

A NEW PROVISION

Esther 2.19-20: With Esther comes a new provision into the life of Ahasuerus

Theme: Understand the provision of God's Spirit in your life, so that you can cultivate an attitude that will allow Him to have preeminence in your life.

Ahasuerus just received Esther as his new bride and queen.

- (v1) Remember that we started off this chapter with Ahasuerus “under conviction” and “feeling his need” for a new and better wife (better than rebellious Vashti).
- (v2-4) Thus started a useless, futile, humanistic search throughout the whole kingdom to meet that need.
- (v12-14) And so the king went from maiden to maiden trying to fix his own problem his own way.
- (v15-18) But as soon as Ahasuerus saw God's provision, Esther, his search was over. Ahasuerus receives Esther as his own, and that decision results in joy, liberty, and shared riches (v18).

All of this pictures for us the conversion of a lost man: (2Cor 5.17) Everything becomes new!

- There's great joy in receiving God's provision of a new and regenerated spirit (Esther).
- There's great liberty from the burden of sin.
- And there comes a great amount of “stately gifts” to every area of our lives (riches in Christ).

But all of this (as great as it is!), is only the beginning...

- The king still doesn't know about *Mordecai*. And... he doesn't know of the *enemies* he now has in his kingdom.
- And that's just how we start our new life after conversion:
 - ✓ We receive the provision of God in the new birth (our new, regenerated spirit; our “Esther”) but...
 - ✓ We are totally ignorant of who “Mordecai” (the Holy Spirit) is, and what His role is in our lives.
 - ✓ And, too, we are totally ignorant of the many enemies we have in our kingdom.

Our conversion (our new, spiritual birth) places us right in the middle of a spiritual war: Ephesians 6.12.

- There are numerous “smaller” enemies that want to do us harm, like we see Esther 2.21-23.
- And then there's the “biggie”—the one enemy who will seek to control our kingdom for his own desires (it's Haman, picture of the flesh).
- And the way to gain the victory of all of these enemies is the same: *Mordecai*.
 - ✓ Mordecai is the key to victory over the “smaller” enemies in Esther 2.21-23.
 - ✓ And Mordecai is the key to victory over the main enemy in the kingdom, Haman (Esther 3-7).

Mordecai is a picture of the Holy Spirit in the life of a born-again believer.

- And today I'd like to talk a little bit about God's new provision in the life of Ahasuerus.
- Yes, God's provision is Esther (a picture of the new, regenerated spirit given to the soul of the lost man who converts to Christ).
- But Esther has a close relative that takes care of her... Mordecai. And now that Ahasuerus is “part of the family,” Mordecai is going to take care of him, too... even though Ahasuerus knows nothing about him!
- Part of God's provision in Ahasuerus's life is Mordecai, and part of God's provision in our lives (since we are now “part of the family”) is the Holy Spirit... even though we may not know a whole lot about Him.
- What can we learn about the provision of God's Spirit in our lives from the provision of Mordecai in the life of Ahasuerus?

I. Mordecai's Presence: (v19) Present, but not Preeminent

A. Mordecai sits in the king's gate.

1. We've seen this before in the Book of Esther: (v5) Mordecai has a position of authority in the king's palace (in the governing of the affairs of the kingdom).
2. (Deut 16.18) Judges (governors, city officials) were those who “sat in the gates”; that is where business was conducted and affairs settled.
3. So here we see that Mordecai is *present* in the Ahasuerus's kingdom (right in the capitol city). And he has a *position* of some authority, though Ahasuerus probably doesn't know much about him.

B. The Spirit of God is present in our lives, also.

1. (1Cor 12.13; Rom 8.9) In the moment of our conversion to Christ, we are born again; we receive that new, regenerated spirit (Esther) from the Lord. And “Esther” brings along with her a close relative: Mordecai, a picture of the Holy Spirit of God living in each and every believer.
2. (1Cor 6.19) Just like Mordecai lived in the capitol city, so the Spirit of God lives in our bodies...
 - a) Ahasuerus: A picture of the soul of man (the “king” who makes decisions).
 - b) Esther: A picture of the new, regenerated spirit of a saved believer.
 - c) Shushan, the capitol city: A picture of the body, in which the soul lives and makes decisions.
 - d) Mordecai: A picture of the Holy Spirit who lives in Shushan—our bodies, the temple of God.
3. (1Cor 6.17) And just as Mordecai is a close relative of Esther, so the Spirit of God is a “close relative” of our new, regenerated spirit (He and our new spirit are “one”—they are joined).

C. But, though Mordecai is *present* in Shushan, he does *not yet* have *preeminence*.

1. Is Mordecai *present* in the king's palace? Yes (just like the Spirit is present in every Christian).
2. Does Mordecai have a *position of authority* in the king's gate? Yes (just like the Spirit is the Spirit *of God* and therefore has authority in our lives).
3. But, does Mordecai at this time have *preeminence* in the king's life and kingdom? *No*.
 - a) Though Mordecai is present, he still doesn't have preeminence (not until Esther 8.1-2).
 - b) This is a good picture of a Christian who has yet give control of his life over to the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) Yes, the Spirit of God is present—He lives in the believer, a “close relative” of Esther.
 - (2) Yes, the Spirit of God has a “position of authority” (He is God, after all).
 - (3) But, just like Ahasuerus, the Christian must make a conscious decision by his own free will to *relinquish control of his kingdom* to the leadership of the Spirit of God.
 - (a) (Est 8.1-2) He has to decide to turn over control of his kingdom to the Spirit.
 - (b) (Eph 5.18) He has to decide to “*be filled with*” (controlled by) the Holy Spirit of God.
 - c) And, like we are going to see in the life of Ahasuerus, this decision to turn over control to Mordecai (the Spirit of God) usually never takes place until the king (you and I; the soul) makes a mess of things trying deal with the enemies in his kingdom by himself.
 - (1) We usually have no idea what our enemies are capable of... And like Ahasuerus, we are usually deceived by the flesh (Haman) and make some very bad decisions...
 - (2) And it's then (after we've failed in handling the enemies in our kingdom ourselves) that we turn over control to Mordecai (the Spirit of God) and allow Him to lead us to victory.
 - (3) That's why the Bible says that *suffering* is necessary in the discipleship process.

D. [Review] Mordecai's Presence: (v19) Mordecai is *present* in the life and kingdom of Ahasuerus, but he's yet to be given a place of *preeminence*. Now... what's his *part* in all of this...?

II. Mordecai's Part (role / function): (v20) As Father, but not the Father

A. Mordecai's part (role and function) begins with his relationship to Esther (and Esther to him).

1. God shows us again the submissive spirit/attitude of Esther (she's not like Vashti at all).
2. Mordecai had charged Esther to not speak of being a Jew, and Esther submitted and obeyed without a word otherwise.
3. That's exactly how our new, regenerated spirit interacts with the Spirit of God.
 - a) (1Jn 3.9; 5.18) Have you ever wondered why the Bible says that if you are born again, you cannot sin? And yet you find yourself sinning every day.
 - b) What part of you was born again? It certainly wasn't your body! It was your spirit. Our “new man” is (for now) spiritual because we have been born again spiritually (in our spirits).
 - (1) And just like Esther submitted to Mordecai, so our new (spiritual) man submits to the Spirit of God.
 - (2) Once our bodies are “born again” in the resurrection, then what is true of us in the new spiritual man will also be true of us in the entire man: We'll never sin again, but rather we'll always submit to the leading of the Spirit of God.
4. And so we see Mordecai's leadership role begin with *Esther's willing submission to his leadership*.

B. Mordecai's part (at this point and time) has been that of “bringing up” Esther.

1. Mordecai will take on a more prominent (and even preeminent) role later in the story. But, for now God brings to our attention one more time to the fact that Mordecai “brought up” Esther.
 - a) (v5-7) Mordecai was *not* Esther's father, but he raised her as if she were his very own daughter.
 - b) He “brought her up” in the sense of educating her as a father would a daughter, bringing her to maturity (to being a responsible adult).
2. The Spirit of God has much the same role in our lives as Mordecai did in Esther's.
 - a) The Holy Spirit is not our Father (they are different Persons of the Godhead, the Trinity).
 - b) But, part of the Spirit's role in our lives is that of helping us grow in Christ—to mature in Him.
 - c) (2Cor 3.18) We grow in Christ-likeness (from glory to glory, little by little) by the Spirit.
 - (1) (Rom 8.29) It is God's ultimate goal to conform us to the image of His Son.
 - (2) And so, to this end, He sent His Spirit into our lives to “bring us up” to spiritual maturity.
 - d) (Gal 5.22-23) That is why Christ-like *character* is called *fruit of the Spirit*. It is the Spirit that “brings us up” in Christ and produces in us that spiritually mature (Christ-like) character.
 - e) (Gal 5.16-17) That is why Christ-like *conduct* is called a *walk in the Spirit*. It's the Spirit that shows us how to live like Christ lived, and do the works that Christ did (and continues to do).
 - f) Just like the role of Mordecai in the life of Esther, we see the role of the Spirit of God in our lives, “bringing us up” (as would a father, though He is not the Father) to spiritual maturity.
 - He teaches us (John 14.26), counsels us (Isa 11.2), and leads us (Rom 8.14).

Conclusion:

Ahasuerus has just received God's provision in his life: Esther.

- And Esther has a close relative that now forms part of Ahasuerus's life, too: Mordecai.
- And even though Ahasuerus probably doesn't know a whole lot about Mordecai at this point in the story, Mordecai is still there (he's present and he's working in Shushan the Palace!).

But... Mordecai, though present, does not yet have the preeminence that he should have.

- Ahasuerus has yet to get to the point that he turns over control of his kingdom to Mordecai.
- And that is like so many believers today who have the presence of the Spirit of God in their lives, but they have yet to relinquish control of their kingdoms to Him (they have yet to "be filled with the Spirit").
- What's it take to get us there? Well... it usually takes being deceived, manipulated, and defeated by our enemies—especially that one, specific wicked enemy called “Haman” (the flesh).
- Once that happens, we're usually more than happy to step aside and let Mordecai run the show.

But that's later in the story. What can we do now so that we can be prepared for that decisive moment?

- I think I would have to say that it's our attitude (our disposition of heart).
- And we see that disposition and attitude in Esther: We need to cultivate that attitude of willing submission to the Holy Spirit of God that we see in Esther toward Mordecai.
 - ✓ We'll never grow up (we'll never mature in Christ) without that disposition of heart (submissive).
 - ✓ Esther allowed Mordecai to “bring her up”; we see that attitude in her continual submission to him.
 - ✓ And we need that kind of attitude always, even when we don't completely understand what He's doing in our lives (like Esther, later in the story, when Mordecai tells her to go into the king unbidden).
 - ✓ If we hope to be conformed to the image of Christ, we need that kind of attitude, always (submission to the Spirit as a child to his Father so the Spirit can teach us, reprove us, correct us, and instruct us).
- How can we do that (how can we cultivate a submissive heart like we see in Esther)?
 - ✓ Grow in your knowledge of God: Read and study the Bible (never stop learning more of Scripture).
 - ✓ Then, along with that, strive to grow in humble submission to the Lord, even when you don't understand what's going on or what He's doing. Make conscious decisions to do what the Bible says.
 - Just accept the fact that you don't have all knowledge; God does. And so you can trust Him completely. Follow Him: Submit to Him and obey Him (trust Him!).
 - That's the kind of attitude that will prepare you for those “decisive moments” when God will require you to give control of your kingdom over Mordecai instead of trying to continue running things yourself.

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. [Prov 3.5-6]