

# ESTHER

God Is Working In His  
Silence



## **Most of our days begin rather predictable and meander through common tasks and expectations**

- We rarely wake up anticipating God to do something marvelous
- Days that begin uneventfully can lead into an unbelievable, indescribable series of heart-stopping events

## **Most of our days begin rather predictable and meander through common tasks and expectations**

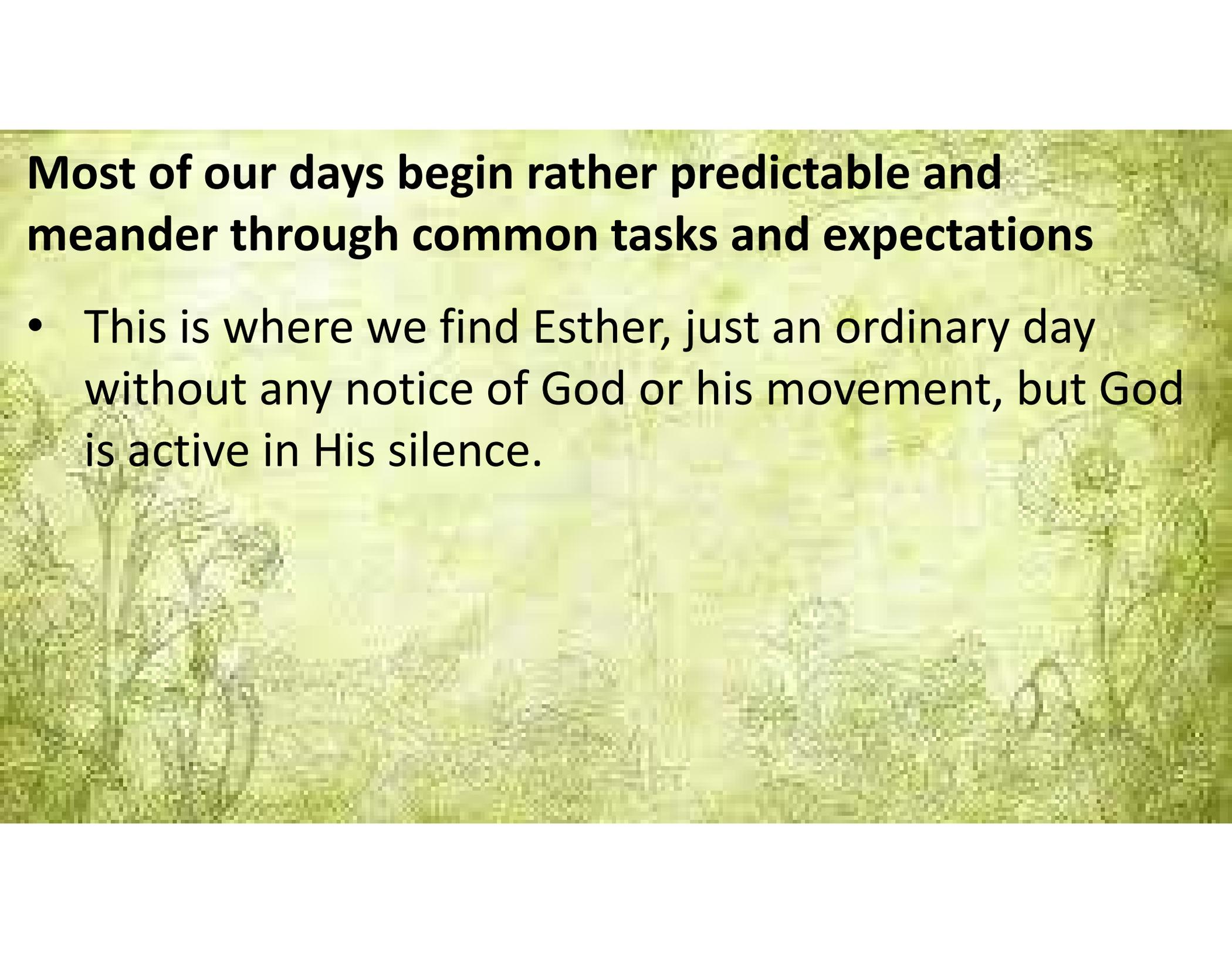
- Think about when the rains began that destroyed all life, but God rescued Noah and his family
- A burning bush in a Sinai wilderness for Moses
- A Judean hillside when a Jewish teenager tending his father's sheep was called inside (David)

## **Most of our days begin rather predictable and meander through common tasks and expectations**

- How about the day Jesus arrived or the morning He rose from the dead
- What about a day that has not happened yet when he returns
- All of these days began as a ho-hum day

## **Most of our days begin rather predictable and meander through common tasks and expectations**

- F.B. Myer – “Fit yourself in God’s service; be faithful. He will presently appoint thee...In some unlikely quarter, in a shepherd’s hut, or in a artisan’s cottage, God has His prepared and appointed instrument. As yet the shaft is hidden in His quiver, in the shadow of His hand; but at the precise moment at which it will tell with the greatest effect, it will be produced and launched on the air”



**Most of our days begin rather predictable and meander through common tasks and expectations**

- This is where we find Esther, just an ordinary day without any notice of God or his movement, but God is active in His silence.

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

- **Jerimiah 31:35-36 NIV** 35 This is what the Lord says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the Lord Almighty is his name: 36 “Only if these decrees vanish from my sight,” declares the Lord, “will Israel ever cease being a nation before me.”

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

**Esther 3:1-5 NLT** Haman's plot to destroy the Jews

- 1 Some time later King Xerxes promoted Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite over all the other nobles, making him the most powerful official in the empire. 2 All the king's officials would bow down before Haman to show him respect whenever he passed by, for so the king had commanded. But Mordecai refused to bow down or show him respect.

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

**Esther 3:1-5 NLT** Haman's plot to destroy the Jews

- 3 Then the palace officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why are you disobeying the king's command?" 4 They spoke to him day after day, but still he refused to comply with the order. So they spoke to Haman about this to see if he would tolerate Mordecai's conduct, since Mordecai had told them he was a Jew.

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

**Esther 3:1-5 NLT** Haman's plot to destroy the Jews

- 5 When Haman saw that Mordecai would not bow down or show him respect, he was filled with rage. 6 He had learned of Mordecai's nationality, so he decided it was not enough to lay hands on Mordecai alone. Instead, he looked for a way to destroy all the Jews throughout the entire empire of Xerxes.

## **The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened**

- God knows of this plan and he begins his movement years in advance by weaving the lives of the King and a simple Jewish girl named Esther

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

- **Esther 1:3-4 NIV** In the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials. The military leaders of Persia and Media, the princes, and the nobles of the provinces were present. 4 For a full 180 days he displayed the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of his majesty.

## **The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened**

- Archaeologists excavating Susa unearthed inscriptions
  - “The great King. The king of kings. The king of the lands occupied by many races. The king of this great earth”
  - The king did not struggle with an inferiority complex

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

- **Esther 1:5 NIV** When these days were over, the king gave a banquet, lasting seven days, in the enclosed garden of the king's palace, for all the people from the least to the greatest who were in the citadel of Susa.
  - Nothing was to be held back, anything goes
  - Incredible display of majesty, power and riches

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

- **Esther 1:9 NIV** Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the royal palace of King Xerxes.
  - Separate banquet for the women in the palace, the wives, sisters and mothers of the important men in Susa

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

- **Esther 1:10-11 NIV** 10 On the seventh day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the seven eunuchs who served him—Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Karkas— 11 to bring before him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at.

## **The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened**

- Inevitably all this revelry led to excess, debauchery and drunkenness
- In his drunken state the King decided to show off his prize possession – the physical beauty of the Queen
- His own private beauty pageant for all his drunken guests to enjoy and envy

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

- **Esther 1:12 NIV** But when the attendants delivered the king's command, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger.
- Alexander Whyte, "Her beauty was her own and her husband's. It was not for open show among hundreds of half-drunken men"

## **The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened**

- She was brave enough to say no to that which was blatantly wrong and in resisting this insult act of indignity
- It was never God's design that a wife submit to her husband's evil desires
- Marriage does not give the husband the right or the license to use his wife in this manner

## **The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened**

- I'm all for submission, as long as it's the biblical kind of submission
- I'm in favor of the husband's leadership of the home as long as he is God's kind of leader as set forth in scripture, not some extreme, self-serving and humiliating concept of leadership and submission
- Be careful men, what you ask of the woman God has given you

## **The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened**

- This created quite a stir within the married men community
- What are we going to do? The queen's response had the King baffled
- All the men were worried that all their wives would treat them the same once they heard about it

## The great thing about Biblical history we get to see what God saw before it ever happened

- **Esther 1:19 NIV** “Therefore, if it pleases the king, let him issue a royal decree and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media, which cannot be repealed, that Vashti is never again to enter the presence of King Xerxes. Also let the king give her royal position to someone else who is better than she.

## **All of this is going on in Esther's mundane day**

- Esther doesn't have the foggiest idea what is going on and God's plan for her life
- God moves not only in mysterious ways, he moves in our mundane days unseen

## **All of this is going on in Esther's mundane day**

- This is the wonder of God's sovereignty
- He is moving and pushing and rearranging events and changing minds until He bring out of even the most carnal and secular settings a decision that will set His perfect plan in place
- Don't fall into the trap of thinking God is asleep when it comes to nations or governments or even carnal banquets

## **All of this is going on in Esther's mundane day**

- His ways are so different from ours, we would quickly jump into panic conclusions while God methodically works His plan
- He is doing this in our lives as well. This should bring us a sense of peace and well-being. God's got this

## **Let's keep the long view in all of this**

- God's heart remains attached to his people
- To keep his promise of protection he has set in motion events that will allow this to happen
- A vacancy is open at the top and predictably, God has someone waiting in the wings

## Let's keep the long view in all of this

- **Proverbs 21:1 NIV** In the Lord's hand the king's heart is a stream of water that he channels toward all who please him.
- God can move the hearts of rulers of this world wherever and whenever He wishes
- He is in no hurry. He is extremely deliberate and painfully slow
- George Herbert, "God's mill grinds slow, but sure."

## The regret of the king is the plan of the Lord

- **Esther 2:1 NIV** Later when King Xerxes' fury had subsided, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what he had decreed about her.
  - Later is an understated word
- **Esther 2:16 NIV** She (*Esther*) was taken to King Xerxes in the royal residence in the tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

## **The regret of the king is the plan of the Lord**

- So, if chapter 1 was his third year or reign and chapter 2 is his seventh year reign, then what has happened in between
- History books tell us that the King attempted to conquer Greece and it was a disaster
- So he has returned home a failure, weary from battle, dispirited by defeat

## **The regret of the king is the plan of the Lord**

- He is looking for someone who knows and loves him to greet him with open arms and there is no one
- He remembers Vashti, her beauty, the comfort of her understanding
- He goes into a period of depression

## The regret of the king is the plan of the Lord

- His attendants recognized this and made the suggestion in **Esther 2:2 NIV** Then the king's personal attendants proposed, "Let a search be made for beautiful young virgins for the king.
- He's not looking for a one-night stand but a companion who really cares for him, long-term
- All of this is going on outside of Esther's world, she is still just going on through the mundaneness of life

## Summary

- God's plans are not hindered when the events of this world are carnal or secular
  - He is not limited to work just in the Christian family
  - He is as much at work in the Oval Office as the pastor's study
  - He is working in China, Iran and other countries of the world just as He is in America

## Summary

- God's plans are not hindered when the events of this world are carnal or secular
  - To doubt this is to draw boundary lines around His sovereign control
  - God is never surprised by what humanity may do

## Summary

- God's purposes are not frustrated by our failures
  - Wrong grieves Him and serious consequences may follow but no amount of wrong frustrates His sovereign purpose
  - If God can work through the debauchery of that banquet hall he can work in your failures as well
  - God applies grace to the long view of life

## Summary

- God's people are not excluded from high places because of handicap or hardship
  - Nick Sibley parking sign – Don't even think about parking here
  - Don't even think about discounting anybody from being in a place of significance
  - Jesus was born and raised in obscurity in Nazareth

## Summary

- What are you today on your own journey?
  - Are you discounting the significance of your days?
  - Are you sighing rather than singing?
  - Are you wondering what good can come from all that you have to live with?

## Summary

- What are you today on your own journey?
  - God's hand is not so short that it cannot save, nor is His ear so heavy that He cannot hear
  - Whether you see or hear Him or not, He is at work in your life this very moment
  - God specializes in turning the mundane into the meaningful

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