

Esther 6:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered.

Analysis

And Mordecai came again to the king's gate: but Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered. After the honor ceremony, Mordecai returned to his normal position at the king's gate—unchanged by sudden exaltation. Meanwhile, Haman fled home in mourning with head covered (traditional sign of shame and grief). The contrast is striking: Mordecai, just publicly honored, remains humble and faithful in his duty; Haman, freshly humiliated, collapses into despair. Mordecai's steadiness demonstrates character unchanged by circumstances, while Haman's volatility shows pride's fragility. The head-covering signals Haman's awareness that the tide has turned against him. His mourning contrasts bitterly with his recent boasting (5:11-13).

Historical Context

Covering the head signified mourning, shame, or distress throughout ancient Near Eastern cultures (2 Samuel 15:30; Jeremiah 14:3-4). Haman's head-covering after public humiliation would have been immediately recognized by observers as sign of disgrace. His "hasting" home suggests flight from public view, unwilling to face witnesses to his humiliation. Mordecai's return to duty despite sudden honor demonstrates remarkable humility and faithfulness—he doesn't leverage royal favor for personal aggrandizement but continues faithful service. This character contrast between Haman's pride-driven volatility and Mordecai's humble consistency demonstrates why God elevates the latter and judges the former.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Mordecai's unchanged faithfulness despite sudden honor demonstrate humility and steady character?
2. What does Haman's collapse into mourning after humiliation reveal about pride's fragility and dependence on external validation?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּשָׁב	וְמִרְדָּכָא	אֶל	שַׁעַר	לְפָנֵי	וַיַּעֲמֹד	וְהַלְמָדָן	וְנִזְמַן
came again	And Mordecai	H413	gate	to the king's	But Haman	hasted	
H7725	H4782		H8179	H4428	H2001	H1765	
אֶל	בֵּית	אָבֶל	תִּחְגּוּל	רָאשָׁה:			
H413	to his house	mourning	covered	and having his head			
	H1004	H57	H2645	H7218			

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 15:30 (Parallel theme): And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

Job 20:5 (Parallel theme): That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment?

1 Kings 21:4 (Parallel theme): And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for

he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

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