

09C8 Week 3 – Handout - Esther 5, 6, 7

Esther 5:1-14 – Esther approaches the King and asks for two banquets

- Esther “D:1-16” – Esther Confronts the King
- After 3 days of fasting, Esther dresses in her royal robes and stands in the hall outside the king's hall
- The king extends the sword to her and she enters (this is the first hurdle...she has safely been received by the king)
- The king offers her up to ½ kingdom...she invites the King + Haman to a banquet
- During the banquet, the king again asks Esther about her request, saying “up to half the kingdom”
- She requests that the King + Haman join her at a second banquet the next day
- Haman gloats about his status being the only noble invited to the Queen's banquets and complains about Mordecai being the only person who does not honor him.
- Haman's wife, Zeresh, suggests that Haman build a gallows 75ft high (exaggerated) and ask the king to hang Mordecai on it before the next banquet

Esther 6:1-14 – Patriot is honored, egomaniac is disgraced

- The night between the banquets, the king cannot sleep, so he asks that the chronicles of his kingship be read to him (odd way to fall asleep)
- In the reading he is reminded of Mordecai who exposed the assassination plot, but was never honored
- At that same moment, Haman enters the court to seek Mordecai's death
- The king asks Haman, “What should be done for the man the king delights to honor?”
- Haman answers, assuming the king had Haman in mind, suggesting a royal parade
- The king likes the suggestion and commands Haman to arrange the parade for Mordecai's honor
- Haman dresses Mordecai in the robe and parades through town declaring, “This is what is done for the man the king delights to honor!”
- Afterward Haman rushes home in grief to his wife and pouts & his wife warns him not to stand against Mordecai

Esther 7:1-10 – Climatic Banquet

- At the second banquet, the king asks Esther about her request and she replies, “O king,grant me my life-this is my petition. And spare my people-this is my request. For I and my people have been sold for destruction and slaughter and annihilation....”
- The king asks, “Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?”
- Esther points to Haman, the king leaves in a rage, and Haman begs Esther for mercy...falling on her couch (Sounds like Joseph)
- The king returns to see Haman falling on the Queen's couch and says, “will he even molest the Queen while she is with me in the house?”
- One of the eunuchs tells the king about the handy gallows that Haman built for Mordecai
- The king commands that Haman be hanged on his own gallows

Thematic Elements

Joseph

- Joseph is one of the twelve sons of Jacob and is sold into slavery by his older brothers.
- He finds favor in the eyes his masters but is subsequently falsely accused of sexual impropriety with the king's wife and sent to prison.
- In prison, Joseph is recognized for his wisdom and ability to interpret dreams. When the king's cupbearer is released Joseph asks the cupbearer to **remember** him when he is released.
- Joseph interprets the king's dreams and is elevated to second in command over all Egypt.
- From his position of power, he saves Egypt and his Father's family as well.
- In the end, Joseph's sale into slavery is reversed into a means of salvation for Jacob and his sons and thus the promise to Abraham advances another generation through the imaginative sovereignty of God.

Reversals in Esther

- Vashti (Queen) is dethroned for refusing her king's desire / Esther is enthroned for fulfilling the king's desire
- Vashti does not want the King to request her presence / The fact that the king has not requested her presence complicates her fate
- Haman is elevated for no apparent reason / Mordecai is overlooked despite saving the king's life
- Mordecai angers Haman because he refuses to bow and honor Haman / Haman angers the king because he "bows (falls)" before the Queen
- Haman (the proud) is humbled and killed by being raised / Mordecai (the humble) is honored and raised in status
- Mordecai and Esther fast / Haman and Xerxes feast

The Message behind the reversals

- Why is Mordecai more honorable than Haman?
- Why is Esther "better" (1:19) than Vashti?

Wisdom embodied in contrasting characters "...position given to some else who is better than she." (1:19)

- Pr.29:11 -A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control
- Pr.12:16 - A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.
- Pr.14:8 - The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception. (NIV)
- Pr 14:17 A quick-tempered man does foolish things, and a crafty man is hated.
- Pr 6:16f - There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.