

Esther 6:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends every thing that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.

Analysis

And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends every thing that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him. Haman reported his humiliation to wife and friends who had advised building the gallows (5:14). Their response is remarkable: they recognize that Mordecai's Jewish identity means Haman "shalt surely fall before him." This acknowledgment of Jewish divine protection from pagans demonstrates widespread awareness of Israel's God defending His people. The phrase "thou hast begun to fall" recognizes the reversal has commenced and will continue to completion. Their prophecy proves accurate—within hours, Haman will be executed. Zeresh's wisdom comes too late; the counsel to build gallows set irreversible destruction in motion.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern peoples recognized various nations' patron deities and their power to protect their people. Zeresh and Haman's advisors apparently knew enough Jewish history—Exodus deliverance, conquest victories, exile survival—to recognize that opposing Jews meant facing their God. This awareness appears

elsewhere in Scripture (Exodus 15:14-16; Joshua 2:9-11; Daniel 6:26-27). The statement "thou shalt surely fall" uses emphatic Hebrew construction indicating certainty. That even Haman's closest associates recognized his doom demonstrates how clearly God's hand had turned against him. Their earlier advice (5:14) set his destruction in motion; their current advice recognizes it's too late to prevent.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does even pagan recognition of divine protection for Jews demonstrate God's reputation among nations?
2. What does the too-late wisdom teach about the consequences of pride-driven decisions that cannot be undone?

Interlinear Text

כָּל	אֶת	אֶת־כָּל	יְדֵי	וְלֹכֵל	אִשְׁתּוֹ	וְזֶרֶשׁ	הָמָן	וַיֹּסֶפַּר
H3605	H853	and all	his friends	H3605	his wife	Zeresh	And Haman	told
			H157		H802	H2238	H2001	H5608
וְזֶרֶשׁ	חֲכָמָיו	לֹ	וַיֹּאמְרוּ	כָּל־הַ	אֲשֶׁר			
H2238	H2450	H0	H559	every thing that had befallen	H834			
				H7136				
אֲשֶׁר	מֶרְדֵּכָי	יְהוּדִים	מִן־בְּרַע	אֶם	אִשְׁתּוֹ			
H834	unto him	of the Jews	be of the seed	H518	his wife			
	H4782	H3064	H2233		H802			
לֹא	לִפְנֵי:	תִּפּוֹל	וְלֹ	הִחֵל	וְ			
H3808	H6440	against him but shalt surely		whom thou hast begun				
		H5307		H2490				
תִּפּוֹל	כִּי	לֹ	וְ	תוֹכֵל				
H5307	H3588	H0		thou shalt not prevail				
				H3201				
לִפְנֵי:	תִּפּוֹל							
H6440	H5307							

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 28:18 (Parallel theme): Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.

Hosea 14:9 (Parallel theme): Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.

Genesis 40:19 (Parallel theme): Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

Genesis 41:8 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

Daniel 2:12 (Parallel theme): For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

Job 16:2 (Parallel theme): I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all.

Job 15:24 (Parallel theme): Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle.

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