

4-21-24

Lesson 6 Esther chap 6:1-14

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Esther 6:1-14 (NASB)

¹ During that night the king could not sleep so he gave an order to bring the book of records, the chronicles, and they were read before the king.

² It was found written what Mordecai had reported concerning Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who were doorkeepers, that they had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

³ The king said, "What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" Then 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 in order to speak to the king about hanging Mordecai on the gallows which he had prepared for him.

⁵ The king's servants said to him, "Behold, Haman is standing in the court." And the king said, "Let him come in."

⁶ So Haman came in and the king said to him, "What is to be done for the man whom the king desires to honor?" And Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king desire to honor more than me?"

⁷ Then Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king desires to honor,

⁸ let them bring a royal robe which the king has worn, and the horse on which the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown has been placed;

⁹ and let the robe and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble princes and let them array the man whom the king desires to honor and lead him on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him, "Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor."

¹⁰ Then the king said to Haman, "Take quickly the robes and the horse as you have said, and do so for Mordecai the Jew, who is sitting at the king's gate; do not fall short in anything of all that you have said."

¹¹ So Haman took the robe and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor."

Everyone can see

¹² Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman hurried home, mourning, with his head covered.

¹³ Haman recounted to Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and Zeresh his wife said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish origin, you will not overcome him, but will surely fall before him."

¹⁴ While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hastily brought Haman to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

4. MORDECAI HONORED BY XERXES (CHAP. 6)

The tension which had been building throughout the account now began to dissipate. Previously understated facts take on new meanings. Almost incredible circumstances point to God's hand guiding the course of events. The entire course of history for the Jewish nation was changed because a pagan king, hundreds of miles from the center of God's activities in Jerusalem, could not sleep. Jewish people all over the Persian Empire, and especially in Palestine itself, were

unaware of God's dealings till long after the fact. But read in the light of God's covenants to Abraham, Moses, and David, the readers could well appreciate the sovereign action of God.

6:1-3. During the **night** before Esther's second banquet, **Xerxes** was unable to **sleep** (cf. [Dan. 6:18](#)). The author had not written why Esther asked for a delay before telling the king her request (Es. [5:7](#)), but the reason **was now made clear**. **God** was going to elevate **Mordecai**, to prepare **the king** to react unfavorably to Haman. Because of the king's sleeplessness he asked for some **of the chronicles** (**court annals**; cf. [2:23](#)) to be **read to him**. Sometimes, as is known by many people with insomnia, reading can help put a person to sleep! Through Xerxes' insomnia God caused him to learn about Mordecai's deed. Of all the texts that could have been selected by the librarian (from the records of Xerxes' 12 years of rule up to that time), the one that contained the account of Mordecai's uncovering the assassination plot ([2:21-23](#)) was read to **the king**. Extrabiblical sources confirm that the Persian kings maintained an elaborate recording system (cf. [Ezra 6:1-2](#)). Herodotus noted that the king **kept especially clear records of those who served him well**. Once again God's sovereignty is evident. When Xerxes asked **what honor** Mordecai had been given for saving the king's life (about five years before; cf. Es. [2:16](#) with [3:7](#)), the king found that he had not been rewarded. Undoubtedly a bureaucratic oversight had occurred. However, if Mordecai had been immediately rewarded for his saving the king there would have been no need for the elaborate plan which would soon be carried out by the king through the mouth of Haman ([6:6-10](#)). Once again unusual circumstances worked to preserve God's people.

6:4-6. In the morning (cf. [5:14](#)) **Haman... entered the palace outer court** to ask that **Mordecai** be hanged. **The king** asked **who** was **in the court** and **Haman** "**just happened**" to be there. Obviously the tables were being turned. Everything that was meant for evil against the Jews was turning out for good for them. What a comfort this must have been to the original Jewish readers in postexilic Palestine as they observed their tenuous position among the nations. They could rejoice in the fact **that God cared about them** and that He would continue to preserve them as He had under Xerxes.

When **Haman** was ushered into the king's presence, he must have felt honored. And when **the king** asked... **What should be done for the man the king delights to honor?** the **egotistical Haman** was **beside himself with joy and enthusiasm**. He thought that **the king** was speaking about him.

6:7-9. Haman responded to **the king** by mentioning several things that should be done for the person **the king** wished to honor: (1) Haman recommended that such a man should have the appearance of royalty, by wearing a kingly **robe** and riding a **royal** steed, one **the king** had already **ridden**. Some have suggested that the Bible is in error when it speaks of a horse wearing **a royal crest... on its head**. They think that the man, not the horse, should have worn the crown. However, a relief actually shows a horse with a crown on its head, signifying that it was a royal horse. (2) Haman said that the honored man should be served by one of the **most noble princes**. (3) The princes were to take the man **through the city** on this **horse**, clearing the way before him and pointing out to all who watched that this **man** was honored by **the king** (cf. [Gen. 41:42-43](#)). Haman did not need money (cf. Es. [3:9](#)). **He craved respect from his peers and from the population at large** (cf. [5:11](#)). Even though he was fabulously wealthy and had more power than anyone outside the royal family ([3:1](#)), he wanted even more respect from the people of the city.

Haman's **lust** for respect (from Mordecai) is what got him into trouble in the first place (cf. [3:2](#), [5](#); [5:9](#), [13](#)).

[6:10-13](#). Haman's ideas apparently appealed to **the king**; he **commanded Haman** to carry them out **for Mordecai the Jew**. This is the first of five times Mordecai is called "the Jew" (cf. [8:7](#); [9:29](#), [31](#); [10:3](#)), apparently to highlight the fact that a Jew, though opposed by **Haman**, was given a prominent position in Susa in the Persian Empire. What a turn of events; **what irony for Haman! Mordecai**, whom he hated, had to be honored by **Haman**. He who wanted respect **from** Mordecai had to give respect **to** Mordecai. Haman had to carry out the king's order even though it embarrassed and angered him greatly. **Afterward he rushed home**, had **his head covered in grief**, and **told Zeresh his wife and friends** the reversal of his fortunes.

Earlier Mordecai had publicly grieved over his people ([4:1](#)); now Haman privately grieved over his own humiliation. When Haman had left his wife in the morning he had been elated. Now the bottom had fallen out from under him. To make matters worse, **his advisers and his wife** all saw nothing but trouble for him in the future. They noted that Mordecai's **Jewish origin** meant that Haman was doomed. Exactly what they meant by that statement is difficult to determine. It is known that in the Persian religions much was made of omens and signs. Fate, chance, and luck were considered important in everyday life. The Book of Esther stands as a polemic against such a fatalistic view of the world. To many who are not of the covenant community, Israel, the world's events appear to be fatalistic and to happen by chance. But those who are the people of God's covenant know that God overrules fate. He moves events and circumstances for His good pleasure. Pagan advisers and the pagan wife of an evil man unknowingly stated the central thrust of this book: neither Haman nor any other human can possibly **stand against** God's Chosen People, the Jewish nation (many of whom were then back in the Promised Land with a rebuilt temple, offering sacrifices to God at Jerusalem).

[6:14](#). Now, with his world crashing down around his head, **Haman** was hustled off to Esther's second **banquet**, which once he desired but now dreaded. He may have well wondered what the king would say to him at the banquet.

Haman stands as a prototype of all anti-God activists who oppose God's people. Like authors of many short stories, God led the author of the Book of Esther to make his historical figures into symbols of much larger proportions. As the regathered nation read this account, they could have looked back over their history and noted other times when men had tried to set aside God's promises to their nation and had failed. They could therefore rest assured that in the future God would do the same. Even though God's people often disobeyed Him, even though they were often not spiritually or even physically where God wanted them to be, deliverance would come. God would so work in history that He would be vindicated and His people delivered.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

Open it

1. What do people usually think of someone who "toots his (or her) own horn"?

They are arrogant and loudmouth

2. What elements make a story interesting to you?

Many, I enjoy Science Fiction, robots, droids etc are my thing.

Explore it

3. What did King Xerxes do to deal with insomnia? [\(6:1\)](#)

He had the book of chronicles read to him, the record of his reign

4. What did the king discover when the book of the chronicles was read to him? [\(6:2\)](#)

That it was Mordecai who had exposed the assassination plot against the king

5. What honor had Mordecai received for exposing the men who plotted to assassinate the king?
[\(6:3\)](#)

Nothing had been done for him

6. Why did Haman enter the outer court of the king? [\(6:4\)](#)

He wished to speak to the king about impaling Mordecai on a pole he had set up

7. What advice did the king request of Haman? [\(6:6\)](#)

How to reward someone who had delighted the king

8. What did Haman assume about the king's question? [\(6:6\)](#)

That the king was speaking of himself not another

9. What did Haman think would be the best way to be honored by the king? [\(6:7-9\)](#)

For the man show has delighted the king, a robe and horse that the king had worn or ridden and ride him through the streets proclaiming this man delighted the king and this is how he is honored

10. What humiliating action was Haman forced to take because of his arrogance? [\(6:11\)](#)

He had to go Mordecai and give him what HE had wanted done to himself

11. How did Haman feel about honoring Mordecai? [\(6:12-13\)](#)

He rushed home with his head covered in grief and told his wife and friends what all had happened

12. How did Haman's wife and friends react to what had happened? [\(6:13\)](#)

Since he had to honor Mordecai, his plot to kill the jews would bring him to ruin

Get it

13. What is ironic about what happened to Haman and Mordecai?

What Haman wanted was given to Mordecai, honor and the respect

14. In what way does this event encourage you to do what is right even though you do not always see immediate rewards in it?

Doing right is always right

Apply it

15. What concrete actions can you take this week to cultivate a spirit of humility?

Remember who our God is and what his Son did for my soul.

16. How can you encourage a friend to persevere in doing what is right even if it hurts?

Be there for them, listen, be a sounding board