

Session 11: Esther

Session 11 Summary: This session explores the book of Esther as a powerful example of God's sovereign hand working behind the scenes in our lives, even when He seems absent or silent. Though God is never mentioned by name in the book of Esther, His providence is evident throughout the narrative as He orchestrates events to save His people. The speaker uses his personal testimony of moving from Texas to Alabama, losing a scholarship, and eventually meeting his wife to illustrate how God works through seemingly random or disappointing circumstances to accomplish His purposes. The central message is that God's hand is more evident in our stories than we might think, and we have been placed in our current positions "for such a time as this" to participate in God's ongoing work. The session challenges believers to look back on their lives, recognize God's faithfulness, and share their stories with the next generation.

Key Points:

- God's absence of mention in Esther is not evidence of His absence but an invitation to see His hand at work
- The book of Esther is structured as a literary mirror, with ironic reversals centered around chapter 6
- Esther's approach to the king required tremendous courage as she risked death by entering his presence unsummoned
- God will accomplish His purposes with or without us, but we are invited to participate in His work
- Mordecai's famous challenge: "Perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this"
- God never abandons His people, never forgets His promises, and never will
- We should document and share our stories of God's faithfulness with future generations
- Your generation has been strategically placed by God for a specific purpose in this moment
- Looking back reveals God's orchestration of events we thought were coincidences or disappointments

Scripture Reference:

- Book of Esther (entire book, with focus on chapters 1-10)
- Esther 4:14 - "Who knows? Perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this"
- Esther 4:13-14 - Mordecai's challenge about relief and deliverance coming from another place
- Romans (reference to God working all things for good for those who love Him)

Stories:

- The narrative of Esther: Queen Vashti's refusal and removal, the beauty contest, Esther becoming queen, Haman's rise to power and decree to kill the Jews, Mordecai's refusal to bow, the king's sleepless night, Haman's humiliation, Esther's courageous banquets, Haman's execution on his own gallows, and the Jews' deliverance
- The establishment of the Purim holiday, named after the "pur" (dice/lot) Haman used to choose the day to destroy the Jews