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# **Adam Clarke Commentary Esther 5**

#### **Adam Clarke:**

#### Introduction

Esther presents herself before the king, and finds favor in his sight, Esther 5:1, Esther 5:2. He asks what her request is, and promises to grant it, Esther 5:3. She invites him and Haman to a banquet, which they accept, Esther 5:4, Esther 5:5. He then desires to know her request; and she promises to make it known on the morrow, if they will again come to her banquet, Esther 5:6-8. Haman, though overjoyed at the manner in which he was received by the queen, is indignant at the indifference with which he is treated by Mordecai, Esther 5:9. He goes home, and complains of this conduct to his friends, and his wife Zeresh, Esther 5:10-13. They counsel him to make a gallows of fifty cubits high, and to request the king that Mordecai may be hanged on it, which they take for granted the king will not refuse; and the gallows is made accordingly, Esther 5:14.

#### Verse 1

On the third day - Most probably the third day of the fast which she has prescribed to Mordecai and the Jews.

### Verse 2

She obtained favor in his sight - The Septuagint represents "the king as being at first greatly enraged when he saw Esther, because she had dared to appear before him unveiled, and she, perceiving this, was so terrified that she fainted away; on which the king, touched with tenderness, sprung from his throne, took her up in his arms, laid the golden scepter on her neck, and spoke to her in the most endearing manner.― This is more circumstantial than the Hebrew, but is not contrary to it.

#### Verse 4

Let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet - It was necessary to invite Haman to prevent his suspicion, and that he might not take any hasty step which might have prevented the execution of the great design.

#### Verse 6

The banquet of wine - At that part of the banquet when the wine was introduced.

#### Verse 8

I will do to-morrow - She saw she was gaining on the kingâ€s affections; but she was not yet sufficiently confident; and therefore wished another interview, that she might ingratiate herself more fully in the kingâ€s favor, and thus secure the success of her design. But Providence disposed of things thus, to give time for the important event mentioned in the succeeding chapter.

#### Verse 9

That he stood not up, nor moved for him - 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.

## Verse 11

The multitude of his children - The Asiatic sovereigns delight in the number of their children; and this is one cause why they take so many wives and concubines.

## Verse 13

Yet all this availeth me nothing - 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.

The soul was made for God, and nothing but God can fill it and make it happy. Angels could not be happy in glory, when they had cast off their allegiance to their Maker. As soon as his heart had departed from God, Adam would needs go to the forbidden fruit, to satisfy a desire which was only an indication of his having been unfaithful to his God. Solomon, in all his glory, possessing every thing heart could wish, found all to be vanity and vexation of spirit; because his soul had not God for its portion. Ahab, on the throne of Israel, takes to his

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bed, and refuses to eat bread, not merely because he cannot get the vineyard of Naboth, but because he had not God in his heart, who could alone satisfy its desires. Haman, on the same ground, though the prime favourite of the king, is wretched because he cannot have a bow from that man whom his heart even despised. O, how distressing are the inquietudes of vanity. And how wretched is the man who has not the God of Jacob for his help, and in whose heart Christ dwells not by faith!

### Verse 14

Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high - The word x¢x¥ (ets), which we translate gallows, signifies simply wood, a tree, or pole; and this was to be seventy-five feet high, that he might suffer the greater ignominy, and be a more public spectacle. I believe impaling is here also meant. See the note, Esther 2:23 (note).

In former times the Jews were accustomed to burn Haman in effigy; and with him a wooden cross, which they pretended to be in memory of that which he had erected for the suspension of Mordecai; but which was, in fact, to deride the Christian religion. The emperors, Justinian and Theodosius, abolished it by their edicts; and the practice has ceased from that time, though the principle from which it sprang still exists, with the same virulence against Christianity and its glorious Author.