

Esther 7:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.

Analysis

So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen. The Hebrew lishto't (לִשְׁתּוֹת, "to drink") emphasizes this is the banquet of wine Esther had prepared (5:6). This is the second of three banquets in the narrative arc: Vashti's refusal at the first (1:12), Esther's selection following (2:18), her first banquet where she delays her petition (5:4-8), and now this climactic second banquet where she reveals Haman's plot.

The simple statement masks high tension. Haman arrives fresh from the humiliation of honoring Mordecai publicly (6:11-12), with his wife's prophetic warning ringing in his ears: "If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews... thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him" (6:13). Yet protocol demands he attend the queen's banquet. Esther has fasted three days (4:16), risked death approaching the king unbidden (5:1-2), and delayed her petition strategically. Now the moment arrives. Providence has positioned Haman for judgment precisely when the king is most disposed to favor Esther. The casual phrase "came to banquet" conceals the convergence of divine purpose.

Historical Context

Persian royal protocol strictly regulated access to the king and queen. Private banquets with only the king, queen, and one other guest represented extraordinary privilege and intimacy. Such occasions allowed confidential discussion impossible in public court settings. The banquet setting served strategic

purposes: wine lowered inhibitions, hospitality created obligation, and the honor of private dining disposed the king favorably toward requests. Esther's wisdom in staging her revelation at a banquet rather than in formal court setting demonstrates sophisticated understanding of Persian court culture. Archaeological evidence from Persian palaces shows elaborate private dining rooms separate from great halls, designed for intimate royal entertaining. The twice-delayed petition (5:8, 7:2) built suspense and ensured the king's curiosity and favorable disposition when the request finally came.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Esther's strategic patience contrast with impulsive responses to injustice we might be tempted toward?
2. What does the convergence of circumstances—Mordecai honored, Haman humiliated, the king curious—teach about God's orchestration of events?

Interlinear Text

הַמְלָכָה אֶסְתֵּר עִם הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמְלָכָה
the queen with Esther and the king came

H4436 H635 H5973 H8354 H2001 H4428 H935

Additional Cross-References

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.

