

God's control in the life of Mordecai (Quality: Good, quiet)

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

[0 : 00] The book of Esther, the ninth chapter and the fourth verse.

Ninth chapter of Esther, verse four. For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the province.

For this man, Mordecai, waxed greater and greater. This is a very remarkable man.

There are few. You might almost wonder if there are any, that have ascribed to them what the word of God ascribes to this man, Mordecai.

And there are three things in our text which speak of him. The first is this.

[1 : 38] He was a great man. And he was great not in his own esteem. There are people who are exceedingly great, but their greatness extends no further than themselves.

That's the limit of their greatness. And that kind of greatness is not worthy of our consideration.

He was great. He was great. He was great. He was great. He was great. He was great in a great place.

great place. As we read in our text. He was great in the king's house.

Secondly, we are told that he was famous. Well, there are, of course, there are a great many people who are famous for various reasons, either because of their prowess or their position among men.

[3 : 03] But this man was famous throughout the whole of the province of this land, which was a great land.

King Ahazarius presided over a hundred and thirty-seven, I believe it is, provinces, which reached far and wide in his time.

In other words, he was the greatest monarch in the land, in the time in which he lived.

And Mordecai was great. He was famous throughout all the provinces reigned over by this king.

The third thing that we shall be looking into in respect to this man, Mordecai, is that he waxed stronger and stronger.

[4 : 15] Well, this needs to be closely and deeply investigated. Because here is something that is not natural.

Naturally, we grow weaker. The powers of man and of the creature grow less, become failing as time proceeds.

The whole tendency of human life and all the circumstances that prevail concerning human life and human existence is always in this direction.

the whole thing that has to be seen. The whole thing that is not natural. The whole thing that is not natural. It is not natural. Just the very opposite from men of science and what they claim. That man is getting better and better, and one day he will arrive at a state and condition of perfection.

condition of perfection. Evolution, for instance, is all based upon this principle. It couldn't exist. It's untenable in the eyes of those who promote it, unless it is with this great principle of increasing and becoming more and more perfect as time proceeds. But we know this, that flesh and blood fail. Man returns to his place. Strengths, as we read in the last chapter in the book of Ecclesiastes, the powers of the creature fail and become diminished.

[6 : 33] And that is the order that prevails over all human life. And you know it so well, and I know it so well. But here is a man that the scripture tells us, waxed greater and greater.

And I say we must look into these three points regarding this man and try to unravel and for our own profit, personal and collectively, for our profit, to see what the scripture intends us to learn from this striking illustration of this individual that is so highly honored by the descriptions that the word of God. And as I say, there are few, if any, found in the word of God that have such a threefold testimony of greatness and famousness and strength as this man does here before us. Now, question then that needs to be asked and also answered is this, what purpose has God in this part of his word for his people? Because we are thoroughly convinced of one thing, that all scripture is by inspiration of God and all scripture is profitable for edification and for profit for the man of God to be instructed and illuminated and guided into the ways of the

Lord and of salvation. And therefore, we shall never find in any part of the scriptures an exception to that golden rule. Be sure of that. We may not understand some parts of the word of God.

God bless. Their purport and their intent may escape our understanding. But it's not that the word lacks anything. It's we that lack. And what we should do is to pray more earnestly that the Lord would show us and lead us into the truth that he lays before us in his holy word.

We can be sure of this. There is something all important and intensely needful and valuable in this part of the word of God. And that's what we want to lay hold upon this morning.

[10 : 00] Now, there have been in the church of God good men from time to time that have questioned whether this book of Esther should be among the canonical scriptures. And the reason for their opinion has been based on these things. First of all, there is no mention of the name of God in the whole of the book of Esther.

No mention of the name of God. That seems strange in itself. But I would say this. There is hardly a book in the whole Bible that reveals the mighty power, the sovereign goodness of that God over and for and on behalf of his people.

And if the name of God does not appear, the works of God do in all their glory, power, and wonder.

So we would not reject this portion or part of the word of God on that account.

Because the very fact and the wonderful working of God's providence is so demonstrated in the life and experience of the people of God here in this book of Esther.

[11 : 47] Secondly, some have felt it to be simply a history, a small history of a heathen nation, nothing much to do with the people of God.

This throne and this people, the Medes and Persians, were not part of the Israel of God.

And therefore it was a history really virtually of a heathen land and a heathen nation. And ought, they say this, this is their argument, ought even a small part of a heathen nation's history be brought into the word of God.

Well, there again, if God has been pleased to make use of a heathen nation. And if he has been pleased to use a heathen monarch as he has done, for instance Cyrus the Persian, whom heathen monarch, whom he has done, whom he has done, whom he has done, whom he used mightily and wonderfully to restore Jerusalem and the people of God to their old land and to their former times and worship of those times.

We cannot ignore this. Say that there should be no mention whatever of such a case or such a historic fact in the word of God.

[13 : 29] You see, the whole thing demonstrates to you and to me that God is unlimited. He has his power. His omnipotence is over everything, all kinds, even his enemies.

He controls them as equally and as powerfully as he does his own people who serve him and believe in him.

And all this reveals to you and to me the mightiness of our God. So we reject then the second reason for removing of this book of Esther from the canon of Scripture.

Now the third is this. And that is that it seems to elugise and honour revenge.

These Jews took terrible revenge upon their enemies. They say, well, this is altogether inconsistent with the whole of the teaching of the word of God and especially with the teaching of the Lord Jesus, where he says, love your enemies.

[14 : 57] Do good to them that hate you. If a man compels you to go a mile, go with him twain, you see, in that. Now this may be the most difficult point in our argument to support the book of Esther as part of the canon of Scripture.

But I want to show you, and I hope I shall be able to show you from the Scriptures themselves, how very important these things are.

I said on Thursday at the Alpharmity, that sometimes it's difficult for people, Christian people, to understand appreciatively the maledictory psalms of David, which he vents all his enmity and spite against his enemies.

And I said then on Thursday, that if we ever know, if we ever come acquainted with our own hearts and the sinfulness of our own hearts and what kind of forces there is dwelling within our own bosom against God and Godliness, we shall desire with all our strength to have those powers eliminated, suppressed, destroyed.

And that is exactly what David was pursuing when he wrote those maledictory psalms calling down upon his enemies the vengeance of God.

[16 : 52] You will do it. I will do it. In the realm of my own heart and conscience and also in yours.

Now, having said that then, let us proceed with our endeavor this morning to come to an understanding of the characteristic and the purport of this portion of the word of God.

And I would say this at the outset. I believe we have here a very profound and striking spiritual portrait of the believer's own heart.

I think this book of Esther, now this is of course my own view of it and my own opinion and I don't wish you to accept it unless it can be seen to be in accordance with the scripture.

But my own view is this, that the book of Esther affords a very striking portraiture of the inner man, the inner workings in the soul of a person, of God's grace, the life of the spirit, the power of faith, the struggles and travails of the soul against sin, unbelief and the flesh.

[18 : 43] And I believe it is, as we may look at it and view it, a very striking and beautiful portrait that God gives us of the inward condition of a real believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now you know that the Lord Jesus himself, when he was here on earth, he gave a number of portraits or illustrations of the various workings of the spirit of God in the hearts of men.

You know those parables that he uttered when he was here. He illustrated taking from nature, from all kinds of things that are well known, common to men, their daily observation.

He takes of these things and he draws out of them and draws from them a great deal of lively and striking instruction that appertains to the spirit and the experience of the beneath.

There's the sower and the sowing of the seed, for instance, one of the most striking portraits of the effect and working of the gospel among men.

[20 : 22] Well now, what have we here then? Let us just look at it very simply and plainly if we can. it's my task, therefore, to try and prove that there's a deeper side to the book of Esther than the historical side of it.

There's something here lying down beneath these words and these events, circumstances, and these characters that appear on the surface.

There's something deeper. The mere historical account that might be in itself very interesting and is indeed very interesting, but no more than that.

What we want is something that will affect us, teach us, lead us nearer to the Lord Jesus Christ, make his kingdom more precious and the life of God more blessed in our own experience.

Now that is my task. You will tell me no doubt, frankly, at the end whether I have achieved what I set out to do.

[21 : 42] Well now, let us look at one or two facts and things that relate to this man, Mordecai. He was situated, as it says, in the king's house.

Now that king's house was Shushan. There's always a meaning behind these words if we'd like to take the trouble to look into it. Shushan means a lily.

And that rather suggests in my mind that God had in his mind when he brought these things to the forefront in his word. He had a place, a very special place, in his esteem.

Shushan was a section, if you like, in this great kingdom of Ahasuerus where he lived. The king's palace was there.

The court was there. It was the seat of authority. It was the very heart of everything, really, in those days, in this particular kingdom and this people.

[22 : 52] Shushan. Now, you read two things about Shushan, among other things. you read on one occasion that Shushan was perplexed.

And you ask the question, why was Shushan perplexed? And you find it was perplexed because there was intrigue going on within its environment.

There was a terrible intrigue and this intrigue involved the entire people of the Jews. Esther was a Jewess.

It involved her own life as well as the life of her people. And these people, Mark, you, were nothing to do with the real people over which this king reigned.

But we read this, when they were in trouble, Shushan was perplexed. Then again, a little later on, we read this in the previous chapter, that Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

[24 : 15] Now, there were two conditions that are described in this respect of this place, Shushan.

First, it was perplexed, then it was made to rejoice and be glad. And why was it made to rejoice? because the power that had endeavored and engineered the destruction of the people of the Jews had been himself brought down, exposed, and destroyed.

And then, Shushan was glad and rejoiced. Well, now, that so far shows us perhaps an idea, an inkling about the place where all this scene was enacted.

Now, what about the king himself, Ahasuerus? Well, I would suggest that he is the mind, the mind, the mind that controls, you see.

It was he that ordered and instructed and gave power, gave unlimited power to Haman to do what he would.

[25 : 50] It was he that was affected so much by Esther's beauty and by her bold and valiant appeal to him when she was in great distress.

Well, then, what about Esther herself? I would say she is the soul's desire, that soul's desire that was first of all nothing, suppressed, insignificant, yet comes to the light very wonderfully, supported and assisted all the while by Mordecai, her uncle, and how that soul's desire prevailed and eventually succeeded in rising to a place and position of priority and all importance.

Therefore, we shall keep in our minds as we consider this portion of God's word that Esther is the soul's desire. Well, then, who is Haman and what is he?

His word, the name Haman means tumult. And indeed, I believe he is an example of the flesh.

You see, he was against everything that was for the promotion of Mordecai and Esther. He was against that.

[27 : 41] He wanted to see the total destruction of the whole of those people, the Jewish people, that formed a part of the king's province.

He went about to procure that aim of his with subtle ingenuity. He tried to succeed by wealth, by flattery, by all things within his power, to destroy.

And he told the king Ahas Urias, the mind, that they were a people that brought no real profit to his kingdom.

And it would be far better if they were removed entirely from his people. And he was offering them a great sum of money in order to carry out this evil desire of him.

Well, then that brings us to Mordecai himself. And what can we find of him? Or what can we make of him?

[29 : 04] Why, this is surely faith. Oh, how wonderfully he does exemplify faith in the soul. He's there at all times, sometimes in sackcloth and ashes.

We find and read of him as sitting outside the king's gate clothed in sackcloth, covered with ashes. When trouble was afoot, when he could see the danger increasing, when he could see that the king really, his best interests were in jeopardy, and his true people, the people who were the real vital people of his nation, they were in danger of destruction, annihilation.

then this Mordecai sat in ashes and was clothed in sackcloth, in a place where it was forbidden that such a garb and such condition should prevail.

And then again, how he comes and cultivates Esther all the way through, right from the very beginning, he brought her up. Virtually her very existence depended upon Mordecai, and all she was, all she was able to accomplish was lovely through his influence and through his presence.

Yes, it's a most extraordinary, striking example of faith, is Mordecai. And so we look at him now, it says in our text, he was great in the king's house.

[31 : 07] What is greater than faith? Compare faith with reason, and there's no comparison.

Compare faith with learning, intellect. intellect, and its intellect and learning fall far, far below.

Compare faith with anything, and faith rises above all things. It's the greatest asset that any soul can possess, a living faith, faith in God.

It was, he was great in the king's house. King did not recognize him. For a long while, Mordecai was about the king's court at the gate, sitting at the gate.

He would not acknowledge or bow to anyone, especially Haman, whom he knew to be an enemy of his people. But he was there unrecognized until one night, and here we see the wonderful providence of God.

[32 : 35] One night, the sleep of the man, the king, was taken away from him. And on his restless bed, in order to entertain his mind, to occupy the time, he calls for the records of the land and nation to be read before him.

And here again is the providence of God, the hand of God over it. There must have been a mighty volume, many volumes, no doubt, of the history of this land.

All the records that had to be made and would be made, of every event, great and small, that had taken place in the land, it would comprise a great, many, many volumes, undoubtedly, of written history.

And yet, out of all that volume, one single part and portion was opened and read before the king, how that a few years previously there had been an insurrection and there had been an attempt made upon the life of the king.

Mordecai had been the instrument in discovering this plot and warning those of its nature and consequently was the cause of the defense and safety and survival of the king.

[34 : 31] Now, this was recorded, but it had never been recognized. And in that night when the king could not sleep, this very account was read before him.

And immediately he says, what has been done for this man to reward him for the great service that he has rendered to me? You see, it was the first realization of what faith could do.

Now, my friends, to bring this down into our personal experience, I don't want to be just thinking this morning, bringing before you the outward facts.

I want us to realize what a wonderful thing it is when the Lord teaches us this. the preciousness of faith and the value of faith and the recognition of faith as a mighty asset.

Now, there may be a time, there was a time with you and with me when we may have mentioned faith and may have thought about faith, but we never thought of it in this term of the mighty value of faith, to conquer, to overcome, to destroy evil, and to lift us up for that which was good.

[36 : 15] But once we see this, change, then a great and mighty change takes place in the whole outlook, in the whole being of that believer, that soul.

They now see there is an element that is above nature. They now begin to see there's something that comes from God, and that's invaluable.

people, they go out after it, they want more of it, they want it to continue, they want never to be without it, and they say, oh, give me faith, more faith, more and more of that precious gift of God, which comes from him alone.

You see, that was the moment when King Ahasuerus of the mind first began to realize what an asset he had in his very kingdom, in the person of Mordecai.

Well, then we'll look at this Haman for a moment, and it must be only for a moment. I said that he was the flesh, man.

[37 : 45] You see, he was against everything that was of a Jewish kind, character. He hated the people because they were a people not among that worldly company that had no fear of God.

They may have been but nominal people at this time, but they were a people that recognized God, and he hated them. the flesh will always hate everything of a spiritual kind.

As we were reading, he that is in the flesh cannot please God. The flesh lusteth against us. The flesh is against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.

flesh. These are not compatible things. The one will work at all times contrary to the other.

We cannot make flesh respectable, let alone make it religious. We need what the Word of God tells us so clearly, that we need the mortifying of the flesh.

[39 : 05] We need to be crucified with Christ, that we might die with him to the flesh. Because while the flesh is there, then Haman is in the ascendancy.

He is in the mastery, in the master's position. And he will engineer and devise all kinds of evil things against the true interests of the people, the person.

And while he is in the ascendancy, Mordecai is in the low place, he's in the sack-loss condition. And there's trouble in Israel, in the kingdom, there's trouble in the shoe shamp, and there's great distress and perplexity.

Well, I've only just very partially introduced to you the figure that as I see it in this wonderful part of the word of God, but I do hope we may realize as we think on these things how needful faith is and how precious it is and how Mordecai became great in the king's house.

He became a man of high esteem, became a man of great power and authority.

[40 : 43] He could even now command, as we read in the letter part of this book, he was almost equal with the king himself. In fact, he was equal with the king.

faith, when it does take its rightful place in the heart of a real believer, takes the highest place and commands, controls, directs, and gives all that that believer needs from the hand of God to survive, to sustain, to enliven, and to give victory over all that is in opposition.

And therefore, I conclude this morning with this. Lord, give us faith. Amen.

praise, praise.

Thank you., Amen.

[42 : 52] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the Father, the communion of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, be with us now and evermore.

[47 : 20] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.