquet with the Queen....same day.....everything is brought out open
The king is so distressed and angry.....
Haman makes it worse
He is hung on the gallows he built.....

15. MORDECAI'S ELEVATION

He becomes the most important man in the land.....**And suddenly the plot to**
exterminate.....Turns into an opportunity.....them to stand against their enemies

16. INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF JEWS

8:17 says *And many people of other nationalities became Jews because fear of the
Jews had seized them*

But more than that.....Because they were not exterminated.....Ezra and Nehemiah
And Jerusalem was rebuilt.....And the line of David....safeguarded

This story emphasises two things.....need to hold on to today

1. **If you are a Christian**.....then whatever you are going through....
You can be certain that God is with you.....He has a plan in place
Trust Him.....however scary it may seem...Because His plan is a Kingdom plan

2.. If you are not fully committed to following Jesus.....then seek Him out today
What God offers you is beyond anything this world can ever give

He alone has a plan for your life that includes eternity

A purpose for you that will make an everlasting difference in this world

And the supreme power...to bring it to past.