



**In The Fog**  
**Esther 7:1-7**

## You can't read the book of Job without feeling sorry for him

- Here was a man godly in heart and righteous in life
- **Job 1:1 NLT** He was blameless—a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil
- His entire world crashed in on him for no apparent reason
- And God allowed it, twice, and never explained, why

## You can't read the book of Job without feeling sorry for Job

- The first part we can kind of handle, it's the second part that throws us
- God wasn't absent or uninvolved, but He was silent at least with Job
- It's the mysterious sense of God's silence that makes us stop and wonder why

## You can't read the book of Job without feeling sorry for Job

- Chuck Swindoll, “It’s like swimming in a vast lake and getting 300 yards from shore and suddenly a dense fog rolls in and surrounds you”
  - You start swimming quickly to shore, or you think you are
  - You get disoriented, then it begins to get dark as the sun goes down

## Not knowing where, to say nothing of why, Job began to voice his distress

- **Job 3:3-4, 11-13 NLT** “Let the day of my birth be erased, and the night I was conceived. 4 Let that day be turned to darkness. Let it be lost even to God on high, and let no light shine on it.

## Not knowing where, to say nothing of why, Job began to voice his distress

- **Job 3:3-4, 11-13 NLT** 11 “Why wasn’t I born dead? Why didn’t I die as I came from the womb? 12 Why was I laid on my mother’s lap? Why did she nurse me at her breasts? 13 Had I died at birth, I would now be at peace. I would be asleep and at rest.
- These are “words in the fog”, don’t criticize him unless you have been there

## We live in the realm of time, God does not

- God has no night, day, month, year, past, present or future
- Theologians call this the *transcendence* of God
- Transcendence = wholly independent of the material universe, beyond all known physical laws
- He sees all the movie of our life all at once, fully and completely

## **We live in the realm of time, God does not**

- Our problem is that we are looking at life through the wrong end of the telescope
- We are finite creatures that even if God told us everything he was doing, we could not comprehend it



## **We live in the realm of time, God does not**

- Phillip Yancy, “No matter how we rationalize, God will seem unfair from the perspective of a person trapped in time. We remain ignorant of many details, not because God enjoys keeping us in the dark, but because we have not the faculties to absorb so much light. Faith means believing in advance what will only make sense in reverse.”

## We live in the realm of time, God does not

- The question this evening is, how do we live in the fog without panic? The answer is really simple, but deep.
  - To discover how God works
  - Having confidence in Him.

## The book of Esther is written from the perspective of God's transcendent presence

- In chapter 3, the fog thickens when there is a prolonged period of God's silence as some really strange things happens from our perspective
  - The king promotes an evil man with an evil plan to his primary counsel named Haman, and God was silent

## The book of Esther is written from the perspective of God's transcendent presence

- In chapter 3, the fog thickens when there is a prolonged period of God's silence as some really strange things happens from our perspective
  - Haman convinces the king his plan will benefit the king and the kingdom, and God is silent
  - Haman builds a 70-foot tall tower to hang Mordecai, a righteous man, and God is silent

## The book of Esther is written from the perspective of God's transcendent presence

- Yet we see God working, even in His silence that you will miss if you don't have your spiritual ears on
- **Matthew 11:5 NLT** Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!
- If you don't believe this and don't remember this when He stays silent, you will panic, you will doubt, resentful brimming with bitterness

**If you want to discover how God works, not only in Esther's day but in our day, keep these two things in mind:**

- Life is filled with sustained periods of silence, often.
  - **1st Samuel 3:1 NLT** Now in those days messages from the Lord were very rare, and visions were quite uncommon.

**If you want to discover how God works, not only in Esther's day but in our day, keep these two things in mind:**

- Life is filled with sustained periods of silence, often.
  - Moses was on the back side of a mountain for 40 years before the Lord reached out to him
  - Between Malachi and the birth of Jesus was around 400 year without a word from the Lord

**If you want to discover how God works, not only in Esther's day but in our day, keep these two things in mind:**

- Life is filled with sustained periods of silence, often.
  - Those periods of His silence are just as significant as the times when He speaks
  - You need ears of faith to listen for His voice



**If you want to discover how God works, not only in Esther's day but in our day, keep these two things in mind:**

- God's surprising sovereignty often takes time to unfold
  - The turning points of life, the significant events, are often subtle
  - A sensitive heart is needed to detect those changes

**If you want to discover how God works, not only in Esther's day but in our day, keep these two things in mind:**

- God's surprising sovereignty often takes time to unfold
  - We read where the king couldn't sleep
  - Mordecai's name just happens to ooze out of obscurity
  - Which leads to the missing pieces of the puzzle that are critical to God's plan

**If you want to discover how God works, not only in Esther's day but in our day, keep these two things in mind:**

- That's the role wisdom plays in our lives
- Rather than thrashing around thinking, "I will not make it through this. I will never hear God's voice. God has abandoned me."
- We determine, in wisdom, to watch for the slightest turning of events

**If you want to discover how God works, not only in Esther's day but in our day, keep these two things in mind:**

- When the events begin to turn, we realize that none of it was merely coincidental
- Luck has no place in a Christian's vocabulary

## We find there is courage when we respond in God's timing in God's way

- **Esther 7:1-2 NLT** 1 So the king and Haman went to Queen Esther's banquet. 2 On this second occasion, while they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "Tell me what you want, Queen Esther. What is your request? I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!"

## **We find there is courage when we respond in God's timing in God's way**

- Esther was patient seeming to know the first and second time the king requests this, was not the proper time
- She had a sensitive ear and had the courage to hold back until the right moment

## We find there is courage when we respond in God's timing in God's way

- **Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7 NIV** 1 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: 7 A time to be quiet and a time to speak.

## We find there is courage when we respond in God's timing in God's way

- **Esther 7:3-4 NLT** 3 Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor with the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my request, I ask that my life and the lives of my people will be spared. 4 For my people and I have been sold to those who would kill, slaughter, and annihilate us. If we had merely been sold as slaves, I could remain quiet, for that would be too trivial a matter to warrant disturbing the king."



## We find there is courage when we respond in God's timing in God's way

- **Esther 7:5 NLT** “Who would do such a thing?” King Xerxes demanded. “Who would be so presumptuous as to touch you?”
- It would have been easy for Esther to say, “Well king, you signed the decree to terminate me and my people.”

## **We find there is courage when we respond in God's timing in God's way**

- We live in a world of preoccupied people, they too live in a fog
- Who knows how many edicts the king signed that day simple because he trusted his counselors?

## We find there is courage when we respond in God's timing in God's way

- **Esther 7:6-7 NLT** 6 Esther replied, "This wicked Haman is our adversary and our enemy." Haman grew pale with fright before the king and queen. 7 Then the king jumped to his feet in a rage and went out into the palace garden.
- Esther answers with strength and courage and Haman is shocked

## We find there is courage when we respond in God's timing in God's way

- Don't ever try to convince me that some situations in this life are absolutely permanent, outside of God's ability to change it
- As Haman is impaled on gallows designed for Mordecai, we see God's "surprising sovereignty" at work

## **We must bring sensitivity to God's interventions every day**

- We can be comforted by God's sovereignty because God "does all things well" and in doing them he has only "good" as His goal
- He can still be trusted in 2020
- The fog on your life lake is neither accidental nor fatal

## We must bring sensitivity to God's interventions every day

- Listen with ever increasing sensitivity, because His message will come in various way
- **2nd Corinthians 5:7-8** NIV 7 For we live by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident

## **We must bring sensitivity to God's interventions every day**

- Get in His word and on your knees
- Accept counsel from those who are maturing and balanced believers
- Don't rush into big decisions
- Don't talk so much, believers who are maturing not only respect God's silence, they model it as well

## **We must bring sensitivity to God's interventions every day**

- The workings of God are not related to our clock or calendar, they are related to our crises
- So, while waiting look beyond the present
- Express to God what is going on inside of you, He can handle it
- As God to help you see beyond the pain of the present



## **We must bring sensitivity to God's interventions every day**

- The surprises in store are not merely ironic or coincidental, they are sovereignly designed
- The greatest temptation in the fog is to doubt or deny that God is even at work

# **We must bring sensitivity to God's interventions every day**

- How perfectly God works
  - A queen who was passive suddenly become in charge
  - A king once duped is now informed
  - An enemy who was only moments away from exterminating a nation is now an object of scorn

# We must bring sensitivity to God's interventions every day

- Think of the cross of Jesus
  - The Roman officials applauded
  - The Jewish officials rejoiced
  - Jesus' disciples mourned with fear
- What seemed like an ending was only the beginning



Because Jesus is alive!