
REMEMBER ME OH LORD

Esther 6:3

ADEOYE, EMMANUEL (EVANG.)

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Then the king said, "What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?"

And the king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him." NKJV

Once again, we see the sovereign hand of God invisibly at work in the life of King Ahasuerus. God was working out His purposes whether the king knew it or not. *The king's insomnia; Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,* wrote Shakespeare. Solomon agreed: *"The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep"* (***Eccl 5:12, KJV***). Was it the cares of state that kept the king awake? Was he worried about his finances? Did he eat and drink immoderately at the queen's feast? Or, was he puzzled about the queen's mysterious request?

Some or all of these worries may have played a part in the king's wakefulness, but behind them was the sovereign hand of the living God who watches over His people and never slumbers or sleeps (***Ps 121:3-4***). God wanted the king to stay awake because He had something to tell him.

While visiting the zoo, I became fascinated with the "nocturnal exhibit." Here were animals that most of us never see because they sleep in the daytime and do their active living at night. "While you are resting," said one of the posters, *"Nature is busily at work helping to keep the balance of life stable."* I thought to myself, *"While I'm asleep, my Heavenly Father is busily at work making sure the new day will be just what He wants it to be."* God's compassions never fail but are *"new every morning"* (***Lam. 3:22-23***) because God never sleeps and never

stops working all things together for our good (**Rom 8:28**).

God directed Ahasuerus to ask for the kingdom chronicles to be read to him. (That would put anybody to sleep!) But God also directed that the servant take from the shelf the very book that recorded Mordecai's service to the king five years before. Certainly there were other volumes available, but that's the one the servant selected. God can even direct *what we read* in a book.

The king's servant picked out the very book that told about Mordecai's good deed and read that section to Ahasuerus. How marvelous is the providence of God!

The king's delay in rewarding Mordecai (Est 6:2-3). This is a key matter; for had Mordecai been honored five years before, the events of this critical day could not have occurred. Rewards and punishments were basic to the Persian system of maintaining loyalty, and it was unusual for meritorious service not to be rewarded.

It has often been said that "God's delays are not God's denials." We sometimes get impatient and wonder why the wicked are prospering while the righteous are suffering, but God is never in a hurry. If Mordecai was ever puzzled because the king promoted

Haman but ignored him, he would soon find out that God had not made a mistake.

The timely arrival of Haman (Est 6:4). It's possible that Haman had been up all night, enjoying the supervision of the construction of the gallows on which he planned to hang (or impale) Mordecai. It was very early in the morning, but Haman wanted to see the king as soon as possible and get permission for the execution (**Prov 6:18**). From Haman's point of view, the earlier the hanging, the better. Mordecai's body would be on exhibition all day, and this would delight Haman and also put fear into the hearts of the Jews in the city. After executing Mordecai, Haman could be certain that everybody would obey the king's command and bow down to him.

Suppose Haman had arrived two hours later? The king would have consulted with other advisers, and Haman would have been left out of the celebration for Mordecai. God wanted Haman to spend the day honoring Mordecai and not gloating over Mordecai's corpse on the gallows. God was actually warning Haman that he'd better change course or he would end up being destroyed.

When you review these evidences of the providence of God, you can't help but want to praise and thank Him for

the great God that He is. "The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.

In verse 6, the king's question was vague and didn't identify *"the man whom the king delights to honor"* (NKJV). In his pride, Haman concluded that the king was speaking about him. After all, what other man in the empire deserved such honor from the king? After the way Mordecai had insulted him, Haman would now get double revenge: First Mordecai would see Haman honored by the king, and then Mordecai would be hanged on the gallows. Haman would then climax the day by feasting "merrily" (5:14) with the king and queen.

Little did proud Haman realize that, before the day would end, the situation would be completely reversed: Haman would be forced to honor Mordecai before all the people of the city; Esther's feast would turn out to be an exposé of the traitor; and Haman, not Mordecai, would end up on the gallows. *"The righteous is delivered from trouble, and it comes to the wicked instead"* (**Prov 11:8**, NKJV).

"Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, and before honor is humility" (18:12, NKJV). The first half of that verse applies to Haman and the last half to Mordecai. What a difference a little comma makes! **Prov**

29:23 gives the same message: *"A man's pride shall bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor"* (NKJV). On which side of the comma do you live?

Thinking that the king was describing the honors he himself would receive, Haman asked for the very best: The man to be honored should be dressed in the king's own apparel; he should ride on the king's horse with the royal crest on its head; and one of the noble princes should lead the horse through the city and command the people to honor him. Such an event would almost be like a coronation! The more I ponder the character of Haman, the more convinced I am that he wanted the throne for himself. As second man in the empire, if anything happened to Ahasuerus, Haman was certainly in the best position to capture the throne for himself.

A proud man with selfish ambitions isn't content to take second place if there's any possible way to secure first place. If what is described in **Est 6:8-9** had actually been done for Haman, it would have given the people of Shushan the impression that Ahasuerus had chosen Haman to be his successor.

Note that King Ahasuerus called Mordecai "the Jew" (v. 10). You get the impression that the king completely forgot that he had permitted Haman to issue an edict to destroy the Jews.

One day the king is an enemy of the Jews, and a few weeks later he honors one of the leading Jewish citizens! But Ahasuerus had a debt to pay, for Mordecai had saved his life. And perhaps in honoring Mordecai publicly, the king might help calm the troubled citizens of the city (3:15).

We wonder what Haman's response was when the king told him to do all those things for Mordecai. Was he shocked? Did he show his astonishment openly? Probably not, because you didn't express yourself that freely before an Eastern monarch. With the practiced duplicity that got him where he was, Haman bowed to the king's commandment and obeyed.

First, he had to go out to the king's gate, get Mordecai, and bring him into the palace. Then he had to dress Mordecai in the king's robes. After putting Mordecai on the king's horse, Haman had to lead the horse throughout the city and proclaim, "This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!" (v. 9, NIV) After he had visited all the city streets, Haman had to lead the horse back to the palace, remove the royal garments from Mordecai, and send him back to his place at the city gate. What irony! For almost a whole day Haman was the servant of Mordecai, commanding the people to bow down and honor him! The thing Mordecai wouldn't do

for Haman-bow down-Haman had to tell others to do for Mordecai!

How did this pageantry and prominence affect Mordecai? When it was over, he simply returned to his place at the gate and continued to serve the king. Applause doesn't change truly humble people, for their values are far deeper. God can trust His blessings with the humble because they seek to honor only the Lord.

Even if they did bow down to him, Haman had no desire to see the public, because he had been humiliated before them and he knew that they were laughing at him behind his back. Such is the difference between reputation and character. Haman was a famous man, a man of reputation, only because the king had made him so; but he was not a man of character. His reputation depended on his office, his wealth, and his authority, all of which could easily be taken from him.

• **LESSONS TO TAKE HOME**

- 1. GOD IS ALIVE IN YOUR SITUATION – *Hebrews 13:8*.**
- 2. HE NEVER FORGET'S YOU – *Psalms 121:1-4***
- 3. HE SEE'S ALL YOUR STRUGGLES - *Psalms 37:25***

4. FEAR NOT – 2 Timothy 1:7

**5. GOD REMEMBER'S HIS OWN
– Genesis 49:9-15, Isaiah
49:15**

CONCLUSION – Hymn 208 (Never Grow Old)