

SERMON NOTES

Where Is God?
The Book of Esther
Pastor Ben Joyce
August 20-21, 2011

Esther 4:12-16

¹² When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai, ¹³ he sent back this answer: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. ¹⁴ For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"

¹⁵ Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶ "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

I. God is at Work Among Us Even When He Seems Absent

"When you cannot hear God, you will find that He has trusted you in the most intimate way possible -- with absolute silence, not a silence of despair, but one of pleasure, because He saw that you could withstand an even bigger revelation."

-Oswald Chambers

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II. God Is at Work Through Us Regardless of Our Position

"If you were to go to a book table with a biography with The Man that God Uses or The Woman God Uses you would immediately assume that it was a book about a missionary or minister or a specialist in some kind of spiritual work, would you not? A pastor, or evangelist, or someone who leads bible studies, at least. But what you have in the story of Joseph, is a successful secular leader. Not a preacher, not a pastor, not someone leading a Bible study. In the long term being a preacher, missionary, or leading a bible study group is in many ways easier. There is a certain spiritual glamour in doing it. And it is easier to discern what we should be doing. It is more black and white, not so grey. What is hard is to get Christians to see how he uses men and women not just in ministry but in law, in medicine, in business, in the arts. This is the great short fall of our day."

-Rev. Dick Lucas on Joseph

III. God Is at Work *For Us* to Give Us Rest from Our Enemies**Esther 9:20-22**

²⁰ Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far, ²¹ to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar ²² as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

Colossians 2:13-15

¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57

⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.