

Esther 9:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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. This summary verse recapitulates the reversal: Esther's intercession led to Haman's own plot destroying him and his sons. The phrase "his wicked device...should return upon his own head" expresses perfect poetic justice—evil rebounds on evildoers (Psalms 7:15-16; 9:15; Proverbs 26:27). Haman and his ten sons hanged on the gallows he built demonstrates comprehensive judgment. This verse emphasizes the reversal theme central to Purim: God turns enemy plots against His people back on the plotters themselves, transforming intended destruction into judgment on destroyers.

Historical Context

The execution of Haman's ten sons (v. 7-10) along with Haman himself (7:10) demonstrates ancient practice of punishing not just perpetrators but their families, preventing blood feuds and eliminating potential avengers. While troubling to modern sensibilities, this practice reflected ancient understanding of corporate guilt and preventing ongoing cycles of vengeance. The phrase "should return upon his own head" became proverbial for divine justice. Archaeological and textual

evidence shows ancient Near Eastern executions sometimes included perpetrators' families, particularly for crimes threatening the king or state. The comprehensive judgment demonstrated that God's justice was thorough, protecting His people from future threats.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the reversal of Haman's plot to destroy his own family demonstrate the biblical principle that those who plot evil against God's people bring judgment on themselves?
2. What does this comprehensive justice teach about God's thoroughness in protecting His people from threats and potential future dangers?

Interlinear Text

וּבֹאָהּ	לִפְנֵי י	הַמֶּלֶךְ	אָמַר	עִם	הֵסָפָר
But when Esther came	before	the king	he commanded	H5973	by letters
H935	H6440	H4428	H559		H5612
יָשׁוּב	מַחֲשֶׁבֶת ו	הַרָעָה	אֲשֶׁר	חָשַׁב	עַל
should return	device	that his wicked	H834	which he devised	H5921
H7725	H4284	H7451		H2803	
הַיְּהוּדִים	עַל	רֹאשׁוֹ	וְתֵל ו	אֶת ו	וְאֶת
against the Jews	H5921	upon his own head	should be hanged	H853	H853
H3064		H7218	H8518		
וּבָנָיו	עַל	הָעֵץ:			
and that he and his sons	H5921	on the gallows			
H1121		H6086			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 7:16 (Parallel theme): His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

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