



Esther 5 - The Tale of two banquets

In the book of Esther the author mentions several feasts and meals, and uses them to mark some of the points of the narrative.

1. Skim through Esther and try to find each time there is a banquet, or when characters gather to eat and drink. Can you see any patterns?

In chapter 5 we see the first banquet that Esther prepares, and then Haman gathers his friends in another meeting.

2. How do verses 1-8 show Esther's wisdom in the way she approaches the king?
3. How do verses 9-14 contrast Haman's behaviour and attitude with Esther's?
4. How do these two accounts point us towards Jesus? What New Testament passages come to mind as you think about the way Jesus intercedes for his people?

Esther has obviously thought very carefully about how to present her case to the king (consider her clothing in verse 1, or her roundabout approach to making her request). This helps to make sure that the king listens to her, rather than rejecting her request out of hand.

5. When we consider evangelism, and how to present the gospel in our culture:
 - a. What would it look like to be "dressed appropriately" like in verse 1? How do we present ourselves to fit in (or stand out) in different contexts?
 - b. Are there ways we can lead people towards the gospel gently (as Esther leads the king)?