

Esther Chapter 5 – 7

Esther's request to the king



5 On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance. **2** When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold sceptre that was in his hand.

So Esther approached and touched the tip of the sceptre.

3 Then the king asked, 'What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you.'

4 'If it pleases the king,' replied Esther, 'let the king, together with Haman, come today to a banquet I have prepared for him.'

5 'Bring Haman at once,' the king said, 'so that we may do what Esther asks.'

So the king and Haman went to the banquet Esther had prepared. **6** As they were drinking wine, the king again asked Esther, 'Now what is your petition? It will be given you. And what is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted.'

7 Esther replied, 'My petition and my request is this: **8** If the king regards me with favour and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfil my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for them. Then I will answer the king's question.'

Haman's rage against Mordecai

⁹ Haman went out that day happy and in high spirits. But when he saw Mordecai at the king's gate and observed that he neither rose nor showed fear in his presence, he was filled with rage against Mordecai. ¹⁰ Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself and went home.

Calling together his friends and Zeresh, his wife, ¹¹ Haman boasted to them about his vast wealth, his many sons, and all the ways the king had honoured him and how he had elevated him above the other nobles and officials. ¹² 'And that's not all,' Haman added. 'I'm the only person Queen Esther invited to accompany the king to the banquet she gave. And she has invited me along with the king tomorrow. ¹³ But all this gives me no satisfaction as long as I see that Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate.'

¹⁴ His wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, 'Have a pole set up, reaching to a height of fifty cubits, and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai impaled on it. Then go with the king to the banquet and enjoy yourself.' This suggestion delighted Haman, and he had the pole set up.

Mordecai honoured

⁶ That night the king could not sleep; so he ordered the book of the chronicles, the record of his reign, to be brought in and read to him. ² It was found recorded there that Mordecai had exposed Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, who had conspired to assassinate King Xerxes.

³ 'What honour and recognition has Mordecai received for this?' the king asked.

'Nothing has been done for him,' his attendants answered.

⁴ The king said, 'Who is in the court?' Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the palace to speak to the king about impaling Mordecai on the pole he had set up for him.

⁵ His attendants answered, 'Haman is standing in the court.'

'Bring him in,' the king ordered.

⁶ When Haman entered, the king asked him, 'What should be done for the man the king delights to honour?'

Now Haman thought to himself, 'Who is there that the king would rather honour than me?' ⁷ So he answered the king, 'For the man the king delights to honour, ⁸ let them bring a royal robe the king has worn and a horse the king has ridden, one with a royal crest placed on its head. ⁹ Then let the robe and horse be entrusted to one of the king's most noble princes. Let them robe the man the king delights to honour, and lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming before him, "This is what is done for the man the king delights to honour!"'

¹⁰ 'Go at once,' the king commanded Haman. 'Get the robe and the horse and do just as you have suggested for Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king's gate. Do not neglect anything you have recommended.'

¹¹ So Haman got the robe and the horse. He robed Mordecai, and led him on horseback through the city streets, proclaiming before him, 'This is what is done for



the man the king delights to honour!’

¹² Afterwards Mordecai returned to the king’s gate. But Haman rushed home, with his head covered in grief, ¹³ and told Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had happened to him.

His advisors and his wife Zeresh said to him, ‘Since Mordecai, before whom your downfall has started, is of Jewish origin, you cannot stand against him – you will surely come to ruin!’ ¹⁴ While they were still talking with him, the king’s eunuchs arrived and hurried Haman away to the banquet Esther had prepared.

Haman impaled

⁷ So the king and Haman went to Queen Esther’s banquet, ² and as they were drinking wine on the second day, the king again asked, ‘Queen Esther, what is your petition? It will be given you. What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted.’

³ Then Queen Esther answered, ‘If I have found favour with you, Your Majesty, and if it pleases you, grant me my life – this is my petition. And spare my people – this is my request. ⁴ For I and my people have been sold to be destroyed, killed and annihilated. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because no such distress would justify disturbing the king.’

⁵ King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, ‘Who is he? Where is he – the man who has dared to do such a thing?’

⁶ Esther said, ‘An adversary and enemy! This vile Haman!’

Then Haman was terrified before the king and queen. ⁷ The king got up in a rage, left his wine and went out into the palace garden. But Haman, realising that the king had already decided his fate, stayed behind to beg Queen Esther for his life.

⁸ Just as the king returned from the palace garden to the banqueting hall, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was reclining.

The king exclaimed, 'Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?'

As soon as the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. ⁹ Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, 'A pole reaching to a height of fifty cubits stands by Haman's house. He had it set up for Mordecai, who spoke up to help the king.'

The king said, 'Impale him on it!' ¹⁰ So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai. Then the king's fury subsided.