

“Divine Coincidences”

Esther 5 - 6

Introduction

Often, God moves in ways that we might perceive to be coincidental -- things just naturally seem to happen. People call those moments luck or chance but as believers we know that God is always at work through His providence. In Chapter 4:15-17, Esther decided to fast & pray as she was faced with the possibility of death when seeking out the king without being summoned. In doing so she made a commitment of faith and beseeched the prayers of others so that God would protect her. When Esther first heard Haman’s plot to kill the Jews and her potential role in saving their lives, she was unsure that she wanted to take the risk of her personal involvement (Esther 4:11). However, when she made the decision to take righteous action and pray for God’s engagement, He began to orchestrate a plan on her behalf. Esther’s plan involved holding a banquet for the king and Haman. During this banquet she did not reveal her concern, rather God moved in her heart to request a second banquet (Esther 5:7-8). We learn that God’s timing is always right, because this pause allowed God’s invisible hand to intercede. God allowed the king to experience insomnia which led to the king’s desire to read the book of records (Esther 6:1-3). It was during this night of sleeplessness that the king read the exact chronicle that told of Mordecai’s act of service in saving his life. (Esther 2:21-23) While the King was contemplating a way to honor Mordecai, Haman just happened to enter the court (Esther 6:4-5) when the king asked, “What is to be done for the man whom the king desires to honor?” While Haman thought he was giving recommendations to honor himself, Haman was actually making a recommendation to honor Mordecai, the very Jew he plotted to kill (Esther 5:9-12). Haman even ended up being the person to lead Mordecai, a Jew, through the streets on the king’s horse.

God can use His invisible hand to create circumstances that look like coincidences but are truly a part of His perfect plan. We must be on the alert for how God might be moving through ordinary interruptions with perfect timing. We have to keep our eyes open for the coincidental “look-alikes.” Not only did God move through a series of seemingly coincidental moments, He also created a great reversal in their situation. God reversed the racial prejudice demonstrated by Haman’s hatred for the Jews. Haman who previously received honor was forced to then honor his enemy Mordecai. God allowed both Esther and Mordecai to experience the victory of overcoming a bleak situation. If we begin to look at how God can turn things around through little coincidences, we will see more of Him. People often look for the big stuff but we need to look for the small moves of God and celebrate His providential power. Once you begin to live with an eye to see His invisible hand, you will see that He is working on your behalf. The key is to be like Esther and decide to act in righteousness and walk in obedience. Once we position ourselves under His rule and direction, we will see more of His divine providence at work.

Getting Started

1. Think about the people you know at home, at work, or in your community? What characterizes their explanation of coincidences, a belief in luck or a belief in the providential hand of God?
2. What does it look like for you to look for God in the little things in your life?

Let’s Get Personal

1. What inconspicuous or small things has God used for good in your life?
2. Have you ever experienced God using your enemies to bless you? Share that experience with your group.
3. How will you look at “chance happenings” differently in light of the message? What chance happenings are happening in your life right now that you see differently as a result of listening to this week’s sermon?

Take the Next Step

1. What decisions do you need to make regarding righteousness in your life that might make it possible for you to see God’s providential hand? Share that with your group.
2. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: Psalm 121:4, 127:2; Daniel 1:8-16; 1 Samuel 9:1-21; Proverbs 16:7; 21:1, 3:1-30, 6:1-28

Renew Your Mind

“...And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?” Esther 4:14