

Right Place, Right Time

I. Slide#1 Intro:

- A. **Slide#2** A group of tourists asked an old man if any **great men** were born in this small town. “No. Only **babies.**” [great men/women aren’t born great - So how to they become great?]
1. Great decisions. Courage.
- B. A young man not long ago who dives for exotic fish for aquariums said that one of the most popular aquarium fish is **the shark**. He explained that if you catch a small shark and confine it, it will stay a size proportionate to the aquarium you put it in. Sharks can be **6-inch long** yet **fully matured**. **But** if you turn them loose in the ocean, they grow to their normal length of **8’**.
1. Haven’t you met some of the cutest little **6-inch Christians**? Are **you** that 6-inch Christian? What if you were to released into the world...**you might become great!** :)
- C. **Slide#3 Outline: Hathach’s Solo Significance; Mordecai’s Personal Progress; Esther’s Life Decisions; and Basic Lessons from Providence.**
- D. **A look back: 4:1a** ties into *The Edict* given by Haman in 3:13. Basically a Hitlerian **genocide** against his people, the Jews.
1. **How significant?** 15 million Jews, spread throughout the Persian kingdom, were now at risk. **All because of Haman’s hostility & the King’s stupidity.**
- E. Driscoll called Esther, “a Mexican Soap Opera with Persian sub-titles.”

II. Slide#4 HATHACH’S, SOLO SIGNIFICANCE

- A. **Slide#5** 1st, **Hathach**(hAY-thACH) was the father of the famous “*Aflack*” :) (jk!)
- B. I wonder if he realized what an **important role** he was playing, in God’s plan to save the Jews?
1. He probably felt **insignificant!**
 2. Very often the Lord uses **obscure people** to accomplish **important tasks!**
 - a) What was the boys name who gave **Andrew** the lunch that fed 5000?
 - b) Who were the men that **lowered Paul** down the wall so he could escape to write ½ the N.T.?
 - c) What was the name of the young **Jewish slave girl** who helped Naaman go to the prophet to be healed of his leprosy?
 - d) What was the name of the man who **led Billy Graham** to the Lord? [Mordecai Ham, who descended from 8 generations of Baptist preachers]
 - e) What was **Spurgeon’s fathers** name? [John]
 - (1) **We may not know but God used them in important ways!**
- C. What an important **link** Hathach was, **between** Mordecai & Esther.
1. Not only bringing **info**, **but the tone, the passion, the accuracy, etc.**

D. Slide#6 Do you believe 1 person can make a difference?

1. Slide#7 Jesus left the 99 to find the 1. One is always a valuable # to God. For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son.
2. Even if you feel insignificant or obscure...are you available to any task God might have for you. Where you might not receive the accolades or kudos?

III. Slide#8 MORDECAI's, PERSONAL PROGRESS

A. Finally progress in his life. (and Esther's in this ch.)

1. Not a whole lot of progress thus far, but now he lets his Jewish cat out of the bag.
2. Nothing is said so far of his "walk" with God. The only thing we have is his decision not to bow to Haman.
3. But, where did you start & where are you going...is the real question.
 - a) Slide#9 Picture your walk with the Lord like a football field. Some of you received the hand off at the 50 yard line (in the middle of the field). But others weren't so fortunate. They started on the 1 yard line. (some of you started back in the parking lot!)
 - b) Lets remember & cut people slack...where did they start & are they going/moving?
 - c) Are you going/moving?
4. So, finally by chapter 4, we see progress in Mordecai's life.
 - a) If you're like Mordecai, don't beat yourself up, just run with the ball now!

B. Slide#10 Mordecai's appearance & actions were showing great grief. (1-3)

1. He was making a statement to all: He was a Jew & he was against this murderous edict.
2. To this day, Eastern cultures still do not restrain their grief.
3. Fasting is a preparation for concentrated & humble prayer. [+ contrasts feasting]
 - a) There is no guarantee in & of itself that God will answer your prayer as you wish.
 - b) It can't be formal ritual, but needs to be sincere humility & brokenness.

C. Slide#11 blank Mordecai didn't want Esther's gifts, but her surrendered life to the Lord. (4)

1. He finally got the attention of the queen.

D. Mordecai was a reliable source! (7,8)

1. All that happened; the(exact) sum of money(in orig); a copy.
2. Mordecai didn't hide the truth, exaggerate it, estimate it, pass rumors about it,... he provided documented info.
 - a) Are you careful about passing on info?
 - b) Are you communicating facts?

c) **Which** of the above are you prone to?

- (1) But I needed to make my point **real real strong**.
- (2) Careful “Internet prayers”, pass em to 10 more.

E. **Slide#12 Is there not a cause?** (13,14) [story of David going to his brothers, in **Valley of Elah**]

1. 1 Sam 17:28,29 **Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." And David said, "What have I done now? **Is there not a cause?**"**
2. **Mordecai couldn't stand by & do nothing!**
 - a) Mordecai's soul *refused to be comforted*. (Ps.77:2) **Also in Mt.2:18 Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted.**
3. **Slide#13 British politician Edmund Burke said, “All that is required for **evil to triumph** is for good men to **do...nothing.**”**
 - a) **Read Prov.24:11,12** – This makes it clear we can't be neutral when **human lives** are at stake. [Brian why are you & Kel **into** Human Trafficking?...this is why! We believe it to be **biblical**]
 - (1) **Slide#14 It *commands* the *Universal Duty of Compassion* - **Rescue** those who are unjustly sentenced to die; **save them** as they stagger to their death. Don't excuse yourself by saying, “Look, we didn't know.” For God understands all hearts, and he sees you. He who guards your soul knows you knew. He will **repay all people** as their actions deserve. NLT**
 - (2) It doesn't have to be HT. There are many brothers & sisters that need to get rescued/saved from their plight. **Like, HIV, drinkable water, malaria, preventable diseases, poverty, hunger, child soldiers, sheltering lost children, Safe Families**(helping single moms thru a temp crisis), **breaking the chains of bonded labor.**
 - b) Ronald Sider in *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* apply said, “I believe the God of the poor wants us to **feel** deep pain over the agony & anguish that torment our poor sisters & brothers. The story of the rich man & Lazarus (Lk.16) does not suggest that Laz's poverty resulted from oppression by his neighbor. The rich man merely **neglected to help**. His sin was one of **omission**. And it sent him to **hell.**”

IV. **Slide#15 ESTHER's, LIFE DECISIONS**

- A. Again, we read nothing of her meeting with “her people”. No tithing. No sacrifices. No reading or studying. No public prayer. No attending feasts or Holy days being observed.
1. Her husband doesn't even know she's Jewish!
 2. She has to own her Jewish identity **or** live as a pagan.

3. The **decision** she will make will *irrevocably define her future*, **and** determine the destiny of her people also.
4. *Cumulative defining moments in our past, determine who we truly are, now.*

B. 3 facts for Esther:

1. Slide#16a **No guarantee** she'd be delivered. [It says *All Jews* (3:13)]
2. Slide#16b Her silence won't prevent deliverance from coming from **another source**. [Its the Abrahamic cov God made in Gen.12:1-3]
3. Slide#16c Her being in the **royal palace**, was **no royal accident**. [For such a time as this!]
 - a) Like Joseph being place in the right place at the right time to save many!
 - b) Gen.50:20 **But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.**

C. There comes a time where we must move from **Theory** to **Reality**!

1. It's the difference in **believing** we should vote as Christians...**and** actually getting out and **VOTING**!
2. Slide#17 It's learning how to finally **take a stand**!
 - a) **Dads take a stand** by being that godly example for your kids & **not** leaning on your wife to be it. **Singles take a stand** for purity. **Men take a stand** against pornography. **Moms take a stand** by choosing biblical discipline for your kids & **not** the new trend.
 - b) **Construction workers take a stand** by not skimping on building materials.
 - c) **Salesmen workers take a stand** by not fudging truth to make a sale.
 - d) **Construction workers take a stand** by not skimping on building materials.
 - (1) **What do you have to lose** by making this stand?-**What do you have to gain?**
 - (2) **Have you had to stand-alone?** In your company; On your block; In your family; At your school.
 - (3) **What in your community have you ever taken a stand for?**
 - (a) The Homeless, Elderly, Abortion, young/poor pregnant moms, Hearing-Impaired, visually impaired, Political Issues, Crime, Hunger, working with those who struggle w/substance abuse.
3. Congratulations to our President for finally taking a stand with Israel.
 - a) Obama declared, the U.S.-Israel alliance "eternal." "It is forever."¹
 - b) Netanyahu said, "I appreciate the fact that the president has reaffirmed, more than any other president, Israel's right and duty to defend itself by itself against any threat,"

¹ AP News App: http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_289563/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=lu2qSliF

- D. **Slide#18** (16) **If I perish, I perish** – Esther became *a living sacrifice* to accomplish the work of God.
1. Rom.12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies **a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.
 2. This is simply “Trustful submission to the will of God!”
 3. It was like when Paul said, **But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.** Acts 20:24

V. **Slide#19 BASIC LESSONS FROM PROVIDENCE**

- A. **Slide#20a [1]** God has **divine purposes** to accomplish down here.
1. Ps.148:5,6 **Let them praise the name of the LORD, For He commanded and they were created. He also established them forever and ever; He made a decree which shall not pass away.**
- B. **Slide#20b [2]** God uses **people** to accomplish them!
1. Believers & Unbelievers alike.
- C. **Slide#20c [3]** God **will** accomplish them whether we **comply** or **don't!**
1. If we **don't** comply we **miss out** on blessings & rewards, **or** we are **disciplined**.
 2. “When God **isn't** permitted to rule, He **overrules**; & He **always** accomplishes His purposes.”
- D. **Slide#20d [4]** God **isn't in a hurry**, but will fulfill His plan **in due time!**
1. The king was in office for 3 years before Vashti was removed – It was 4 more years before Esther was chosen Queen – 5 years later Haman hatched his evil plot – The day to wipe out the Jews was set for the very end of the year.
 2. **Gods never in a hurry. His decrees are always right & always on time.**
- E. **Slide#21 Last Note:** She doesn't finally say, “ok, I'll do it!” (i.e. in her flesh). **But instead**, “I'll place myself in the Lord hands!”
1. **Are you motivated to live as a Gods child? Now? Today? Ready to take a stand?**
 - a) Pick up the ball & start running.
- F. **An old farmer** frequently described his Christian experience by saying, “**Well, I'm not making much progress, but I'm established!**” One spring when he was hauling some logs, his wagon wheels sank down to the axles in mud. Try as he would, he couldn't get the wagon out. Defeated, he sat atop the logs, viewing the dismal situation. Soon a neighbor who had always felt uncomfortable with the farmer's worn out testimony came along and greeted him, “Well, brother Jones, I see you're **not making much progress**, but you must be **content** because you're **well-established!**”

G. Prayer: God help us not to be content in **our aquarium**, help us to **swim free** to find our **purpose**. Help us to **make progress** & not be content sitting on our logs.