



When God Seems Silent – Week 1
“Out of the Shadows”

I. Esther Distinctives

1. In Esther, God’s name is never mentioned.
2. In Esther, the silence of God is not the absence of God.
3. In Esther, God delivers His people through ordinary means.
4. In Esther, God uses ordinary, imperfect people to accomplish extraordinary things.

II. Esther’s Setting

1. 586 BC - Babylonian Exile
2. 539 BC - Persia wins World Series.
3. 486-465 - Xerxes becomes King of Persia

Esther 1:1-12 (NIV)

This is what happened during the time of Xerxes, the Xerxes who ruled over 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush: ² At that time King Xerxes reigned from his royal throne in the citadel of Susa, ³ and 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. ⁵ 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. ⁶ The garden had hangings of white and blue linen, fastened with cords of white linen and purple material to silver rings on marble pillars. There were couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl and other costly stones. ⁷ Wine was served in goblets of gold, each one different from the other, and the royal wine was abundant, in keeping with the king's liberality. ⁸ By the king's command each guest was allowed to drink with no restrictions, for the king instructed all the wine stewards to serve each man what he wished.

⁹ Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the royal palace of King Xerxes.

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. ¹² But when the attendants delivered the king's command, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger.

III. Esther's Characters

1. Xerxes
2. Vasthi
3. Esther
4. Mordecai
5. Haman

IV. Esther's "Golden" Message

Esther 4:12-16 (NIV)

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 your 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 attendants 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."

V. Esther's Raised to Life Moment

1. God often works behind the scenes before He calls us to step forward.
2. Faith is personal but never private.

Matthew 10:32 (NIV)

Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven.

Acts 8:36, 38 (NIV)

As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?"

³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

3. God may not be speaking because He already has.
4. Your public faith might be part of God's bigger story.