**God’s Sovereignty in the Shadows: Lesson 1**

Climax

**Rising Action**

**Falling Action**

**Exposition/Setting**

**Conclusion/**

**Denouement**

*Key elements of narrative (stories):*

* **Exposition/Setting**: This is the where, when, and who of the story.
* **Rising action**: A problem (or problems) is introduced.
* **Climax**: This is the most major point of tension in the story; it’s the turning point of the story.
* **Falling action**: The story moves from crisis to resolution- The solution to the problem is taking affect
* **Conclusion/Denouement**: “Tying up the loose ends.” The conclusion provides the outcome of the story and what happens to the characters.

**A Party Gone Royally Wrong**

*Scene 1:*

Party at the Palace! (vs. 1-9)

*Picture yourself as one of the citizens of Susa. You’re a native Persian, and you’ve been there for a while. As we look through these details, we’re going to do so with the perspective of an eyewitness.*

* + The party was long. (v. 4)
  + The party was large. (vs. 4-5)
* 2 parties
  + 1st party- 180 days- Feast
  + 2nd party- 7 days- Drinking party

***Party Invitation***

* ***Who?*** GREAT AND SMALL!
* ***Where?*** THE PALACE GARDENS
* ***When?*** ALL THIS WEEK!
* ***What?*** DRINKING, DRINKING…AND MORE DRINKING!

Don’t Hold Back!

*Scene 2:*

Party Gone Wrong (vs. 10-12)

* + The command to Vashti
    - Come with your crown (v. 11a)
    - Why? Because “she was lovely to look at” (v. 11b)
  + When she refused, Xerxes was visibly furious and emotionally hot.

*Scene 3:*

Party Turned to Punishment (vs. 13-22)

* + What legal grounds do I have against her?
  + Memucan’s speech- “Vashti did wrong to everyone!”
    - For the national problem: Make an unchangeable law
    - For the personal problem: Replace Vashti
  + Xerxes’ response: He was pleased.

**God’s Sovereignty in the Shadows**

* + Xerxes’ 2nd party- His apparent easy-going spirit might have been a factor in Vashti’s rejection
  + Xerxes’ men were afraid, so they encouraged him to create a permanent punishment.
  + An ultimate replacement for Vashti

**Practical Applications**

* What part are you playing in the exploitation of women?
* The partying life is a godless life.
* God is still working even in the darkest places of this world.
* Materialism and fame are fleeting.