

Esther: The Wondrous Providence of God
Esther 4:14

INTRO: Can you imagine this, a Book of the Bible where the name of God is not even mentioned. A book where His name cannot be found. Such a book of the Bible exists; it is the book of Esther. Although the name of God is not found in the book of Esther, He is found on every page. Every page bears the mark of the author. Shakespear's name never appears in his works, yet his works are undeniably his.

The key word that describes this book is providence, the providence of God.

I. UNMASKING PROVIDENCE

- A. We get our word Providence from the Latin word *provideo*.
 - 1. The prefix *pro* means before.
 - 2. *Video* means "I see."
- B. The Sovereign God of the universe sees events before they take place.
 - 1. God sees the future with precise clarity because He is in charge and He is the one who works events according to His purpose, plan, and will (Eph 1:1,5,9,11).
 - 2. At times things seem to be out of hand, but God is in the wings, working invisibly behind the scenes. Ecclesiastes 7:13-14, "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him."
 - 3. The child of God is especially assured of God's plan for him (Rom 8:28; Psa 56:8).
- C. Here are some definitions that will help us understand what providence is:
 - 1. Providence is God at the steering wheel of the universe.
 - 2. Providence means that God is behind the scenes, shifting and dissecting the happenings of the world.
 - 3. Providence is God standing in the shadows, in the wings, keeping watch over His own.
 - 4. Providence is the hand of God in the glove of history, and that glove will never move until He moves it. *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he*

turneth it whithersoever he will (Prov 21:1).

II. UNFOLDING THE PLOT

- A. The book of Esther clearly, plainly and strongly teaches the Providence of God.
 - 1. In the weeks to come, we will continue to see the Providence of God unfold before our eyes.
 - 2. We will see the hand of God moving in the glove of history.
- B. The plot of this story pictures the sure providence of God.
 - 1. An event to remember (2:21-23).
 - 2. Survival of the Jews is the plot of Esther. Mordecai's refusal to bow before Haman enrages this self serving leader so much that he determines that all Jews in Persia would pay with their lives (3:2-6, 8-13).
 - 3. It did not take long for the word to get out that the Jews were in real danger (4:1-3).
 - 4. Knowing that there was only one person who could get to the king to have this impending tragedy stopped, Mordecai appealed to Queen Esther (4:13-17).
 - 5. Esther, with the help of an unseen hand, the hand in the glove of history, devises a plan to eliminate the main enemy of her people.
 - a. Esther invites Haman and the king to a banquet where the king has vowed to hear what is troubling the Queen and grant her wish (5:6-8).
 - b. Haman is elated but his joy turns to bitterness when he passes Mordecai who refuses to honor him.
 - c. Infuriated he cries on his wife's shoulder. She advises Haman to build a gallows to hang Mordecai (5:12-14).
 - d. In the midst of all these happenings, God in His providence gives king Ahasuerus insomnia. He does this to awaken in the king an awareness of Mordecai's past deed of heroism— heroism that had saved the king's life (6:1-3). Through night promptings, God can awaken the sleeper. God uses the Gospel to awaken the sinner often reminding him of the message of the Gospel (Rom 1:16)
 - e. Haman has to drape a robe around Mordecai's shoulders instead of putting a noose around his neck

(6:4-12).

- f. In Esther 6:14, we see a mad Haman picked up by the king's chamberlains to bring him to the banquet.
- g. At the banquet table, Esther reveals the ugly plot against her people the Jews. The king wants to know who is the evil man behind this (7:5).
- h. In a raging fit, the king orders Haman to be hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Haman (7:10).

III. UNDERSTANDING THE GOD OF PROVIDENCE BETTER

- A. God does work in mysterious ways; at least His ways are mysterious to us.
- B. Our God is an awesome God, and we need to see just how awesome He is if we are to get a glimpse of the way He works:
 - 1. The mind of God— His unsearchable judgments.
 - a. Searching the mind of God is like a minnow surveying the ocean. The best we can do is see what lies in front of our tiny eyes.
 - b. Read carefully the words of Isaiah the prophet (Isa 55:8-9).
 - 2. The will of God— His unfathomable ways.
 - a. The ways of God are deep. So deep that many times we can not plumb their depths.
 - b. Roman 11:33-34.
 - 3. The power of God— His Sovereign control.
 - a. Our God is an all powerful God. He is omnipotent and can do what He pleases when He pleases.
 - b. Daniel 4:34-35.

IV. UNFAILING PROVISION

- A. We have already seen that the word providence comes from the Latin words *provideo*: pro meaning “before, and video “I see.”
 - 1. As the Sovereign over this universe, God sees things before they happen.
 - 2. Because God sees ahead, he has made provision for His people. Another definition of providence is “to provide.” God will provide (Rom 8:29-31).
- B. God has made provision for salvation to all who will believe. The story of Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah (Gen 22) is the story of God’s provision.

1. In Gen 22: 6-7, we see how Abraham had the wood, fire, and knife for the sacrifice.
 2. Note that Isaac says, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"
 3. In verse 8, Abraham answers: "God will provide himself a lamb...." Remember providence means to provide.
 4. Vss 9-12 tells us of the obedience of Abraham and the submission of Isaac.
 5. In vs 13, we see God's provision of a sacrifice.
 - a. The sacrifice was a ram not a lamb.
 - b. God would provide a Lamb. Nineteen hundred years later, a man, the God man, walked into the area where Abraham had offered Isaac. Of this man, Jesus, John the Baptist proclaimed: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1;29).
 - c. Friend, God has provided a Lamb of sacrifice for sinners. You need the Lamb of God to take away your sin. You need Jesus!
- C. There is another word that speaks of God's knowing beforehand. It is the word foreknowledge. In God's foreknowledge, He determined that Christ would die, must die for sinners (Acts 2:23-24). Jesus died so men could live eternally.

CONCLUSION: In God's providence, He has allowed you to hear the Gospel message. Receive Him today.