



## FOCUS PASSAGE: ESTHER 5:9-6

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** Sometimes we tend to think that certain events that happen in our life are just a series of coincidences. How would your mindset change if you saw it as God stringing everything together with a greater purpose in mind?



## HEAR THE WORD

Pause for a moment of prayer before reading today's focus passage.

### CONTEXT

Esther 5 starts with a decision made on a "third day" which closely resembles other biblical stories mentioning a third day commonly involving mortal danger and deliverance. On this day, Esther prepares to face the king by dressing in the finest robes and jewelry (a literal translation saying, "she wore a kingdom") showing that she would be so bold as to challenge the Persian law, the king, and his second-in-command Haman while dressed as a proper queen of Persia.

In a unique shift of power and control from the king and Haman into her own hands, Esther displays a certain degree of cunning by hosting two private banquets for them. They would drink and have their egos lifted until the time was ready for Esther to expose Haman's plan to the king.

The narrative shifts to yet another encounter between Haman and Mordecai where Haman is reminded of his deep hatred for the Jews and his plans to demolish them. While Haman's plans continue to develop, he soon finds himself honouring his own enemy in a turn of events favouring Mordecai.

## SEEK THE WORD

Spend the next 5-10 minutes seeking to understand more about the passage. What are the key events, characters or themes that stand out? Which parts of the passage draw your attention? Express these in questions, observations, and reflective response.

## ENGAGE THE WORD

Continue to reflect and discuss today's focus passage using the following questions. Feel free to address any questions or observations brought up in the previous section.

- This part of Esther's story makes it seem like several coincidences come together to result in a fortunate turn of events. Do you think these are instances of coincidence or providence? How would you differentiate the two?
- Based on what you've read so far in the book of Esther, list out the characteristics of Haman. What are some lessons we can learn from this character in the Bible?
- Exercise: We tend to look at people and circumstances from the lens of a human perspective and forget to account for God's perspective. Take a moment to consider how God would retell Esther's story so far from His perspective.

## LIVE THE WORD

Whenever we encounter the Word of God on our own time or with other believers, we are called to understand its message with not only our heads, but with our hearts.

- "Where is God when bad things happen to God's people?" Questions like this are among some of the most asked today. How would you answer this question?
- There will be instances when difficult people or circumstances in our life steal away our joy and thankfulness to what God has given us. How can we overcome or shift our mindset to see how God may be trying to work in our lives through such difficult people or circumstances?
- How can you trust God's providence this week? Where in your life do you find you are still doubting your faith that God is present to you?

**BIG IDEA:** Despite what it may sometimes seem, God is always at work in our lives – quietly and patiently working in us and around us.

