



ESTHER

THE HIDDEN HAND OF GOD

Deck Shuffled, Diamond King | Esther 5 & 6

1. As a group, share a summary of the book of Esther so far (chapters 1-6). Who are the main characters and their contributions (for better or worse) to the story? Is there anything which doesn't make sense or stands out for a different reason?
2. Share your 'waiting room' stories. What emotions did you wrestle with during these times? Did you find it easy to '*praise God in the corridor*' whilst you were waiting for a door to open? Are there issues or circumstances which you feel are still in the 'waiting room'? Share as you feel able.
3. Does God approve of Esther's cunning and scheming plan? Is it ever okay to use deception for the good of others and/or the glory of God?
4. Why, do you think, did Esther not make her request to the King immediately when entering the throne room? She waited until the *second* banquet. Why? Discuss.
5. When you think about the situations you described in Q2, how important was stepping forward at just the right time a significant contribution to the end outcome (or not)? If God's timing is always perfect, how do we discern it? If Esther had made her request in the throne room or at the first banquet, how might the outcome have been different?
6. Discuss Haman and the King's dominant character traits. How does Esther stroke their egos in the story? What might these two characters learn from Esther's leadership example?
7. How does God's intervention far exceed Esther's expectations?
8. Chris spoke about the ugly marriage of Haman's pride and malice. How do these character traits manifest themselves in the story? What steps can leaders take to avoid the pit Haman falls into? Do you have a story of when ammunition ricochets and wounds the malicious shooter?
9. Describe how the various characters in Esther are a snapshot (or a foreshadowing) of the Gospel. How and what role does each character play? How is the Gospel an infinitely better outcome?
10. Celebrate the Good News contained in Ephesians 2:1-10. What difference does this Good News make in your life today?