

Esther 6:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

Analysis

And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in. This verse captures one of Scripture's most dramatic ironies. Haman arrives at the palace early in the morning (mashkim, מִשְׁכִּים, suggesting eager haste) intending to request permission to hang Mordecai on the gallows he had just constructed (5:14). The phrase "standeth in the court" (omed bechatzer, עֹמֵד בְּחִצֵּי־ר) indicates he waits in the outer courtyard, following Persian protocol that prohibited unauthorized entry into the king's presence.

The king's immediate response—"Let him come in" (yavo, יָבוֹא)—reveals his own sleepless urgency to honor Mordecai (6:1-3). Neither man knows the other's purpose. Haman thinks the king will grant his murderous request; the king assumes Haman has come to help honor a deserving subject. God's providence orchestrates this collision of opposing purposes with exquisite timing.

The Hebrew narrative artistry heightens suspense through understatement. The reader knows both men's intentions; the dramatic irony creates tension as these contradictory purposes approach collision. What Haman intends for evil, God redirects for Mordecai's honor and Haman's humiliation—foreshadowing the complete reversal that will save the Jewish people.

Historical Context

This scene occurs during the night of Nisan 13-14 (probably 474 BCE), the very night before Haman planned to execute Mordecai and exactly one year before the date set for destroying all Jews (3:13). Persian court protocol, confirmed by Greek sources, required visitors to wait in outer courtyards until granted audience. The king's accessibility at this early hour suggests his sleeplessness (6:1) and eagerness to resolve the matter of Mordecai's unrewarded service.

Persian palace architecture, excavated at Susa and Persepolis, included multiple courtyards with increasing levels of restricted access. Visitors progressed through outer courts, inner courts, and finally (if granted) into the king's presence chamber. Guards and officials monitored each transition point. Haman's position as chief minister allowed access to inner courts where ordinary subjects could not enter, but even he required permission to approach the king directly.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does this verse demonstrate God's sovereignty over timing and human purposes, even when His name goes unmentioned?
2. What does Haman's early-morning scheming reveal about how hatred and vengeance consume those who harbor them?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	נָעֲרֵי י	הֶמָּה לֵךְ	הֵן ה	אֵלַי י	הֵמָּה
said	servants	And the king	H413	H2009	unto him Behold Haman
H559	H5288	H4428			H2001
עֹמֵד	בְּחֵצֵי ר	וַיֹּאמֶר	הֶמָּה לֵךְ	יָבוֹא:	
standeth	in the court	said	And the king	Let him come in	
H5975	H2691	H559	H4428	H935	

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