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Esther 5 - 7

"When Plans Backfire"

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In the book of Esther, Haman's wicked plan to annihilate the Jews backfired in a big way. The gallows he had built to hang Mordecai ended up being the gallows on which he was hanged. Haman's hatred, pride, and arrogance became his downfall, and they could be ours as well if we aren't careful. Join Pastor Gary today in his continuing series in the book of Esther, as he looks at the providential hand of God in the story of human events.

Historical Background

1. Esther's first banquet was designed to set things up so Xerxes would have a favorable response to her requests.
2. After this banquet, Haman returned to his home for a "bragging party."
 - a. **Esther 5:9** - *"Haman went out that day happy and in high spirits. But when he saw Mordecai at the king's gate and observed that he neither rose nor showed fear in his presence, he was filled with rage against Mordecai."*
3. Haman's wife, Zeresh, and his friends advised him to satisfy his rage by building a 75ft. tall gallows on which to hang Mordecai.
 - a. **Esther 5:14** - *"His wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, 'Have a gallows built, seventy-five feet high and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai hanged on it. Then go with the king to the dinner and be happy.' This suggestion delighted Haman, and he had the gallows built."*

4. That same night, Xerxes wasn't able to sleep, so he ordered that the record of his reign be read to him.
 - a. **Esther 6:1** - *"That night the king could not sleep; so he ordered the book of the chronicles, the record of his reign, to be brought in and read to him."*
5. Xerxes learned about the way Mordecai exposed an assassination plot.
 - a. **Esther 6:2** - *"It was found recorded there that Mordecai had exposed Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, who had conspired to assassinate King Xerxes."*

Pride And Humility

6. **Esther 6:3-14** provides the details about the way the Lord orchestrated events to honor Mordecai and humble and disgrace Haman.
7. Haman's life is a picture of pride.
8. Mordecai's life is a picture of humility.
9. Pastor Gary said: "What happens when someone tries to exalt himself or herself? [They] are put down. What happens when someone humbles himself or herself? [They] are lifted up."
 - a. **Matthew 23:12** - *"For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*
 - b. **James 4:6b** - *"That is why Scripture says: 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.' "*
10. God opposes the proud because we rob God of the glory he deserves when we try to take the glory for ourselves.
11. We need to choose humility before God chooses for us!
12. We will either be humbled by choice or humbled by force, and being humble by choice is always least embarrassing and always most rewarded.
13. If God has to humble us, it is often awkward, embarrassing, and public.
14. If we choose to humble ourselves, we will put ourselves in a place in which God can promote us and use us for his glory.
15. **Esther 7:3-6a** - *"Then Queen Esther answered, 'If I have found favor with you,*

O king, and if it pleases your majesty, grant me my life – this is my petition. And spare my people – this is my request. For I and my people have been sold for destruction and slaughter and annihilation. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because no distress would justify disturbing the king.’ King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, ‘Who is he? Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?’ Esther said, ‘The adversary and enemy is this vile Haman.’ ”

16. [Esther 7:6b-10](#) provides the details about the demise of Haman.

Biblical Typology

17. A biblical “type” simply means that something or someone in the story is symbolic of something or someone else in a larger context.
18. Most often, a “type” is a person or thing in the Old Testament, which foreshadows a person or thing in the New Testament.
19. Haman was a type of Satan, who is our adversary and enemy.
- [Esther 7:6](#) – *“Esther said, ‘The adversary and enemy is this vile Haman.’ ”*
 - [1 Peter 5:8b](#) – *“Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”*
 - [Matthew 13:39a](#) – *“... the enemy who sows [weeds] is the devil.”*
20. The Jews were a type of humanity needing to be saved.
21. King Xerxes was a type of God the Father (not in a righteous sense, but royal sense).
22. Esther was a type of Christ who interceded on behalf of the people.
- [Job 16:19-21](#) – *“Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high. My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as a man pleads for his friend.”*
23. Pastor Gary reminded us that while it’s true that Satan hates us, we should never forget the fact that God loves us, and Jesus died for us!
24. [John 3:16](#) – *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [Esther 5:1-14](#) to provide the foundation for this study.
3. How has pride shown itself in your life? (See #9 above)
4. Spend time talking about experiences you've had when the Lord humbled you because you wouldn't humble yourself.
5. Was it your experience that having God humble you was awkward, embarrassing, and public?
6. Share experiences about times when you humbled yourself and the Lord promoted you and used you for his glory.
7. Spend time talking about the four examples Pastor Gary shared concerning biblical typology. (See #17 through #22 above)
8. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).