

June 14, 2020 - Psalms 147:5-7 / Esther 6:1-11 - "Sleepless in Shushan"

Introduction

We have all heard and seen the "Restless in Seattle" videos in the news. We know that is a play on the film title *Sleepless in Seattle*". Today I have my own play on the title "Sleepless in Shushan" where we witness God working in a mysterious way. When someone says that God works in mysterious ways, they often mean that God does something completely opposite of our expectations. God can make a way where there does not seem to be a way. Have you ever been in a situation where you thought it was pretty hopeless? The problem is what we see is not necessarily all that there is. We often have tunnel vision. God is at work in our lives even in the worst of times.

There are many places in the Bible that tell stories of God's direction in someone's life that leads that person down a road they never thought they would tread. The Bible is full of stories of God astonishing His people when they realize how He had devised situations in their lives. A constant characteristic of God's nature is how He turns situations and problems upside down. Psalms 147:5 states, Great *is* our Lord, and of great power: his understanding *is* infinite which means that we cannot possibly comprehend all the ways that He works throughout our lives. An excellent example of God's mysterious ways is exemplified in the life of Mordecai and Esther to change the circumstances and it all began with...

II. The Kings Sleepless Night (6:1-3)

1. King Xerxes did what many do when they cannot sleep. He brought out a book and used it to fill his sleepless night, hoping that the reading would make him sleepy again. Charles Haddon Spurgeon stated, "Ahasuerus is master of one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, but not master of ten minutes' sleep! This was a remarkable example of Divine Providence in action on the very same night the evil Haman build the gallows the King can't sleep.

2. This king had many options to fill his sleepless night - but he commands that a book be brought to him and read. The one commanded to bring the book could have brought any one book of the records of the chronicles, but he brought one particular book. The book could be opened to any page, but it was opened to the exact page telling the story of Mordecai and how he saved the King from assassination. God guided every step of the way.

Let it be a lesson to us in resolving issues. God desires that we do all we can and leave the rest to Him. King Ahasuerus heard read to him how Mordecai had saved his life by reporting the evil assassination plot against him. In those ancient days, Kingdom revolt was the menace and fear of kings. So this king is aware that this is a serious matter. Of all the records to read it is a mathematic impossibility to come upon the exact record that would save Mordecai and the Jewish people but with God as our Father all things are possible.

Illustration and Application

The world has not change much; many of us lived to see President Kennedy assassinated and Reagan shot too. But it was President Truman who could relate to King Xerxes whom life was spared. Truman and his wife were upstairs in the Blair House and he was taking a nap when they heard a commotion—and gunshots—coming from the front steps of the house. A pair of would-be assassins had strolled up to the front door and opened fire. They never made it past the front steps, the Secret Service met them at the entrance and a gun battle ensued. One of the Secret Service agents was slain. The next day President Truman said, "You know, it is a strange thing to know that you are alive because another man has died. I will never forget him. **This book is the story of the One who gave his life for us. --- Gospel / Romans 5:8**

4. Xerxes asked what reward was given in a very rare showing of concern for a common subject of the kingdom. God holds the heart of every man as Proverbs 21:1 states: The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD... The answer was simply nothing.

III. Haman in the court of the king. (Est. 6:4-5)

1. It is early in the morning but the king hastens to demonstrate his appreciation. He asks, "Who is on duty in the court?" Haman? This is one of those coincidences which are never really a coincidence Haman had just arrived in the outer court of the palace to ask the king to impale Mordecai on the pole that he had prepared. The book of Esther shows us that God manages the affairs of men, even without their knowledge. God knows what He is doing.

If the Book of Esther shows us anything, it shows us that God manages the affairs of men, even without their knowledge. God knows what He is doing and in the courts of heaven there are no coincidences or surprises.

The king greets Haman in verse 6 with these words, "**What shall be done to the man whom the king delights to honor?**" He has no doubt who that man is. There is only one man He thinks can fit the requirements for honor; Haman was so vain he probably thinks this reward is about him."...

2. Haman is required to express to the King what honor should be done for such a man. Of course since he believes it all about him, Haman pours it on strong. Haman says, "Look, if you want to really honor this man, give him your kingly clothes to wear, your horse to ride, give him a crown to wear -- give him yourself, publicly!" This is true honor.

3. What a scene in verse 10 & 11! Can you imagine this? What a picture of bitter humiliation as Haman, in a bedazzling rage, walks through the streets of this city leading the horse of Mordecai who is the man he planned to murder that very day. Mordecai is wearing the royal garments of the king and wearing a crown upon his head. Haman's plan of glory has collapsed through. All his proud ambitions exposed by this maddening thing that he must do! Outwardly, he is praising Mordecai, "This is the man whom the king delights to honor." Inwardly, he is grinding his teeth and awaiting a time for revenge.

Conclusion:

Have you ever known someone like Haman or been in a situation by someone like him to hurt you? God has a plan for every life here today. If we are not saved, that plan begins with coming into a right relationship with God by receiving Jesus Christ as our Savior. The person who isn't saved is uncertain about life: Faith in Christ trades uncertainty for assurance.

I John 5:13 These things are written that ye might know that you have eternal life.

No matter how difficult life may seem, or how sometimes life hits us between the eyes, God gives us the assurance that He is able to take care of our lives. A constant characteristic of God's nature is how He turns situations and problems upside down to work for the good of His people. A seventeenth-century French monk named Brother Lawrence wrote, "If we knew how much [God] loves us, we would always be ready to receive equally . . . from His hand the sweet and the bitter." This is difficult! What Brother Lawrence is talking about lies in God's character. The psalmist said of God, Thou *art* good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

“(Psalm 119:68).