

Esther 1-2

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Preacher: Billy Joe Calvert

[0 : 00] We finished up the book of Nehemiah, so tonight we turn the page and we go to the book of Esther. Full confession, this is my first time preaching through the book of Esther, so I'm pretty excited about that.

It brings some unique challenges in it as we approach this book, and we'll see those very quickly. One of the things in which the book of Esther brings to us is that it is not really becoming of... It's kind of hard to say this because we're going to do it, but it makes it a little bit challenging. So I say it's becoming of expositional preaching the way that I do it.

That is, it's hard to pick a few verses and just look at those few verses and exegete those verses and see exactly what's going on. I'll show you why in just a moment. So with that being said, we have to look at big portions of the book of Esther.

Tonight we'll be looking at chapters 1 and 2. We won't read them in their entirety. Sunday night we'll be moving probably chapters 3 and 4 and possibly into chapter 5.

[1 : 02] So we have to see things as big picture, if you will, rather than pulling a few verses out. I would say that there are probably one or two verses which you know full well from the book of Esther, if you are familiar with scripture at all.

Who knows if you are there for such a time as this? Yes, you know that one. Or if you don't speak, then deliverance will come for the Jewish people from another way. We understand that one. But it would also be hard to exegete, that is to pull the truth out of chapter 1, for instance.

And when all we're looking at is the party of a debacle party of a king of the Persian Empire. As they're drinking wine and he asks his wife to do something that is very offensive and she doesn't do it.

And therefore he excommunicates her from the palace and tells her she can never come back. So I don't know what truth we would pull out of that that would be beneficial to us if we did not look at it in larger sections.

Other than don't drink and ask your wife to do something that she shouldn't do in front of a bunch of people. But that is not going to be our aim because those are basic, right? That's the milk of the word. We understand that.

[2 : 06] We know what's going on. So when we approach the book of Esther, we have to approach it differently, okay? We're going with the same passage. We're still going to exegete the book.

But we're going to have to look at it in a broader sense and understand what's going on in its entirety. There's a lot of historical backgrounds that we have to bring in. There's a lot of thought process that we have to bring in our understanding of it.

Because if not, and we confine ourselves to this one book, we will be quite often confused. And we will try to figure out what in the world is going on.

One of the things that will confuse you if you look at this book on its own, independently of any other writing, if you look at this book independently of its historical setting, and if you just look at the verses of this book, I would dare say if you handed someone a copy of the book of Esther and said, here you go, read this, that that person with no other knowledge of scripture would learn nothing about the Lord God Almighty from it.

For his name is never mentioned in the book of Esther. It is implied. But unless you have some foreknowledge of what you're bringing into it, if you're just reading it for its first time, I could hand you this book on its own, and you would say, well, that's a really cool story.

[3 : 26] And that's a really amazing story, how this rags-to-riches type of ordeal came up. But there's so much more going on than just that. So we have to understand its setting.

We have to understand its context. And we have to see exactly everything that's going on. So with that in mind, I'll ask that you kind of bear with me when I don't follow my normal custom, and we don't read every single verse.

We could read all of chapters 1 and 2, but it would probably bore us a little bit. And I don't mean to say that the Word of God is boring. I mean to say that my tone of voice can be monotonous.

And so it would be much easier for you to read it as we go into it as well, for you to read it on your own. So I'll pull a few verses out. We're not going to pick and choose verses, but I will read the verses that would at least get it within a proper context for us.

So I'm going to start in chapter 1. I'm going to read the first 9. Well, actually, I'll read probably the first 12 verses of chapter 1. And then we will go and we will jump over to like verse 19.

[4 : 26] Then we'll get into chapter 2. Okay? Now, it took place in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia, over 127 provinces.

In those days, as King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne, which was at the citadel in Susa, in the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all his princes and attendants, and the army officers of Persia and Media, the nobles and the princes of his province being in his presence.

And he displayed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor of his great majesty for many days, 180 days. When these days were completed, the king gave a banquet lasting seven days for all the people who were present at the citadel in Susa, from the greatest to the least, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.

There were hangings of fine white and violent linen, held by cords of fine purple linen on silver rings and marble columns, and couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother of pearl, and precious stones.

Drinks were served in golden vessels of various kinds, and the royal wine was plentiful, according to the king's bounty. The drinking was done according to the law. There was no compulsion, for so the king had given orders to each official of his household that he should do according to the desire of each person.

[5 : 42] Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the palace which belonged to King Ahasuerus. On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehumon, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Bagatha, Zathar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown in order to display her beauty to the people and the princess, for she was beautiful.

But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. Then the king became very angry, and his wrath burned within him. So we'll stop right there for just a minute.

I mean, honestly, we could really expound a lot right there, right? We're not even looking at the people of the Lord here. We're looking at the people of the world. So his wrath burned within him. Let's go on over to verse 19 because you can read verse 13 that King Ahasuerus consults the wise men that are around him, the people who, quote, understand the times.

They would be his counselors.

She. And the king says in verse 21, this word pleased the king. And the princess and the king did as Mamucan proposed. So he made a decree. He made an edict saying she can no longer come into her presence.

[7 : 24] She ignored my warning. And so because of that, she's no longer queen. So she's been deposed as king. Between that order and chapter 2, four years passed.

And after four years, actually, there's a battle that takes place within the Greek world there. They lose the battle. And when he comes back and he's lost the battle, he's a little down and out because he's just lost the battle.

The Persians didn't win the battle. When he comes home, the home is empty. You know, he doesn't have a queen anymore. And he just came back from a battle in which he was defeated. So he has no comfort at home. So he says, what am I going to do? And so they decide they're going to do the plan that comes forward.

But before we're introduced to that, look at verse 5 of the second chapter. So we're four years after the edict. Now there was at the citadel in Susa a Jew whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimea, the son of Kish, a Benjamite, who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem with the captives who had been exiled with Jeconiah, king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had exiled.

He was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had no father or mother. Now the young lady was beautiful in form and face. When her father and her mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

[8 : 40] So we understand here that he's raising his cousin. Verse 8 says, so it came about that when the command of the decree of the king were heard, and all the young ladies were to be brought into his presence, that they were bringing all these in, that many young ladies were gathered to the citadel of Susa and to the custody of Haggai, that Esther was taken to the king's palace into the custody of Haggai, who was in charge of the women.

Now the young lady pleased him and found favor with him, so he quickly provided her with her cosmetics and food and gave her seven choice maids from the king's palace and transferred her and her maids to the best place in the harem.

Esther did not make known her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had instructed her that she should not make them known. Every day Mordecai walked back and forth in front of the court of the harem to learn how Esther was and how she fared.

Now go down with me to verse 17. You can fill in these gaps later for the sake of time. Let's start in verse 17 and we'll read it into the second chapter. The king loved Esther because her time had come.

She went to his presence, another 18 months and some change had transpired. The king loved Esther more than all the women and she found favor and kindness with him more than all the virgins so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

[9 : 58] Then the king gave her great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his princes and his servants. He also made a holiday for the provinces and gave gifts according to the king's bounty. And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate.

Esther had not yet made known her kindred or her people, even as Mordecai had commanded her. For Esther did what Mordecai told her, as she had done when under his care. In those days while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bithan and Teresh, two of the king's officials, from those who guarded the door, became angry and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

But the plot became known to Mordecai and he told Queen Esther and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name. Now when the plot was investigated and found to be so, they were both hanged on a gallows.

I'll tell you something about that in just a moment. And it was written in the book of the Chronicles in the king's presence. And we'll end right there with our verses as we see Esther chapter 1 and 2. To be hung on the gallows in the book of Esther meant to be impelled upon a tree.

It doesn't necessarily mean be hung by a rope, but it was either the Persians were not necessarily real pleasant. So they were kind of brutal. So it was to impel an individual upon a tree. Think kind of crucifixion or think a tree sticking up.

[11 : 14] We would find out later that's important because Haman builds one that's 50 cubits high. And if you do the math, you think, how in the world did he build a 50 cubit high scaffold? Well, no, the gallows is nothing other than a tree in Haman's yard.

And to be a tree that tall is absolutely possible. So it is understanding in our, it helps us to understand a little bit of clarification. But I want you to see this evening a people or the people in place.

Because there's so much more that's going on in the book of Esther than what we understand. And it is absolutely important, I mean understand just in first reading, it is absolutely important that we approach it this way as the people in place.

First and foremost, I want you to see the providential ruling of God. This book is really a testimony to the providential ruling of the Lord God Almighty.

Providence is God's ability to rule and overrule circumstances throughout history to bring about his purposes for his glory.

[12 : 16] And if we believe in the providential rule, to affirm the providential rule of God is to affirm that all things and all matters are absolutely within his control. It is to declare that everything that happens to us, everything that comes our way, everything that good or bad falls within the realm of God's providential rule.

It is, we cannot say, well he picks and chooses which things he controls. To say that he has providence or to say that he has this type of rule is to affirm the reality that he is absolutely in control.

Now I would say that's a pretty standard issue because if there is anything outside of his control then he is not God. So we need to affirm this rule.

But the book of Esther is one of those that really affirms it and displays it for us. Namely in the fact that his name is never mentioned throughout the entirety of the book.

But yet his purposes and his plans continue on. He does not affirm the actions, even of the first chapter, of the fact that you have King Ahasuerus who is here throwing so many banquets.

[13:24] There are three banquets there. There's the first one that lasts 180 days. There's the second one that lasts for seven days. And then there's the third one that he allows his queen to throw into court too. Three great banquets are going on.

The wine is flowing and everything is there. Everything is declaring Ahasuerus' glory in his reign. And by the way, that's because he's getting ready to go fight a battle. If we read it historically, he's building his own esteem and his own prestige before they fight the battle.

We can see that in history books. But anyway, he is doing it in all of his pomp and all of his glory. And he makes a very poor choice. He does something that is unfitting for any woman to do, let alone the queen to do.

And he makes this request. And by the way, Vashti is very much right in denying this request. But she is indeed punished extremely for it.

But yet, even in this, God does not affirm the actions. But God uses it, as Romans 8 tells us, to work it out for his good purposes. And so we need to understand what's going on in the book of Esther as God's providential moving in history for his people and for his purpose.

[14:33] And if we miss that, then we miss the grand narrative of the story. We would just see, again, this one individual who stood up and made a bold choice and saved her people. But that's not what's going on at all.

We have to ask ourselves, why is the name of God not mentioned in the book? I love what J. Sidlow Baxter said. J. Sidlow Baxter, by the way, he's got a great book out there.

It's an old book. Or he had a great book out there called Explore the Book. And I love that book. It gives you an overview of every book of the Bible. It actually takes you through this kind of, if there's one book, I'd say, hey, get this book and read it in connection with your Bible.

Explore the book. But many of you will look it up and go, that's a big old brick of a book. That's a huge book. I don't know if I want to read that. But it's kind of an overview of everything. But I love what Baxter says. He said, the name of God is here, but it's kind of hidden in the midst of it.

And there's all these acrostics that are all throughout it. And you have to really hunt for it and look for it. And he has all these great theories. But I don't really think we need to stretch ourselves that much. What we understand, there are two major thoughts as to why the name of God is never mentioned.

[15:38] One of the major thoughts is, well, this is a book written outside of the promised land. So it is written and it is set within the Persian Empire. And therefore, the Jewish people outside of the promised land would rarely mention the name of the Lord God Almighty.

Because God's name was connected to his glory and his glory was displayed in Jerusalem, right? But we can't really say that's why it's not here. Because all of a sudden, you should take into your mind the book of Daniel.

Daniel was in the same place. And over and over again, the book of Daniel, we find the mentioning of God's name. Or what about Ezekiel? Ezekiel is a prophet who is in that land. And Ezekiel declares God's name over and over again.

So I kind of dismiss the reality that they don't mention his name simply because they're not in the land. More than likely what's going on here, and this may kind of unsettle us a little bit, but I think it helps to magnify what God is doing.

If we said it historically, the events of Esther happen during the time of the book of Ezra, chapter 1 to chapter 6. Now, if you know, if you remember when we went through Ezra, you said, well, pastor, that was a long time ago.

[16:46] We've already went through 13 chapters in Nehemiah, and Ezra was a long time ago. You're right. But Ezra 1 and Ezra 6 and Ezra 1, there's a King Cyrus issues a decree to whoever wants to go back and go back, and they can return, and they can rebuild the temple, right?

And if you remember, what happens between 1 and 6 is the people get complacent, the people stop, they get scared, and they quit building the temple. It is during that time when the temple construction has stopped, when everybody that returned are building their own homes. This is before the spiritual awakenings in Nehemiah. This is before Ezra ends up in Jerusalem reading the law to them. So what's going on? The work on the temple has stopped. There's no prophet.

Haggai and Zechariah are not there prophesying yet. There's no prophet to stir the people. Everybody's just kind of going through the motions, and God's really not at the forefront of anybody's mind, even the mind of his people.

And if we top it off a little further than that, the people we're talking about, now I know we have a tendency to promote individuals we find in Scripture and to elevate them.

[17:52] I would caution you. Will and I were just talking about, I love how Scripture is very honest about the fallings and failures of people and shows us that there is but one perfect one we're looking for and looking at, and that is Jesus.

So be careful how much you elevate Esther. Be careful how much you elevate Mordecai. Because remember, we are also talking about Jews who decided not to go back to Jerusalem.

The decree had been issued, but they stayed behind. And they were very comfortable behind. And so to put it really bluntly, they're living in the world and they love it.

And that's where they're at. They're not thinking a whole lot of the temple. They gave some money maybe to the people who went back and said, bless you and bless the Lord for sending you.

We're staying here in Susa. We've got a good life. The majority of the Jews stayed behind. And these are some of them.

[18:56] But here's what's telling. By the way, this is going to help us. When we get to week eight of the eight essentials, what about Israel? God also doesn't abandon them that weren't really concerned about reuniting with him.

They had made no effort to go back and rebuild the temple, but God didn't abandon them. Okay, God didn't forget about them and say, well, if y'all don't want to rebuild my temple, forget about you. He didn't.

How do we know that? Because we have the book of Esther. It's right here for us, right? These are the worldly ones who said, we're at home here. We're doing good. And so the name of God is never mentioned throughout this.

God is not glorified or praised or acknowledged. There's mentionings to fasting. But if we would expect, I mean, just honest on face value, when deliverance came, would we not expect there to be glory?

Hallelujah. Yahweh has saved us. We've been redeemed. He has once again set us free. You know what we find? Nothing. Have a party.

[20:00] Each go to your neighbor, give gifts. Jesus even acknowledges this festival of Purim in the New Testament. We could get to that when we get there. But what we have is the providential rule of God in favor of his people because of the covenant of God.

They are still his people. They still are affected by his movements. They're still affected by his leading and his ruling. His plans and purposes are not changed even when they're not responding in complete faith.

Why? Because the covenant with Abraham, it was God who walked back and forth. It was dependent upon him, not them. That's never changed, by the way, in history.

So we have to acknowledge here if everything that goes on is the ruling of God. We may not see the name of God, but we cannot deny the presence of God in this book.

It's all over it. It's manifested from beginning to end. Even as we notice the second thing, the power that was given to man.

[21:12] King Ahasuerus is reigning. Now this is telling. For many years, secular scholars and even biblical scholars said we don't know who Ahasuerus is.

We cannot find his record anywhere. And then, you know, there's an old book called The Spade and the Shovel. And when the spade and the shovel dug in the ground, all of a sudden they found some inscriptions and they found it.

And they found something about this king of the Persian Empire named King Xerxes. X-E-R-X-E-S. King Xerxes. Not Artaxerxes. Xerxes. You know Artaxerxes because he came after Xerxes and

Artaxerxes is the one Nehemiah goes back and forth to.

So it was King Xerxes. King Xerxes' name in Hebrew is Ahasuerus. When you transliterate that name to Hebrew, it's Ahasuerus.

So this is King Xerxes in history. He reigned for 20 years. He had a brutal reign. He was known for kind of being light towards his people. He had a lot of splendor, had a lot of glory.

[22 : 11] It says here are 127 provinces he rules over. And he did. And he did it with all of the power and might and the pomp that you would expect from this empire. He is not a believer. We don't want to pretend like he's a believer. He is the man in power.

Now, just so we understand this, he is also the man in power over who? The Jewish exiles that went back and returned to Jerusalem rebuilding the temple. Or the ones that were supposed to be rebuilding the temple because if you remember, they were not an independent people.

They were still in the Persian Empire. That matters. Because you know that Haman makes a plot to wipe out all of the Jewish people. Which Jewish people would be included in that? All of the Jewish people in King Xerxes' dominion, which would include the exiles who went back when they responded to the decree of King Cyrus, which would have ensured that the temple and walls around Jerusalem would have never been rebuilt, which would have meant that according to Zechariah 9, that he would not be able to ride upon a donkey coming into the city gates and there would be no lineage of Christ.

So don't miss the reality that God is in control of history. Even when this man with supreme power and authority is setting up on his throne, he does what he wants to with the flick of his hand.

He gives his ring to an individual who says, yeah, go wipe out all those people. I don't care who they are. He doesn't even know who they are. And he writes a decree. He allows a decree to be written that he cannot overturn because the law of the Medo-Persians is once a decree has been given, it cannot be overturned.

[23 : 37] That's important, by the way. And then, on another whim, he says, okay, the ones that are going to be killed, y'all rise up and defend yourselves. But, the instability of the man does not overrule the movement of God.

He's just the man in power. Even his debauchery is used to open the door, so to say. When he has this party and these things go wrong and he does the unthinkable and he asks his queen to do the unthinkable, just in case you missed it, he does not just ask her to walk around in a royal robe. He asks her to do the unthinkable among all of his princes and rulers and all immodesty and all impurity and he does something that he should have never done. But God uses even that, even the counsel of his, quote, wise men who understand the times.

Listen, they might have understood the times, but no one knew what was coming ten years later because Haman's not even on the scene here. But God did.

So even with these people who are in place and the removal of Vashti, which we can say she was justified in saying no, it is not fair that she's deposed as king, but yet, if she had not been, there would not have been Esther.

[25 : 03] God knows what he's doing. He uses even the failings of the men in power to bring about his purposes. He holds the heart of the king in the palm of his hand, turning it to and fro, it tells us, as waters in the channel.

And this is absolutely one of those times that there's a power given to man. The man who counseled the wise men had no idea of the plan that was going on.

And yet, God uses it. We notice in the second chapter that there is the positioning of his people. So not only is the door open now that the vacancy is left in the temple palace in Susa, there's a need for a queen.

Four years transpire. He goes and fights a battle which he loses and when he comes back, he comes back to an empty home and he wants the comfort of his wife but yet he made a decree that he cannot overturn. He's probably sobered up.

He sobered up real quick when she said no. He got real angry and so now he can't do anything about it because he made a decree. He followed Meham's advice and decided, well, I can't do that. But there happens to be some people positioned in the right place at the right time.

[26 : 14] But all of that happened before the Persians were even under control. See, that took place when Jeconiah, remember Jeconiah? He's also named Coniah in scripture. He's the one that no descendant of his would ever set up on the throne because of his wicked rule.

He's the one that Nebuchadnezzar came in and carried away. Well, when Jeconiah was being carried away to the Babylonian capital, somebody else was trailing along too and it tells us that in the fifth chapter.

Now, there was in the citadel, happened to be in the citadel, in Susa, a Jew whose name was Mordecai. So not only is he in the capital city, notice where God has him positioned.

He's in the citadel. That means he has a government office. Much like Nehemiah was the cupbearer to the king, Ezra is a scribe, so the Jewish people have really got accustomed.

But Mordecai is here four years later. He's in the citadel. And Mordecai just happens to be raising his cousin, Hadessa.

[27 : 21] That's her Hebrew name, which means myrtle, the plant. But her Persian name is Esther, which means star.

Bible scholars will tell you that the flower on the myrtle plant is in the shape of a star. And so Esther's name is star in the Persian. And he happens to be raising this cousin because her mom and dad have died and God has happened to gifted his cousin with beauty.

And they are in the right position at the right time when the decree of the king was to find all of the beautiful women. And you say, this is so belittling, this is so wrong, and you would be absolutely right.

But don't be surprised when sinners act like sinners and we're talking about a Persian king, we're not talking about what's going on in the temple. And the king makes a parade of these ladies and we don't need to read it, we don't need to see, we can read it in scripture, we know what it says, but God has the right one in place because he's positioned his people.

But I want you to also notice how the people are positioned before him. because when Esther goes into the harem and she is shown favor, we are told that Esther did not make known her people or her kindred.

[28 : 46] She didn't tell them. And we know why. For Mordecai, don't miss this wording here, for Mordecai had instructed her that she should not make them known.

That would be he himself and her. Now, I love what Warren Wiersbe said. For Esther to not reveal that she was of Jewish descent meant that she could not live according to Jewish dietary regulations.

She would not be able to observe Jewish prayer rituals. She would not be able to do anything connected to her Jewish faith. Unlike Daniel, continued to pray with his doors open.

And for them not to know that Mordecai was a Jew means he has to be living the same way. So they weren't even, and we don't mean to put them down, but notice what scripture says.

They're not even living like Jews. And this is even more telling because we see God still moving.

[29 : 54] they don't want anyone to know their heritage or their kindred. And the only way you hide that in the citadel is to live like everybody else.

We don't know the motives behind it. Was it fear? I don't think so. Because he doesn't, Mordecai has at least some semblance of understanding of his heritage later when he refuses to bow down to Haman.

But at least initially they're like, well, don't reveal it to anyone. But God's got them in this position.

Fourth and finally we notice the promotion of the queen. For the king loved Esther more than he loved the others. I would say that love here is used very loosely.

This would be the euros love in which we get the word erotic from in our English language. It would be more of a sensual love. But he loved her more than the others so she found favor in his kindness and kindness and with him more than all the virgins.

[31 : 01] So he set the royal crown on her head and now all of a sudden Esther is queen. We're still four or five years removed from when Haman plots against the Jewish people.

Haman's not even in the royal court yet. But before Haman shows up God's got an answer. And Queen Hester is there.

But she's not the only one who gets a promotion because notice as soon as she gets a promotion something happens with Mordecai too because Mordecai in chapter in verse five is what in the citadel in Susa right.

So he's in the citadel. He's within the compounds there. But as soon as she is made queen it tells us in verse 20 21 in those days while Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate.

So from this point on we find Mordecai not just in the citadel we find him sitting at the king's gate. You say oh well he's just taking a seat. No to sit at the king's gate would like to be sitting in the courtroom as judge.

[32 : 07] These are where matters were discussed. These are when decisions were made. Everything was made at the gate. That's why when we read about Abraham and Lot and Lot goes down and Lot's in that not so good place and we find Lot sitting at the gate when the angels of the Lord get there that means that Lot was holding a prominent position of being a judge in that city and all that wickedness was going on.

So don't think Lot's really too innocent either. Just see the grace and the mercy of God in his deliverance. It's not always highlighting Lot's worthiness. It's always scripture magnifies God's merciful loving kindness beginning and end.

So what we find is now Mordecai has got a promotion because he is sitting at the king's gate. He is an official. He's one of the judges. He's one of those who makes decisions. Nobody knows he's a Jew yet. Nobody understands that but while in this position Mordecai again noticed the timing of God and we'll notice this.

Mordecai is made aware of a plot against the king's life. Some people think that these two doorkeepers are potting because he had married a foreign woman. He had not married one of the women from the proper sex and society.

Not one of the great seven regions that they should have married from and so there's an outsider so they're upset at him. Maybe they were fans of Vashti. We don't know but they were making a plot against Ahasaurus. Mordecai finds out about it.

[33 : 20] He tells Esther because it just so happens to be that his cousin is the queen and he's sitting at the king's gate when all these decisions are being made and so Esther informs the king in Mordecai's name.

Don't miss that. And all of a sudden they find out it's true. They impale these on a tree or they hang them on the gallows. These two are killed and don't miss this little subscript and it was written in the book of the Chronicles in the presence of the king.

And all we think is oh that's cool. They wrote it down in a book. It was written in the book of the Chronicles. There'll be a sleepless night in Ahasaurus' life when he some years later where he opens up the book of the Chronicles and he happens to turn to that page.

But if it had never been written, if Mordecai had never been at the king's gate, if these matters hadn't have been known to him, then Vashti's presence filled with Esther wouldn't matter.

So understand the providential ruling of God for his people because of his covenant. God is working things out for his glory.

[34 : 29] It is for their good, but it's for his glory. And right now he's got the people in place. The problem will arise that God already has the people in place.

This ought to bring great comfort and honor to us and hope. When we face problems, they were foreknown by the Lord God Almighty and he has already done what needs to be done to prepare in advance.

I fully believe in the providential rule of God. That nothing takes him by surprise. That he moves long before these matters begin in the third year of King Ahasuerus' reign.

It's not until seven years later that Haman shows up. God was moving seven years before the problem showed up.

He's not taken off guard. He is not a reactionary figure in the life of his people. He doesn't react to our problems. He is the ruling figure who is preparing us and those around us before we get there.

[35 : 49] And when we see it that way, we understand he's doing it for his glory. He's doing it for his purposes.

He's doing it for his plans. And we see that beginning for us in Esser 1 and 2. Thank you, brother.

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