

Undercover Sovereignty: Esther 1

Undercover; no mention of God, prayer, the Law, the Levitical sacrifices, worship, miracles. Yet God is controlling everything for His purpose all throughout this book. Are we comfortable with God flying undercover? God is!

Psalms 139:1-12 You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

He can be undercover, but He is always sovereign.

Daniel 4:35 He [God] does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth.

Proverbs 16:9 In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.

Proverbs 19:21 Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.

Acts 17:28 For in him we live and move and have our being.

John 19:10-11 "Do you refuse to speak to me?" Pilate said. "Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above."

God's Providence (Jerry Bridges): **His constant care for and His absolute rule over all His creation for His own glory and the good of His people.**

Chapter 1:

Verse 1: Xerxes 486 – 465 BC; third ruler of Persian Empire (539 – 331 BC); Ahasuerus (Heb.); from India to Ethiopia

Verse 2: Susa (Shushan) one of four capital cities

Verse 3: 483 BC;

Verses 4: 6 months open house to impress his leaders to back him militarily against Greece

Verse 5 – 8: banquet for those who served for six-month feast; drinking encouraged but not forced.

Verse 9: Queen Vashti banquet for the women

Verses 10-12: high spirits; sent seven eunuchs (serving the king and his harem); not culturally appropriate; why refused? Outfit, knew their condition (men she knew), other women around her, pregnant? Multiple requests? Xerxes: became furious and burned with anger – weakness not strength.

Verses 13-15: The wise men arrived! Good move by Xerxes.

Verses: 16 – 18: They make things bigger to increase their power. Seriously?

Verses 19 – 20: Sounds more pragmatic than law.

Verse 21: “Every man should be ruler over his own household.” Is it that easy? By fiat...because it’s the law?

Ephesians:5:33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Summary: God is at work among pagan people to move that pieces in place that will rescue the people of God from potential destruction.

Takeaways:

Pride sets us up for a fall.

James 4:6 “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”

Anger can lead us to foolish decisions.

Proverbs 14:17 A quick-tempered person does foolish things,

Conclusion: God’s Providence: His constant care for and His absolute rule over all His creation for His own glory and the good of His people.

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

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