

Esther 7:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

Analysis

And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. Harbonah informed the king about Haman's 75-foot gallows prepared for Mordecai. The revelation that Mordecai—who saved the king's life (2:21-23; 6:2)—was Haman's intended victim added to the outrage. Harbonah's mention of Mordecai having "spoken good for the king" emphasized this injustice. The king's immediate command "Hang him thereon" sealed Haman's fate with perfect poetic justice—execution on his own gallows. This fulfills Proverbs 26:27: "Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein." The instrument of intended murder becomes the means of the murderer's judgment.

Historical Context

Harbonah, one of the seven eunuchs who served the king (1:10), apparently knew about both the gallows and Mordecai's service. His intervention suggests palace officials recognized Haman's injustice and seized opportunity to expose it. The 50-cubit (75-foot) height made the gallows highly visible from the palace, explaining Harbonah's knowledge. That execution occurred immediately demonstrates

Persian justice's swift nature once the king decided. Archaeological evidence shows ancient Near Eastern executions could proceed very rapidly after condemnation, particularly for high-profile cases threatening the king or royal family.²

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Haman's execution on his own gallows demonstrate divine justice's perfect irony and poetic nature?
2. What does Harbonah's intervention teach about how God uses multiple human agents to accomplish His purposes?

Interlinear Text

לִפְנֵי הַפְּרִיס יְמִינֵי אַחֲרֵי
before of the chamberlains on the right side
said And Harbonah one H4480 of the chamberlains H5631 before H6440

בְּמִן הַמִּלְחָמָה הַבְּנָה גַּם בְּמִן הַמִּלְחָמָה
of Haman had made Then the king Behold also the gallows
H2001 H6213 H4428 H6086 H1571 H2009

עַתְּה בְּמִן הַמִּלְחָמָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר
standeth Then the king who had spoken good Then the king
H5975 H4428 H2896 H5921 H1696 H834 for Mordecai

בְּבֵית יְהוָה בְּמִן הַמִּלְחָמָה
Then the king said Then the king in the house of Haman
H4428 H599 H1004 H2001 H1364

עַלְיוֹן תַּל הַ
Hang H5921
H8518

Additional Cross-References

Esther 5:14 (Kingdom): Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.

Esther 1:10 (Kingdom): On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

Psalms 35:8 (Parallel theme): Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself: into that very destruction let him fall.

Psalms 141:10 (Parallel theme): Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape.

Daniel 6:24 (Kingdom): And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

Psalms 73:19 (Parallel theme): How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

1 Samuel 17:51 (Parallel theme): Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

Daniel 6:7 (Kingdom): All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.

Esther 6:14 (Kingdom): And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

Esther 9:25 (Kingdom): But when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.