

Esther 2:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew it.

Analysis

Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew it. Esther's concealment of her Jewish identity, explicitly following Mordecai's instruction, raises ethical questions. Was this deception, or legitimate prudence? The Hebrew verb higgid (הִגַּד, "shewed/declared") suggests active disclosure rather than response to direct questioning. Esther didn't volunteer information, but the text doesn't indicate she lied if asked. This strategic concealment proved essential: had Esther's Jewish identity been known initially, she might never have become queen, leaving the Jews vulnerable when Haman's plot emerged. God's providence sometimes requires strategic discretion about timing and disclosure. Wisdom discerns when to speak and when to remain silent (Ecclesiastes 3:7).

Historical Context

Jews in Persian diaspora often adopted local names, customs, and appearances while maintaining private religious practice—a survival strategy in potentially hostile environments. Esther's Persian name, her participation in the beauty contest, and her concealment of Jewish identity all demonstrate adaptive strategies. However, this assimilation created tensions: how much cultural adaptation was prudent versus compromise? The debate continues among interpreters whether Esther and Mordecai's choices represent commendable wisdom or problematic compromise. The narrative presents their actions without explicit moral judgment, allowing readers to wrestle with these tensions. What

remains clear is God's providence working even through morally complex human decisions.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 – Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How should believers navigate the tension between cultural adaptation for survival and witness versus compromise of essential identity and convictions?
2. What principles govern when strategic silence about faith is wisdom versus when it becomes denial or unfaithfulness?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	תָּגִיד:	רָאשָׁתְךָ	אַתָּה	עַמּוֹת	וְאַתָּה	מָלֹדֶתְךָ	כִּי
H3808	had not shewed	Esther	H853	her people	H853	nor her kindred	H3588
	H5046	H635		H5971		H4138	

מְרֹדָכָי	צָו ה	עַל יָהּ	אֲשֶׁר	לֹא	תָּגִיד:
for Mordecai	had charged	H5921	H834	H3808	had not shewed
H4782	H6680				H5046

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 10:16 (Parallel theme): Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

Esther 2:20 (Parallel theme): Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

Ephesians 6:1 (Parallel theme): Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Esther 3:8 (Parallel theme): And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

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