

HIDDENNESS OF GOD

Psalm 44:22-24



SYNOPSIS

This past Sunday, we continued our Psalms of Lament series with a look at Psalm 44 as well as two brothers and the two different reasons for the 'hiddenness of God.' Psalm 44 starts us off with the question: Why are so many people perishing even when it seems like they did nothing wrong? Why does God seem to hide his face? Is he asleep?

As we look at the stories of Joseph and Judah, we realize there are many reasons for the hiddenness of God. In Judah's case, it was because of his sin of selling Joseph into slavery and then deceiving his father about the disappearance of his son. We know that because he professed that as the reason when he stood before Joseph on the day of reckoning while Joseph had not yet revealed himself. He understood it to be the retributive justice of God.

As for Joseph, there were two reasons for the hiddenness of God we come to see. First of all, the purpose that Joseph discovered for his suffering (after 22 years of slavery before his rise to becoming Pharaoh's right hand man) was that God had sent him ahead to preserve life for many.

But the hidden purpose of God that he did not come to realize was that God used his storyline to fulfill the promise that God had made to Abraham - that through the preservation of his lineage and the formation of the nation of Israel, the Messiah (Jesus) was able to come to not only be a blessing to Israel, but to all nations.

We may not fully understand why God seems to hide His face, especially in our moments of grief and suffering, but we do know that God has a hidden purpose. Even as Jesus hung on the cross, crying out "My God My God, Why Have you hidden your face from me," we know that there was a purpose to the hiddenness of God.

In the midst of suffering, God laments with us, he allows us to question where he is, but he asks us to wait and to trust him, put our ears next to his head to understand the deeper purposes of God.



OUTLINE

1 HIDDENNESS BECAUSE OF OUR HARDENED HEART

There are times when we experience the silence of God because of our sin and our hardened heart. When we make a mockery out of God's grace and mercy, we can expect that God will turn His face away from us. But there is also a different reason for the hiddenness of God.

2 HIDDENNESS BECAUSE OF GOD'S HIDDEN PURPOSE

There are times when God hides His face in order to fulfill His hidden purpose. We may not understand, and He certainly invites us to lament and question where He is - but He asks us to wait and trust Him as we learn to trust His leadership and understand the deeper purposes of God.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Icebreaker: Favorite/best hiding place you've ever had when playing Hide-and-Seek.

2

Have you ever experienced the 'hiddenness of God'? What were you going through and what did it feel like?

3

How do we tell whether the hiddenness of God is due to our sin or God's hidden purpose?

4

Do you choose to trust in God even when you don't understand His purposes? If so, why? If not, why?

5

What is a current 'suffering' or grief you have that you can bring to Him and lament/question where He is?



BIG IDEA

Individually and corporately, we all go through seasons where God seems hidden from us. He seems to be asleep. Sometimes, it may be because of our sin and our hardened hearts towards Him. Other times, it may be because it is part of God's hidden purpose. Even if we do not understand, we are invited to deeper repentance and to grow in our trust of His purpose and His leadership.