

Esther, the Power of Divine Providence
Walter Beuttler

[Comments: 1) All scriptures are from the KJV except where noted. 2) This message has been transcribed word for word (from Beuttler's own teachings) as accurately as possible (due to the quality of the recording). 3) Beuttler had his own dictionary of favorite words he used throughout his messages, and they have been transcribed and spelled out accordingly. 4) Spelling on certain proper names, airports, hotels, locations, etc. may not be exact. 5) Messages were spoken late 1960's, early 1970's. 6) Beuttler was a Bible teacher at NBI (a.k.a. EBI, Eastern Bible Institute) for 32 years traveling worldwide since early 1950's until a year before he went to be with the Lord in 1974.]

I'm speaking this morning on "*the power of divine providence.*" I've been looking to the Lord this morning for you. We're so busy at school that I have no time to think of anything, but this morning I was waiting before the Lord, and asked the Lord to direct in some way. As we drove up from the airport, there came this truth along about the power of divine providence. Now this is somewhat of a study, a commentary. I'm not preaching, I'm simply sharing with you some things from Esther. We are all more or less acquainted with the book, but I felt so quickened in my own spirit about "*the power of God's providence*" that I, for myself, have already received some help and encouragement from this amazing book.

This Book of Esther is amazing in a number of respects. One of them is that the name of God is not mentioned once. There is no reference to God anywhere. At the same time, the book is saturated with God. In fact, to me it seems that this book, the events in this book, great events, small events, important events, insignificant events are so saturated with God that the name of God is not necessary. I can carry this a step farther. I didn't pick this up. I don't know how others feel, but the details in this book are so saturated with God that I'm inclined to think if the name of God were in the book, or at least repeated in the book, we would miss much of God in the book because His name would be there, and we'd concentrate on that without observing that the entire book is saturated with God. Of course that suggests to us that even the events in our own lives are saturated and controlled by God - even our troubles.

When we speak of the power of divine providence, I'm speaking of the ability of God to make all events, whatever transpires in our lives, even the troublesome things that come our way, to fulfill His purpose. In case I've made this too complicated, I'm speaking of the ability of God to make all events fulfill His purpose. That's the message of this book. Tonight we're sort of looking at a panorama of providence. Do not expect a sermon. We're just pointing out different incidents and taking a look at God in most unusual circumstances.

Another thing that is very conspicuous in this book, namely God is as it were, hiding His face from His people. Yet while He hides His face from His people, He is still interested in them and works in the shadows of events, unseen, unrecognized, but ever working on

behalf of His people. You know that's true of us. Many times shadows flip over our lives like a cloud, and yet God is in those very shadows still at work on our behalf to fulfill His purpose.

“I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.” Deuteronomy 31:18

God's people had disobeyed, ignored Him and disregarded His laws until finally God had to hide His face, as it were, and take them into the captivity. Even in captivity, God was still actively preserving His people even though all that time, His face was turned away from them.

Take Zechariah for instance: The prophet Zechariah was born in the Babylonian captivity, so it is believed. His parents were there. He was born there. His name means “*Our God Remembers.*” Apparently Zechariah's parents kept their faith during the Babylonian captivity while the vast majority of the people were satisfied in Babylon. They adjusted to its culture. They did not want, and did not return to Jerusalem at the end of the captivity. Most of them stayed in Babylon save Zechariah's parents kept their faith, because the nation as a whole had complained that God had forgotten. But the parents of Zechariah named their boy, “*Our God Remembers.*” That was true because God did remember His people in the captivity. He raised up prophets like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and a deliverer in Cyrus. Though His face, as it were, looked away from them, still He was working and at work with His hands on their behalf. In other words, God was standing in the shadows unnoticed, unseen, yet still at work on behalf of His people.

Regarding this providence, one of the outstanding facts is what I've just said. God is hidden and unrecognized, silently active in the interest of His people. With that God employed the most ordinary means to accomplish His purpose. This is one of the great things of this book, the things which God uses. And we'll go over these things. These means were partly major events and trifling circumstances. Have you ever noticed how the power of God is at times exercised in the most trifling, insignificant circumstances?

Quite some years ago, I was teaching in a camp in New York. The Lord had been dealing with me for three days to go to France, and I did not want to go to France. I told the Lord I didn't want to go and told Him why I didn't. I said, “*Lord, I am German and the Germans have been historical enemies. The French would not want me of all people. Besides, I don't have the money.*” So I had two good reasons: 1) No money and 2) there was this historical state of enmity.

I said, “*Lord, I have no contact. I wouldn't even know where to begin. How can I go to France?*” So I argued with the Lord for three days. For some reason or another, He wasn't impressed. I'm talking here about trifling circumstances.

One evening, the evangelist got up before he spoke and said, “*Now friends, before I speak I have to tell you something. This morning while I was in prayer, the Lord spoke to my heart and told me to take up an offering for Brother Beuttler and the offering must be no*

less than \$500.” I sat in the congregation and heard it. When I heard it, I was afraid that I would have to go to France. So I jumped up and walked out into the woods. I didn’t want to hear anymore about an offering. They handed me something like \$580. The round-trip fare to Paris at that time cost \$552, so I had the fare and a little extra, which you need.

I said, *“Well Lord, that’s nice of You, but I can’t go. I have no contact.”* Where would I start? On top of the Eiffel Tower?

I was back at school and the pastor from Philadelphia called me and said, *“Hi Brother Beuttler, how would you like an Italian spaghetti dinner?”* Well, if you talk to me about Italian spaghetti dinner, I’m glad.

I said, *“Oh that would be fine, sure. What’s the idea?”*

He said, *“Oh I have a friend over here from France. I would like you to meet him.”* Now I had already committed myself, and I didn’t like that word France, but then I didn’t worry anymore. I knew nothing could happen.

I got down there with Wife and this French man said to me (he spoke good English), *“Brother Beuttler, I heard about you.”*

I said, *“Oh, what about it?”*

He said, *“Have you ever thought of coming to France?”*

I said, *“Oh, the thought has crossed my mind.”* Then I put my foot in. Did you ever put your foot in? Well I put my foot in. I tried to get my foot out and in getting it out, I put it in. *“It has passed my mind, but I have no contact.”*

He said, *“Oh, if that’s the problem, I’ll be your contact. I’m the secretary of the Assemblies of God and I can arrange a visit for you.”* I was caught. It worked out all right.

Here was a trifling circumstance, an invitation to an Italian spaghetti dinner, and then this casual conversation. God was in the providential arrangement. I still was afraid of this German-French feeling. When I got to France, I got a big surprise.

Do you know what they said? Before I started they said, *“Brother Beuttler, play down your American connection. Say as little about your American background as possible. Try not to mention America. Do refer to the fact that you are German.”*

That puzzled me. It was the daughter of the house who interpreted for me that said that, so I said, *“How is that? Americans came over to liberate France. The Germans had come to defeat it.”*

She said, *“Well, I’ll tell you, we have no respect for Americans. When the Germans occupied France, they were hard taskmasters, but we respected them, but we have no respect for Americans.”* That’s what they said. I could give you details, but I don’t want to. For one thing that snooper is going and I don’t want to say anymore, but it’s all right. It’s not important. The important thing is that God uses trifling circumstances to accomplish His will.

“Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.” Zechariah 4:8-10

Now I don’t know whether you are aware as to what the prophet is talking about. The returnees from the Babylonian captivity were to rebuild the temple. That is to say, they were to build a new temple. In Haggai, the people lacked interest. They just had no interest. They thought they didn’t have sufficient means so God sent along Haggai, the prophet, to stir up the zeal, the spirit of the people. Actually their zeal had been diverted to their own houses. They were interested in themselves, in their own places, so God sent Haggai to stir them up to go and build the house of the Lord. They had complained and were discouraged in Haggai. That’s what Zechariah is referring to here.

Their discouragement arose from the fact that the new temple that they were building did not compare in glory, that is in magnificence, to the temple of Solomon. They thought their temple was too insignificant. In comparison to Solomon’s, I suppose it was a shack, but it still was the Lord’s temple. Now shack is an understatement. Anyhow there was no comparison between what they were building and what Solomon had built. So here God now speaks and gives the promise that Zerubbabel shall lay the foundation, and that his own hands shall also finish it. Now in the preceding verses, for instance in verse 6, God gives the means:

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.” Zechariah 4:6-7

Now there are two aspects here. There is a future aspect and a local aspect. We have nothing to do tonight with the future aspect, just pointing out the local. The building of this temple, even though it didn’t compare to that of Solomon’s, was an enormous task for the people that had just returned from Babylon. They thought it couldn’t be done. They thought they wouldn’t have the means to finish it. So God says, *“Zerubbabel shall lay the foundation, his own hands shall also finish it.”* Notice again in verse 7, *“Who art thou, O great mountain?”*

Now the local aspect here, this building of the temple, was a great mountain, a big task, insurmountable, inconceivable of completion, a big mountain that they couldn’t tackle,

they thought. Yet God said, *“Who art thou, O great mountain?...thou shalt become a plain.”* In other words, God promised these people that the work would be finished *“not by might, not by power, but by the might and incentive and grace of the spirit of God.”*

And in verse 10, *“For who hath despised the day of small things.”* This temple was small compared to Solomon’s and they took the attitude, *“Oh what a place!”* The old men remembered Solomon’s temple. They said, *“Oh brother! This doesn’t mean anything to what we have known.”*

God says, *“Now look here. Are you despising the day of small things?”* God is using great things as well as small things to accomplish His purpose. Now we’re going to watch this power of divine providence a bit operating in three individuals. They overlap.

First of all we’re going to look at Esther. You know folks, this book is terrific. I’m just now myself feeling at it because we need to take a look at the power of God’s providence in action. Now we’ll take a look at Esther.

“And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle’s daughter; for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.” Esther 2:7

Now you’ll have to follow me with this. You can’t let your thoughts wander if you want to get the point. God now had a long-range program for His people. His people here were in captivity and God, years and years ahead, looked at that captivity. He saw this great Persian king, Ahasuerus, with a very pretty wife. You get that from the first chapter. God had to do something to deliver His people. If you will remember, all the Jews were in danger of their lives because of the scheming of Haman. God foresaw that and needed to find a way and a means of saving His people from the hands of the Persians lest they be exterminated. God saw those years ahead.

So God had His eyes on a little girl down in Israel. Her name was Esther. It says that she had neither father nor mother. That simply means that her parents had died. She was an orphan. Mordecai took this orphan into his house. When they were taken captive in the days of King Zedekiah, Esther and Mordecai went up to the captivity. Now what God, in His amazing providence had planned, is that He’s going to take this little orphan girl and make her the queen. I get a kick out of that. God takes a little orphan girl and makes her queen of the mighty realm of Persia to save His people.

How on earth can God take a little orphan girl, a Jewess, and make her queen of Persia for no other purpose than to be the key of the salvation of the Jews? That’s some workmanship! So God saw this girl that He wanted to use and she was pretty. She was a beautiful girl. God even used the girl’s beauty to be a factor in her becoming queen because King Ahasuerus did not want a toad. He wanted a beauty, and God had a girl down there who was a beauty. So girls don’t be discouraged at your beauty. God can use beauty. Hallelujah!

And God used the death of her parents. God wanted this Esther and Mordecai to get together so He would take her with him up into the captivity. I would say that even the death of her parents were a means to accomplish His great purpose for the Jews. Sometimes misfortune is used by God to promote His purpose. Then, of course, the adoption by Mordecai of Esther. He took her, and that took her along in another step. Then they were in captivity. You have that in verse 6, *“Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity.”*

So here a girl has a very unfortunate event. Not only is she an orphan, but now she's also a captive. Folkses, before this girl could become a liberator, so to speak, in the hands of divine providence, she had to become a captive. Some of us I suppose would like to be used by God in delivering other people from whatever might ail them, but we ourselves have to become captive and a prisoner of the Lord Jesus.

Remember Paul? He was in the Roman jail. He didn't write his letters and say, *“I Paul, the prisoner of those so and so Romans.”* No. The Romans slapped them into jail, but he said, *“I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ.”* There's quite a difference.

So this girl in the hand of providence had to become a prisoner. Think of it! She had to become a prisoner to become a queen. My! How God takes the most mundane circumstances and brings about huge events for His glory! All right then, we find in verse 5. You see, I have to rearrange this from the word, turn it around for a logical sequence.

“Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai.”
Esther 2:5

Now this Mordecai, who brought Esther along, was in Shushan the palace and so it was very near to the king. God used Mordecai's position, some kind of a service position, keeper of the gate or what have you. God used that to bring about the ultimate deliverance of His people.

Now we come to King Ahasuerus. His kingdom stretched from India all the way to Ethiopia. That's an enormous realm. If you can picture with geography from India to Ethiopia is an enormous area, and this little captive orphan girl became queen of all the realm from India to Ethiopia. So maybe the important thing is that we become the captives of the Lord in service, then God can arrange for us an appointment in His program.

“The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.” Proverbs 21:1

Now please, let's not think into the area of predestination, what we would call in Bible school Calvinism or Armenianism. We're not giving any thought to predestination. What we want to do is recognize the fact that the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth it whithersoever he will. In other words, God has control of the hearts of

rulers and causes rulers to do what God wants done to fulfill His own purpose. We don't press beyond that. This is true. We're not talking about man's will cooperating with God and the like. We'll leave that to the theologians. Tonight, we're just humble people looking at divine providence.

I suppose some of you at least remember John Foster Dulles. When he was Secretary of State, he made an awesome mistake that cost the United States, not only prestige, but I would say, defeat in the chess game of politics in the world. I'll tell you how. Now the mistake is recognized, that's not my opinion. This mistake is recognized in high places.

Egypt asked John Foster Dulles to have the United States build what is known today as the Aswan Dam. John Foster Dulles had an argument with Nasser, and Dulles got into a rage, angered, and snapped at Nasser, "*America is not going to build your so and so dam.*" He said it and spoke for the United States.

So Nasser turned away and asked the Russians. You have read many times of the Russian penetration of the Middle East. You know that. Do you know that the Mediterranean today is more of a Russian name than a Western name, especially the United States? Do you know that Russia is pouring arms and equipment into the Middle East? Do you know that it is said another war could break out over there? It was John Foster Dulles who opened up the gates for Russia by his rash statement turning Nasser down and our building the dam. So Russia got into all the area as a result of that statement, and the end is not yet. They are building forts and bases right down the Red Sea, around Arabia, in Somalia and right down the East African coast, all the result of John Foster Dulles' refusal to build a dam. We, the United States, could be in Egypt. Instead of that it's Russia. I'm not critical when I say those things. I would say that God had a hand in that rash statement, because God is shaping world affairs.

Daniel says, "*He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.*" President Nixon is going to Rome. He's on his way; you know that. What's in China? As far as I'm concerned, the chief ruler in these summit meetings is Almighty God, and that God is actually shaping world affairs in accordance with His ultimate purposes.

Ezekiel tells us, God speaking, "*I will overturn, and overturn, and overturn until he comes whose right it is to reign.*" So God is acting in providence even in the hearts of kings causing them to act and react in accordance with His purpose. That's what the Book says, "*The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth it whithersoever he will.*" The ultimate government, the highest government of this world is not in Washington, nor in Moscow, nor in Peking. That government rests up there before the throne of God.

Let's take a look here now at Esther 1:12. The king had a sense of vanity. He wanted to show his wife off. She was pretty. That's what it says, and he asked her to come and display herself so he could say, "*Here's the queen. How do you like her? That's my queen!* (King's subjects claps hands) *Thank you.*"

But the queen refused. She said, *“I ain’t gone to come.”*

“But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king’s commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.”

Esther 1:12

I declare here without equivocation, on the part of the queen, was the work of God. What queen would not be glad to display her attire and her beauty before thousands of princes, coo-coo-eyed, and thousands of princess drooling with envy? I could just about see her come in and oblige and be the admiration of everybody. I think that would be the logical or normal thing. She got her Dutchman up or something, *“I won’t come.”*

“The king says you should come.”

“I won’t come.” As far as I’m concerned, God, in the power of His providence, caused that queen to refuse the invitation, the command in fact, of the king. That was serious. She refused the command of the king to provoke the wrath of the king so that the break would come between the king and the queen. Be careful here. The next time any one of us flies off the handle, let’s not say, *“Well, that’s the Lord’s providence. Brother Beuttler said so.”* I don’t mean it that way. Here God used the wrath of the king to bring about the fulfillment of His purpose.

“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee.” Psalms 76:10

Think of it! God can even use the wrath of man to bring glory to Him. The next time we get mad let’s not say, *“I’m glorifying the Lord.”* That would be a misapplication. But here, Ahasuerus is angry with his queen. She refused and as a consequence, if you follow the story there, the queen no more appeared before the king. She was deposed. That was in the providence of God.

So I want to end here by saying that God, in the power of His providence, can remove people from the highest position, if need be, to achieve His purpose. You can think here of King Saul, *“The Lord has sought him a man after his own heart.”* And God took the kingdom from him and deposed Saul. Do you remember Judas where it says, *“And his bishopric let another take?”* God removes people from positions. In regards to Solomon, I will rend the kingdom out of his hands, and the kingdom became divided. My! If we could see all that God is doing in the world when we think people are doing it. Actually God is doing it.

“Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck. For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.” Psalms 75:5-7

I often think of this for myself. *“Lift not up your horn on high.”* I am careful in some areas.

“Speak not with a stiff neck.” I’m thinking now of an individual that has been a thorn in my side for many years, an individual that has hurt me with people many times, *“That Beuttler!”* That person had an attitude toward me for many years, of a snobbish nature. He was riding a high horse of conceit, a sense of superiority, being somebody, a big shot. God, not too long ago has taken that person and clunk...Now I dare not gloat. I know my Bible too well for that. That same person spoke to me recently with great dismay. I tried to comfort him a little bit. I remember how so often, *“That Beuttler!”* But I dare not gloat. Remember Edom? Edom was judged because of her attitude. When God chastised Israel she was so irrelative.

“Lift not your horn on high.” Toot, too, too, toot! *“Speak not with a stiff neck.”* I’ve made it! I’m the man! Hear ye, hear ye!

God brings people down. He brings them up and exalts. God puts people into positions; God takes them out. I’ve told you on more than one occasion as it is written in Samuel. I’ll read it.

“He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s and he hath set the world upon them.” I Samuel 2:8

God takes the nobodies, the have nothings, the despised, the rejected, the ignored and takes them up from the dunghill and sets them among princes. And God reaches up to the princes and drags while He brings them down. As we read in the Psalms, *“None can stay his hand and say, What doest thou? For power belongs unto the Lord.”*

Now we’ll close this with some individual circumstances. I’ll try to be a little shorter. We have several individuals here exhibiting some circumstances. In Esther 2:21, there is a plot. You know what a plot is, a sinister scheme.

“In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king’s gate, two of the king’s chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai’s name. And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree; and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.” Esther 2:21-23

Now they plotted to destroy the king. I will say that God used this sinister plotting against the life of the king as a means to bring about His purpose. All these acts are steppingstones of divine providence. A plot to kill the king was turned into a steppingstone for God. The report of Mordecai to Esther, and hers to the king, was a steppingstone for God. The hanging of the two fellows on a tree was a steppingstone of divine providence to fulfill His purpose. God can even use a hanging. God can use anything. They are stepping stones to fulfill His purpose.

In Esther 3:1-3 we have a reference to a promotion. The king had promoted Haman and had others bow down to him. Mordecai, the Jew, refused to bow down. He just wouldn't do it. He wouldn't say, "*Hi Hitler.*" Even Mordecai's refusal was a steppingstone of divine providence. So the lot went up. If you want some encouragement, look at Esther 6:1. An oversight finally got to the king.

“On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.” Esther 6:1

Are you ever lying in bed sleepless? Do you know what I have discovered on occasions? I was awakened every night at the same time in the middle of the night wide awake until finally I discovered it was God's signal for me to get up and spend time with the Lord. I had that just recently for some time. It was 4:00 o'clock. It was like the Lord saying, "*Beuttler, you've had enough sleep. Get up and go to work.*" First of all, you start with the Lord. So God can use even sleeplessness, as He did in this case, to promote His purpose.

The king did what many people do, they get a book and read. Have you ever done that when you couldn't sleep? The king read, and the chronicles were read before the king. Then they found what Mordecai had done. Lo and behold, the king discovered some neglect and said, "*What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?*" Then the king's servants said, "*There is nothing done for him.*" Now look at this. This sounds like a little truth, but I think it's a big one. Here Mordecai was neglected. He did not receive credit or reward. Have you ever been neglected or didn't get what was due to you? Certainly this man deserved a reward. He saved the king's life, but nothing was done. Nobody thought of it.

Have you ever experienced when nobody thinks of you and you think they ought to, but they don't? Here God used the fact that Mordecai had been ignored. His deed was unrewarded. I don't know how he felt, but it was unrewarded. God can even use our not being adequately rewarded, or our being neglected can be used as a steppingstone for divine providence to move up.

“And the king said, Who is in the court? Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.” Esther 6:4

There is a lot here. Here is this Haman. The king said, "*Who is in the court?*" My God is a timer! How this timing coincided! The king said something ought to be done for Mordecai. "*Who is coming?*" Haman is coming. Haman was coming to get Mordecai hung, and the king was at that moment thinking what reward could be given to Mordecai. Oh the timing!

Haman comes, "*Hi Haman. Hey Haman, what should be done for a man whom the king wants to honor?*" The timing of this thing!

Haman thought quickly, *“Oh he must be thinking of me. Is there anybody in the kingdom but me that deserves any honor? He must be thinking of me.”* So he said, *“Well, I’ll tell you king, just let him ride on the king’s horse in the king’s robe and take him through the city and have everybody bow down to him.”* He made the request for himself. My, God put him in a trap!

And the king said to Haman, *“All right, do so to Mordecai.”* How that must have struck! He must have been struck by lightening. The timing of this thing!

They put a robe on Mordecai, and Haman had to take him through the city and have the people fall down and bow before Mordecai. My, the humiliation! The conceit of this Haman, the humiliation which God had brought. Think of it! The power of divine providence!

I had something like that, quite an incident in the Marshall Islands a couple of years ago. I’m talking about providence. I arrived in the capitol, a 2½ street little town and discovered the missionary had left for the states and I was stranded there. I didn’t know where I was to go or anything. There I was. I got myself a hotel, and what a hotel - brother. I thought, *“Well here I am.”* I went to the store to buy a few things to eat. I had no idea where I was to go. I said, *“Lord, help me to make some contact with somebody.”*

Here was a lady, apparently an American shopping. I walked up to her and asked her where to buy something, a flashlight or something.

She said, *“Oh, you won’t find it in this place, but I can tell you where to go.”* Then she continued, *“By the way, have you just arrived from America?”*

I said, *“Yes, may I ask your name?”*

She answered, *“I am Mrs. So and So from the Assembly of God.”*

I asked, *“Would you perchance be an A/G missionary?”*

She said, *“Oh yes, we were sent here from Springfield.”* There was my contact, and in the same evening, I preached. God, in His providence brought us together on a Pacific island. Neither one knew the other. There I was looking for a flashlight, she was looking for something else. We got together. Talk about providence!

I’ll summarize this and we’ll call it an evening. Turning to 4:14 for a moment. Mordecai is talking to Esther.

“For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father’s house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” Esther 4:14

What I want to add here is this: That God had a purpose in all these events, namely, the deliverance of the Jews. In God's providence, this little orphan girl, Esther, was come to this place, and at this time under the leadership of divine providence to accomplish a great purpose there in Persia. Now to the last chapter:

“For Mordecai the Jew was next unto the king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.” Esther 10:3

Prior to this, Haman was next to the king, but Haman was now hung and Mordecai was next to the king. Haman had prepared gallows for Mordecai and he, himself, got hung on them. We have to be careful that we don't make gallows for other people, because God can see to it that we'll hang there.

God had in mind here His ultimate goal of making the Jews respected, wealthy and giving them peace in this captivity. That was God's great objective. To move toward it, He used the death of the parents of a little girl. He used the orphan status being taken in by Mordecai. He used the captivity to get her to Persia. He caused the queen to reject the king's request. He caused the queen to be deposed. He got Esther to the throne and used Esther as a mighty instrument. Not only did He use the king's wrath, and the sleepless night, and the beautiful timing in all sorts of incidents. God was stepping along through all sorts of steppingstones, small things and great things, working secretly, unknown, unseen. God placed His stones of providential circumstances, great and small, small and great, in the proper timing, and moved the little orphan girl up to the throne. It's a mighty display of the power of divine providence.

I would assume that the object of this panorama is to give us a greater faith and confidence in the sovereignty and power of divine providence so that we would not despise the small things. Big doors often swing on small hinges, the least recognized and most inconspicuous incidents in our lives contribute to God's purpose for us, and become steppingstones for God in the accomplishment of His purpose.

That's our lecture for tonight. Let's have a word of prayer. Praise God! Oh how great Thou art!

(Prayer)

Father, as we consider these things, we are over-awed by Your power. Help us to recognize Your hand in the circumstances of our lives even as it is written, *“All things work together for good to those who love the Lord,”* that we might be conformed unto the image of his Son. Father, with this Book of Esther, give us a great awe of Thee, a recognition of Your power and wisdom, and a submission to You even in our most troublesome circumstances knowing that all things that touch our lives are stepping stones for You in the accomplishment of Your purpose, however unknown that might be. It is Your purpose just the same. So Father, teach us to be confident, to keep faith

knowing that You are God, so that in all our turbulence, we can be still in our hearts and spirit knowing that You, and You alone, are God indeed. For Your Name sake we ask it.

(Tongues and Interpretation)

“Ezekiel was partly hindered in his message toward the people of Judah. For 4½ years he was hindered and not able to open up the way he should, not because of his own incapacity, but because of a lack of response of the people of Judah. Then he was hindered greater until he could not directly come with a message of God to them for 3½ years. But at the end of this, the dealings of God came to them, as He put them in the furnace to remove their dross. When they came to utter destruction, it worked in them to remove the dross, which caused them to be liberated, and he could speak freely unto them.

“The Lord uses many circumstances. He has power over many things, even over the power of divination. For remember Nebuchadnezzar sought out by finding out through divination which way to go, either to go to Jerusalem or to go to Rabbah. Through divination he went to Jerusalem and brought the destruction thereof and the fall thereof, but I, the Lord God, was the one who controlled divination.

“Remember that Samuel came up through a witch under My control to speak unto My backslidden king? I am the God who has power over all things, I do many things that people do not realize that I am in. I am the Lord, the one who is in control of the devil, for he must do My bidding also. Remember to submit yourselves unto all things, and in all things rejoice, for it is Me that is working. I set up one and take down another. Hold steady and trust Me, for I am God, mighty in providence, able to deliver, able to accomplish that which man cannot do. Look not to man, but look unto Me, for I alone, thy God can bring it to pass.”