



ESTHER

THE HIDDEN HAND OF GOD

Pair of Queens, Dirty Trick | Esther 1 & 2

1. Share what you already know about the book of Esther, including any knowledge you have about any of the characters. What, do you think, is the meta-narrative of the story?
2. Skim read Esther 1 & 2. What words or themes stand out to you? Why?
3. Does it surprise you that there are books in the Bible that do not mention God and which seemingly tell the story of an ungodly and immoral people? Can you think of other characters or stories in the Bible who's presence surprises or shocks you? Why, do you think, does God include them in his inspired Word? Discuss.
4. Sensitive discuss Xerxes. What words would you use to describe him? What/who are the contemporary parallels that you might be able to draw?
5. What do you make of Vashti's response to her husband? Can you think of a contemporary movement or individual who has taken a similar stance in the world? Why, especially in her day, were her actions so controversial? Was the cost worth it?
6. Share what you know about Mordecai and Haman. These characters will keep appearing in the story, so it's helpful to get to know them today.
7. God's providence is clearly on display in the book Esther. What do you understand this to be? Can you share examples from your own life when you have known the providence (or you might say 'foresight') of God? Did you know God's providence the time or only with the benefit of hindsight?
8. How does Romans 8:28 underline the providence/sovereignty of God? Discuss the link between Romans 8:28 and Esther 4:13-14. Do you find these thoughts reassuring or uncomfortable or something else?
9. If God's providence is perfect, what place do we have in the plans of God as individuals and/or as a church community?
10. Mordechai didn't have his theology/faith fully worked out and yet God used him. Can you think of an occasion when this has been true for you too?