

### Haman is Hanged on Gallows He Prepared for Mordecai

#### Esther 7

**Esther 7** - *"So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther. <sup>2</sup> And on the second day, at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!"<sup>3</sup> Then Queen Esther answered and said, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. <sup>4</sup> For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king's loss."<sup>5</sup> So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?" <sup>6</sup> And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman!" So Haman was terrified before the king and queen.<sup>7</sup> Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine and went into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king. <sup>8</sup> When the king returned from the palace garden to the place of the banquet of wine, Haman had fallen across the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, "Will he also assault the queen while I am in the house?" As the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. <sup>9</sup> Now Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the king, "Look! The gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good on the king's behalf, is standing at the house of Haman." Then the king said, "Hang him on it!" <sup>10</sup> So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's wrath subsided."*

#### Background Notes

Here's a little Bible trivia for you Bible students: How many banquets were given in the book of Esther? The answer is 5 – two by King Xerxes, one by Queen Vashti and two by Queen Esther. Banquet #1: *"In the third year of his reign he made a feast for all his officials and servants—the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces being before him"*(1:3). Banquet #2: *"In the third year of his reign he made a feast for all his officials and servants—the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces being before him"*(1:5). Banquet #3: *"Queen Vashti also made a feast for the women in the royal palace which belonged to King Ahasuerus"* (1:9).

Banquet #4: *"So Esther answered, "If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come today to the banquet that I have prepared for him"*(5:3). And Banquet #5 is here in Esther 7:2, *"And on the second day, at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!"*

During Banquet #5, wicked Haman and his evil plans were exposed. We don't know why Queen Esther delayed her petition to the king until her second banquet. Maybe she sensed that temperamental Xerxes was not in the right frame of mind at her first banquet. Maybe Esther wanted to see how close Haman was to the king, and perhaps find a point of vulnerability from which she could expose him. Maybe she wanted to see if Haman and the king had yet uncovered the fact that she was Jewish. Remember, Mordecai had wisely instructed Esther not to let people know that she was Jewish (Esther 2:10).

So we don't know Esther's reasons for waiting until her second banquet to expose Haman. However, as we've mentioned already, we do know that God was working behind the scenes to set the stage for the dramatic moment when Haman would be exposed and then eliminated, and would no longer be a threat to the Jewish people. Haman had plotted and planned to eliminate Mordecai and all the Jews - but he was eliminated instead! The Jews were protected, and Mordecai was elevated. Such are the marvelous ways of God!

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. Wicked plans should be brought to light.

In Luke 12:2 the Lord said, *"For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known."* The Bible clearly teaches that in the end, all wickedness will be dealt with and judged. No one will get away with making or carrying out evil plans. All will be exposed and brought to light in the end.

What about now? If we know about an evil deed, should we allow the evil deed to remain hidden until the final judgment? Should we take the attitude that judgment is God's business, and our only responsibility is to keep ourselves from any connection with the evil? No. As believers, we not only have the responsibility to keep ourselves from evil deeds, but we also have a responsibility to expose evil deeds, if we're aware of them. Listen to the exhortation to believers in Ephesians 5:11, *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them."*

Here in Esther 7 this biblical truth is illustrated. When Mordecai learned about the plot to assassinate King Xerxes back in chapter 2, he did the right thing and brought it to light. Mordecai and Esther knew about Haman's wicked intent, and they exposed the plot. And Esther did the right thing by informing the king about Haman's evil plan to eliminate the Jews.

Do you know about any evil deeds or wicked plans where you work, or in the town where you live? You have a responsibility to bring this evil to light in some way. As a result, you may not be popular, and you may even be persecuted, but Scripture says it's the right thing to do. Ephesians 5:11 once again: *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them."* Wicked plans should be brought to light.

As Christians, we should be thankful when the news media bring moral corruption and evil doing to light. Unfortunately, too often the news media have hidden agendas that cause them to slant and “spin” the news – maybe to be politically correct, or maybe to favor a political party or candidate for office. Sometimes moral corruption and wicked plans are downplayed, or reinterpreted, or never exposed at all. In other cases, some situations are sensationalized and distorted, and blown out of all proportion. We need to be informed of what’s going on and evaluate what we hear and read to make sure we’re not being brainwashed.

Now having added all of these warnings, safeguards and disclaimers, we’re still grateful when the news media bring wicked plans and moral corruption to light, and when they tell the truth. And we all need to do our part. Wicked plans should be brought to light.

## 2. Wicked persons should be brought to justice.

Not only should evil deeds be exposed, but the people responsible for this wickedness should be brought to justice. Romans 13:4 says that God establishes the governing authorities for the punishment of evildoers: *“For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for the governing authority does not bear the sword in vain; for it is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.”*

If this is the God-given responsibility of the state, then we as citizens have the responsibility to help expose perpetrators of evil. That’s what Esther did to Haman. *“So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, “Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?” And Esther said, “The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman!”(v5-6).*

The biblical principle of bringing wicked persons to justice is not a contradiction to the Lord’s command in Matthew 7:1, to *“judge not that you be not judged.”* In the context of the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord is speaking about judging **motives**. We **are not** to judge **motives** - but we **are** to judge **actions**. Parents must judge the rebellious or evil actions of their children, and discipline the children properly. Church leaders must judge the immoral actions of church members, and exercise their authority in discipline. And government must judge illegal activity and bring lawbreakers to justice.

As citizens of the state, we have a responsibility in this area as well - whether we are called for jury duty, or when we must call the police if we see wrongdoing. We shouldn’t be involved in witch-hunts or extreme vigilante activities, but we have a responsibility to bring people with evil intentions to justice. Wicked persons should be brought to justice.

## **Practical Application**

### **Don't dig pits or roll stones.**

This is not meant to be taken literally! I was did some digging and rock moving in our back yard this week. But in a moral sense, we shouldn't "dig pits" or "roll stones." It's dangerous activity!

Proverbs 26:27 says, *"Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone will have it rolled back on him."*

Proverbs are short statements that contain moral truth. The moral truth that's conveyed in this proverb is the same as the moral truth in Galatians 6:7, *"Whatsoever a person sows, that he will also reap."*

This truth is illustrated in Esther 7:10. *" So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai."* This 75-foot-high gallows that Haman vindictively built may have been an impaling pole. In the Hebrew language, the word translated "gallows" could have been a typical gallows for hanging by the neck, or it could have been a seventy-five foot sharpened pole on which to impale a victim. The Persians and the Assyrians were well known for their extremely cruel practice of impaling people as a form of execution. In any case, the 75-foot height was meant for maximum exposure.

But Haman "fell into the hole that he had dug" and "the stone that he had rolled came back to crush him." The proverb is true, so - don't dig pits or roll stones!

Let's be very careful that we don't get caught up in some type of evil plan, or get involved with certain evil people. It's possible that Christians may actually get drawn into vindictive plans or plots with evil intentions. Don't dig pits or roll stones!