

## Message 4: Divine Reversals

**SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** ESTHER 7:1–8:17

### MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message is to help you learn to believe and trust in God even when life doesn't make sense or seem to be fair, because He can reverse circumstances that seem irreversible and make sense out of life when nothing seems to add up..

### INTRODUCTION:

If I were to give you a four-piece puzzle, you could put it together in no time. If I gave you a fifty-piece puzzle, it would take you a little longer to solve, but you would manage it okay. But if I gave you a five-hundred-piece puzzle, that's going to be a lot more complicated because there are so many more pieces.

However, if I handed you a five-thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle, you would probably refuse to tackle it because it just has too many pieces. And if puzzle were five hundred thousand, five million, or even a billion pieces, you would say, "It's way too much! I can't figure all this out."

Trying to figure out God is like trying to put together a billion-piece puzzle. There are too many pieces to His plan, and the Bible says His thoughts and ways are infinitely higher than ours anyway (Isaiah 55:8-9). So, trying to figure out infinity with our finite minds is a waste of time. To be sure, God has revealed many things about Himself in His Word. But there are also the secret things that belong to Him alone, which we will never figure out (Deuteronomy 29:29). In fact, it is going to take eternity to understand God. That's one reason we will live forever, because it's going to take us that long to make sense of the uncreated Creator and Sustainer of all things.

And our God, who doesn't miss a micro-second or syllable of any subject that has been known, is known, or will ever be known, is so brilliant in His capacity that He can take things

that look totally unrelated and disconnected, and put them together like a giant jigsaw puzzle to make sense out of them. And there is no time when we wish God would put the pieces of our life's puzzle together more than when we are going through a rough time and things don't make sense.

But before He does this, God often puts us with our backs to the wall so that we might discover He alone is God. This is what happens in the story of Esther—but it is also one of the finest biblical examples of God putting a seemingly impossible, too-big-to-solve puzzle together.

### SERMON POINTS:

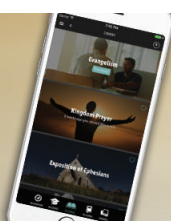
#### **1. GOD CAN USE NEGATIVE, EVEN EVIL, CIRCUMSTANCES AND PEOPLE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS ULTIMATE PLAN.**

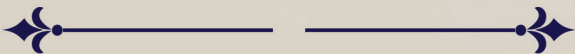
- If you don't know that, when you get hit by the devil or one of his minions, you're only going to react to what you see
- Don't miss the good that God may be doing through your bad experience.

#### **2. WAITING ON GOD MEANS WAITING ON HIM TO PUT THINGS TOGETHER THE WAY HE WANTS THEM TO BE (ESTHER 7:1-10).**

- We can't know how long it will take for God to put everything together in our situation. There are too many pieces to the puzzle—too many people and things that God needs to arrange.
- But you will know it when God shows up! It will be sudden and in so many unexpected ways.
- In the meantime, God may let things get worse before they get better. He may take you to rock bottom so you can discover that He is the rock at the bottom.

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### **3. WHEN GOD IS READY TO MOVE, HE CAN REVERSE THE MOST IRREVERSIBLE CIRCUMSTANCES (8:1-17).**

- Thankfully, our God is a God of reversals. He can change seemingly irreversible circumstances in a moment:
  - \* Economic Reversal: The Scripture says the inheritance of the wicked will be laid for the righteous (Proverbs 13:22).
  - \* Political Reversal: You may think your boss, the powers that be or those unscrupulous co-workers who are plotting against you have the final say because they have the name, the money and the position. But they don't have anything unless God gives it to them, and He can take it away (Daniel 4). Nobody has the final say over a Christian living by the Spirit in the will of God.
  - \* Legal Reversal: No edict or court ruling against you can stand when God decides to reverse it. He may allow it to be issued for His purposes, because His kingdom plan is bigger than one person.
  - \* Emotional Reversal: When God reverses your circumstances, He can wipe away tears and turn sadness into joy.
  - \* Spiritual Reversal: God may put you in a bad situation so that He can give you a supernatural deliverance that will cause other people to want to attach to the God who delivered you.

#### **SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:**

##### **PROPER DIVINE MOTIVATION**

An Army sergeant was testing his men to see how far they had progressed in their training. He told them to run and leap over a small body of water without falling in and getting wet. Some soldiers made it halfway, others made it two-thirds of the way across, but they all fell in the water. The sergeant

told them, "This is unacceptable. We're going to do this again tomorrow, and you'd better jump all the way over!" When they came back the next day, the soldiers discovered that the sergeant had put alligators in the water. They all made it over! Sometimes God lets bad situations swim in the water of your life in order to take you to a place you would not naturally go.

##### **GOD'S POP-TARTS**

When my children were growing up, they didn't always have time for a big breakfast, so they would grab Pop-Tarts and drop them in the toaster. But sometimes, they would pop up before they were ready. They weren't crisp enough, so you had to push them back down in the toaster for more heat. Just because they popped up didn't mean they were ready. We want to pop up after a while in God's toaster and say, "We're ready!" But God looks at us and say, "No, you aren't done yet. The situation you're in isn't finished."

##### **GETTING OUT FROM UNDER THE DIRT**

A farmer's dog fell into a deep well one time, so the farmer decided just to bury him in it. He started throwing in dirt, but every time the dirt hit the dog would shake it off and stand on the new pile. This went on until the dog had been lifted high enough that he was able to climb out of the well and escape, even though the farmer kept on throwing dirt into it. God may allow the devil or other people to throw some dirt on you, but if you know Him you can shake it off and keep on climbing because God knows how to reverse the irreversible!

##### **GOD'S SURE JUDGMENT**

Thomas Nast was one of the most famous political cartoonists in American history. In the late 1860s, Nast began his famous cartoon attack on the corrupt Democratic Tammany Hall ring that ruled New York City. The head of Tammany Hall, William "Boss" Tweed, was so pressured and exposed by Nast's



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powerful cartoons that he fled to Europe. But Nast's cartoon caricatures of Tweed had become so internationally famous that the former boss of New York was recognized and arrested in Spain in 1876.

This fascinating story illustrates a timeless principle that was true of Haman and remains true today. When God decides it is time for judgment, a person's position or power cannot deliver them. There is no place to run and hide from God.

## QUOTES BY DR. TONY EVANS:

"When life goes left on us, when it doesn't make sense, when it seems unfair, when it's definitely wrong, we're still called to believe in this God who can make the incomprehensible make sense. But too often we try to illegitimately take matters into our own hands to control our circumstances. But we often wind up making them messier."

"God not only wants you to do the right thing, He wants you to do the right thing at the right time. Timing matters to God. He does things with precision, not only related to events but also related to time. In Esther's case, there were a number of other things God wanted to happen to set the stage for the good He wanted to do that had not yet happened."

"As a Christian, you only have one source. If you ever get that in your head, if it ever burns into your heart and mind that nobody, I don't care who they are, has the final say-so over a Christian living by the Spirit in the will of God, then you will understand that you never have to live a threatened life. I know things can be threatening, but you don't have to live a threatened life as though they have a final say over you, because they do not."

"God has an override button that He can push to thwart what Satan has planned against you, the people he has raised up against you, or the circumstances that look hopeless. When God pushes override, it may not stop the evil from being evil, but God gives you something to conquer it."



*Life is busy.*  
but Bible study is still possible.