

The Plans of Men and the Sovereignty of God
Esther 2

Intro: By literary devices, God is shown to be hidden in this book, yet powerfully present

- Borrowing from Joseph story
- Acrostic
- The word "Purim."

I. The Plans of the King (Is God sovereign even over the seamy side of life?)

A. *Lust Aroused (v. 1)*

B. *Lust Is Often Frustrated (v. 1)*

1. By our emotions - His anger
2. By dwelling on what is not available ("he remembered")
3. By the people we seek to control (Vashti)
4. By the stupidity of our actions ("what had been decreed against her")

C. *Lust can find approval in others (vv. 2-4)*

D. *Lust Deceives (v. 4)*

1. It pleases him. He is deluded into thinking that depersonalized sexuality can satisfy his loneliness
2. women (v. 4) But think of all those who didn't please the king. Were their needs met? No.

E. *Lust Depersonalizes (v. 3)*

II. The Plans of God

A. *God doesn't react. His plans were in action long before (v. 5) Some of the plans of God may have seemed like a lack of plan and disaster and confusion. But in hindsight, we can understand. (tapestry)*

1. Mordecai had been summoned back to Persia
2. Shimei was spared the sword.
3. Kish, the father of Saul becomes a factor in this story.
4. The captivity was a judgment, but it was also a blessing. Jeremiah 24. It was God's means of spreading the kingdom. But the more fundamental issue is God's control of those wars. God caused Jeconiah to lose and Nebuchadnezzar to win. Daniel 1:2 says, The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand..
5. Scripture says that the exact day that his uncle Abihail died was determined by God's plan
6. Perhaps there could have been other families to raise Hadassah, but God laid on the heart of Mordecai to do so. If he hadn't done it, she would have been in Israel, and the likelihood of her being taken would have been greatly reduced.
7. Her beauty may have seemed like a curse to her. There are many women who have felt that way. But this too was part of God's plan.
8. Even the evil of the king's plans were part of God's plan. Shall evil befall a city and the Lord has not done it?

B. *God Exercises His Will Through Men's Plans*

1. God catches Esther in this dragnet. But while they intend evil, God intends good.
2. God prepared Hegai to watch over her
3. God gave her favor in his eyes.
4. She might have been tempted to try to get better treatment by mentioning her royal blood. But Mordecai, perhaps prophetically, had warned her not to (v. 10)
5. Yet despite ignorance of her royal blood, Hegai likes her so well, that he gives her royal treatment.
6. But God doesn't always reveal His will to us. Mordecai wished that he knew more. (v. 11)
7. The preparations for King Darius.

Conclusions

