

“Connect The Dots”
The Book of Esther
Sermon Series: “God’s Unseen Hand”

Introduction: Life can seem really random sometimes, but God is working out His sovereign will through free moral agents. The book of Esther pictures divine sovereignty and human responsibility perfectly intertwined together. Mark Dever has written, “Except for Song of Songs, Esther is the only book of the Bible that never explicitly mentions God. Yet, as Matthew Henry said, ‘Though the name of God be not in it, the finger of God is, directing many minute events for the bringing about of his people’s deliverance.’ God’s ability to accomplish his purposes, despite his hiddenness, only heightens our sense of his power. He may not be named, but this book is one of the longest sustained meditations on the sovereignty and providence of God in the whole Bible. It is really just one long narrative illustration of Romans 8:28: ‘We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.’ You may have missed God’s dramatic role in this book because he does not act in the same spectacular fashion that he does at other points in the Old Testament, such as calling Abraham or delivering the children of Israel from Egypt. Such interventions fall under the heading of *miraculous*. But here he works *providentially*—through the normal actions of people in the normal order of life, as he worked with Joseph and Ruth. God works sovereignly with no apparent miracles, just a lot of ‘happenings’ and just the right ‘circumstances’.”

Dever lists the following seeming coincidences in the story:

- Esther just happens to be Jewish, and she just happens to be beautiful (Es. 2:7).
- Esther just happens to be favored by the king (Es. 2:17).
- Mordecai just happens to overhear the plot against the king’s life (Es. 2:19-22).
- A report of this just happens to be written in the king’s chronicles (Es. 2:23).
- Haman just happens to notice that Mordecai does not kneel down before him and he just happens to find out that Mordecai is a Jew (Es. 3:2-4).
- When Haman plots his revenge, the dice just happen to indicate that the date for exacting revenge is put off for almost a year (Es. 3:7)! (What does Proverbs 16:33 say? “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.”)
- Esther happens to get the king’s approval to speak, but then she happens to put off her request for another day (Es. 5:8).
- Her deferral just happens to send Haman out by Mordecai one more time, which just happens to cause him to recount it to his friends (Es. 5:9-13).
- They, in turn, just happen to encourage him to build a scaffold immediately (Es. 5:14)!
- So Haman just happens to be excited to approach the king early the next morning (Es. 6:4).
- It just so happens that the previous night, the mighty king could not command a moment’s sleep, and he just happened to have had a book brought to him that recounted Mordecai’s deed (Es. 6:1).

- He then happened to ask whether Mordecai had been rewarded, to which his attendants happened to know the answer. Simply consider for a moment the fact that Mordecai happened not to have been rewarded for having saved the king's life (Es. 6:2-3).
- Anyhow, Haman happens to approach the king just when the king is wondering how Mordecai should be honored (Es. 6:4).
- Later on, the king happens to return to the queen just when Haman happens to be pleading with Esther in a way that can be misconstrued (Es. 7:8).
- The gallows Haman built for Mordecai just happens to be ready when King Xerxes wants to hang Haman (Es. 7:9).

Main Idea: God's unseen hand is connecting the dots of our lives in order to bring about His will.

1. God is sovereign. This means that He is in control. He rules and reigns in the affairs of mankind. Nothing happens that He does not cause or allow to happen.

2. God is providential. He is a good God who takes care of His creation and children (Matthew 6:25-33). The *Revell Compact Bible Dictionary* defines it as "the continuous active involvement of God in the created universe." Someone has said that "coincidence is a secular term for providence."

3. God is gracious. The Jews were in Exile because of their idolatry and unbelief. Mordecai and Esther did not seem to be practicing their faith openly. However, the Lord was still gracious to deliver His people and keep His covenant. This is because He is gracious even when we are unfaithful.

Conclusion: Because of who God is, let's trust Him and surrender our lives to Him. Let's seek Him and His will instead of fighting against Him. He is in control even when life seems to be falling apart. He has a purpose for us even when it seems like life is random. He is gracious even when we are doubting and sinning. He is working for our good even when we are experiencing a lot of trials. **Let's root our faith in the character of God instead of the circumstances of life.**