

Esther 6:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head:

Analysis

Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, The Hebrew *levush malkhut* (לבוש מלכות) means literally "clothing of kingship"—garments reserved exclusively for the monarch. Haman proposes that the honored person wear the king's own clothes, an extraordinary privilege suggesting virtual equality with the monarch. Persian law made unauthorized wearing of royal garments a capital offense, so this represents ultimate honor.

And the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: The triple honor—royal robes, royal horse, and royal crown (*keter malkhut*, כֶּתֶר מַלְכוּת)—constitutes the highest possible recognition short of actually making someone co-regent. The phrase "which the king rideth upon" emphasizes these are not merely royal-quality items but the king's personal possessions. Haman's fantasy reveals his ambition: not just high office, but quasi-royal status. The irony deepens when we realize Haman will personally outfit Mordecai with these very symbols, leading him through Shushan while proclaiming his honor.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern royal symbolism invested clothing, animals, and crowns with political meaning. Only the king could wear certain purple-dyed garments, ride specific horses, or wear the royal crown. Herodotus describes Persian royal protocol forbidding anyone from wearing the king's clothing or crown.

Archaeological evidence from Persepolis shows the elaborate royal dress and crown of Persian monarchs. The phrase "crown royal" may refer to a special horse-crown or frontlet placed on steeds in royal processions, as depicted in Persian reliefs. Granting someone the right to wear royal robes temporarily acknowledged extraordinary service while stopping short of actual succession rights. The combination of all three honors was unprecedented and reveals Haman's megalomaniacal ambition.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Haman's fantasy of quasi-royal status reflect the human tendency to seek glory that belongs to God alone?
2. What does this passage teach about the relationship between outward symbols of honor and true significance?

Interlinear Text

הָמָּ לֵךְ	בּוֹ	לְבִשׁ	אֲשֶׁר	מֶלֶךְ וְ	לְבִשׁ	יָבִיא
that the king	H0	useth to wear	H834	Let the royal	H4438	be brought
H4428		H3847				H935
נִתְּ	וְאֲשֶׁר	הָמָּ לֵךְ	עָלָיו	כִּבֹּב	אֲשֶׁר	וְ
which is set	H834	that the king	H5921	rideth	H834	and the horse
H5414		H4428		H7392		H5483
				מֶלֶךְ וְ	כֹּתֶרֶת	
				Let the royal	upon and the crown	
				H4438	H3804	
				בְּרֹאשׁוֹ		
				upon his head		
				H7218		

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 1:33 (Kingdom): The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon:

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