

Esther 7:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom.

Analysis

And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, The phrase "said again" (va'yomer, וַיֹּאמֶר) references the king's identical question at the first banquet (5:6). The repetition demonstrates royal persistence and curiosity—Esther's delay has intensified the king's interest. The specification "second day" and "banquet of wine" grounds this climactic moment in precise narrative context.

What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom. The king's formula exactly repeats 5:6, with the threefold offer: petition (she'elatekh, שְׁאַלְתְּךָ), request (baqqashatekh, בָּקַשְׁתְּךָ), and the extravagant "even to the half of the kingdom" (ad chatzi hamalkhut, עַד חָצֵי הַמֶּלֶךְותָ). This hyperbolic royal promise, repeated verbatim, creates legal and moral obligation. The address "queen Esther" emphasizes her official status, reminding readers that her intervention carries constitutional weight. Esther has positioned herself perfectly: the king has committed publicly, Haman is present to be exposed, and Mordecai has been honored, demonstrating the king's capacity to reverse previous positions. Divine providence has prepared every element.

Historical Context

The formula "even to the half of the kingdom" represents ancient Near Eastern royal hyperbole, expressing unlimited generosity without literal intent to divide the realm. Similar phrases appear in extrabiblical texts where monarchs grant extravagant promises to favored subjects. The threefold structure—petition, request, half the kingdom—creates rhetorical emphasis and public commitment. Persian kings took oaths seriously; royal promises made before witnesses could not be easily broken without loss of honor. Ahasuerus's repeated question shows both genuine affection for Esther and growing curiosity about her mysterious delay. The banquet setting, with wine lowering inhibitions and hospitality creating obligation, maximized Esther's leverage. Her strategic timing meant the king would hear her petition in the most favorable possible circumstance, with Haman present for immediate judgment and no opportunity for counter-plotting.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Esther's patient waiting for God's timing challenge our tendency toward impulsive action when facing injustice?
2. What does the king's repeated, escalating offer teach about how God prepares human hearts for His purposes?

Interlinear Text

בְּמִשְׁתַּת הַשְׁנִי	בַּיּוֹם גֶּם	אֶסְתָּר הַמֶּלֶךְ	וַיֹּאמֶר
said	And the king	Esther	H1571
H559	H4428	H635	H3117
וַיְהִי בַּיּוֹם גֶּם	שְׁאַלְתָּה נָאָתָה	רַקְעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ	וְיִתְּגַּדֵּל
of wine	What is thy petition	Esther	queen
H3196	H7596	H635	H4436
וְיִתְּגַּדֵּל כְּבָשָׂת רַקְעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ	וְעַד חָצֵבָה	וְתַּחֲשִׁל כְּבָשָׂת רַקְעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ	וְתַּחֲשִׁל כְּבָשָׂת רַקְעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ
thee and what is thy request	H1246	H5704	H4438
H4100		H2677	
וְתַּחֲשִׁל!			
and it shall be performed			
H6213			

Additional Cross-References

John 16:24 (Parallel theme): Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Esther 5:6 (Kingdom): And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

Esther 5:3 (Kingdom): Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.

Esther 9:12 (Kingdom): And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further? and it shall be done.