

Esther 07 - Esther's Second Banquet; Esther Reveals Haman's Plot; Ahasuerus Angered, Orders Haman's Execution; Haman Executed

II. Deliverance of the Jews (Esther 6:1—10:3)

(2) Ahasuerus hangs Haman (Esther 7:1-10)

(A) Ahasuerus asks Esther to state her request (7:1-2)

(B) Esther reveals Haman's plot to eradicate the Jews (7:3-6)

(C) Ahasuerus' anger (7:7-8)

(D) The hanging of Haman on the very gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai (7:9-10)

Esther 7

(2) Ahasuerus hangs Haman (Esther 7:1-10)

(A) Ahasuerus asks Esther to state her request (7:1-2)

1 Now the king and Haman came to drink *wine* with Esther the queen.

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1 The king and Haman went in to have a drink with Queen Esther.

1 So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.

- This banquet probably took place in the late morning since Haman had already led Mordecai around Susa on a horse to honor him, and since Haman died later that day.

2 And the king said to Esther on the second day also as they drank their wine at the banquet, "What is your request, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your wish? Up to half of the kingdom it shall be done."

2 And the king said to Esther on the second day also as they drank their wine at the banquet, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done."

2 On the second day the king again told Esther as they drank wine, "What's your petition, Queen Esther? It will be given to you. What's your request? Up to half of the kingdom, and it will be done."

2 And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom.

- In Persian feasts the solid dishes were few, and the time was passed in drinking and eating desert [Herod. I.133]

- His curiosity whetted, the king for the third time asked Esther her request, and again he promised that he would grant it to her (Cf. 5:3,6)

— Knowing the ideal timing, Esther got right to the point and gave her petition and request: life for her and her people.

— If Haman knew of the connection between Mordecai and Esther, he may have been even more terrified at the prospect of attending this second banquet

(B) Esther reveals Haman's plot to eradicate the Jews (7:3-6)

3 Then Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, **let my life be given me** as my request, and my people as my wish;

3 Then Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me as my petition, and my people as my request;

3 Queen Esther answered: "If I've found favor with you, your majesty, and if it seems good to the king, let my life be given to me as my petition and my people as my request.

3 Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request:

- "...let my life be given me" - it was now clear to Ahasuerus what her nationality was (Cf. 2:10,20)

4 for we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, killed, and eliminated. Now if we had only been sold as slaves, men and women, I would have kept silent, because **the distress** would not be sufficient *reason* to burden the king."

4 for we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed and to be annihilated. Now if we had only been sold as slaves, men and women, I would have remained silent, for the trouble would not be commensurate with the annoyance to the king."

4 Indeed, I and my people have been sold to be annihilated, killed, and destroyed. If we had just been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because the trouble wouldn't have been sufficient to bother the king."

4 For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

- She explained that all her people had been sold (i.e., the king was offered a bribe by Haman; Cf. 3:9; 4:7) into extinction (3:13)
- Showing her subservient position to the king, she added that if they had merely been sold into slavery she certainly would not have bothered the king
- Esther's statement not only shows the unbelievable power of the king, but also the condition to which she was reduced. Her whole speech was designed to present her as one who, like Mordecai, had uncovered a plot against the king.
- "...the distress" - Esther was in a very dangerous position. Not only did she identify herself with a minority group that Haman had represented to the king as subversive, but she also accused one of his closest advisers of committing a serious error in judgment.

5 Then King Ahasuerus asked Queen Esther, "**Who is he**, and where is he, who would presume to do such a *thing*?"

5 Then King Ahasuerus asked Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would presume to do thus?"

5 Then King Ahasuerus asked Queen Esther, "Who is this, and where is the person who would dare do this?"

5 Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?

- "Who is he" - he at once makes her enemy his own! The king immediately realized that his enemy, whomever it was, was going to rob him of his queen and her people.

— Before Esther named the culprit, Ahasuerus had already decided to punish him severely

— Undoubtedly a look of terror was on Haman's face as he realized that he was about to be exposed before the most powerful man on the face of the earth. He must have known that his execution was assured now.

6 And Esther said, "A foe and an enemy is this wicked Haman!" Then Haman became terrified before the king and queen.

6 Esther said, "A foe and an enemy is this wicked Haman!" Then Haman became terrified before the king and queen.

6 Esther replied, "An adversary and an enemy—it's this wicked Haman!" So Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

6 And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

(C) Ahasuerus' anger (7:7-8)

7 The king then got up in his anger from drinking wine *and went* into the palace garden; but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that harm had been

determined against him by the king.

7 The king arose in his anger from drinking wine *and went* into the palace garden; but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that harm had been determined against him by the king.

7 The king got up from the banquet in anger and went out to the palace garden, while Haman stood there begging Queen Esther to spare his life, because he realized that the king intended to harm him.

7 And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

- Now the king was filled with rage (Cf. 1:12 and Haman's anger on two occasions, 3:5; 5:9); he apparently went into the garden in an effort to control his anger. History tells us that the king had an anger management problem so he's going for a walk to cool off.

— The fact that his enemy sat in his very presence evidently made the king pause and think about it before coming to his obvious verdict (execution)

— In the meantime, Haman begged Esther for his life. Ironically, this enemy of the Jews ended up pleading for his life with a Jewess. He was trapped between an angry king and an offended queen.

The man who without a twinge of remorse could devote a nation to destruction, is in dire distress at the thought of himself losing life and liberty. [H.A. Ironside]

8 Now when the king returned from the palace garden into the place where they had been drinking wine, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, "Will he even assault the queen with me in the house?" As the word went out of the king's mouth, **they covered Haman's face.**

8 Now when the king returned from the palace garden into the place where they were drinking wine, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, "Will he even assault the queen with me in the house?" As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

8 When the king returned to the banquet hall from the palace garden, Haman was prostrate on the couch where Esther was. The king asked, "Will this man even assault the queen with me in the house?" The king had no sooner spoken than they covered Haman's face.

8 Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

- Upon returning, what Ahasuerus saw confirmed his decision to execute Haman
- Haman had fallen at Esther's feet to beg for his life, but the king misunderstood his intentions. In antiquity, there were strict regulations on the harem. Had Haman knelt within a foot from the queen's couch, the king's reaction could've been justified.
- The king's misunderstanding may have been intentional. Haman's kneeling at Esther's feet was a severe breach of protocol, which gave the king a pretext to punish Haman for his real wrong (plotting to destroy the Jews), which originally had the king's full endorsement.
- "...they covered Haman's face" - this was a call to attendants to seize the culprit and execute him (Cf. 6:12). A convicted criminal was no longer able to look at the face of the king.
- "they" - refers to the attendants, not the king or Esther

(D) The hanging of Haman on the very gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai (7:9-10)

9 Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs who *stood* before the king, said, "Indeed, behold, the wooden *gallows* standing at Haman's house fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai who spoke good in behalf of the king!" And the king said, "**Hang him on it.**"

9 Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs who *were* before the king said, "Behold indeed, the gallows standing at Haman's house fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai who spoke good on behalf of the king!" And the king said, "Hang him on it."

9 Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs attending the king, observed, "Look there! A pole is standing 50 cubits high at Haman's house that he prepared for Mordecai, whose report benefitted the king!" The king said, "Hang him on it."

9 And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

- This verse implies that the king was unaware that Haman had constructed a gallows specifically to impale Mordecai

- "...Hang him on it" - it adds a touch of barbarity to Haman's character that he intended for the execution of Mordecai to take place within the walls of his own house

10 So they hanged Haman on the wooden *gallows* which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the king's anger subsided.

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the king's anger subsided.

10 So they hanged Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai, and then the king's anger subsided.

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

- The king carried out the execution and ended the life of one of the most hostile anti-Semitic Jew-haters to ever walk the face of the earth (Cf. Ps 9:15-16)

Reaping What Is Sown

- Jacob killed an animal and lied to his father, pretending to be Esau (Gen 27:1-29)
 - Years later Jacob's sons killed an animal and lied to him, pretending that Joseph was dead (Gen 37:31-35)
- Pharaoh gave orders to drown the Jewish baby boys (Ex 1)
 - One day his army was drowned in the Red Sea (Ex 14-15)
- David secretly took his neighbor's wife and committed adultery (2 Sam 11)
 - David's own son Absalom took his father's concubines and openly committed adultery with them (2 Sam 16:20-23)
 - Furthermore, David's daughter Tamar was raped by her half-brother, Amnon (2 Sam 13)
- David killed Bathsheba's husband (2 Sam 11:14-25)
 - Three of David's own sons were slain: Absalom, Amnon, and Adonijah (2 Sam 18; 13:23-36; 1 Kings 2:13-25)
- Saul of Tarsus encouraged the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1)
 - When he became Paul the missionary, he was stoned at Lystra and left for dead (Acts 14:19-20)
- Haman was degraded just when he thought he had reached the goal of his ambition
 - He perished on the very gallows that he had erected for his enemy

The mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small; Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all. [Friedrich von Logau]