

ESTHER 6

A SLEEPLESS NIGHT AND A BAD DAY

The last chapter revealed how Satan put it into the heart of Haman to contrive Mordecai's death; but in this chapter, we will see how Jehovah put it into the heart of the king to contrive Mordecai's honor. The Lord had Providentially moved Esther to refrain from presenting her petition at her banquet, but sometimes delay works out for the best for God's people after all.

On that very same night after the banquet, the king could not sleep. Even after a banquet of wine, he could not rest his body when Providence had a purpose to serve by keeping him awake. He who commanded 127 provinces could not command even one hour's sleep. Therefore, he called for someone to pass away the sleepless hours by reading aloud to him from the government record-book. It is strange that he thought the reading of this book would lull him to sleep, for it would seem that it would rather fill his head with stressful cares! But God put it into his heart to call for that book, rather than for music or songs, which would have been more likely to put him to rest.

But listen! What is the servant reading about? He is saying something about Mordecai. He is recalling how that noble gatekeeper had disclosed a plot against the life of the king, in time to prevent its being carried out! The Lord's Providence directed the reader to that very section of the record-book! And now the interested king enquired what honor had been shown to Mordecai for this noble deed, but he was informed that nothing had been done to repay him.

By this time, it was now the early hours of the morning; but Haman was so impatient to see Mordecai hanged that he wasted no time in coming to get the king's warrant for his execution. Upon hearing that the man standing in the court was Haman, the king commanded him to be brought in immediately; and no doubt he was proud of the honor that was shown to him in being thus admitted into the king's private apartments before he was even out of bed. He now thought that he had the fairest opportunity to fulfill his revenge against Mordecai, but the king's heart was as full as his own. He asked Haman how he should express his favor to one whom he desired to honor. Haughty Haman immediately concluded that he himself must be the man whom the king intended to honor; and therefore, he prescribed the highest expressions of dignity and respect that could possibly be bestowed upon a subject. The honored favorite was to be dressed in the royal robes, wear the royal crown, and ride on the king's own horse. In short, he was to appear in all the pomp and grandeur of the king himself. He was to be attended by one of the king's most noble princes to act as his lackey, and all the people were to take notice of him and do him reverence.

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ God's Providence brings Mordecai to the king's notice and favor – verses 1-3
- ❖ Haman becomes the instrument of the king's favor to Mordecai – verses 4-11
- ❖ Haman's family and friends predict his doom – verses 12-14

But what terrible news for Haman! The king confounded the proud vizier with an order that he himself must go immediately and bestow all this honor upon none other than Mordecai! How he must have been thunderstruck when the king bade him to do these things to the very same man whom he hated above all others, and whose ruin he had just been about to ask for! Surely it must have been with the greatest regret and reluctance imaginable that he bestowed the king's honor upon Mordecai. The apparel was brought out, Mordecai was clothed in it, and he rode in state throughout the city – being recognized by everyone as the man who was the king's favorite.



Mordecai was not puffed up with his sudden advancement. After the honorable procession was over, he came again to the king's gate; he returned to his place of duty immediately, and minded his business as closely as he had done before. On the contrary, however, Haman was greatly cast down with disappointment! He could not bear it. He hurried home in shame and tears. But this was not all. His day was about to get even worse; for from this turn of events, his wife and his friends prophesied his utter doom. They told him that he could not hope to stand against Mordecai, but he could only expect to fall and fail before him. What miserable comforters! They did not advise him to repent and ask for Mordecai's pardon for his bad intentions against him, but they merely foretold his doom as fatal and unavoidable. They foresaw that Haman would be disappointed in his plot against the Jews, and that he himself would also be destroyed. And they based their predictions upon two things. First, Mordecai was a Jew. He was a member of a holy and prayerful people, who were in covenant with Jehovah and enjoyed His blessings; therefore, their enemies could not expect to triumph over them. Second, Haman had already begun to fall, so he was certainly a goner. When God begins to lay low the Church's enemies, He will make a sure end of them.

While Haman's wife and friends talked with him, the king's chamberlains came to bring him to Esther's second banquet. This was probably quite seasonable in Haman's mind, for he likely hoped that it would revive his drooping spirits and save his sinking honor. But the Lord had timed everything perfectly, for Haman was actually about to be brought crashing down by Esther's complaint against him.

As we read of Mordecai being honored, we must not forget how the Father has honored Jesus by exalting Him as a Prince and a Savior, and as the glorious Head of His Church! Let us not fail to bow the knee in worship before Him.

Lord, give us grace to behold Jesus in the glories of His character as the Head and King of His people; and help us to honor Him as our Lord and our God! Amen.