

Esther

God's Silent Sovereignty

The Purpose of Providence

Esther 6

Grace Fellowship Church | Dave Wernz | July 17, 2022

Esther 6:1-14 *"On that night the king could not sleep. And he gave orders to bring the book of memorable deeds, the chronicles, and they were read before the king. ² And it was found written how Mordecai had told about Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, and who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. ³ And the king said, 'What honor or distinction has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?' The king's young men who attended him said, 'Nothing has been done for him.' ⁴ And the king said, 'Who is in the court?' Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace to speak to the king about having Mordecai hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for him. ⁵ And the king's young men told him, 'Haman is there, standing in the court.' And the king said, 'Let him come in.' ⁶ So Haman came in, and the king said to him, 'What should be done to the man whom the king delights to honor?' And Haman said to himself, 'Whom would the king delight to honor more than me?' ⁷ And Haman said to the king, 'For the man whom the king delights to honor, ⁸ let royal robes be brought, which the king has worn, and the horse that the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown is set. ⁹ And let the robes and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble officials. Let them dress the man whom the king delights to honor, and let them lead him on the horse through the square of the city, proclaiming before him: "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor."'" ¹⁰ Then the king said to Haman, 'Hurry; take the robes and the horse, as you have said, and do so to Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king's gate. Leave out nothing that you have mentioned.' ¹¹ So Haman took the robes and the horse, and he dressed Mordecai and led him through the square of the city, proclaiming before him, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor.' ¹² Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman hurried to his house, mourning and with his head covered. ¹³ And Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, 'If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of the Jewish people, you will not overcome him but will surely fall before him.' ¹⁴ While they were yet talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hurried to bring Haman to the feast that Esther had prepared."*

God is not only sovereign; He is up to something good. He has a purpose! God has a **LOCK** on things. He **limits, orders, controls, and knows** all things. But that's only half of the equation. God's sovereignty describes His divine right and authority to rule. Providence says He uses that authority to weave something beautiful. We usually condense these ideas into the phrase "**God limits, orders, and controls all things for His glory and our good.**" The first half addresses His power. The second half addresses His purposes. God in His kindness has revealed a few of His long-term goals and purposes. Let's explore the blessings that come with celebrating three of these purposes. We'll see how they both protect and direct our lives.

I. God's Purpose #1 – His Glory

When we truly celebrate God's pursuit of His own glory, we can enjoy what Tim Keller calls the "Freedom of Self-Forgetfulness."

"This is gospel-humility, blessed self-forgetfulness. Not thinking more of myself as in modern cultures, or less of myself as in traditional cultures. Simply thinking of myself less."

~ Timothy J. Keller, *The Freedom of Self-Forgetfulness*

II. God's Purpose #2 - Our Good

The most powerful, creative, wise, and kind Being in existence has set a personal goal of doing good for His own. Don't forget that in Genesis 3, Eve never doubted God's authority to tell her what tree to eat from. She simply wasn't convinced He had her best interest in mind when He gave the order.

Luke 15:11-12 *“And He said, ‘There was a man who had two sons. ¹² And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living.”*

III. **God’s Purpose #3 – The Humiliation of His Enemies**

We are talking about God’s enemies, not our enemies.

Genesis 3:15 *“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel.”*

Psalms 110:1 *“The LORD says to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”*

Colossians 2:13-15 *“And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him.”*

Psalms 37:12-13 *“The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them; ¹³ but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for He knows their day is coming.”*

1 Corinthians 15:19-25 *“If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. ²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For as by a man came death, by a Man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵ For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.”*

Isaiah 42:5-8 *“Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it: ⁶ ‘I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, ⁷ to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. ⁸ I am the LORD; that is My name; My glory I give to no other, nor My praise to carved idols.”*

It is so important that we recognize these are God’s enemies we’re talking about here. Not just people who don’t like us, or even the folks who persecute us. In fact, one of the primary ways God humiliates His true enemies is by rescuing and redeeming some truly wicked people, and adopting them into His family. Such were some of us!

Esther 6 shows us at least two good reasons why we still want to celebrate this purpose.

When we celebrate this big picture goal, or at least humbly submit to it, we are free to ignore both the threats of the wicked and the flattery of the foolish. What about you? Wouldn’t you love to have that kind of freedom? That kind of focus? Confident, unafraid, unaffected.

We can have it! All these and more are ours when we humbly submit - or even better, joyfully celebrate - God’s purposes.

Read Psalm 73