

**"The Silent Seed of Providence" Esther 2:19-23**  
**Wednesday 9/19/18 – Jeff Lyle**

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God often moves silently. Sometimes, it seems as if He does not move at all. While God is nowhere named in the entire book of Esther, the Holy Spirit reveals His intentional activity to the discerning reader. This message teaches us to look for the invisible hand of God who is frequently planting the seeds of His providence in the normal, unspectacular moments of our lives. On any typical day of the believer's life, God is silently, invisibly working on countless levels to accomplish His designs for us.

What is meant by "God's providence"?

**Providence is the means by which God directs all things - both animate and inanimate, seen and unseen, good and evil - toward a worthy purpose, which means His will must finally prevail.**

"The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all." - Psalm 103:19

"In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will..." - Ephesians 1:11

"Our God is in the heavens; He does all that He pleases." - Psalm 115:3

"Whatever the Lord pleases, He does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps." - Psalm 135:6

**I. Providential Location: the right place (19)**

**"Now when the virgins were gathered together the second time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate."**

For those who believe what the Bible teaches about the providence of God, there is no room in our thinking for concepts like coincidence, luck or chance. God exists outside of the realm and time. He is beyond it and above it. In fact, God uses time as a tool in order to accomplish His plans on our behalf. As Esther has been crowned Queen of Persia, her cousin Mordecai is apparently enjoying the privilege of being one who sits in the king's gate where important discussions and decisions would often take place. On a particular day, God sovereignly ensured that Mordecai was positioned at the gate. God determined the location of His servant,

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Mordecai. Something was about to happen, and Mordecai could have been anywhere else on the planet. But he wasn't. He was exactly where God designed him to be in order to experience first-hand what was about to occur. Nobody knew it, but this placement in the king's gate would have a ripple effect later on that would impact a whole generation of Jewish people. It is wise for believers to faithfully be where they are supposed to be when they are supposed to be there. Perhaps, nine times out of ten, there will not be any noticeable impact from our being faithful to where we are supposed to be. Every now and again, however, God drops something from His providential processing right into the location where we are to be positioned.

**II. Providential Oil: the right posture (20)**

**"Esther had not made known her kindred or her people, as Mordecai had commanded her, for Esther obeyed Mordecai just as when she was brought up by him."**

There is a real danger in handling the doctrine of God's providence. Some people allow the pendulum to swing so far that they end up with a fatalistic view of life. This view basically declares, "Because God is sovereign, it does not matter what any people do. He has a plan and there is nothing we can do to enhance it or undermine it. Why bother?" This view is not a biblical view. Wherever the sovereign God of Heaven ordains the end, He also ordains the means to those ends. Most of the time, God works via human instruments who posture themselves in humility, trust and obedience. This is the priceless reward of faith: we get to facilitate the providential plans of God. Esther, though now the highest-ranking woman in the entire empire, still holds to honoring Mordecai and his counsel in her life. Though she had a crown on her head, she still did not have enough wisdom to live detached from Mordecai's guidance. How beautiful that Esther did not let rank, riches or privilege take away from her faith and character. She knew enough of God to retain her posture as a humble daughter-type to her older cousin, Mordecai. She valued his input. She sought his counsel. She obeyed his direction. Yes, God is sovereign, but we do well to remember that humility, obedience and faithfulness tend to facilitate the work God sovereignly ordains for our lives. We often unknowingly cooperate with God's providential plans that He is working when we stay grounded in what we know to be right concerning our attitudes and actions.

**III. Providential Timing: the right process (21)**

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**"In those days, as Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, became angry and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus."**

As God has Mordecai in the right place, he overhears a very troubling conversation. Two of the king's staff members are plotting his assassination. The Scripture is very clear that it was as Mordecai was in the right place at the right time that this conversation occurred between the two traitors. God perfectly timed Mordecai's precise placement at the gate in order for him to be able to intercept the plot to kill King Xerxes. Luck? Coincidence? Chance? No, it was nothing other than the sovereign God of Heaven orchestrating events on planet earth. Again, this singular moment in time will be reintroduced later in the story of Esther. At the time, nobody could have known how crucial this overheard conversation was. This providential moment will intersect with another providential moment in chapter six. It's amazing when it unfolds.

**IV. Providential Connection: the right people (22)**

**"And this came to the knowledge of Mordecai, and he told it to Queen Esther, and Esther told the king in the name of Mordecai."**

Notice the precision of what has occurred: Esther, a Jewess, is married to the king of the land. Her cousin, Mordecai, himself a Jew, is sitting at the king's gate at the precise time when two of the king's staff are discussing a plot to kill him. After overhearing the conversation, the only person to hear it happens to be one of the only people with access to the queen. He reports it to her and Esther, one of the only people with access to the king, reveals the plot to the king and gives Mordecai the proper credit for having uncovered the assassination plot. God was working in all of the details which were taking place. Nobody understood that as it was happening. Later on, it will be abundantly clear that God was not primarily interested in saving a pagan king. He was setting the pieces in play that would later deliver all the Jews in the empire from holocaust.

**V. Providential Detail: the right precision (23)**

**"When the affair was investigated and found to be so, the men were both hanged on the gallows. And it was recorded in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king."**

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This little record-keeping entry would prove to be a major factor in events that followed! The plot was foiled because of Mordecai. The would-be assassins were executed. In the legal documents and official records of their execution, Mordecai's name was written almost as a footnote. The record was formalized, and the book was closed with Mordecai's loyal deed chronicled. Nobody gave it a second thought. Life returned to normal for Mordecai, Esther, the king and all the people. Only the sovereign God of Heaven kept an eye on Mordecai's name written in the volume of legal records. God was not done with that little book. There is coming another providential moment when someone would open that book, just in the nick of time, and uncover that a hero named Mordecai once saved the king's life. It is a moment worth our waiting for.