

THE STORY OF
ESTHER

THE HIDDEN KING DELIVERS



Small Group Guide: Esther - Hearing God When He Seems Silent

Sermon Series: The Book of Esther

Main Text: Esther 3-5

Key Theme: Discerning God's voice and activity when He doesn't speak audibly

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: Share about a time when you had to make an important decision without having all the clarity you wanted. How did you move forward?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

- 1. God is ceaselessly and sovereignly working even when He seems silent**
 - God doesn't speak through burning bushes or audible voices today like He did in biblical times
 - His silence doesn't mean His absence
- 2. God speaks through Scripture and patterns of salvation**
 - Esther recognized God's fingerprints through stories she knew (Joseph, Moses, Shadrach/Meshach/Abednego, Jonah)
 - Knowing Scripture helps us discern God's activity in our circumstances
- 3. God speaks through the testimony of His people**
 - The body of Christ shares experiences of God's faithfulness
 - Our testimonies help others recognize God's hand in their situations

4. We are placed "for such a time as this"
 - Our circumstances are not coincidences
 - God positions us strategically to be His witnesses
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Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

1. What stood out to you most from this passage in Esther 3-5? Why?
2. How does the generational conflict between the Amalekites (Haman) and the Jews (Mordecai) help us understand the depth of this crisis?
3. What was significant about Mordecai's response (sackcloth and ashes) and Esther's call to fast? How did these actions connect to their faith heritage?

Hearing from God

4. The pastor said, "God did speak to Esther through the scriptures of a pattern of salvation." What does this mean practically for how we hear from God today?
5. Can you identify a time when you recognized God's "fingerprint" in your life by remembering what He had done before (either in Scripture or in your past)?
6. Why is it important to know Scripture well when trying to discern God's will? What happens when we don't?

Living It Out

7. Esther had to choose between two forms of certain death. What gave her the courage to say, "If I perish, I perish"? How does this challenge our own faith?
8. The sermon emphasized that we are God's "mouthpiece" today—His witnesses. Why do you think many Christians struggle to share their testimony or the gospel?
9. Where has God placed you "for such a time as this"? (Consider: workplace, neighborhood, family, school, etc.)

Personal Reflection

10. Esther and Mordecai both lived with "one foot" in their Jewish faith and "one foot" in Persian culture. In what ways do modern Christians struggle with the same tension? How do you personally navigate this?
 11. The pastor asked, "Where have you seen God?" Take time for each person to share a recent example of God's activity in their life.
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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one or two of the following to practice this week:

1. Scripture Immersion

- Read through one of the biblical stories mentioned (Joseph - Genesis 37-50; Moses - Exodus 1-14; Shadrach/Meshach/Abednego - Daniel 3; Jonah)
- Journal about patterns you see in how God delivers His people
- Ask: How might this apply to a situation I'm currently facing?

2. Testimony Sharing

- Write out your salvation story or a recent example of God's faithfulness (aim for 3-5 minutes when spoken)
- Share it with one person this week—either someone in the group or someone outside the church
- Be specific about what God did and how it changed you

3. Positional Awareness

- List the different "positions" or roles you occupy (parent, employee, neighbor, friend, etc.)
- For each one, prayerfully ask: "God, how have You placed me here 'for such a time as this'? Who needs to hear about You?"
- Take one step to be a witness in at least one of those positions

4. Fasting & Prayer

- **Like Esther called for a three-day fast, consider fasting one meal or one day this week**
- **Use that time to pray specifically for:**
 - **Courage to speak about Jesus**
 - **Discernment to see God's activity**
 - **Boldness to act on what God is showing you**

5. Pattern Recognition

- **Keep a "God sightings" journal this week**
 - **Each day, write down at least one way you saw God at work (answered prayer, provision, protection, conviction, etc.)**
 - **Share your findings with the group next time**
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Memory Verse

Esther 4:14 - "For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Closing Discussion

- 1. What is one specific thing God is calling you to do based on today's discussion?**
 - 2. How can we pray for each other this week?**
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Closing Prayer

Pray together, focusing on:

- **Asking God to help us recognize His activity even when He seems silent**
 - **Boldness to share our testimonies and the gospel**
 - **Wisdom to see where we've been placed "for such a time as this"**
 - **Courage to act on what God is showing us, even when it's costly**
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Leader Notes

- **Encourage vulnerability: Create a safe space for people to share struggles with hearing from God or feeling uncertain about His will**
- **Emphasize grace: Some may feel guilty about not sharing their faith enough—point them to God's empowerment through the Holy Spirit rather than condemnation**
- **Make it practical: Help group members identify specific, concrete ways they can apply this week's teaching**
- **Follow up: Next week, begin by asking how people did with their chosen application**