

God Destroys An Evil Dreamer

Esther 3-7

A dream was defined in Lesson 1 as an idea that grows within you until you are captivated by it. The idea grows so strong that all your actions are controlled by it. Your dream becomes inseparable from who you are. But God, who is righteous and omnipotent, remains in control despite the dreams of any individual.

Consider Haman, a powerful noble of the Medo-Persian empire, who was a man of high aspirations. King Xerxes considered Haman a man worthy of authority and elevated him, "giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles" (Esther 3:1). Even the king's own signet ring had been given to Haman. The signet ring was the equivalent of today's "power of attorney."

Royal officials at the king's gate bowed before Haman as he passed through the city of Susa. Delighted with what he had accomplished for himself, Haman lived under a delusion of grandeur. Power and prestige had become a disease that infected his ego.

Haman had reached the point where he believed he was worthy of worship. When he discovered Mordecai would not bow before him, he could not be content merely to eliminate Mordecai. Although Mordecai became his focal point, it was not Mordecai he hated so much as it was Mordecai's "Jewishness."

Jews would not bow down before any God but one. Mordecai's upright body was a symbol of his refusal to pay homage to any other than the one God. Haman realized that any other Jew who bowed as he passed was only a coward, letting his body bend even as his mind rejected Haman's worthiness.

Saturated with his own worth, Haman put himself above God and became the recipient of his own idolatry. Destroying all Jews became the dream that permeated and controlled Haman. His hatred for them became such an obsession that he went to King Xerxes and obtained an edict for their destruction.

Haman, so overbalanced with hatred, must have been pushed near the brink of insanity when King Xerxes ordered him to lead Mordecai through the streets as a hero. An evil dream, kindled by hatred and fanned by the well wishes of friends, burned in his heart.

God was displeased with this dream. He had delivered the Jews into exile, but He had not forgotten them. They were still His people, and He already had worked out their salvation. By God's providence, Esther was already in place within the palace. Already Mordecai had saved the king's life and had been recorded in the annals. Everything was in place. God's people were saved, and the evil dreamer, Haman, went to the gallows.

神毁灭了一个邪恶的梦想者

《以斯帖记》第3-7章

在第一讲中我们已经说过，梦想是由你的内心而生，直至让你为之着迷的想法。这想法在你的心中有着强大的力量，甚至影响着你的行为。你的梦想与你自身有着不可分割的关系。但是，无论什么人有着何种梦想，最终控制一切的还是公义全能的神。

我们来看看哈曼这个人。他在米甸-波斯王国官高势大，有着极大的抱负。国王亚哈随鲁认为哈曼配得掌权，并且提升了他，“叫他的爵位超过与他同事的一切臣宰”（《以斯帖记》3:1）。这位国王甚至将自己的印章戒指都交给了哈曼。这枚印章戒指相当于当今的“委任书。”

当哈曼穿过书珊城时，在朝廷供职的臣仆都要向他下拜。由于欣喜于自己所成就的一切，哈曼便开始妄自尊大。权力和威望一步步侵蚀着他的自我。

哈曼甚至狂妄到认为自己应该受人膜拜的地步。当他发现末底改拒绝在他面前下拜时，他觉得就算是除掉末底改也难除他心中的怒气。虽然末底改成了他的焦点，但他之所以会如此恨末底改，是因为末底改的“犹太人”身份。

犹太人只拜一位，那就是神。末底改笔直的躯干表明了他拒绝向神之外的一切人和事低头。哈曼意识到若有犹太人向他下拜，也只不过是那些胆小鬼而已，他们可以屈身，但是他们心里不会承认哈曼值得人去拜。

由于狂妄占据了整个内心，哈曼将自己置于神之上，并且开始了对自己的偶像崇拜。毁灭所有的犹太人便成了他的梦想，这梦想充斥他内心并且操控着他行为。他对犹太人的恨到了近乎着魔的程度，他甚至找亚哈随鲁王要他传一道指令杀灭犹太人。

可以想象，当亚哈随鲁王下令由哈曼替末底牵马，陪末底改如英雄般在街上游行时，哈曼那极度的仇恨一定将他推到了疯狂的边缘。因着仇恨以及朋友们本是出于善意的劝说，一个邪恶的梦在他的心中燃烧着。

神不喜悦这梦。神虽然让犹太人遭流亡，但他并没有忘记他们。他们仍是神的子民，并且神已经在实施对他们的拯救。藉着神意，以斯拉早已进入到宫中，末底改也早已救过国王的命，并且被载入官方史录。凡事神都已预备。神的百姓得救了，那个邪恶的梦想者——哈曼被送上了刑架。

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Read Esther 6:13, and determine why Zeresh was so sure of her words.
2. Does King Xerxes show any symptoms of alcoholism?
3. Define "providence." Show scriptural evidence of its existence.
4. How did the book of Esther make it into the Bible without containing a single mention of God?
5. If Esther had remained silent, what would have happened to her? Would the story of the Jews' deliverance still be in the Bible?
6. Study fasting, and determine why Esther asked all the Jews to fast on her behalf.
7. From Esther 5:11-12 make a list of reasons to think Haman might have had an ego problem.
8. Compare the significance of the lineage of Haman and Mordecai.
9. What kind of marriage existed between Esther and Xerxes?
10. Do a study of the Jewish Feast of Esther or Purim. Is it still celebrated today? If so, how?

思考题

1. 阅读《以斯帖记》6:13，思考为什么细利斯会如此肯定地说出她的那番话。
2. 亚哈随鲁王是否显出了任何酗酒的症状？
3. 解释什么叫“神的预备 (providence)。”从经节中找出证明它存在的依据。
4. 为什么《以斯帖记》中根本没有提到“神”这个字却被纳入到了圣经中？
5. 如果以斯帖保持沉默，她可能会遭受怎样的后果？若真是那样的话，圣经中还会出现犹太人得救的故事吗？
6. 学习禁食祷告，理解以斯帖为什么要让所有的犹太人为她禁食祷告。
7. 根据《以斯帖记》5:11-12的内容，从哪几点可以看出哈曼骄傲自大？
8. 试比较哈曼和末底改谱系的意义。
9. 在以斯帖与亚哈随鲁两人之间存在的是一种什么样的婚姻？
10. 学习了解犹太人的以斯帖节、普珥节。我们今日是否仍会庆祝这节日呢？若是的话，是如何庆祝的呢？