

Esther 5:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.

Analysis

And Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.

Instead of immediately revealing her request, Esther invited the king and Haman to a banquet. This strategic delay served multiple purposes: it maintained suspense and royal interest; it created intimate setting for her eventual disclosure; it included Haman, ensuring he would be present for his exposure; and it demonstrated Esther's wisdom in preparing the moment carefully. The phrase "If it seem good unto the king" shows respectful deference despite the king's generous offer. Esther controlled the timing and setting of her appeal, maximizing its effectiveness. This models strategic wisdom in advocacy—not merely blurting demands but carefully orchestrating circumstances for maximum impact.

Historical Context

Royal banquets created intimate, relaxed settings where important business often occurred. Wine loosened inhibitions and formality, facilitating frank conversation. Esther's hosting the banquet demonstrated her status and resources—queens maintained households and could entertain independently. The inclusion of Haman seemed to honor him (he bragged about this exclusive invitation, v. 12), but actually set him up for exposure. Ancient political wisdom recognized that timing, setting, and relationship dynamics significantly affected outcomes. Esther's

strategic use of banquet setting demonstrates political acumen honed through her years as queen.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Esther's strategic delay and banquet invitation model wisdom in advocacy about timing, setting, and relationship dynamics?
2. What does this teach about the importance of preparing circumstances carefully rather than acting impulsively, even in crisis?

Interlinear Text

יָבֹא	טוֹב	הִמָּלֵךְ	עַל	אִם	אֶסְתֵּר רַ	וַתֹּאמֶר
come	If it seem good	let the king			And Esther	answered
H935	H2895	H4428	H5921	H518	H635	H559
אֲשֶׁר	הַמִּשְׁתֶּה הַ	אֶל	הַיּוֹם	וְהָמָן	הִמָּלֵךְ	
	unto the banquet		this day	and Haman	let the king	
H834	H4960	H413	H3117	H2001	H4428	
לִּי	עָשֵׂה יְיָ					
	that I have prepared					
H0	H6213					

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 29:11 (Parallel theme): A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.

Esther 5:8 (Kingdom): If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to morrow as the king hath said.

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