

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.

God's providence in our lives: my story

Looking for a job: a friend whose uncle owned a golf course, close to home/needed help at Cream Ridge

Became my major for college: Univ. of Mass./ summer program at The Woodmere Club

Bel Air Country Club/Westchester Country Club/Echo Lake Country Club 25 years old, in Westfield NJ

Why God's providence? Most of those years wasn't following Jesus; but 3 years later I went to church/Mountainside Gospel Chapel, where I found Jesus once again, I found my beautiful wife of almost 40 years, I found a different calling on my life, I found a seminary to attend, churches to serve in Princeton NJ, Hellam, PA, and Fort Myers FL

Proverbs 16.9 *In their heart's humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.*

We return to the book of Esther, where we see God at work among his exiled children in Persia. We've met Xerxes, the king of Persia, who chose Esther, a Jewish orphan raised by her cousin Mordecai and his wife, to become queen. And we've met Haman, the king's second in command, who, because of his hatred of Jews, has just convinced Xerxes to have all the Jews in the vast Persian empire to be killed, because one Jew, Mordecai, refused to give him honor.

Esther 5.14 *His wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Have a pole set up, reaching to a height of seventy-five feet and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai impaled on it. Then go with the king to the banquet and enjoy yourself." This suggestion delighted Haman, and he had the pole set up.*

Chapter 6: A Sleepless Night (vss. 1-3)

Read

God's Providence (4)

That night **the king could not sleep**; so **he ordered the book of the chronicles**, the record of his reign, to be brought

- Lit: "the king's sleep fled away" other choices?

in and read to him. 2 It **was found recorded there that Mordecai** had exposed Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's random read?

officers who guarded the doorway, who had conspired to assassinate King Xerxes. **Esther 2.22-23**

*But Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai. And when the report was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were impaled on poles. **All this was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king.***

3 "What honor and recognition has Mordecai received for this?" the king asked.

Normal – he would feel good about his appropriate response

"Nothing has been done for him," his attendants answered.

Unusual!

What must Mordecai have thought over 5 years? The king forgot/ignored... but not God!

Warren Wiersbe: It has often been said that "God's delays are not God's denials." We sometimes get impatient and wonder why the wicked are prospering while the righteous are suffering, but God is never in

a hurry. He is long-suffering toward the wicked because He wants them to repent, and He is patient with His people because He wants them to receive the right reward at the right time for the right purpose.

A Morning Resolution (vss. 4-9)

4 The king said, “Who is in the court?” Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the palace to speak to the king about impaling Mordecai on the pole he had set up for him.
Morning arrived: two early risers with two different agendas

His plans are still in place. **Proverbs 6.18** *There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil,*

5 His attendants answered, “Haman is standing in the court.” “Bring him in,” the king ordered.
providence

6 When Haman entered, the king asked him, “What should be done for the man the king delights to honor?”
Competing interests...The king gets to go first...and Haman is glad!

Now Haman thought to himself, “Who is there that the king would rather honor than me?” 7 So he answered the king, “For the man the king delights to honor, 8 have them bring a royal robe the king has worn and a horse the king
He remembers chapter 5: “vast wealth, his many sons, and all the ways the king had honored him and how he had elevated him above the other nobles and officials.”

king, “For the man the king delights to honor, 8 have them bring a royal robe the king has worn and a horse the king
one that everyone would recognize

has ridden, one with a royal crest placed on its head. 9 Then let the robe and horse be entrusted to one of the king’s
horse: Herodotus relates, that the kings of Persia had horses peculiar to themselves, which were brought from Armenia, and were remarkable for their beauty; and if the same law prevailed in Persia as in Judea, no man, under the penalty of death, might ride on the king’s horse, any more than sit on his throne, wear his crown, or hold his sceptre.

most noble princes. Let them robe the man the king delights to honor, and lead him on the horse through the city
streets, proclaiming before him, ‘This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!’ ”

He wanted to be King! (or at least treated like one) and then attend a banquet with the king and queen. What a plan! What a day! Mordecai’s hanging could wait!

A Day of Humiliation (vss. 10-14)

10 “Go at once,” the king commanded Haman. “Get the robe and the horse and do just as you have suggested
Not going to make the same mistake twice.

for Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king’s gate. Do not neglect anything you have recommended.”
He knows who Mordecai is and where he can be found. Jew? Forgot/this honor was more important at the moment/didn’t matter since his decree wouldn’t happen for a year.

11 So Haman got the robe and the horse. He robed Mordecai, and led him on horseback through the city streets,
proclaiming before him, “**This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!**”

Could he experience any greater humiliation? Talk about being stuck between a rock and a hard place. His plan was to ask the king to hang Mordecai, but instead he himself is asking everyone to honor him. Bad day at the office for Haman.

Proverbs 16.18 Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 18.12 Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor.

Proverbs 29.23 Pride brings a person low, but the lowly in spirit gain honor.

12 Afterward Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman rushed home, with his head covered in grief, Did we expect anything different?

13 and told Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Maybe they could lift his spirits?

His advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, "Since Mordecai, before whom your downfall has started, is of Jewish origin, you cannot stand against him—you will surely come to ruin!"

The Persians were a very superstitious people, and the advisers saw in the events of the day a "bad omen" for Haman's future. Perhaps they were also familiar with God's covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3), or maybe they just knew Jewish history.

14 While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hurried Haman away to the banquet Esther had prepared.

Chapter 5 concluded just after a banquet, one that Haman so enjoyed as was so proud about being invited to and chapter 6 ends with the second banquet almost beginning. We can only imagine what Haman's thoughts were as he was hurried away. As Robert Burns so aptly wrote, "The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry".

Takeaways:

1) Building our understanding and trust in God's providence requires patience. Are we willing to trust Jesus that his timing is always perfect? Or do we know better than Him not only when, but what needs to happen. Patience comes as a result of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.

Psalms 37.7-9 *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil. For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.*

Colossians 3.12 *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

2) God gives the lost every opportunity to repent. Haman's humiliation in the streets and these words in his house should have alarmed him and moved him to change his course of action. God was warning Haman, but the proud prime minister wouldn't heed the warning. Had he sincerely repented and asked for mercy, it's likely that he could have saved his own life and the lives of his ten sons.

James 4.8-10 *Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

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