

God's "Providing" For Israel

Intro: This morning we continue our look into "providence". From scripture, we have determined that God often works behind the scenes to accomplish things that are a part of his overall plan for man. Today, we see two very important parts of that plan in Joseph and Esther.

1. He used Joseph to preserve the future for Israel.
 - A. Consider the idea of "concurrency".
 - B. When working concurrently, God has used bad people i.e. Joseph's brothers, Pharaoh, Judas, etc. See Genesis 50:15-20
 - B. Summarize Joseph's life from Genesis 37-45.
 - C. How did Joseph perceive the events of his life. Genesis 50:15-20; 45:1-8

2. He used Esther to prevent the destruction of the people of Israel.
 - A. "Redemptive History" and "Secular History" sometimes collide
 1. Christ's life begins in the framework of secular history. Luke 2:1-7
 2. What Rome had become brought Jesus' family to the fulfillment of Micah 5:2.
 3. This may explain the "fullness of time" of Galatians 4
 4. Note Pontius Pilate's life as it relates to Jesus' death.
 - B. What about Esther?
 1. Consider the historical setting of her life. Esther 1:1-3
 2. A party thrown by the king caused a vacancy for the "queenship".
 3. Esther becomes queen and a man named Haman gets a promotion.
 4. Uncle Mordecai disrespects Haman and all Jews are now threatened.
 5. Mordecai suggests Esther might be a part of God's providence. 4:1-14

3. Why was it so important to keep this nation alive?
 - A. Remember the original promise to Abraham in Genesis 12
 - B. From Judah's tribe – Genesis. 49:10; Hebrews 7:14
 - C. From the line of King David – Jeremiah. 23:5; Luke 1:32-33
 - D. Born in Bethlehem – Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4-7
 - E. Nation is preserved to allow the Christ to come through it.

Conclusion: I'm afraid that our understanding of providence focuses far too much on how God is working in our lives and all the drama that goes with it. Being appreciative of what God has done in the big picture in bringing salvation to his creation as illustrated in today's lesson will give us a greater sense of value to who God is and the way he has worked to the benefit of all.