

## In It to Win It



### 1. An Unexpected \_\_\_\_\_

So his personal attendants suggested, “Let us search the empire to find beautiful young virgins for the king. Let the king appoint agents in each province to bring these beautiful young women into the royal harem at the fortress of Susa. Hegai, the king’s eunuch in charge of the harem, will see that they are all given beauty treatments. After that, the young woman who most pleases the king will be made queen instead of Vashti.” This advice was very appealing to the king, so he put the plan into effect. At that time there was a Jewish man in the fortress of Susa whose name was Mordecai son of Jair. He was from the tribe of Benjamin and was a descendant of Kish and Shimei....

<sup>8</sup> As a result of the king’s decree, Esther, along with many other young women, was brought to the king’s harem at the fortress of Susa and placed in Hegai’s care. Esther 2:2-5, 8 (NLT)

- \_\_\_\_\_ or **Obstacle**

Mordecai gave Hathach a copy of the decree issued in Susa that called for the death of all Jews. He asked Hathach to show it to Esther and explain the situation to her. He also asked Hathach to direct her to go to the king to beg for mercy and plead for her people. So Hathach returned to Esther with Mordecai’s message. Then Esther told Hathach to go back and relay this message to

Mordecai: “All the king’s officials and even the people in the provinces know that anyone who appears before the king in his inner court without being invited is doomed to die unless the king holds out his gold scepter. And the king has not called for me to come to him for thirty days.” So Hathach gave Esther’s message to Mordecai. Mordecai sent this reply to Esther: “Don’t think for a moment that because you’re in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed. If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?” Esther 4:8-14 (NLT)

- \_\_\_\_\_ or **Resistance**

### 2. Discover The \_\_\_\_\_

- **Don’t become swayed by the** \_\_\_\_\_

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; Psalm 1:1 (NRSV)

- **Surround yourself with others who** \_\_\_\_\_

Hegai was very impressed with Esther and treated her kindly. He quickly ordered a special menu for her and provided her with beauty treatments. He also assigned her seven maids specially chosen from the king’s palace, and he moved her and her maids into the best place in the harem. Esther had not told anyone of her nationality and family background, because Mordecai had directed her not to do so. Every day Mordecai would take a

walk near the courtyard of the harem to find out about Esther and what was happening to her....<sup>15</sup> When it was Esther's turn to go to the king, she accepted the advice of Hegai, the eunuch in charge of the harem. She asked for nothing except what he suggested, and she was admired by everyone who saw her. Esther 2:9-11,15 (NLT)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. Hebrews 12:1 (NLT)

- \_\_\_\_\_ **the course**

Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: "Go and gather together all the Jews of Susa and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will do the same. And then, though it is against the law, I will go in to see the king. If I must die, I must die." Esther 4:15-16 (NLT)

Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NRSV)

Blessed is anyone who perseveres when trials come. Such a person is of proven worth and will

win the prize of life, the crown that the Lord has promised to those who love him. James 1:12 (NJB)

## Conclusion

But I don't place any value on my own life. I want to finish the race I'm running. I want to carry out the mission I received from the Lord Jesus—the mission of testifying to the Good News of God's kindness. Acts 20:24 (GW)

## My Next Step Today Is To . . .

- Trust Jesus with my life by asking Him to be my Lord and Savior.
- Accept the unexpected opportunity that God has placed before me.
- Stopping listening to the negative voices and listen to those God has sent to encourage me on my mission.
- Not give up but to keep on keeping on.
- Meditate on and/or memorize Acts 20:24