

# Esther 8:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces:

## Analysis

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**And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces:** Esther's carefully crafted appeal piles up conditions—"if it please the king," "if I have found favour," "if the thing seem right," "if I be pleasing"—demonstrating humble deference despite her established influence. She requests written reversal of Haman's letters "to destroy the Jews." The fourfold conditional phrases show strategic rhetoric: she doesn't presume on the king's favor but appeals to his judgment, affection, and sense of justice. Her specific request for written documentation matches the original decree's form (3:12-14), showing she understands Persian administrative and legal procedures.

## Historical Context

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Esther's understanding of Persian legal system shows sophistication: she knew reversing an immutable decree required counter-decree with equal authority and formality. Her multiple conditional phrases reflect ancient Near Eastern diplomatic

language used when making difficult requests of superiors. The phrase "which he wrote to destroy the Jews" explicitly identified the decree's genocidal nature and Haman's authorship, potentially allowing the king to distance himself from it (though he had authorized it, 3:10-11). Her diplomatic language provided the king face-saving opportunity to issue counter-decree without admitting error in approving the original. Ancient political wisdom recognized the importance of allowing superiors to change course while preserving dignity.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does Esther's diplomatic language model effective advocacy that achieves goals while preserving relationships and others' dignity?
2. What does her understanding of legal procedures teach about the importance of strategic knowledge in advocacy and reform?

## Interlinear Text

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מִצְאָתִי	וְאִם	וְאִם	עַל	אָמַר	לֹא	תָּאֹמַר	מִצְאָתִי	וְאִם	וְאִם	עַל	אָמַר	לֹא	תָּאֹמַר	מִצְאָתִי	וְאִם	וְאִם	עַל	אָמַר	לֹא	תָּאֹמַר		
<b>And said</b>	H518	H5921	<b>the king</b>	H4428	<b>If it please</b>	H2896	<b>and if I have found</b>	H4672	<b>favour</b>	H2580												
H559																						
אָנָּה	וְאִם	וְאִם	לֹפֶנְךָ	רַבָּךְ	לֹפֶנְךָ	לֹפֶנְךָ	וְאִם	וְאִם	וְאִם	לֹפֶנְךָ	רַבָּךְ	לֹפֶנְךָ	לֹפֶנְךָ	וְאִם	וְאִם	וְאִם	לֹפֶנְךָ	רַבָּךְ	לֹפֶנְךָ	לֹפֶנְךָ		
<b>before</b>	<b>seem right</b>	<b>and the thing</b>	<b>before</b>	<b>the king</b>	<b>If it please</b>	H589																
H6440	H3787	H1697	H6440	H4428	H2896																	
בְּעֵינֵי	בְּתַת	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה	בְּקַטְבָּה		
<b>in his eyes</b>	<b>let it be written</b>	<b>to reverse</b>	H853	<b>the letters</b>	<b>devised</b>	<b>by Haman</b>																
H5869	H3789	H7725	H5612	H4284	H2001																	
אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר		
<b>the son</b>	<b>of Hammedatha</b>	<b>the Agagite</b>	H834	<b>let it be written</b>	<b>to destroy</b>	H853																
H1121	H4099	H91	H3789	H6																		
מִדְיָנִים	וְתַּתְּבִּל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכָל	אֲשֶׁר		
<b>the Jews</b>	H834	H3605	<b>provinces</b>	<b>the king</b>																		
H3064		H4082	H4428																			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Esther 7:3** (Kingdom): Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request:

**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.