

# WISDOM AND FOLLY

Esther 5



## SYNOPSIS

As we continue on in our Book of Esther series, we find Esther making her way into the presence of the King. She is not summoned, thus committing an offense punishable by death, and yet she is committed to going to make an appeal on behalf of her people. The king extends the golden scepter in his hand, signifying his pleasure towards her, and asks her for her request. Queen Esther asks for the king and Haman to attend a banquet that she has prepared for them.

As the story continues, we start to see the contrast, the drastic difference, of Queen Esther and Haman. The author wants us to notice the difference between what can only be described as the wise versus the foolish. Looking at Esther, we see that Esther is patient. While we don't have a window into the intent of why Esther is waiting to present her true request, we see the wisdom in her prudence. She is wise and observant, giving careful consideration into the words she speaks to the king.

On the other hand, Haman is rash and impatient in his action. When we look at Haman, we notice two spiritual realities. First, we realize that the spiritual battle happening in the spiritual realm leaks into the natural realm. Haman has a demonic rage - and we learn that being demonically influenced is not always something done to us, but sometimes it is something within us that is amplified. Satan can amplify the anger, the fear, the lust and pride, the insecurities inside of us in order to wreak havoc in our lives and the lives of those around us. Second, we realize how easy it is for job to be stolen. Haman has every reason to rejoice with the favor that he has been shown, and yet he is joyless and dissatisfied. This dissatisfaction ultimately leads to bad advice from his wife and friends, where we begin to see the beginning of his downfall.

So far, we've seen how everything has been going wrong for Mordecai and the Jews, and how everything has been going right for Haman, but the great reversal is about to happen. In our world, we (at times), also see the wicked prevail and the righteous crushed, but when we have paradigm of eternity, we can say in confidence (Psalm 37) that the blameless spend their days under the Lord's care, and their inheritance will endure forever.



## OUTLINE

1

### ESTHER AND HER PRUDENCE

In this chapter, we see the wisdom and prudence of Esther in how she acts and speaks towards the king. We learn that prudence (thoughtful consideration) is so important in all that we do, especially in our speech.

2

### HAMAN AND HIS FOLLY

In this chapter, we see the folly of Haman - his impatience and dissatisfaction that ultimately leads to his downfall. Haman is an example of someone who has been shown so much favor, but his success is temporary, as his folly leads to his great downfall in the chapters to come.

3

### OUR CONDUCT (AND) THE MYSTERY OF GOD

From Esther and Haman, we learn that our speech and conduct matter and have an impact on the outcome. But there is also a mystery of God, the fingerprints of God that are part of the story that we may not be aware of. In that reality, we must both care for our conduct and speech, but also hold to the mystery of God even when we don't feel like we can see him.



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

What does it look like to be prudent/careful/thoughtful in our speech, words, and lives today?

2

What areas of your life can the enemy amplify to lead you away from God and hurting yourself and others? Anger, fear, anxiety, lust, insecurity?

3

How seriously do we consider spiritual warfare in your daily lives?

4

Have you ever acted like Haman? Having all the blessing of the world - but letting one piece of bitterness, anger, jealousy steal all your joy?

5

Have you questioned God's justice? Wondered why good people get bad outcomes and bad people go unpunished?



## BIG IDEA

One of the ongoing motifs of the Book of Esther is the fingerprints of God all throughout the story despite God not being mentioned once. We see the divine favor over Esther, placed where she is for such a time like this. We see the motif of the wicked (Haman) experiencing temporary success, but the downfall of the wicked coming quickly. And in this chapter, we see how wisdom and prudence matters. Our speech and our conduct have an impact on the outcome. But at times, there is still a mystery of God that also plays a part in the outcome. As we live in this both/and, we continue to grow in wisdom and seek the Lord in His ways. And at the same time, we hold onto the mystery of God, especially in the moments where we feel like it is difficult to see what He is doing.

