

Reversals (Esther 5:1-14)

Reversals

- *On the very day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, the reverse occurred (Es 9:1)*
- This verse serves as a clue from the narrator on how to interpret what is unfolding
- What unfolds over the next few chapters will be a sequence of **reversals**

Esther enters the king's presence uninvited (5:1-5)

- Esther thoughtfully prepares to enter the king's presence
- **Reversal:** Vashti was banished for not coming when called for, Esther is going to enter king's presence even though she had not been called for
- Xerxes is pleased to see Esther and welcomes her
- With him offering her the scepter, her life is safe, positively resolving one of our outstanding issues (how will the king respond to Esther entering uninvited?)
- Queen, not criminal
 - **Reversal:** Esther is received not as a criminal, but as the queen
- Queen Esther
 - Up till now, Esther referred to as "Esther"
 - Starting here in 5:3, term "Queen Esther" used 16 times in remainder of story
- Xerxes' offer
 - Xerxes not only receives Esther, but he also makes her an offer
 - *"What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given to you, even to the half of my kingdom?" (Es 5:3)*
- Esther's invitation
 - Esther invites her husband, the king (Xerxes) and Haman, to a feast
 - Her invite: *"If it please the king..." (5:4)*
- King accepts Esther's dinner invitation

Esther's Feast: Take One (5:6-8)

- King again offers up to half his kingdom to Esther
- Note: Observe the parallel structure between his offer and his response
 - *"What is your **wish**? ... What is your **request**? ..." (5:6)*
 - *"My **wish** and my **request** is..." (5:7)*
 - *"If it please the king to grant my **wish** and fulfill my **request**..." (5:8)*
- Esther appears ready to share her request, then changes midstream
- Instead, she invites both Xerxes and Haman back for another party the next night

Haman Plots Against Mordecai (5:9-14)

- Haman left the party on cloud 9
- That delight is short lived as he is filled with anger when he sees Mordecai
- Haman follows his great party by throwing himself a pity party
- *"This idea pleased Haman" (5:14)* – of course it did!

"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)