

God's Providence: Overcoming Unfairness

Esther 2:19-23 Rev. Donghyeok Kim



Living in a World of Unending Injustice

Have you ever experienced unfairness? As we live our lives, there are many moments when we face deep injustice. For instance, there are times when someone spends time in prison despite doing nothing wrong. Or when we prepare thoroughly for an examination only to fail for inexplicable reasons—we feel profoundly wronged.

When this sense of unfairness remains unresolved, it can eat away at a person's spirit and cause severe physical and emotional distress. Someone I know once suffered a deeply unfair ordeal at work. At the direction of his superior, he inevitably cooperated in an illegal matter. Although he gained no personal benefit from it, the corporate environment made it impossible to refuse his manager's demands. Following a prosecutorial investigation, those superiors were convicted, and the entire executive management was replaced. Up to that point, things made sense. However, the newly appointed management unfairly terminated this employee simply because he had been involved in the corrupt practice. As a result, he lost his job, lost his severance pay, lost his home to the bank, and was left completely penniless. Yet the prosecutor took no further steps to investigate his side of the story, leaving the matter completely unresolved. Where could he go to address such injustice? He had done no intentional wrong, yet he suffered catastrophic loss due to internal corporate politics. In a situation where no one can help, how could one not fall ill from sheer frustration? The real problem is that such incidents happen around us all too frequently.

The Most Unfairly Treated Person in History

Jesus Christ Even believers in God cannot avoid facing unfair situations. If there is one person in human history who was treated most unfairly, it would be Jesus. He helped the poor, healed the sick, and proclaimed the truth. Furthermore, He engaged in no political maneuvering whatsoever. Even Pontius Pilate knew this and washed his hands, declaring himself innocent of this young man's blood. Yet in the end, Jesus was executed on the cross. How extraordinarily unfair is this? If Jesus Himself suffered such injustice, how could we, who follow Him, expect to be completely spared from similar experiences?

The question for us as Christians is how we ought to respond when faced with such profound unfairness. The feeling of being wronged can break our spirits and consume our hearts. We also cannot ignore the reality that unfairness is a frequent occurrence in daily life. There is, of course, a way to relieve this emotional burden: when our innocence is fully vindicated and recognized by others—or even if just one person truly understands our situation—our hearts lighten. But in most cases, getting such closure is far from easy.

Mordecai, Forgotten After Saving the King

Even after Esther became queen, her position remained insecure. Because a precedent had already been set with Vashti's dethronement, Esther could easily be removed whenever she was deemed lacking—or even for purely political reasons, regardless of her character. Fault can always be manufactured if someone intends to find it.

That is likely why Mordecai sat regularly at the king's gate, praying that Esther would face no harm in the palace. He paid close attention to palace affairs, constantly wishing for her well-being. On that particular night, he was at the gate once again, hoping to offer his distant support. He kept his ears open, gathering whatever information he could about the inner workings of the palace.

It was then that Mordecai intercepted urgent and shocking intelligence: two of the king's close eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, were plotting to assassinate King Ahasuerus. The scripture notes that they were angry with the king. Although they served in close proximity to the throne, they may have fallen out of favor or felt disrespected. Consequently, they conspired to assassinate him. Though they held high positions guarding the doors, Mordecai—sitting there for Esther's sake—overheard their plot. The eunuchs likely did not know that Esther was Mordecai's adopted daughter, as Mordecai had instructed her to keep her Jewish identity secret, and she had obeyed.

Upon hearing this, Mordecai immediately informed Esther, who then reported the plot to the king in Mordecai's name. An investigation confirmed the report, and the two eunuchs were hanged on a gallows. The event was then officially recorded in the king's royal chronicles.

A Strange Anomaly: Punishment Without Reward

Yet there are three curious aspects to this account. First, Mordecai did not report the plot directly under his own name, but conveyed it through Esther. Realizing the gravity of the threat, he likely chose the fastest route to save the king rather than going through complex bureaucratic channels. Second, Esther reported the disclosure explicitly in Mordecai's name. Had she claimed credit herself, she could have gained immense personal favor with the king, yet she selflessly credited Mordecai. The third detail is the most puzzling of all: although Mordecai saved the king's life and his deed was recorded, he received no reward whatsoever. In the Persian court, where royal benefactors were traditionally showered with honors and land, this omission was extraordinarily unusual.

For a nation to remain strong, rewards and punishments must be administered fairly (*sin-sang-pil-beol*). People must trust that wrongdoing brings consequences while good deeds bring reward. Capable rulers enforce this principle strictly to

maintain public trust. Yet in this assassination plot, punishment was meted out, but no reward was given.

What is remarkable is Mordecai's response. The Scriptures make no mention of him feeling bitter or complaining. While he did not act out of a desire for reward, uncovering a high-level conspiracy put his own life at risk, making recognition well-deserved. Yet he received nothing, nor did he express discontent. Though he had every reason to feel wronged, Mordecai simply moved on as if unconcerned with personal gain, and the incident gradually faded from public memory.

Overcoming Injustice: Trust in God's Providence

How did Mordecai accept this situation? Why did both he and Esther allow this apparent injustice to pass without protest?

Looking at this narrative, it becomes clear that Mordecai and Esther were people who waited on God's Providence. Those who believe in divine providence do not become overly elated by favorable events, nor do they sink into despair or bitterness when mistreated. This is the posture of those who trust God amid earthly circumstances.

Consider David. He was also a man who trusted in God's providence, fully believing that God would eventually make him king of Israel. Therefore, even when Saul sought to murder him without cause, David did not harbor bitterness or plot revenge; instead, he trusted in God. He lived by God's providence rather than relying on earthly luck. Those who rely on luck fall into cynicism or fatalism when circumstances turn against them, assuming fate has abandoned them. When long-prepared plans collapse or opportunities are lost, deep bitterness takes root.

However, those who trust in divine providence can endure even the most unjust circumstances because they believe in God's timing. David exemplified this. Though anointed king by divine covenant, his reality was that of a hunted fugitive. Yet he neither despaired nor blamed God. He quietly waited for God's time rather than forcing his own way. Even when presented with opportunities to kill Saul, David refused to touch the Lord's anointed, recognizing that vengeance belongs to God alone.

Similarly, Mordecai chose not to be consumed by bitterness. He harbored a firm confidence in God's ultimate purpose, fully trusting that God was aware of his sacrifice and his unfair treatment.

Conclusion

God's Good Work in His Perfect Time Dear members of Meonjeo-Sarang Church, do you believe in God's providence? Do you trust that God utilizes even the smallest details of your life for His sovereign purpose? Do you believe that His timing

is at work even within your current hardships? If so, you are equipped to overcome every sense of unfairness.

If any of you are currently hurting due to unfair treatment, do not be overwhelmed by sorrow or resentment. God possesses the power to work all things together for good (Romans 8:28). Put your trust in Him, and remember that vengeance is not yours to exact—it belongs to God. Though justice may seem delayed and your burden heavy, God will set all things right at His precise moment.

Do not be disheartened if your abilities go unrecognized for a season. In His time, God will lift you up. This is the consistent truth displayed throughout Scripture. May we all hold fast to the divine providence woven throughout the Book of Esther, gaining the spiritual wisdom to endure life's injustices with patience. I pray that God's providence and wisdom fill the lives of every member of Meonjeo-Sarang Church. Hallelujah!

Pastor's Column

Salvation Testimony

Hyunsoo Cho

I was born into a family that did not know God and instead served idols. From a very young age, I watched my grandmother and mother bring in shamans to perform gut rituals and put out bowls of water at the front platform in the early morning to pray. I even went to the mountains with shamans to offer prayers, which caused a wildfire that burned the mountain for two days and nights. We consulted shamans for family events and acted according to their instructions. However, the more we did so, the more bad things continued to happen in our family. Eventually, my father had an affair, and my only younger sister was lost in an accident. My mother spent a long time trapped in sorrow and despair. Then, she thought of God whom she had met in Sunday school when she was young, and she began attending church. Depending on God amidst her despair and thinking of her remaining children, she stood back up.

I followed my mother to Sunday school and middle school. The life of faith I lived back then seems to have become the strength that held onto the Lord throughout my life. I believe that my mother's tearful prayers have guided me until now. However, as I grew older, I lived a religious life full of pride and arrogance, moderately compromising with the world, enjoying worldly pleasures, and just attending church. My master was not God; I lived as my own master. The people I met were not people of faith, but friends of the world. I lived a sinner's life where there was a gospel but no realization, and where there was repentance but no change.

Then, while listening to the pastor preach during a sermon, saying, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness," I looked back at the life I had lived. I felt painfully how many sins I had committed and how I had lived only according to my own will. At that time, the true message of love that God cherished toward me was poured into my heart. Just as the words of John 3:16 say, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life," the great love of God—who gave up Jesus Christ on the cross to save a sinner like me—was finally realized as my true gospel. Receiving Jesus, who bore all my

sins and shed His blood on the cross, as my Lord and Savior, I finally experienced the grace of true repentance and rebirth.

From that time on, I tried to sort out all relationships with the world and return to the Lord. I used to think of it as hardship whenever things did not go my way. However, the Lord trained me and changed me very slowly and little by little. Through my heinous sins, I came to deeply realize day by day the love of God, who sent His Son and even let Him die. Now, my flawed ego is nailed to the cross, and I have become a new creation.

I feel ashamed of my ignorance when I once prayed as if bargaining with God, saying that if He healed my wife when she was sick, I would live for Him. I no longer pray just for everything to go well; instead, I pray for the strength, boldness, and wisdom to overcome any trials and hardships. I also ask to realize the Lord's plans and thoughts within them. I have come to think about what I can do for the Lord rather than what I will receive from Him. Furthermore, I hope to become a vessel used precious by the Lord.

Because I believe that the Lord is my master and the one who gives eternal life, walking with the Lord, feeling His love, and growing a little closer day by day makes me realize what a blessed life this is. Finally, I earnestly desire and hope before the Lord that the vain heritage of the world will be cut off from my children, and only the heritage of the cross's gospel and life will be passed down to them intact.