

# INTRODUCTION

- ❑ Chapter 1 focussed on **the invitation of the king**. A king summons his wife to his banquet. She defiantly refuses to come and is subsequently banished from his presence. The banishment is irrevocable. A new replacement wife is sought.
  - These events are typical of Israel and the church.
  - But there is also a personal application for these types in Esther and Jesus' banquet parable.
- ❑ Chapter 2 is about **the preparation for the king**.
  - In Esther's preparation and her eagerness to please the king, we saw some useful types regarding the preparation that we as believers go through for our heavenly king.

# INTRODUCTION

- ❑ In Chapter 3 Mordecai foils an assassination attempt on the king's life. But we also see Haman construct a **decree of death** aimed at eliminating the Jews. **Mordecai was a picture of the Holy Spirit while Haman is a type of the flesh**. The conflict between Haman and Mordecai is typical of the ongoing battle we experience as Christians - the conflict between flesh and Spirit.
- ❑ In Chapter 4 the Jews mourn (a type of **repentance**) the decree of death (a type of sin) and Mordecai persuades the initially reluctant Esther to **intercede** to the king on behalf of her people.
- ❑ In Chapter 5 we saw Esther invite the king and Haman to a banquet on the third day of fasting. We looked at the significance of the **third day** in Scripture. Esther stalls again and invites them to yet another banquet.

# INTRODUCTION

- ❑ Prompted by his wife and friends, Haman now hatches a plot to execute Mordecai. Again this is typical - Haman (the flesh) wants to destroy Mordecai (the Holy Spirit).
- ❑ We saw that the proud Haman is not only a type of the sinful nature, but also of the coming Antichrist. As a type of the natural fleshly man, where everything revolves around the here and now and the things of the world, Haman was so self-seeking and caught up in material gain that he did not realise that his day of ruin was imminent.
- ❑ In Chapter 6 we saw God's providence in action again and that God will always vindicate his people. While Esther and Haman were the one's least likely to sleep well, it is the king who has a sleepless night. The king gets his servants to read to him and they just happen to read the account of how Mordecai saved him from an assassination attempt.

# INTRODUCTION

- ❑ We observed the result of Haman following bad advice from his wife and friends and would have to face the consequences. We noted that:
  - Advice that you want to hear is not always godly advice, even if the adviser claims it comes from God.
  - Sometimes the people who are viewed as “experts” can give bad advice.
  - Sometimes bad advice comes from those who are close to us, and who are well-meaning.
  - The majority are not always correct. So don't take advice based on peer pressure.
  - Don't take advice that is based on man's worldly wisdom, rather than on Biblical principles.

# GOOD ADVICE

- ❑ Unlike Haman, Esther received good counsel from Mordecai.
- ❑ To her credit Esther took advice:
  - even when she was in a position of privilege
  - even when it was advice she didn't want to hear



See  
NOTE 2





# The Book of Esther

## *CHAPTER 7*



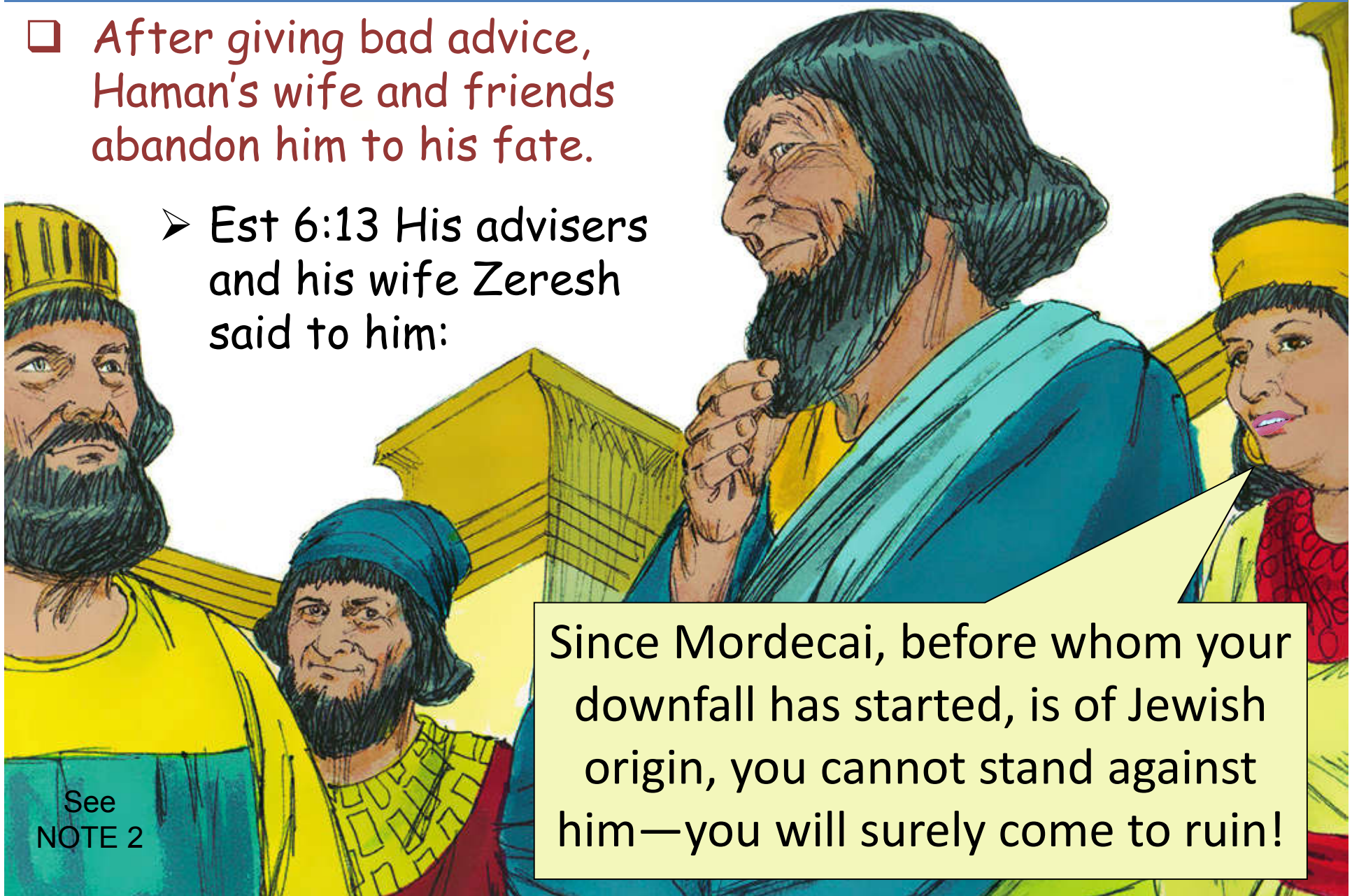
# BAD ADVICE

- ❑ After giving bad advice, Haman's wife and friends abandon him to his fate.

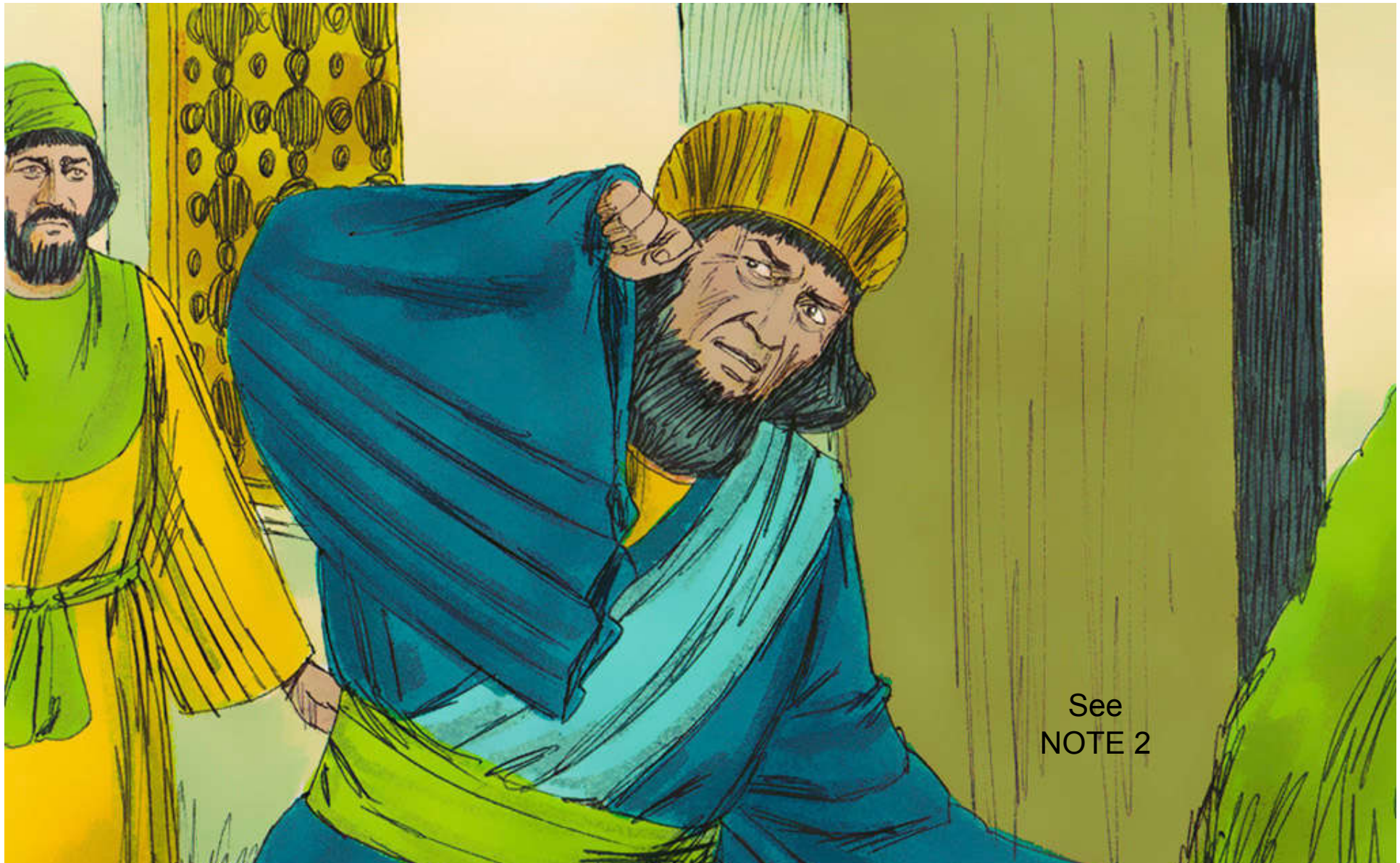
➤ Est 6:13 His advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him:

Since Mordecai, before whom your downfall has started, is of Jewish origin, you cannot stand against him—you will surely come to ruin!

See  
NOTE 2





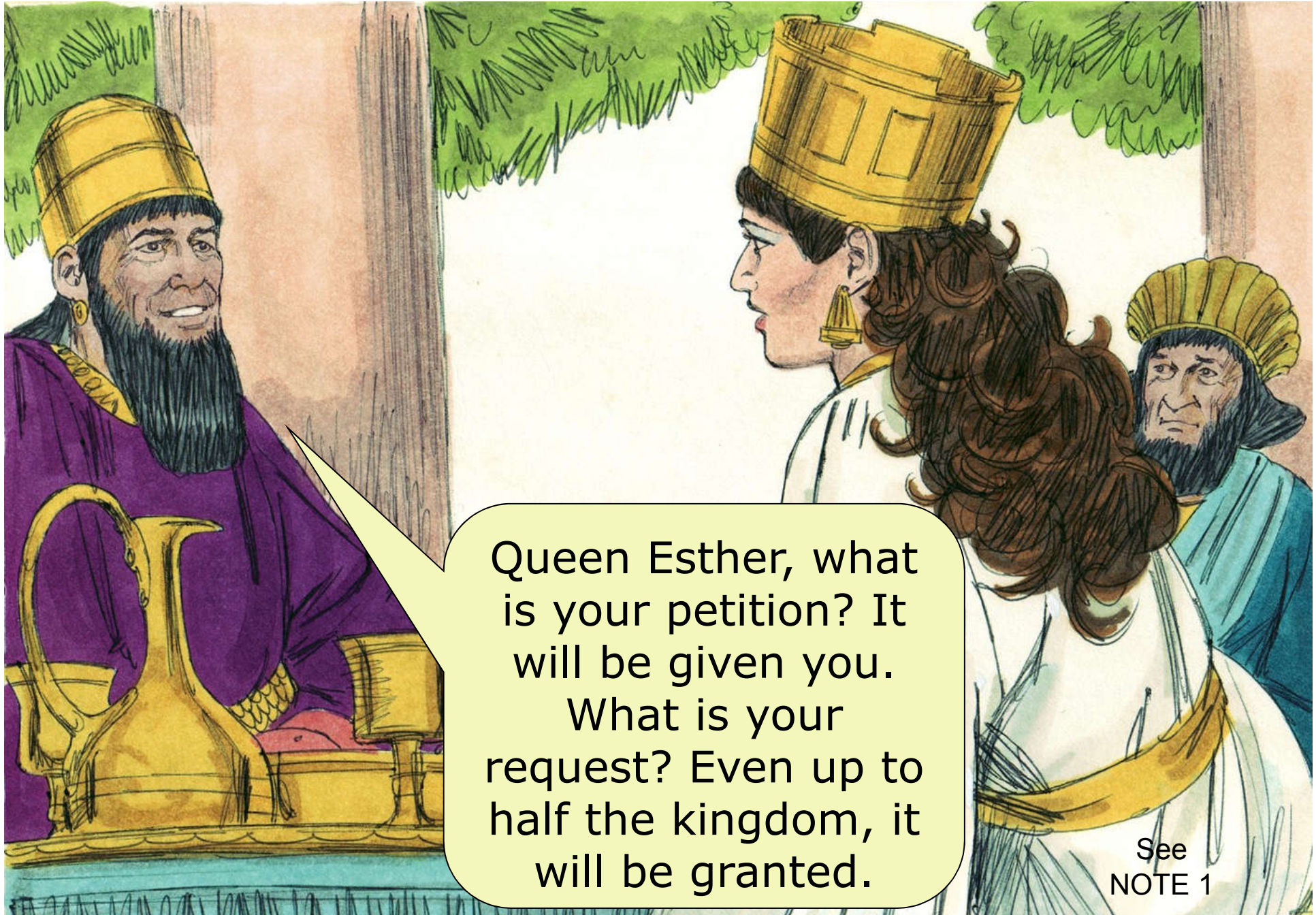


See  
NOTE 2

- ❑ 6:14 While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hurried Haman away to the banquet Esther had prepared.



7:1-6 So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther...



Queen Esther, what is your petition? It will be given you. What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted.

See  
NOTE 1

# A STARTLING REVELATION

- ❑ The king's curiosity has piqued and for the third time he asks Esther what her request is. No doubt he is curious to know what was so important that Esther not only risked her life, but also has hosted two banquets for him.
- ❑ While on the first two occasions she seems to have hesitated, in hindsight we see that God, in his providence, had used her delay to complete Haman's downfall.
  - Haman has been publicly humiliated in the streets of Susa by having to honour his enemy.
  - He has erected a stake to impale a man the king has just honoured.
  - All that remains is for Esther to finally make her petition to the king.





If I have found favour with you, O king, and if it pleases your majesty, grant me my life—this is my petition. And spare my people—this is my request.

- ❑ Esther associates herself with her people and their fate. She is about to reveal her national identity for the first time. She does not immediately accuse Haman as we might have expected but instead tells the king that her life along with the lives of her people are in jeopardy.



For I and my people have been sold for destruction and slaughter and annihilation. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because no such distress would justify disturbing the king.

See  
NOTE 2

Who is he? Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?



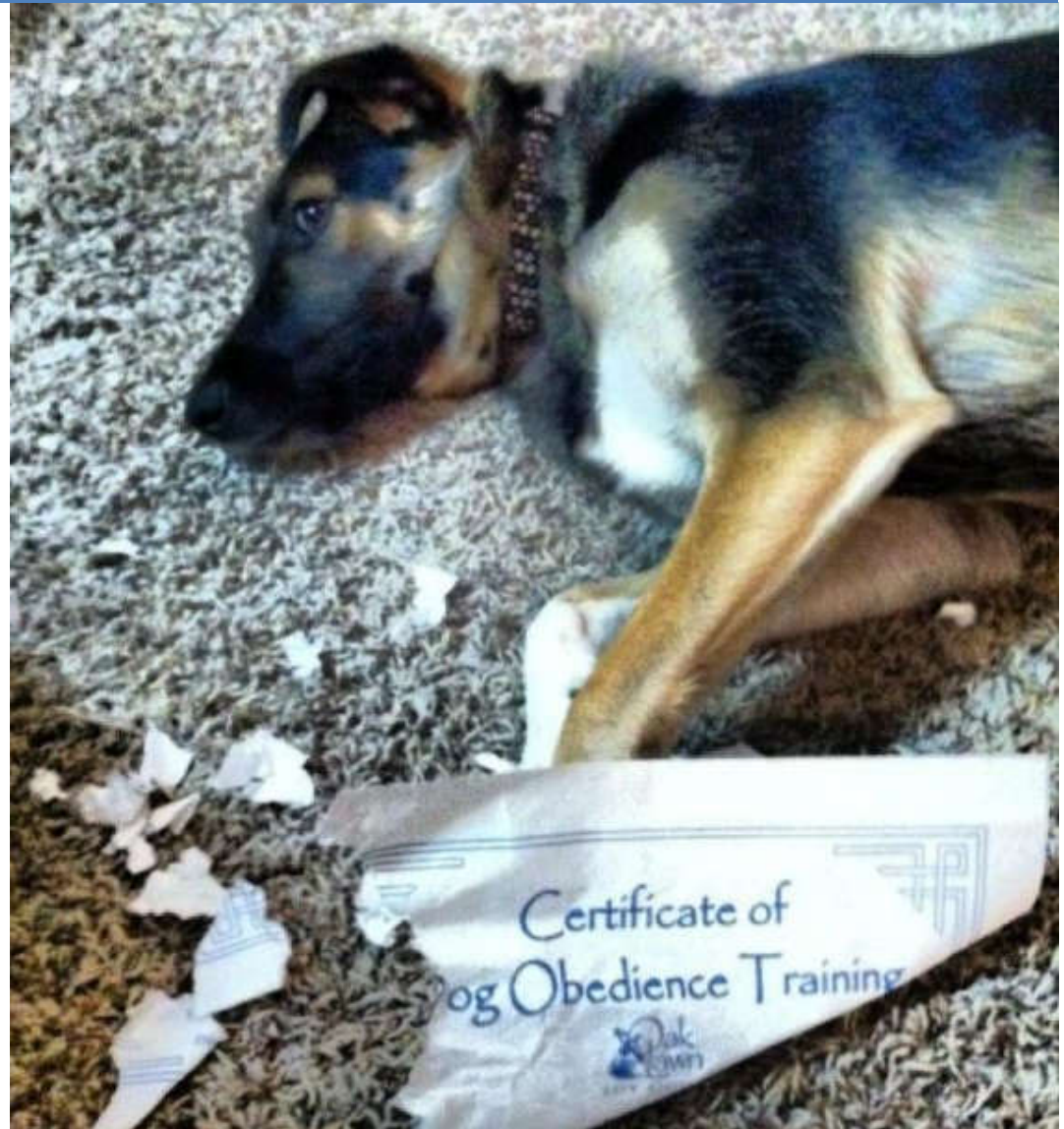
# A STARTLING REVELATION

- ❑ Ahasuerus may have thought he was coming to a nice private little party where his queen had a relatively minor issue she wanted to inform him about.
- ❑ Now it turns out that her life is in danger. His beautiful wife is not safe within his own kingdom! He is immediately angry that someone would attempt to injure his queen and her people.
- ❑ But at this stage neither the king or Haman knew that Esther was Jewish. Remember that Mordecai had previously advised her to conceal her nationality. So the question, "Who is he?" indicates that the king is clearly not linking this to the decree of death that Haman drafted.



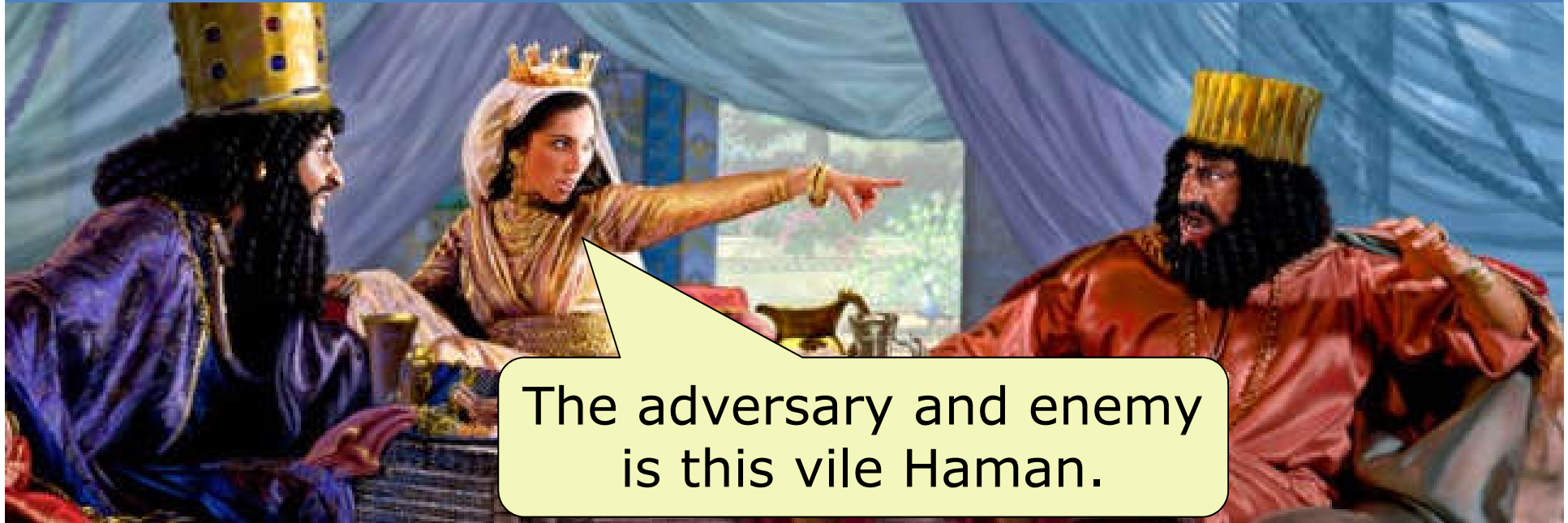
# IRONY

- ❑ IRONY: a state of affairs that seems contrary to what one expects and is often amusing as a result.
- ❑ It is ironic that the angry king asks for the identity and the whereabouts of the man who would dare do this, without suspecting that it was his favourite right hand man sitting with them in the same room.





# A STARTLING REVELATION



- ❑ Even the king must have been surprised at this revelation for he too was unaware of Esther's nationality. But imagine how Haman's heart sank when he discovered that the queen belongs to the race of people he planned to annihilate! Only the previous day he was ready to believe that there was no one else within the kingdom that the king would desire to honour more than himself. Now Haman is convinced that he will be executed.

7:6-7

Then  
Haman  
was  
terrified  
before the  
king and  
queen. The  
king got  
up in a  
rage, left his wine  
and went out into  
the palace garden.

But Haman, realizing that the king had already decided  
his fate, stayed behind to beg Queen Esther for his life.

See  
NOTE 2



# A STARTLING REVELATION

- ❑ When the king asked who the source of this danger is (“Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?”) he clearly didn’t realise that it was as a result of a decree that he played a role in approving.
- ❑ He is now probably angry at himself for the part that he played in the decree. He likely regretted that he had not check the details of the decree more carefully, because of his implicit trust in Haman’s judgment.
- ❑ Be careful what you sign up for and who you trust!
- ❑ Don’t make decisions based on limited information or after hearing only one side of the story.
  - Prov 18:17 (ESV) The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.



# A STARTLING REVELATION

- ❑ His anger would have been fuelled by the fact that he realises that Haman had used him to settle his private vendetta.
- By giving the king limited information, Haman had manipulated him into approving a decree of death, by pretending that the targeted people were a threat to the entire kingdom, when in fact it was only one person from that people group who had annoyed Haman.
- ❑ The king storms out, probably to try and think of a way out of this, without making himself look bad for the role he played. **How can he punish Haman for a decree that he himself had played a part in approving?**

7:8 Just as the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was reclining.

See  
NOTE 2

Will  
he  
even  
molest  
the  
queen  
while  
she is  
with  
me in  
the  
house?





# FROM BAD TO WORSE

- ❑ Things go from bad to worse for Haman. While pleading with Esther, the king returns and accuses him of attempting to force himself on the queen.
- Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers: Ahasuerus must have known perfectly well that **Haman's position was that of a suppliant**; his words do but indicate his **utter anger**... <sup>1</sup>
- Matthew Poole's Commentary: He speaks not this out of a real jealousy, for which there was no cause in those circumstances; but from an exasperated mind, which takes all occasions to vent itself against the person who gave the provocation, and **makes the worst construction of all his words and actions**. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/esther/7-8.htm>

# A STARTLING REVELATION

- ❑ Maybe his strange accusation is his possible solution to the problem? The king would look bad if he punished Haman for a decree he was complicit in and that was publicised in his name.
- “Can he punish Haman for a plot he himself approved? If he does so, won't he have to admit his own role in the fiasco [and lose face]? Moreover, he has issued an irrevocable law; how then can he rescind it?”<sup>1</sup>
- ❑ But what if Haman was trying to molest the queen? Inadvertently Haman may have provided the king with a solution to his problem, by falling onto the couch where Esther was sitting.

<sup>1</sup> Michael V. Fox, *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther*, 86.



# A STARTLING REVELATION

❑ In those days, the kings were afraid that other men might try to take advantage of their wives and so, with the exception of the royal eunuchs, they normally denied any man contact with their women.

➤ Even in the presence of others, a man was not to approach a woman of the king's harem within 7 steps.

– Edwin M. Yamauchi,  
Persia and the Bible, 262.

❑ And so the king now accuses Haman of trying to take advantage of the queen.



See  
NOTE 1

# FROM BAD TO WORSE

- ❑ 7:8 As soon as the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.
- "It was the custom of the kings of Persia, that their servants covered the face of him the king was angry with, **that he might not see his face any more**, which was well known in the Persian writings." (Gill quoting the medieval Jewish rabbi, Aben Ezra) <sup>1</sup>
- Curtius in his history of Alexander the Great (vi. 8) speaks of this as done to Philotas, who had served with distinction under that monarch, when, on a confession of treason having been wrung from him by torture, he **was about to be stoned to death**. Livy also (i. 26) mentions it as a Roman custom. (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges) <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/esther/7-8.htm>



# THE FINAL STRAW

- Then to top it all Harbonah (mentioned in the list of Esther 1:10 as one the seven eunuchs who served the king) places the proverbial last straw on the camel's back when he points out that, in addition to his plot to kill the Jews, Haman has made plans to execute Mordecai, the man the king has just honoured for his loyalty.

A pole reaching to a height of fifty cubits stands by Haman's house. He had it set up for Mordecai, who spoke up to help the king.

See  
NOTE 2



# A STARTLING REVELATION

- ❑ We already noted that Haman wasn't a man to be crossed. And we saw his barbarity - he didn't just want Mordecai executed, he even had the pole erected at his house, so he could personally witness his impalement on a 75 foot stake.
- ❑ Could this mean streak have gained Haman enemies in the court and might Harbona himself be one of them? Note how quickly Harbona speaks up to inform the king about the impalement stake that Haman has erected for Mordecai, while stressing that Mordecai was the man who was honoured by the king that very morning.
- ❑ Maybe the added insinuation was that, since Haman wanted to kill the man who had saved the king from an assassination attempt, Haman might have had sympathies with the would-be assassins?

# A STARTLING REVELATION



- ❑ Most people only treat people nicely if they think they can do something for them - or further their own goals.

**The true judge of your character is how you treat those who can do nothing for you.**





See  
NOTE 2

Impale  
him on  
it!

- ❑ 7:10 So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai. Then the king's fury subsided.

# REAP WHAT YOU SOW

- ❑ Ahasuerus now has adequate grounds for executing Haman besides the charge brought by Esther (which we saw would put the king himself in a bad light, if he acted on that alone). Haman has attempted to “molest” the queen and also plotted to assassinate a man loyal to the king. He **orders that Haman be impaled on his own stake.**
- ❑ So the honour that Haman wanted for himself is bestowed on Mordecai (being led through the streets on the king's horse). The punishment he had plotted for Mordecai was given to him instead.
- ❑ This is evidence of the Biblical principle that “A man reaps what he sows” (Gal 6:7).
  - Prov 26:27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it; if someone rolls a stone, it will roll back on them.



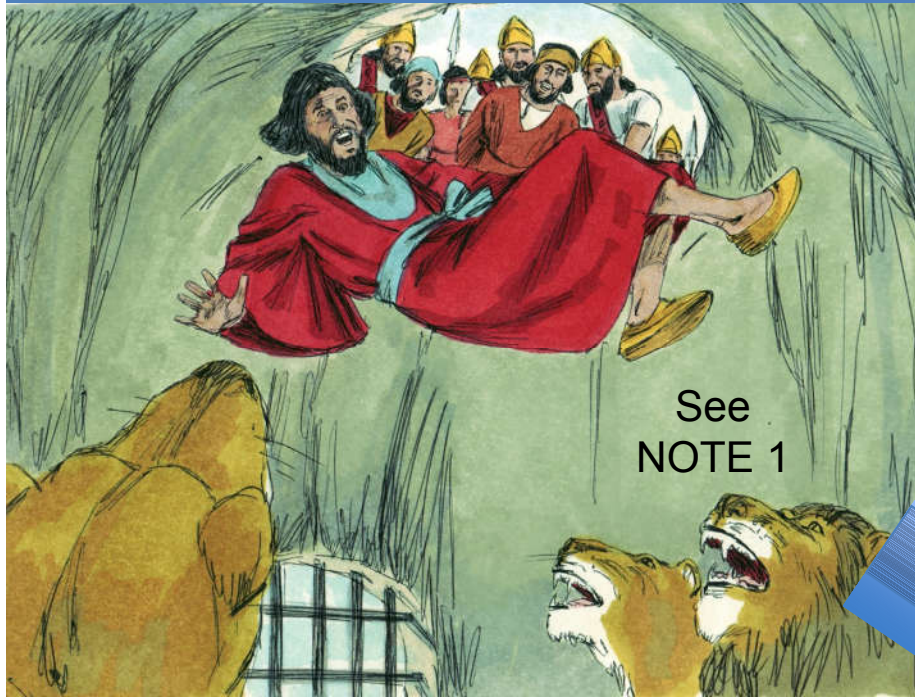
# REAP WHAT YOU SOW

- ❑ The first-century Jewish historian, Josephus, comments:
  - And from hence I cannot forbear to admire God, and to learn hence his wisdom and justice, not only in punishing the wickedness of Haman, but in so disposing it, that he should undergo the very same punishment which he had contrived for another; as also, because thereby he teaches others this lesson, that what mischiefs any one prepares against another, he without knowing of it, first contrives it against himself.<sup>1</sup>
- ❑ We find this principle in action elsewhere in Scripture:
  - Matt 26:52 "... for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."

<sup>1</sup> Antiquities of the Jews, in The Works of Josephus, trans. W. Whiston (Lynn, Mass.: Hendrickson, repr. 1980), page 241.



# REAP WHAT YOU SOW



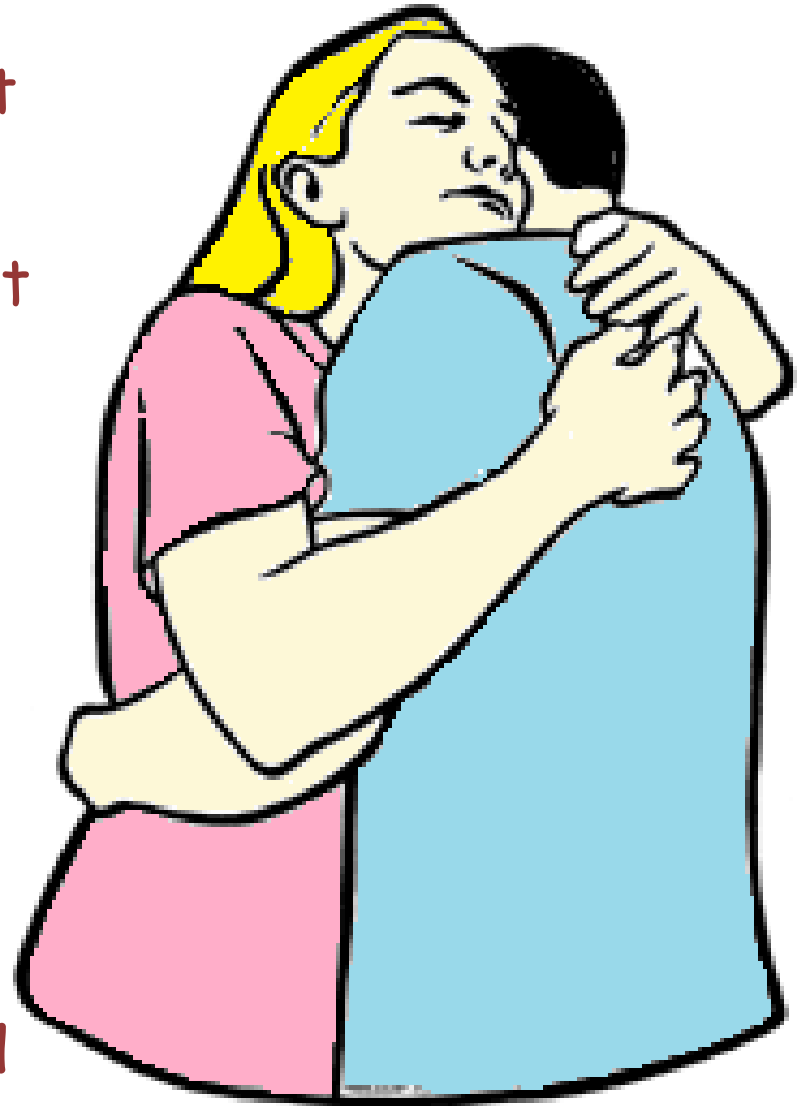
- ❑ Daniel refuses to obey a law (which was instigated by his enemies) that prohibits him from praying to God. As a result he is thrown into the lion's den.

- ❑ God shuts the mouths of the lions and like Haman, Daniel's enemies become victims of their own plot, when the king decides they should suffer the fate they intended for him.



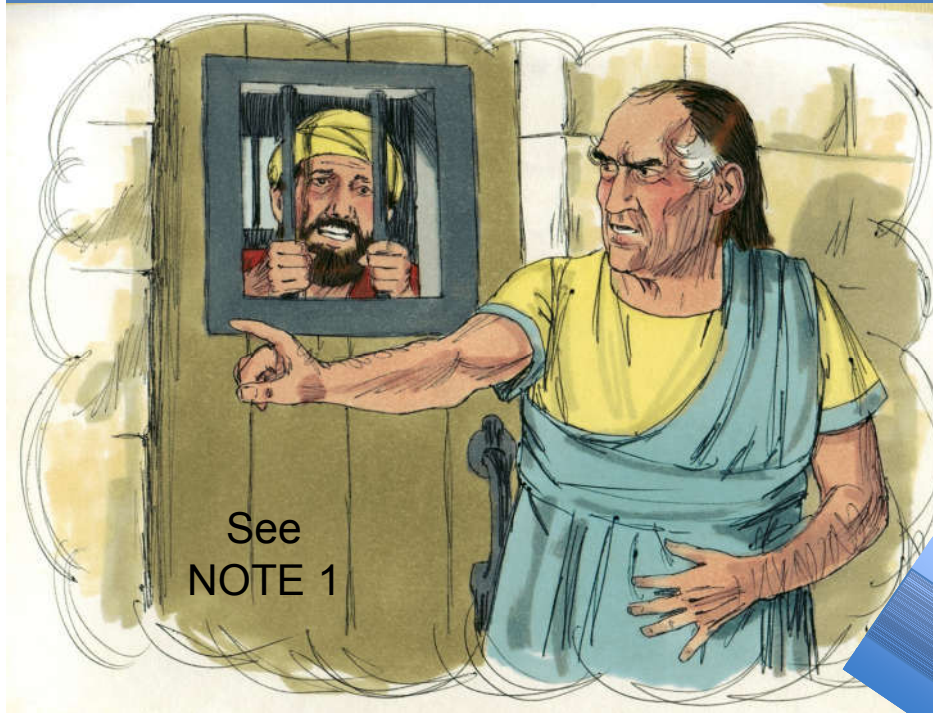
# REAP WHAT YOU SOW

- ❑ In the context of forgiveness and judging others, Jesus taught us that you reap what you sow:
  - “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” (Luke 6:37-38)





# REAP WHAT YOU SOW



- ❑ Jesus tells of a parable of a servant who refuses to forgive a fellow servant his small debt and has him imprisoned - this after his own master has released him from a far greater debt.

- ❑ When the master learns of this he angrily revokes his former cancellation of the servant's debt and has the unmerciful man thrown into prison.





# REAP WHAT YOU SOW

- ❑ Reaping what you sow also applies in the positive sense.
  - 2 Cor 9:5-13 ...Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. Remember this: **Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.** Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And **God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.** As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." →

# REAP WHAT YOU SOW

← Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

# REAP WHAT YOU SOW

- ❑ Many only quote the latter part of this passage - they remember the promise, but not the precondition.
- Phil 4:15-19 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, **you sent me aid again and again when I was in need...** I have received full payment and even more; **I am amply supplied**, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And **my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.**

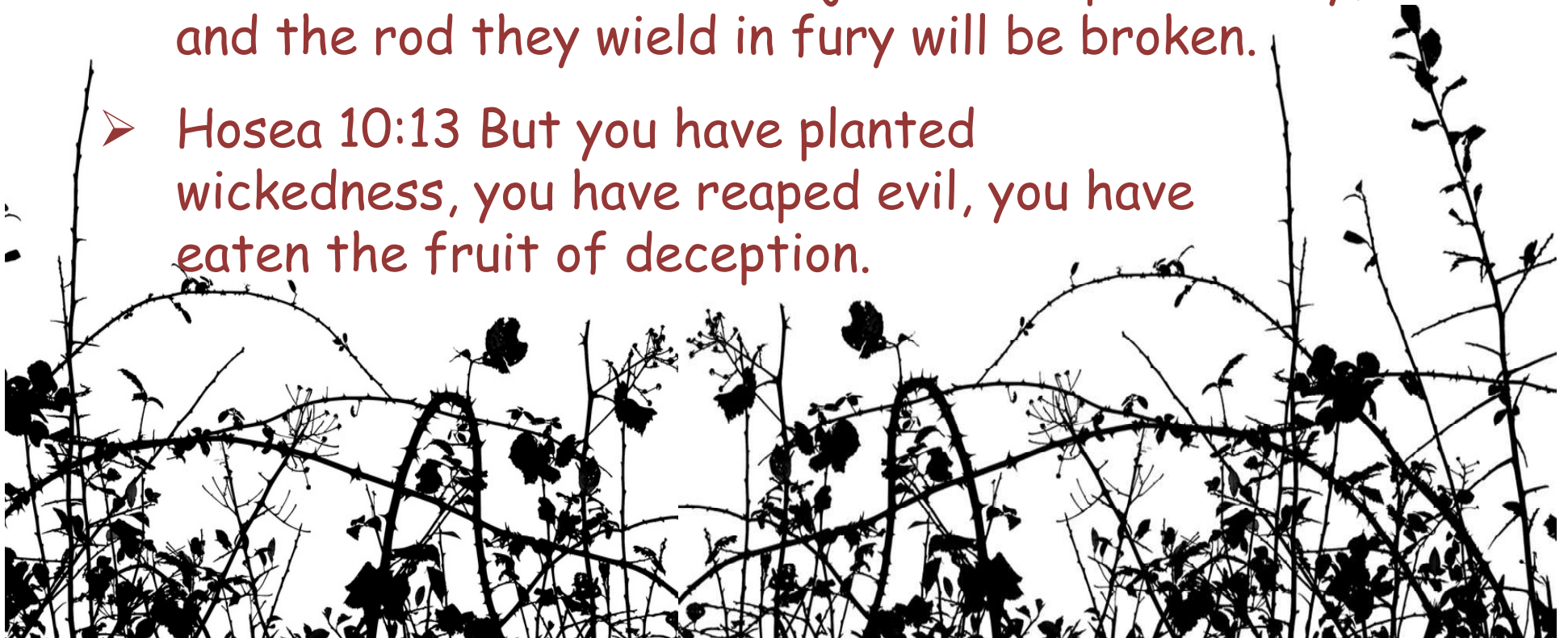


# REAP WHAT YOU SOW

- ❑ In our covenant relationship with God - we reap what we sow.
- ❑ E.g. The Israelites sowed rebellion towards God and reaped his judgment.
  - Hos 8:1-7 "Put the trumpet to your lips! An eagle is over the house of the LORD because the people have broken my covenant... Israel cries out to me, 'O our God, we acknowledge you!' But Israel has rejected what is good; an enemy will pursue him... With their silver and gold they make idols for themselves to their own destruction... How long will they be incapable of purity? ... **They sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.** The stalk has no head; it will produce no flour. Were it to yield grain, foreigners would swallow it up."

# REAP WHAT YOU SOW

- Job 4:8 As I have observed, those who plough evil and those who sow trouble reap it.
- Prov 1:31 they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.
- Prov 22:8 Whoever sows injustice reaps calamity, and the rod they wield in fury will be broken.
- Hosea 10:13 But you have planted wickedness, you have reaped evil, you have eaten the fruit of deception.



# Self-seeking



**ME**



# SELF-SEEKING

- ❑ Haman is a type of the fleshly nature and by extension, the natural fleshly orientated man. For such a person, everything revolves around the here and now and there is no wisdom seen in living for the life to come.<sup>1</sup>
- ❑ DEFINITION OF SELF-SEEKING:
  - having concern for one's own welfare and interests before those of others.
  - synonyms: self-interested, self-serving, self-obsessed, self-absorbed

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.jesusplusnothing.com/studies/online/Esther6.htm>

# SELF-SEEKING

- ❑ Julian Huxley was committed to an evolutionary humanism. He believed:
  - “Man’s most sacred duty and at the same time his most glorious opportunity, is to promote the maximum fulfilment of the evolutionary process on this earth; and this includes the **fullest realization of his own inherent possibilities.**”<sup>1</sup>
  - Sadly some people present that same message as “the gospel” today.



<sup>1</sup> J. Huxley, Religion without Revelation, p. 194.

# SELF-CENTRED

- ❑ Two friends meeting in a restaurant each ordered a steak. After a while the waiter returned with two pieces of steak, a large and a small one, on the same plate. One of the men proceeded to serve his friend, putting the small piece on a plate and handing it across the table.  
"Well, you certainly have got nerve!" exclaimed his friend.  
"What's the matter?" asked the other.  
He answered. "You've given me the little piece of steak and kept the big one for yourself."  
"How would you have done it?"  
the man asked.  
His friend answered, "If I were serving, I would have given you the big piece."  
"Well," replied the man, "Don't worry. I've already got it, haven't I?"





# SELF-CENTRED

- ❑ Did you notice how Haman's life and conversation revolve around himself?
- When he is speaking to his friends and family the conversation is always focussed around how well or how bad he is doing.
- He is consumed by Mordecai because he doesn't appear to give him the attention or respect that is due to him.
- He even makes decisions that will impact an empire or entire people groups, based on what will benefit him personally, or to satisfy his own private desire for vengeance.



# SELF-CENTRED

## ❑ How To Be Miserable

- Think about yourself. Talk about yourself.
- Use "I" as often as possible.
- Listen greedily to what people say about you.
- Always bring the conversation back to yourself and your interests.
- Demand agreement with your own views on everything.

- ❑ British actor Michael Wilding was once asked if actors had any traits which set them apart from other human beings. "Without a doubt," he replied. "You can pick out actors by the glazed look that comes into their eyes when the conversation wanders away from themselves."

# SELF-CENTRED

## ❑ How To Be Miserable

- Be suspicious. Trust nobody but yourself. Be jealous and envious.
- Be sensitive to slights. Never forgive a criticism.
- Expect to be appreciated.
- Insist on consideration and respect.
- Sulk if people are not grateful to you for favours shown them.
- Never forget a service you have rendered.
- Shirk your duties if you can. Do as little as possible for others.





# SELF-SEEKING

➤ 1 Cor 13:4-5 Love ... is not self-seeking...

- ❑ A person who demands his own way, who tramples on others' rights for the sake of upholding his own, or who insists on having his due is not showing love. Love is considerate of others, always. The one who loves is willing to forgo recognition and lay down his rights for the sake of the loved one. Jesus showed love in this way: He "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). No self-seeking there.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gotquestions.org/love-is-not-self-seeking.html>

# SELF-SEEKING

- ❑ Phil 2:3-7 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.



# APPLICATION

- ❑ **Application:** Are you like Haman, so caught up in self and material gain that you do not realise that your day of ruin is so close?
- ❑ Many people are self-seeking and spend their lives chasing money, possessions and fame, only to find that being consumed by those things leads to their downfall!
  - Rom 2:8 But for those who are **self-seeking** and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be **wrath and anger**.
  - Gal 5:19-21 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious... **selfish ambition** ... and the like. I warn you... that those who live like this **will not inherit the kingdom of God**.
  - God sends no one away empty except those who are full of themselves. - D. L. Moody.



# APPLICATION

- ❑ Returning to the Biblical concept that you reap what you sow, we see that Haman (the flesh) reaped what he sowed. The very execution he planned for his enemy - was the instrument of his own death.

**Gal 6:7-8 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.**

Audio (WMA) and text (PDF) ministry

FREE MINISTRY DOWNLOADS



**AUTHOR: Gavin Paynter**

- ❑ For more ministry downloads visit:  
<http://www.agfbenoni.co.za/ministry-archives.aspx>
- ❑ For more ministry downloads by Gavin Paynter visit:  
<http://www.agfbenoni.co.za/ministry-archives.aspx?speaker=Gavin%20Paynter>

# COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

- ❑ Unless otherwise stated, Scripture quotations are taken from the ESV:
  - Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
- ❑ Scripture quotations taken from the NIV:
  - THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®  
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™  
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
- ❑ Scripture quotations taken from the NASB:
  - New American Standard Bible®,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977,  
1995 by The Lockman Foundation  
Used by permission. (<http://www.Lockman.org>)



# COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

## ❑ ILLUSTRATIONS

- NOTE 1: Biblical illustrations by Jim Padgett, courtesy of <http://sweetpublishing.com>
- NOTE 2: Illustration from <http://www.freebibleimages.org>