

4-13-24

Lesson 5 Esther 5:1-14

## of Fasting

Glenda Broken Foot  
Ade go home?  
Heather emotionally

### Esther 5:1-14 (NASB)

<sup>1</sup> Now it came about on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace in front of the king's rooms, and the king was sitting on his royal throne in the throne room, opposite the entrance to the palace.

<sup>2</sup> When the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, she obtained favor in his sight; and the king extended to Esther the golden scepter which was in his hand. So Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter.

<sup>3</sup> Then the king said to her, "What is troubling you, Queen Esther? And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be given to you."

<sup>4</sup> Esther said, "If it pleases the king, may the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him."

<sup>5</sup> Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly that we may do as Esther desires." So the king and Haman came to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

<sup>6</sup> As they drank their wine at the banquet, the king said to Esther, "What is your petition, for it shall be granted to you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done."

<sup>7</sup> So Esther replied, "My petition and my request is:

<sup>8</sup> if I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and do what I request, may the king and Haman come to the banquet which I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king says."

<sup>9</sup> Then Haman went out that day glad and pleased of heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate and that he did not stand up or tremble before him, Haman was filled with anger against Mordecai. *No respect*

<sup>10</sup> Haman controlled himself, however, went to his house and sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh.

<sup>11</sup> Then Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches, and the number of his sons, and every instance where the king had magnified him and how he had promoted him above the princes and servants of the king.

<sup>12</sup> Haman also said, "Even Esther the queen let no one but me come with the king to the banquet which she had prepared; and tomorrow also I am invited by her with the king."

<sup>13</sup> "Yet all of this does not satisfy me every time I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

<sup>14</sup> Then Zeresh his wife and all his friends said to him, "Have a gallows fifty cubits high made and in the morning ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on it; then go joyfully with the king to the banquet." And the advice pleased Haman, so he had the gallows made.

### B. Plot exposed by Esther (chaps. 5-7)

These chapters mark the climax of the book. Here the tables are turned and evil is overcome by good. God's people are preserved through an unlikely set of circumstances. It is obvious to readers who trust the Lord that He was sovereignly at work, accomplishing His purposes. The original readers in postexilic Palestine would also be reminded that God would protect them against anything that might come their way. Even the forgetfulness of a pagan king could be used by God to preserve and protect His people.

## 1. BANQUET PREPARED ([5:1-4](#))

[5:1-4](#). After the three days of fasting in which **Esther** participated (cf. [4:16](#)) she was ready to go to **the king** with her request. Actually she went **on the third day** because part of a day was counted as a whole day (cf. comments on [Matt. 12:40](#)). Even though she had not been with the king in over a month (Es. [4:11](#)), **he was pleased** that she came (though she had been apprehensive) and **he held out... the gold scepter toward her** (cf. [4:11](#); [8:4](#)). He sensed that she had come to request something so he asked her for her **request**. And he even offered to give her whatever she wanted **even up to half the kingdom** (cf. [5:6](#); [7:2](#); [Mark 6:23](#)). This apparently was an idiom to express the point that **Esther** could request whatever she desired and that her wish would be fulfilled. Esther's request was simple: she asked that Xerxes and **Haman come... to a banquet** she had prepared.

## 2. SECOND BANQUET PREPARED ([5:5-8](#))

[5:5-8](#). **The banquet** was readied and **Haman** was told to come as **Esther** had requested. It was an unusual honor to be invited to a banquet with the queen, for Persian officials were protective of their wives. When **the king** asked what she wanted and again promised to fulfill her wish (cf. [v. 3](#); [7:2](#)), **Esther replied** that she would tell him the next day at a second **banquet**. Why **Esther** did not relate Haman's plot at the first banquet is not stated. Perhaps **Esther** was afraid to voice her complaint to **the king**. Perhaps she had second thoughts about telling him at all. Or perhaps she sensed that he was not in the right frame of mind for her to tell him on that day. From a literary standpoint, this delay raises the tension level as the story moves to its climax. A person reading Esther for the first time would be in a high state of agitation as the tension increased. Xerxes' response to Esther's suggestion is not given here, but Haman's later boasting ([5:12](#)) shows that **the king** was in obvious agreement with the idea.

## 3. HAMAN GLOATED, AND BUILT GALLOWS ([5:9-14](#))

[5:9-14](#). **Haman** was euphoric (**happy and in high spirits**) about his sudden good fortune with **the king** and the queen ([v. 12](#)) but, in contrast, he was enraged about **Mordecai, the Jew**, who still refused to bow down to him (cf. [3:2](#), [5](#)). Haman was so overwrought about Mordecai that he could not enjoy his good position. On this occasion, to relieve himself of his rage and anxiety about **Mordecai**, he gathered his family and **friends** and spent time boasting about the **wealth** he had amassed and the family he had raised (he had 10 **sons**; [9:7-10](#), [12](#)). **As a social braggart** (cf. [6:6](#)) he also reminded them of his promotions in rank in the government, capping it off by telling them that on two successive days he was to be the guest of honor at a private **banquet** with only **the king** and **queen** present. However, he admitted that all his money and fame did not satisfy him because of **Mordecai**.

Haman's **wife, Zeresh, and all his friends** were no better than he was. They suggested that Haman **have a gallows built** that would be **75 feet high** and that he **have Mordecai hanged on it** before the banquet so he would have nothing bothering him when he went to the feast. **The gallows probably was an impaling stake, a common method of execution in the ancient world** (cf. [comments](#) on [2:23](#)). The purpose in suggesting such a tall stake was so it would be a lesson to all who saw it. The person on the stake would be visible from all directions, since he would be

higher than all the trees. This spectacle would solemnly emphasize that Haman was in control (cf. [3:1](#)) and that no one should try to stand in his way.

**Haman** undoubtedly felt that with Mordecai gone there would be no organized opposition from the Jewish camp. **He would be freed from his enemy forever.** Here the tension in the Haman-Mordecai conflict reached its peak. From this point on it was relieved little by little through circumstances that had already been set in motion. As the events unfold, the reader is reminded of seemingly insignificant or forgotten events that the skillful narrator had previously mentioned but had not highlighted. God was sovereignly at work behind even such a hateful act as building a gallows (cf. [Acts 2:23](#); [4:27-28](#)).

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### Open it

1. What things are most valued and sought after by many people these days?

**Money, power, prestige, big cars and homes**

2. What brings you the most satisfaction in life?

**Knowing I am doing the best I can in God's job for me**

### Explore it

3. Why did Esther approach the king uninvited? ([5:1](#))

**To plead for her peoples safety**

4. Of what significance is the fact that the king held out his golden scepter? ([5:2](#))

**This was the King acknowledging her and allowing her to come in without being killed**

5. What did Queen Esther ask of the king? ([5:4](#))

**That the King and Haman come this day to a banquet prepared for him**

6. What infuriated Haman after he attended Esther's banquet? ([5:9](#))

**That Mordecai still did not stand up or tremble before Haman, and it filled him with anger**

7. What do we learn about Haman at this point? ([5:11](#))

**He thought he was better than others for having the Kings ear**

8. What advice did Haman's wife and friends give him? ([5:14](#))

**Build a gallows 50 Cubits high so everyone could see who was there**

9. Why did Haman build gallows? ([5:14](#))

**To hang Mordecai from it**

### **Get it**

10. How is Esther a good example to us today?

**She listened to her advisors and elders and used their advice well**

11. What can we learn from the negative example of Haman?

**Not to count on things unseen**

### **Apply it**

12. What can you do today to restore any relationship damaged by pride?

**Go and ask for forgiveness.**

13. What is one way you can place your focus on serving God and off of getting money and influencing others?

**Concentrate on doing God work and not your own agenda**