

## Esther 6:1-14

Esther 6:1-14 That night the king could not sleep. So one was commanded to bring the book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. (2) And it was found written that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, the doorkeepers who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. (3) Then the king said, "What honour or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" And the king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him." (4) So the king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace to suggest that the king hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. (5) The king's servants said to him, "Haman is there, standing in the court." And the king said, "Let him come in." (6) So Haman came in, and the king asked him, "What shall be done for the man whom the king delights to honour?" Now Haman thought in his heart, "Whom would the king delight to honour more than me?" (7) And Haman answered the king, "For the man whom the king delights to honour, (8) let a royal robe be brought which the king has worn, and a horse on which the king has ridden, which has a royal crest placed on its head. (9) Then let this robe and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that he may array the man whom the king delights to honour. Then parade him on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him: 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honour!'" (10) Then the king said to Haman, "Hurry, take the robe and the horse, as you have suggested, and do so for Mordecai the Jew who sits within the king's gate! Leave nothing undone of all that you have spoken." (11) So Haman took the robe and the horse, arrayed Mordecai and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honour!" (12) Afterward Mordecai went back to the king's gate. But Haman hurried to his house, mourning and with his head covered. (13) When Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him, his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish descent, you will not prevail against him but will surely fall before him." (14) While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs came, and hastened to bring Haman to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

### Questions On The Text

#### How did Ahasuerus remember Mordecai's deed?

Verses 1-3: On the same night that Haman was having his gallows built and Esther had earlier thrown her banquet, Ahasuerus was unable to sleep. So he commanded a servant to read to him from the court records. In it was the account of how Mordecai had saved his life (see 2:21-23). As it was usual for Persian kings to reward generously those who displayed such loyalty, the king asked how Mordecai had been honoured. Of course, Mordecai had not rewarded in any way.

#### Why was Haman in the king's court?

Verses 4-5: Haman was standing in the king's court waiting to suggest to Ahasuerus that Mordecai be hanged. Unknown to him, the king has other plans for Mordecai and summons Haman with the intent of asking his advice.

#### How did Haman advise Ahasuerus?

Verse 6-9: The comical situation described in these verses was based on a complete misunderstanding; Haman and Ahasuerus were talking at cross purposes. The king wished to honour Mordecai, but in the phrasing of his question to Haman, he neglected to mention Mordecai's name.

Being filled with his own importance, Haman assumed that the king was referring to him, and considered that he was worthy of the highest possible honour. Instead of suggesting a bestowment of cash or land, Haman's wish was that he sit upon the king's horse, wearing the king's robe, both delivered by one of the most noble princes, and that he then be paraded through the city square accompanied by a proclamation that the king delighted in him. All of this would have bestowed virtual royalty on Haman.

### **What was Haman's assignment?**

Verses 10-11: No doubt to his chagrin, Haman discovered that he was to be the delivery boy and that Mordecai was the object of the king's favour. Parading Mordecai through the city square must have been intensely humiliating for Haman as the occupants of the square would certainly have known of the animosity between the two men. Yet he had no choice; he was under royal orders.

### **What happened after the "parade"?**

Verse 12: After being paraded round the square, Mordecai resumed his post in the king's gate, whereas Haman hurried home in mourning.

### **How did Haman's wife and friends advise him?**

Verses 13-14: When he arrived home, Haman blurted out to his wife and friends all that had happened to him. Although in 5:13 he had clearly referred to Mordecai "the Jew," they now acted as though this was news to them, thus distancing themselves from him and his predicament. Their advice was that he was on his way down. It was at this point that the king's eunuchs arrived, in haste, to escort Haman to Esther's feast.

### **Further Questions For Discussion:**

What act of Mordecai's was the king reminded of?

What was Haman expecting to discuss with the king?

Haman was expecting to be honoured by the king, and so had plenty of advice for the king. How many of Haman's suggestions reveal the size of his ego?

How might Haman have felt while publicly honouring Mordecai?

How many amazing coincidences are in this passage?

Haman's wife and friends now give him very different advice from what they had originally given him. What does that tell you about their character?