

Haman's Humiliation

September 30, 2012

ESTHER 5:9-6:14

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Core Competency:

Personal God- I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

I lift my eyes toward the mountains. Where will my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:1-2)

Using This Study

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate matters so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage.

② DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

③ LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFE GROUP.

Introduction

Pride has many pitfalls. Golfing great Arnold Palmer relates a story from the past that demonstrates just that:

"It was the final hole of the 1961 Masters tournament, and I had a one-stroke lead and had just hit a very satisfying tee shot. I felt I was in pretty good shape. As I approached my ball, I saw an old friend standing at the edge of the gallery. He motioned me over, stuck out his hand and said, 'Congratulations.'" I took his hand and shook it, but as soon as I did, I knew I had lost my focus. On my next two shots, I hit the ball into a sand trap, and then put it over the edge of the green. I missed a putt and lost the Masters.

You don't forget a mistake like that; you just learn from it and become determined that you will never do that again. I haven't in the 30 years since."

The Book of Esther offers a classic case study of the sin and consequences of pride. Haman was an Agagite, a prominent government official in Persia. Because he had been snubbed by an exiled Jew named Mordecai, Haman used his power and influence to secure a royal decree calling for the extermination of all Jews.

What the arrogant Haman didn't know was that years earlier, Mordecai had saved the king's life and that Mordecai's young cousin was Queen Esther! Together these two facts would cause Haman's murderous plot to quickly unravel. In fact, the tables would be utterly turned, proving that "pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18).

This Week

This week we see how the ultimate bad guy, Haman, as recorded by God for all time in the book of Esther, succumbs to the sins of pride. He thought that he had all of his "ducks in a row." He was "full" of himself, but all of his evil scheming was no match for the immutability of God's plan for His chosen people, the Jews. There are many lessons that we can learn from "Haman's Humiliation" in our passage today.

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate matters so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage:

Esther 5: 9 - 6:14

9 That day Haman left full of joy and in good spirits. But when Haman saw Mordecai at the King's Gate, and Mordecai didn't rise or tremble in fear at his presence, Haman was filled with rage toward Mordecai.

10 Yet Haman controlled himself and went home. He sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh to join him.

11 Then Haman described for them his glorious wealth and his many sons. He told them all how the king had honored him and promoted him in rank over the other officials and the royal staff.

12 "What's more," Haman added, "Queen Esther invited no one but me to join the king at the banquet she had prepared. I am invited again tomorrow to join her with the king.

13 Still, none of this satisfies me since I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's Gate all the time."

14 His wife Zeresh and all his friends told him, "Have them build a gallows 75 feet high. Ask the king in the morning to hang Mordecai on it. Then go to the banquet with the king and enjoy yourself." The advice pleased Haman, so he had the gallows constructed.

6:1 That night sleep escaped the king, so he ordered the book recording daily events to be brought and read to the king.

2 They found the written report of how Mordecai had informed on Bigthana and Teresh, two eunuchs who guarded the king's entrance, when they planned to assassinate King Ahasuerus.

3 The king inquired, "What honor and special recognition have been given to Mordecai for this act?" The king's personal attendants replied, "Nothing has been done for him."

4 The king asked, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman was just entering the outer court of the palace to ask the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows he

had prepared for him.

5 The king's attendants answered him, "Haman is there, standing in the court." "Have him enter," the king ordered.

6 Haman entered and the king asked him, "What should be done for the man the king wants to honor?" Haman thought to himself, "Who is it the king would want to honor more than me?"

7 Haman told the king, "For the man the king wants to honor:

8 Have them bring a royal garment that the king himself has worn and a horse the king himself has ridden, which has a royal diadem on its head.

9 Put the garment and the horse under the charge of one of the king's most noble officials. Have them clothe the man the king wants to honor, parade him on the horse through the city square, and proclaim before him, "This is what is done for the man the king wants to honor.' "

10 The king told Haman, "Hurry, and do just as you proposed. Take a garment and a horse for Mordecai the Jew, who is sitting at the King's Gate. Do not leave out anything you have suggested."

11 So Haman took the garment and the horse. He clothed Mordecai and paraded him through the city square, crying out before him, "This is what is done for the man the king wants to honor."

12 Then Mordecai returned to the King's Gate, but Haman, overwhelmed, hurried off for home with his head covered.

13 Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened. His advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, "Since Mordecai is Jewish, and you have begun to fall before him, you won't overcome him, because your downfall is certain."

14 While they were still speaking with him, the eunuchs of the king arrived and rushed Haman to the banquet Esther had prepared.

Notes

many sons (v. 11)—At least ten sons were fathered by Haman (see 9:13), who personified sinful pride (see Galatians 6:3).

gallows (v. 14)—a stake on which a human would be impaled to death or displayed after death (see 2:23).

the book (6:1)—Five years (see 2:16 with 3:7) had passed since Mordecai's loyal, but as yet unrewarded, act (see 2:23).

royal garment... royal diadem (v. 8)—an honor which involved being treated as though the recipient were the king himself (see 8:15).

mourning (v. 12)—Deservedly, Haman inherited Mordecai's distress (see 4:1–2). What a difference a day makes! His imagined honors had quickly turned to unimaginable humiliation.

DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the following questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

1. Discuss Haman's "mood swing" in Esther 5:9-13. How does this passage demonstrate the difference between happiness and genuine joy?
2. What does Esther 5:9 reveal about Mordecai's character?
3. Compare Esther 5:14 with 6:13. Discuss some considerations regarding the receiving of advice from family and/or friends.
4. Some commentators believe that Esther 6:1 marks the turning point of the Book of Esther. Why do you think that they would conclude that?
5. People in the Book of Esther seemed to be preoccupied with Mordecai's nationality. Discern the different shades of meaning in the way the different people use the following terms:
 - a) "Mordecai the Jew" in Esther 5:13
 - b) "Mordecai the Jew" in Esther 6:10
 - c) "is of Jewish descent" in Esther 6:13
6. Read Esther 6:6-11. Do you think this account is simply ironic or do you think that it demonstrates that God has a sense of humor?

7. Proverbs 16:18 states that, “Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.” Haman is a perfect example of this (see Esther 6:6). What are some examples of sinful pride in your life? Is there such a thing as acceptable pride?

Sermon Notes:

③LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God’s word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFE GROUP.

Mordecai is repeatedly referred to as “the Jew.” Haman argues before the king that there is a group of people whose “laws are different from all other people.” Haman then uses that argument as a stepping stone to persecute the Jews. Is it possible that we may even use that line of thought against “different” people (e.g. Muslims) with different laws and customs in our own country?

30 CORE Competencies

10 Core Beliefs

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I live life with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away God's Money *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away God's money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 Core Virtues

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ

10 Core Practices

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.