

**Book Study on Esther**  
**Haman's Plan for Mordecai**  
**Esther 5:9-14**

Dr. Bill Gilmore  
Oakleaf Baptist Church, Orange Park, Florida  
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## **Introduction**

- Review books of the Bible: Genesis – Esther
- Esther request her first banquet with King Artaxerxes and Haman

## **Let's pick up here in chapter 5 and verse 9**

### **Bible**

*Est 5:9 Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.*

*Est 5:10 Nevertheless Haman refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife.*

*Est 5:11 And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.*

*Est 5:12 Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.*

*Est 5:13 Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.*

*Est 5:14 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.*

### **Lets look a little deeper into these verses:**

*Est 5:9 Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.*

- He looked upon himself now as no less favoured by the queen than by the king, and was puffed up with this new honour,<sup>1</sup>
- This was certainly carrying his integrity or inflexibility to the highest pitch. But still we are left to conjecture that some reverence was required, which Mordecai could not conscientiously pay.<sup>2</sup>
- From this it seems that after Mordecai knew Haman's wicked plans against the Jews he purposely refused him all signs of respect. His inmost soul despised Haman, and he took

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<sup>1</sup> Trapp, John. "Commentary on Esther 5:9". John Trapp Complete Commentary. 1865-1868.

<sup>2</sup> Clarke, Adam. "Commentary on Esther 5:9". "The Adam Clarke Commentary". 1832.

no pains to conceal his feeling, but seems rather to have intentionally offended him.<sup>3</sup>

- What was Haman going to do? Kill him, Haman already planned on doing that.
- Originally Mordecai had merely declined to prostrate himself before Haman on religious grounds. Now he looked upon Haman as his personal enemy, and would not even acknowledge his presence. There is nothing more galling than such utter contempt shown openly in the presence of others.<sup>4</sup>
- The greater Haman's excitement and exultation at having reached the highest pinnacle of dignity attainable by a subject, the more did Mordecai's conduct rankle within him and move his rage; so pointed was the contrast with the extreme adulation naturally exhibited by all others connected with the palace towards the king's favourite.<sup>5</sup>

*Est 5:10 Nevertheless Haman refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife.*

- Haman refrained himself. It is a circumstance not unworthy of notice, that even those persons who are habitually self-willed, and destitute of the power of self-government, can nevertheless, when occasion requires it, exercise a wonderful control over both their speech and their passions.<sup>6</sup>
- Refrain = to contain, that is, (reflexively) abstain: - force (oneself), restrain.<sup>7</sup>
- from taking present vengeance upon Mordecai, to which he was strongly inclined, and which he might easily have effected, either by his own or any of his servants' hands, without any expectation or fear of inconvenience to himself, who having obtained license to destroy a whole nation, could easily get a pardon for having killed one obscure and infamous member of it. Herein therefore God's wise and powerful providence appeared in disposing Haman's heart, contrary to his own inclination and interest, and making him, as it were, to put fetters upon his own hands.<sup>8</sup>
- A name probably derived from an old Persian word for "gold." According to the Targum she was the daughter of Tatnai, "the governour on this side the river," i.e., of that part of the Persian Empire which lay beyond the Euphrates ( Ezra 5:3).<sup>9</sup>

*Est 5:11 And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.*

- As all this was of necessity sufficiently well known to his hearers, this was simply a piece of vain-glorious boasting.<sup>9</sup>
- and the multitude of his children; he had ten, as we learn from Esther 9:10, but the former Targum enlarges them, beyond credit, to the number of two hundred and eight, besides his ten sons,<sup>10</sup>
- This account of Haman is a comment upon Pr 21:24. Self-admirers and self-flatterers are really self-deceivers. Haman, the higher he is lifted up, the more impatient he is of contempt, and the more enraged at it. The affront from Mordecai spoiled all. A slight affront, which a humble man would scarcely notice, will torment a proud man, even to madness, and will mar all his comforts. Those disposed to be uneasy, will never want

<sup>3</sup> Whedon, Daniel. "Commentary on Esther 5:9". "Whedon's Commentary on the Bible". 1874-1909.

<sup>4</sup> The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2010 by BibleSoft, inc.

<sup>5</sup> The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges

<sup>6</sup> Exell, Joseph S. "Commentary on "Esther 5:10". The Biblical Illustrator. 1905-1909. New York.

<sup>7</sup> Strongs Concordance

<sup>8</sup> Poole, Matthew, "Commentary on Esther 5:10". Matthew Poole's English Annotations on the Holy Bible. 1685.

<sup>9</sup> Ellicott, Charles John. "Commentary on Esther 5:10". "Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers". 1905.

<sup>10</sup> Gill, John. "Commentary on Esther 5:11". "The New John Gill Exposition of the Entire Bible". 1999.

something to be uneasy at. Such are proud men; though they have much to their mind, if they have not all to their mind, it is as nothing to them. Many call the proud happy, who display pomp and make a show; but this is a mistaken thought. Many poor cottagers feel far less uneasiness than the rich, with all their fancied advantages around them. The man who knows not Christ, is poor though he be rich, because he is utterly destitute of that which alone is true riches.<sup>11</sup>

*Est 5:12 Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.*

- Plutarch, in his *Life of Artaxerxes*, tells us, that none but the king's mother and his real wife were permitted to sit at his table; and therefore he mentions it as a condescension in that prince that he sometimes invited his brothers; so that this particular favour was a matter which Haman had some reason to value himself upon.<sup>12</sup>
- had been invited, not by a messenger, but by the queen herself, which was a double honour.<sup>10</sup>

*Est 5:13 Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.*

- Pride will ever render its possessor unhappy. He has such a high opinion of his own worth, that he conceives himself defrauded by every one who does not pay him all the respect and homage which he conceives to be his due.<sup>2</sup>
- Haman's misery sprung from his most prominent vice. The avenger did not so much track his path, like an independent retributive messenger, as that it was secreted in his very sin. It is often so in providence. God does not need to stretch forth His hand against the sinner. It is enough that He allows the working of his sin to overtake him. Had there been no pride in Haman's heart he could never have been subjected to this soul-torture because of a harmless affront by an inferior in rank; but forasmuch as he had nursed and cherished his pride to an ungovernable extent, the pain and anguish which he had to endure when it was thwarted and injured was crucifying to all his prosperity and joy. He became his own tormentor. The law is universal, giving to all sin its entail of evil. The sinner may suppose that his sin is not known, and, because not known, that it will escape punishment; but the sin will itself find out the man, and the punishment will grow out of it as a poisonous plant from a hidden seed. Sceptics may theoretically deny the Divine government, but practically it is beyond dispute.<sup>11</sup>

*Est 5:14 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.*

- A gallows, in the ordinary sense, is scarcely intended, since hanging was not a Persian punishment. The intention, no doubt, was to crucify (see the *Esther 2:23* note) or impale Mordecai; and the pale or cross was to be 75 feet high, to make the punishment more conspicuous.<sup>13</sup>
- "fifty cubits high" Meaning, the highest that could be found.<sup>14</sup>
- a tree (from its *firmness*); hence *wood* (plural *sticks*): - + carpenter, gallows, helve, +

<sup>11</sup> Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible by Matthew Henry

<sup>12</sup> Coke, Thomas. "Commentary on Esther 5:12". Thomas Coke Commentary on the Holy Bible. 1801-1803.

<sup>13</sup> Barnes, Albert. "Commentary on Esther 5:14". "Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible". 1870.

<sup>14</sup> The Geneva Bible Translation Notes [1599]

pine, plank, staff, stalk, stick, stock, timber, tree, wood.<sup>7</sup>

- Hebrew, a tree, or wood: that is, a lofty beam or post for impalement; not a gallows, or gibbet, in the ordinary sense. Compare Genesis 40:19; Deuteronomy 21:22-23. Hanging with a rope by the neck seems not to have been a Persian mode of punishment, but impalement was common.. Haman's wife and friends proposed to make the post of wood for Mordecai's execution fifty cubits high — seventy-five feet — so as to make his impalement as conspicuous and as ignominious as possible.<sup>3</sup>
- See note on Esther 2:23 – We discussed this a little back in that study. Impaled or crucified