

Route 66: The Book of Esther

I. Introduction

A. Coincidence?

II. Proposition

A. The sovereign Lord is faithful to His covenant promises and works all things together to accomplish His end and for the good of His people.

III. A Brief Overview of the Story of Esther

IV. The Message of Esther:

A. **The sovereign Lord directs all circumstances even when they appear coincidental.**

1. Two worldviews contrasted:

a. The worldview of chance/fate (Persians):

- 1). The casting of lots (3:7) – Haman is looking for the “lucky” day to pursue his plot.
 - a). This worldview was driven by fate, chance.

b. The worldview of a purposeful creation guided by the hand of the sovereign Lord to its ultimate goal:

1). The casting of lots:

- a). The land was divided by lots (Numbers 26:55-56; Joshua 14:2).
- b). Jonah was discovered as responsible by lots (Jonah 1:7).
- c). The eleven apostles cast lots to fill the vacancy left by Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:26).
 - (1). The difference is the view of Proverbs 16:33.
 - (2). The Lord God is in control of even dice.

2. What appears to the Persians as chance or fate or coincidence, the Bible declares as God’s hand.

B. **The sovereign Lord is faithful and works all things together in order to fulfill His covenant promises.**

1. What appears to be coincidence is used by God to further His purposes and save His people.

- a. Vashti’s removal and Esther’s selection as queen – 2:15-18.
- b. Esther being received by the king after three days of fasting – 4:11; 5:1-2.
- c. The king’s sleepless night which leads him to remember Mordecai – 6:1-2.

2. Though the book of Esther never mentions God, it declares God’s sovereign and faithful providence in fulfilling His covenant promises and preserving His people.

- a. Mordecai has a high view of God’s sovereignty (4:12-14).
- b. Haman’s wife was aware of God’s sovereign faithfulness to His covenant people (6:12-13).
- c. NOTE: While Cyrus permitted Jews to return to Jerusalem beginning in 539 B.C., some like Mordecai and his family chose to remain in foreign lands.
 - 1). The book of Esther shows that God did not forsake His faithful ones, no matter where they happened to live.
 - 2). It shows also that God has a plan to preserve His people through whatever means He designs.
 - a). This is similar to Joseph being sent to Egypt to preserve the covenant people!
 - b). Though Mordecai’s decision to remain in Persia may seem coincidental, God had placed him and Esther there “for such a time as this” (4:12).

d. We must go back to the covenant with Abraham to better understand God's faithfulness and the direction toward which He is leading His people.

1). Through Abraham's offspring, all the nations of the world will be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3).

2). One of the themes throughout Scripture is that this covenant promise seems always to be in danger (Genesis 3:15 – the promise begun and Genesis 12:1-3 – the promise clarified):

a). Genesis 22 – the sacrifice of Isaac

b). Genesis 40-50 – the starvation of God's people, but deliverance through Joseph.

c). Exodus 1 – the demise of God's people in slavery, but deliverance through Moses

d). Numbers 11 – the demise of God's people through disobedience, but deliverance through Joshua and Caleb

e). The Prophets – the demise of God's people through disobedience but the promise of restoration through a Davidic messiah.

f). Esther – the demise of God's people through eradication but deliverance through Mordecai and Esther

(1). The book of Esther shows how God guarantees a faithful remnant.

C. The sovereign Lord works all things together for the good of His people.

1. Reversal of fortunes – the wicked fall and the righteous are vindicated:

a. Haman inadvertently honors Mordecai (6:1-13).

b. Haman is hanged on the gallows intended for Mordecai (7:7-10).

c. Instead of being destroyed, the Jews destroy their enemies (9:1-19).

d. Mordecai is honored above all but the king (10).

IV. Conclusion

A. Our response is faith: utter dependence on the sovereign Lord (4:15-17).

1. We must know that the Lord is sovereign and that He is faithful and that He will work all things together for His glory and our good!

2. How else can we say, "Though I walk through the valley of the Shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

B. This faith allows us to be faithful to God through Christ in a culture that is hostile to Christianity.

1. We already have examples of Joseph, Daniel and friends even before Esther.

2. The only way we can say, "Yes, even if I perish, yes!" is by faith in this big God!

3. When that time comes will we make excuses or will we say yes!

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