

# Esther



## Providence

Divine protection, a reversal of fortune and God planting 'Myrtle in the dessert'

# Esther's Jewish Name? Hadassah



**Meaning Myrtle**



Ahasuarus (aka Xerxes)

*Ch 1*

The King threw his party



The Queen threw her party





In the citadel of Susa

Xerxes land was vast. He ruled  
from Ethiopia to India



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/475059460684503109/?lp=true>

Communication was challenging  
but their 'letter' delivery system  
inspired the motto for  
the US 'Pony Express'



**It is said that as many days as there are in the whole journey, so many are the men and horses that stand along the road, each horse and man at the interval of a day's journey; and these are stayed neither by snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness from accomplishing their appointed course with all speed.**

from Herodotus on the ancient Persian delivery system  
taken from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/  
United\\_States\\_Postal\\_Service\\_creed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Postal_Service_creed)



The King?  
and after the party a battle with Greece  
that inspired the movie 'The 300'  
Yes, that Xerxes.





175

**God** 0 ?

The King will be mentioned at least 175 times  
in the book

God will be mentioned 0 times

Yet with the eyes of faith,  
God is seen to ultimately prevail,  
working on every page,  
unseen.

There will be three best supporting (inanimate) minor characters in the book



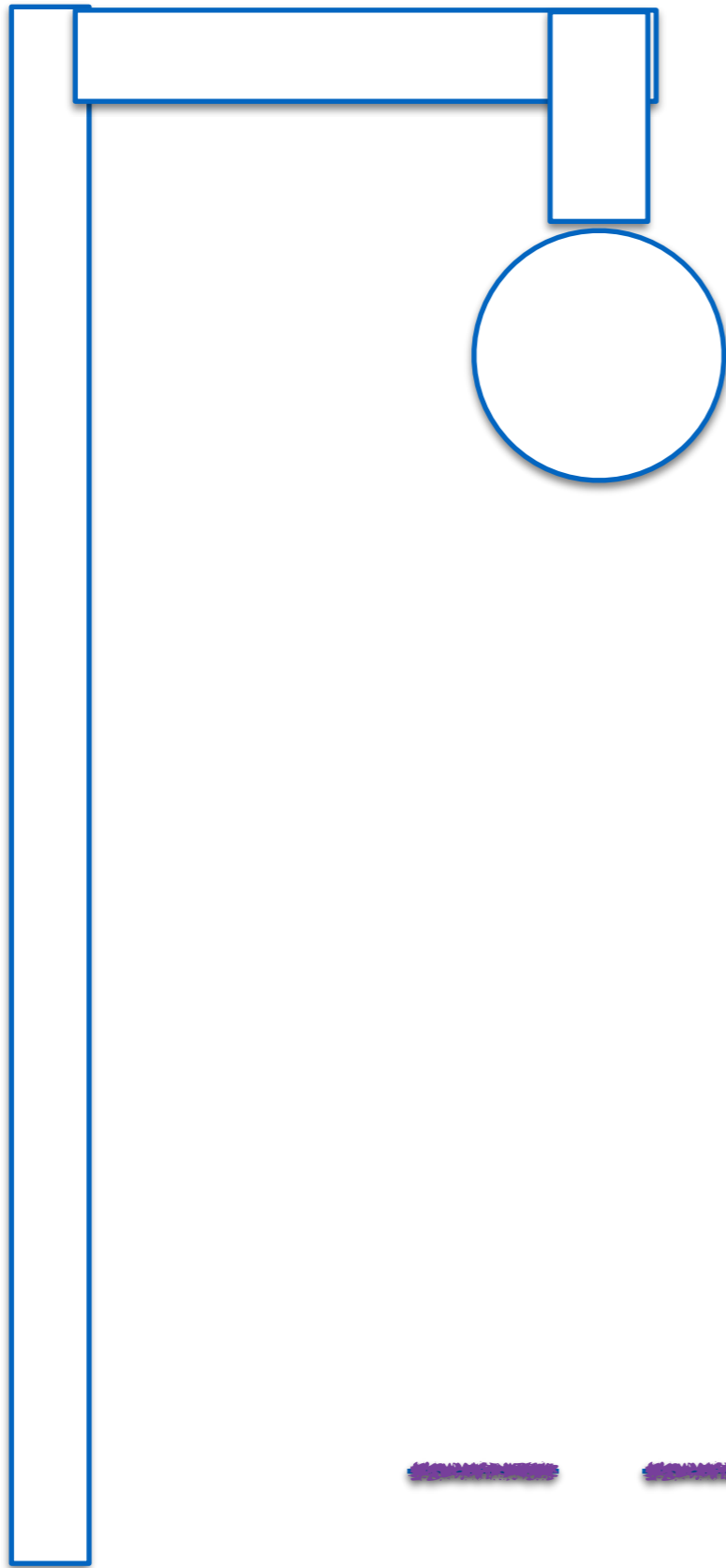
Wine



Letters



Gallows



Xerxes has an X  
but there is no X  
in the puzzle  
that unravels

A long celebration ended with a 7 day feast where the King sent 7 Eunuchs to fetch the Queen to put her on display for the guests



and she refused  
in publicly and in front of her woman guests

Fearing a 'feminist' uprising  
the King's advisers advised to remove the Queen  
and make a law that what the husband says goes!



Vashti was queen no longer

## Ch 2



The king remembered Vashti and was sad  
but the law (of the Medes and Persians)  
cannot be reversed not even by Him



So the young men suggested a beauty contest  
to select a queen  
(out of the approximately 25 million women in the realm)





He liked the idea



And a young Jewish orphan girl won.

**Young Haddasah had an older cousin named**  
**Mordecai**  
**who looked out for her**



Mordecai's name is from Marduk  
Esther's Persian name from Ishtar  
(the Jews had to some extent been assimilated)  
No quoting of scripture or overt mention of God

Mordecai can't come in the palace but stays at the gate



Archeologists even found 'the gate'

The celebration so great that  
the King even **cut taxes**  
when he married Esther



*Ch* 3

and shortly after the King promoted  
an ambitious man named Haman



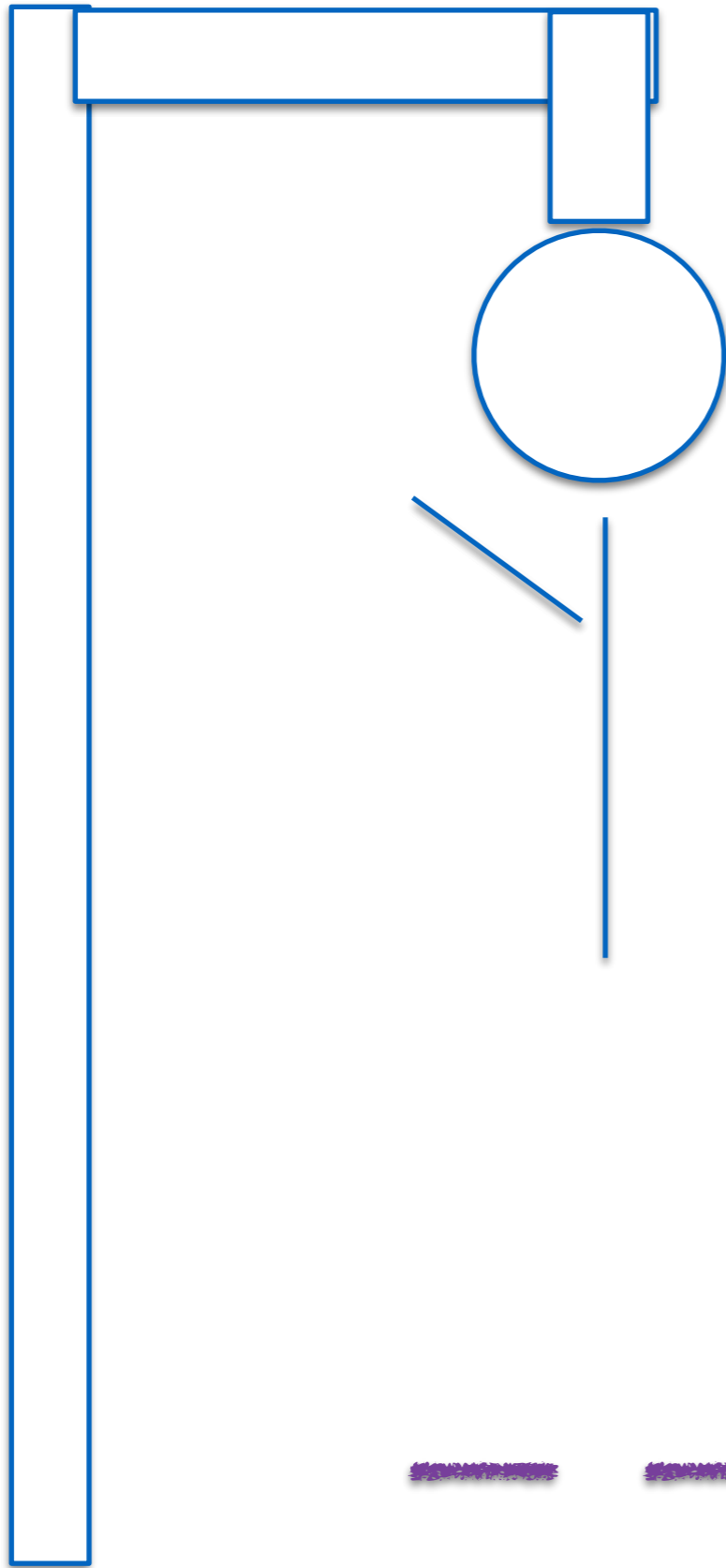
Haman was extremely pleased with his success



Haman was extremely displeased that Mordecai would not bow to him







Haman has a plot with 'a Lot'  
but there is no P  
in the puzzle  
that unravels  
or an L for 'Lot'





A Persian lot

Haman is repeatedly called an Agarite  
Mordecai and Esther descended from the tribe of Benjamin  
and related to Saul, being Kishites

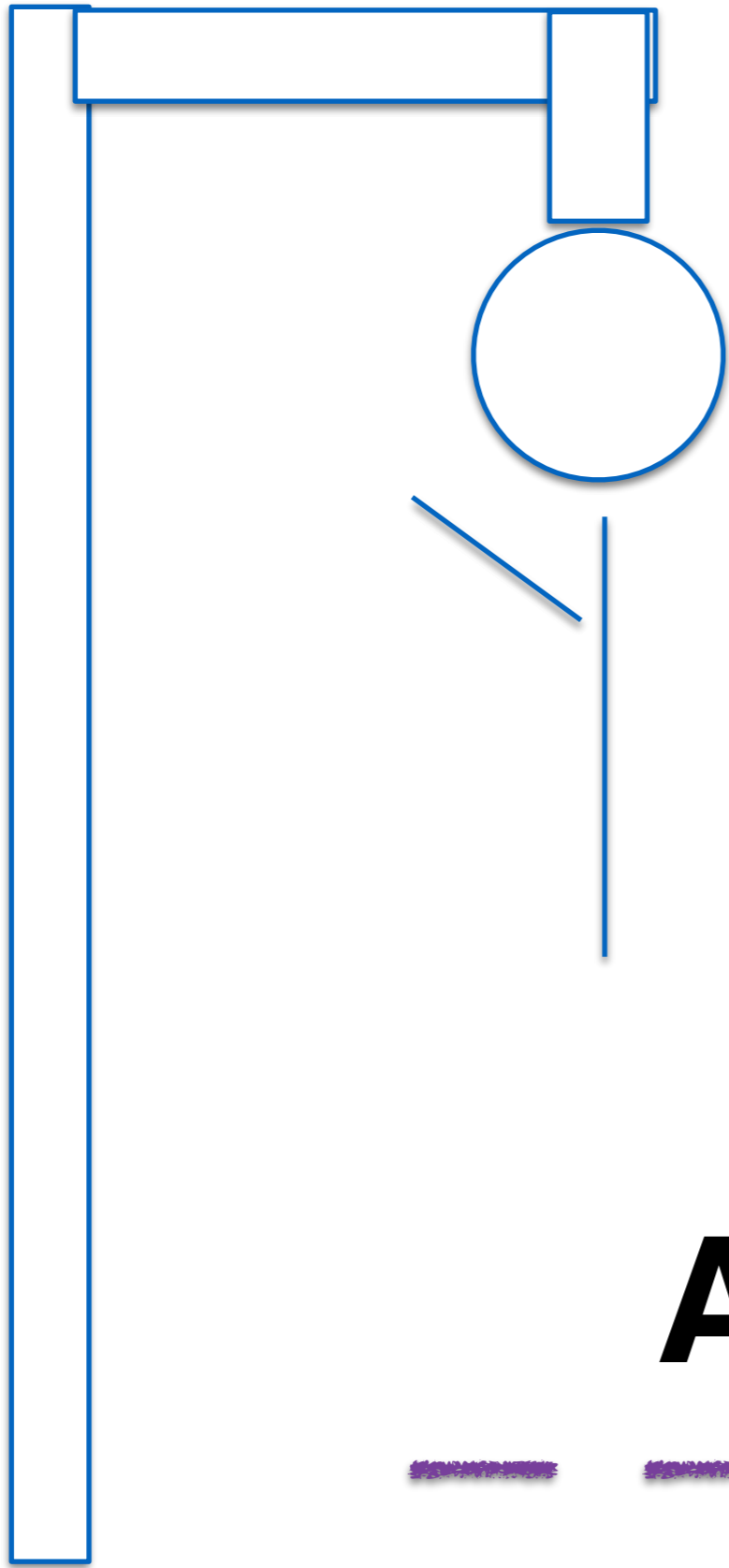


Saul killed most of the Agarites  
Haman apparently harboring large past and present grudges

*Ch 4*

# **Esther**

**agrees to help the Jews**



There is an 'A' for agrees

**A**

**A**

*Ch 5*

# Esther risks her life

## **‘for such a time as this’**

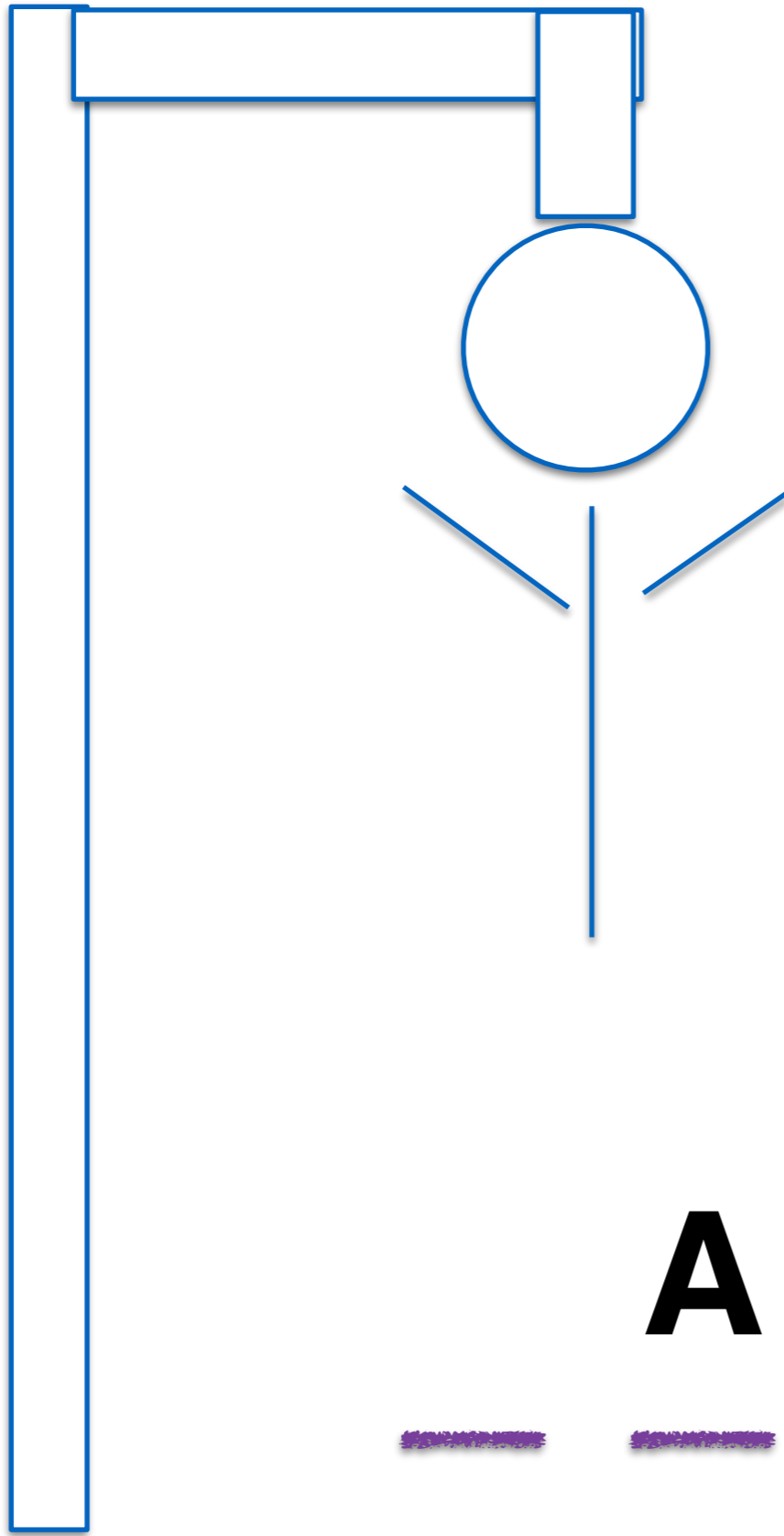
and puts herself under the curse of the law  
for her people



Esther has problems:

A LEGAL PROBLEM - anyone coming into the presence of the King dies  
( unless he ‘extends his scepter’)

A PERSONAL PROBLEM - the King hasn't asked for her for 30 days  
( is he displeased with her)



There is no 'E' for Esther

**A**

**A**

# Esther throws a banquet







The king comes, but perhaps the time doesn't seem right... and so she asks for the King and Haman to come back tomorrow with more promises from the King to grant her desires

*Ch 6* **The King who can't sleep**  
**What did she want?**  
**Why did she come?**

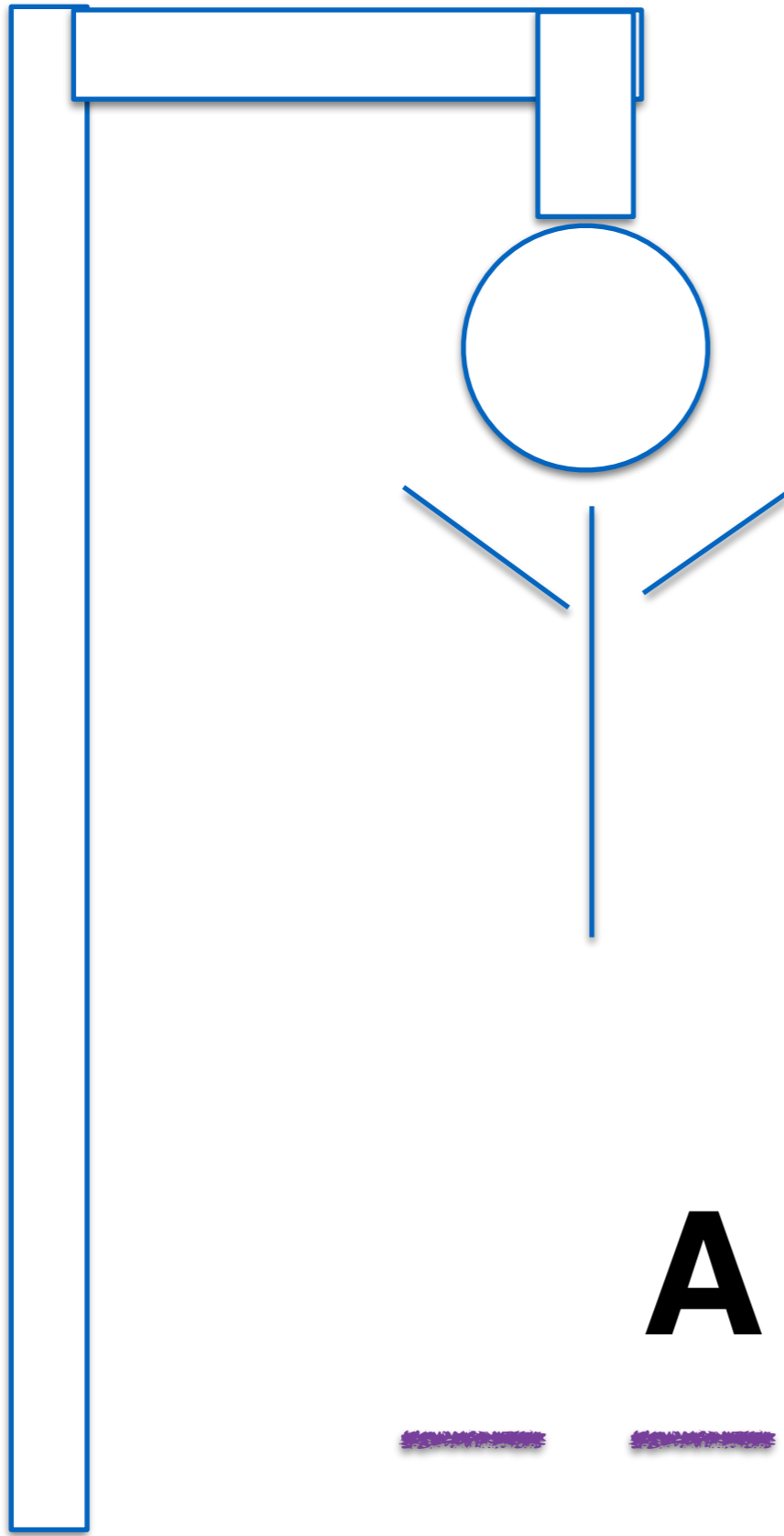


Can't sleep and all night has the 'book of the Chronicles of the Meads and Persons' read to him.  
(in hopes of falling asleep?)

# The King makes a discovery



Mordecai foiled a plot against the King's life  
and was never rewarded

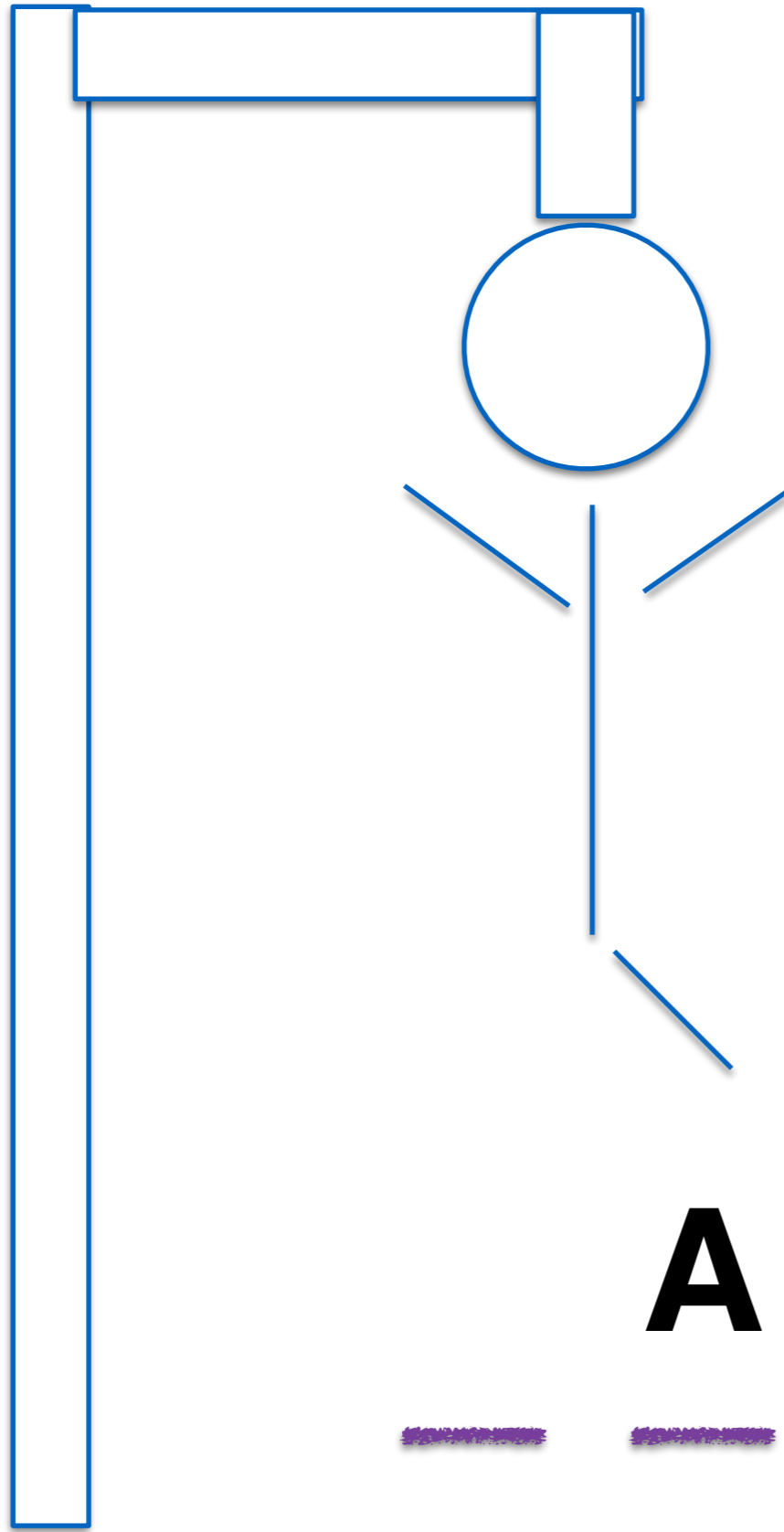


There is an 'M' for Mordecai

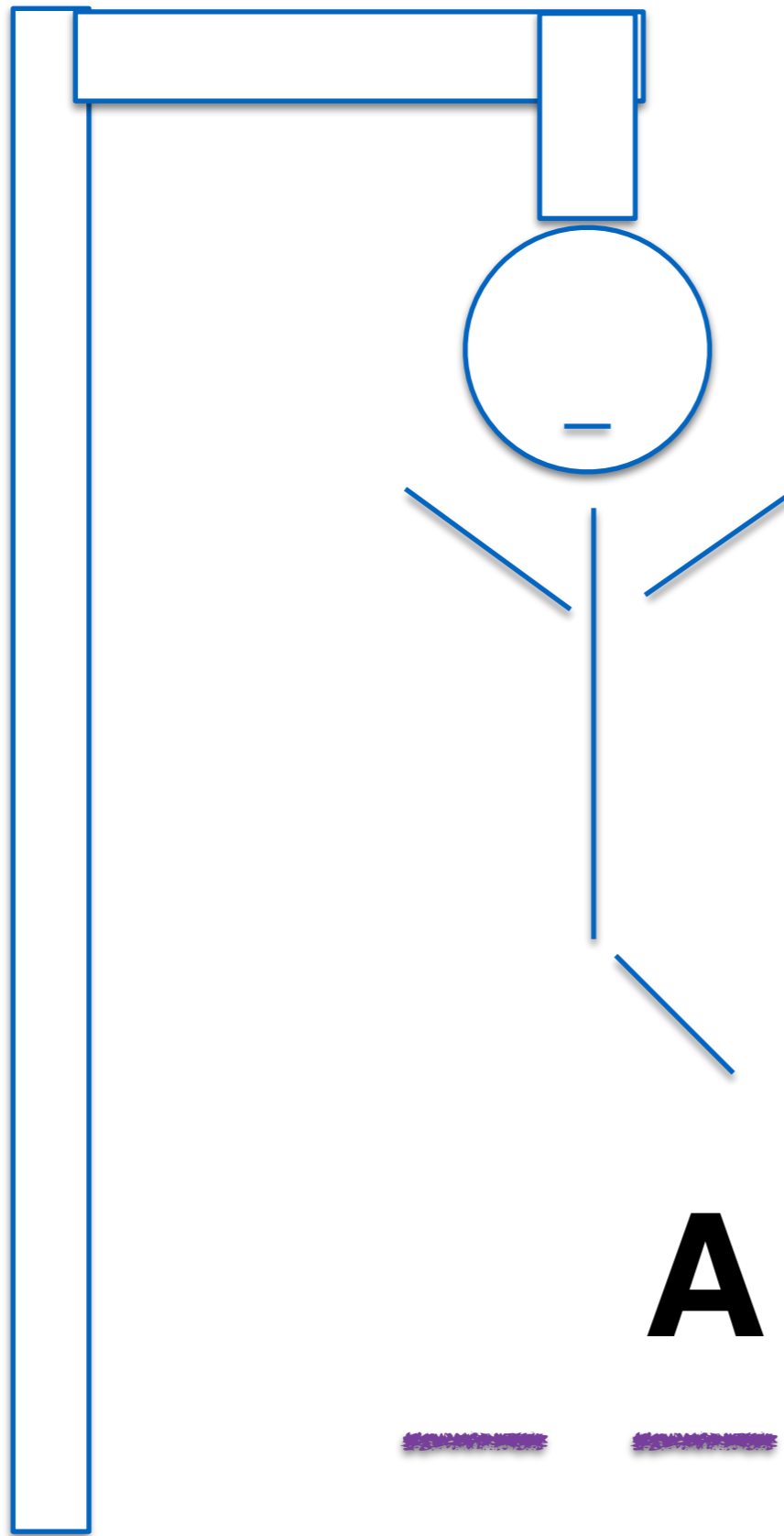
**A**

**M**

**A**



Was she to scared?  
There is no S  
for scared



On the other hand  
she got the king to  
publicly and privately  
say he would grant her request  
but no R for request  
(or revoking request)

**A**

**M**

**A**



# Ch 7



Too much party? Too many questions?  
God at work. The King can't sleep

*Ch 7*

Hearing the story of the plot by those who 'guarded the threshold' he hears a noise (and wonders who is at the threshold - the king wrapped up in the account?)



Oh ! Haman! Haman eager to ask permission to hang Mordecai came early in the morn and if granted the laws of the Meads and Persians cannot be revoked, not even by the King. Timing is everything!



Ch 7

And the tables turn  
and turn quickly



How should I reward the man who the King would like to honor? Haman? what do you think?

*Ch 7* (must be talking about me, Haman thinks)  
Let him ride your horse  
Let him wear your robe  
Let men shout before him 'thus will the man the King  
desires to honor be rewarded



Good idea, Haman. His name is Mordecai.  
**Do it!** Exactly as you said and leave not a thing out



Humiliated, he approaches Mordecai and lets him know the King's desires and leads him through town

*Ch 7*

Haman covers his face  
goes home



Ch 7

# banquet deux



The King has already lost a night of sleep  
and is eager to know what Esther's desire is  
and she tells him



**Spare my life!**



**And the life of my people!**

*Ch 7*

Shocked! Someone  
would dare harm the queen!  
but clueless as to his part in it



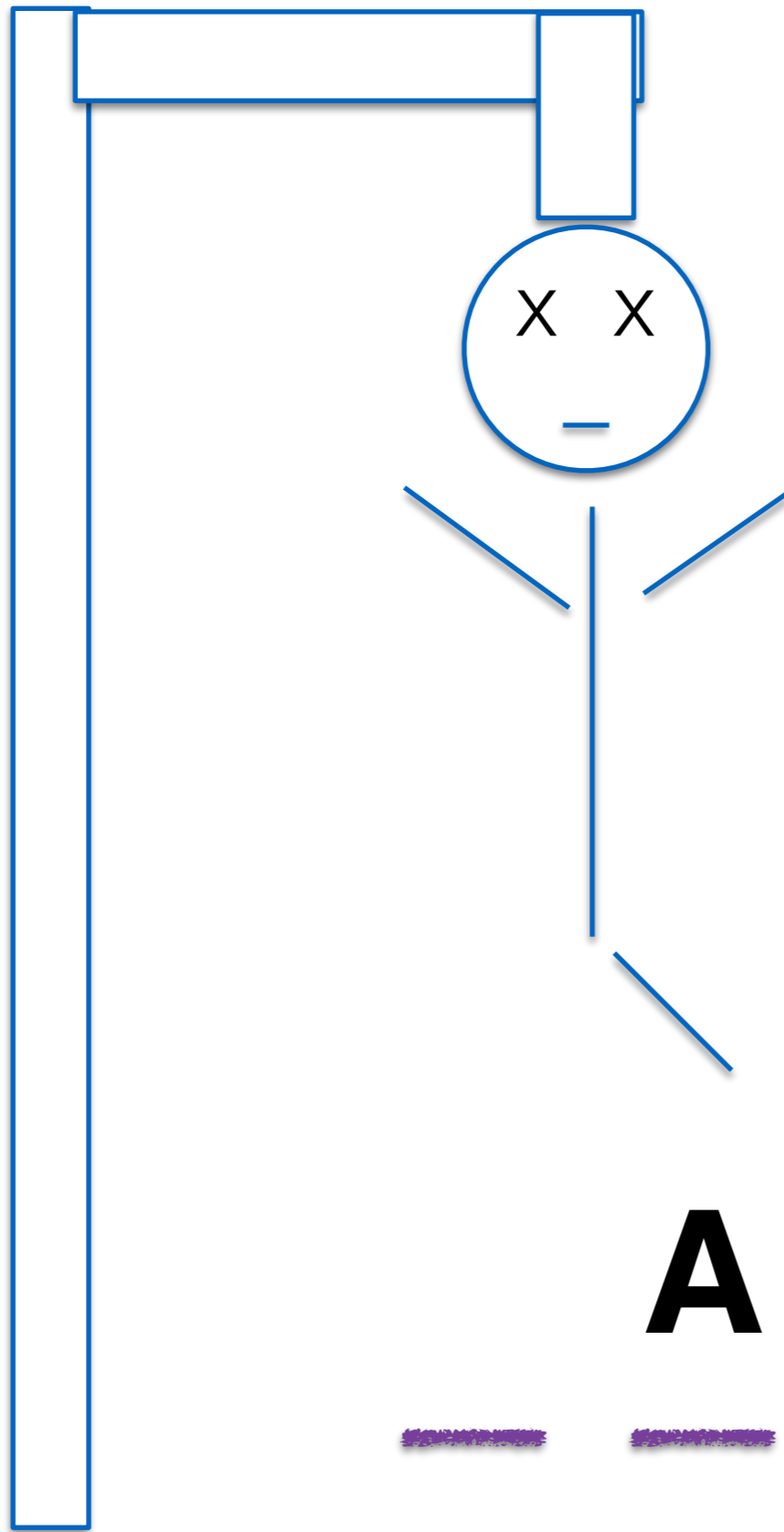
He asks, “Who would do such a thing?”



Now with 'no holds barred'



**A wicked Haman!**

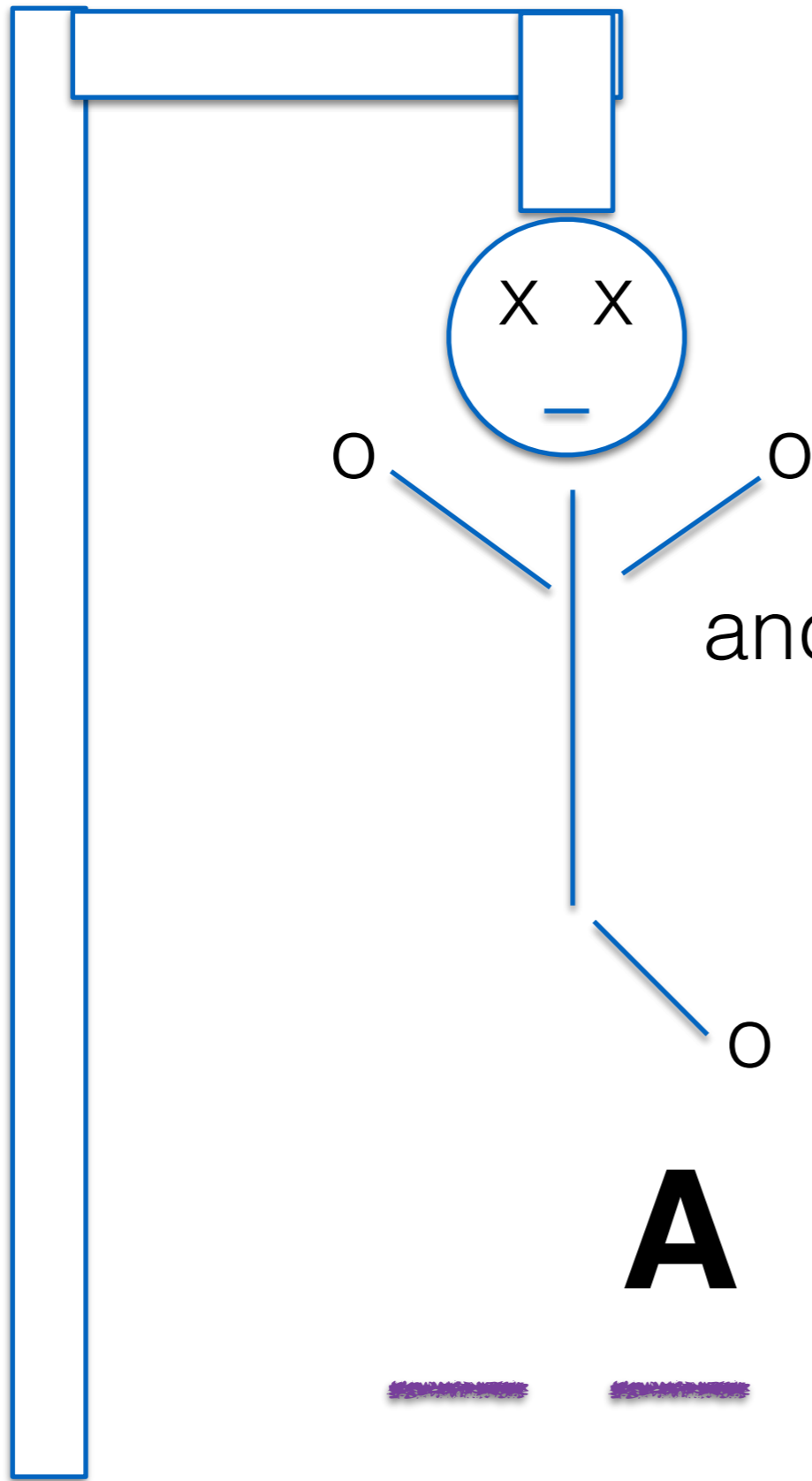


The king leaves to go  
to the Garden  
to think  
There is no G

**A**

**M**

**A**

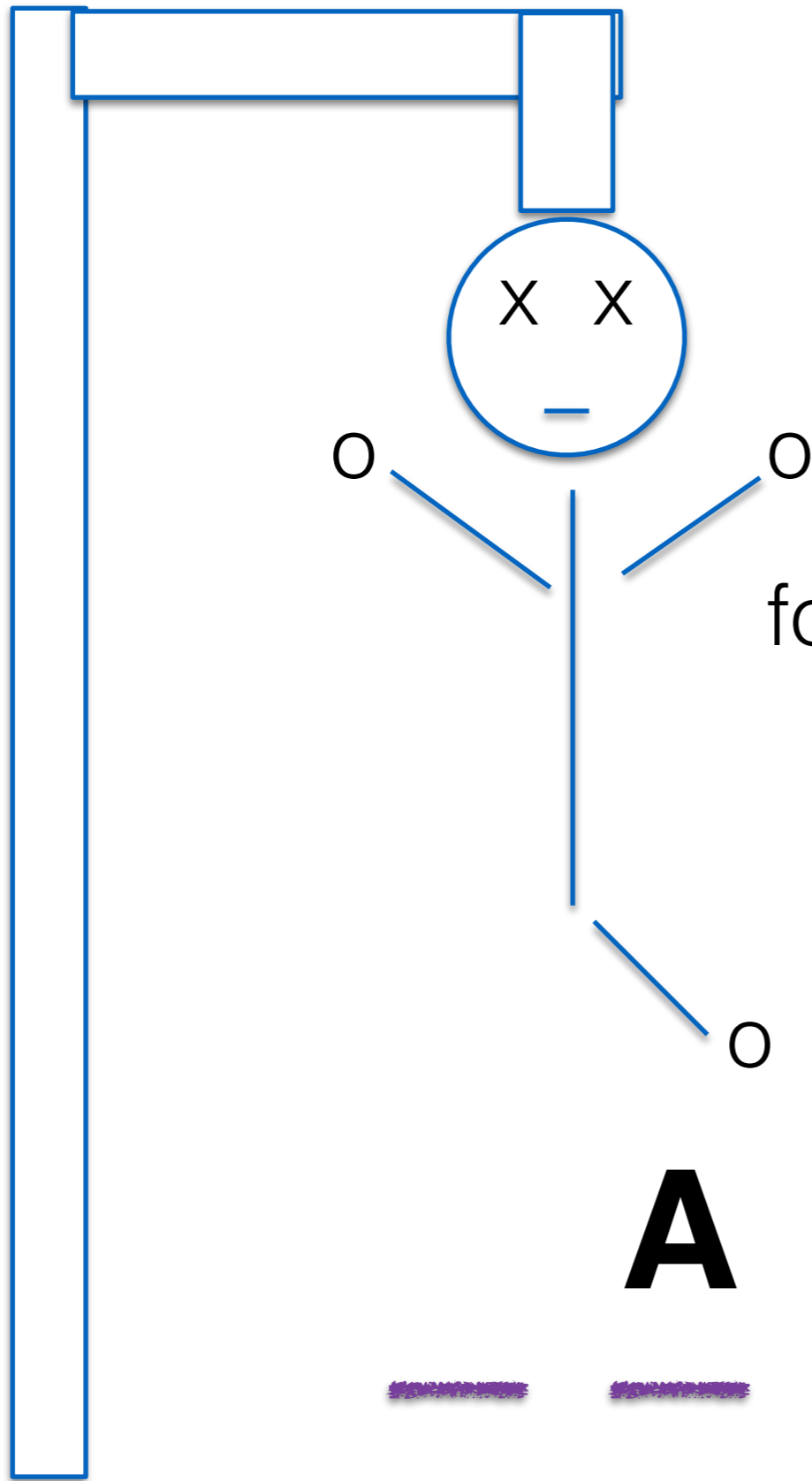


Haman falls before Esther  
and pleads for his life  
unfortunately  
the King comes back  
and mistakenly concludes Haman  
is assaulting the queen  
in her home!!!!

**A**

**M A**



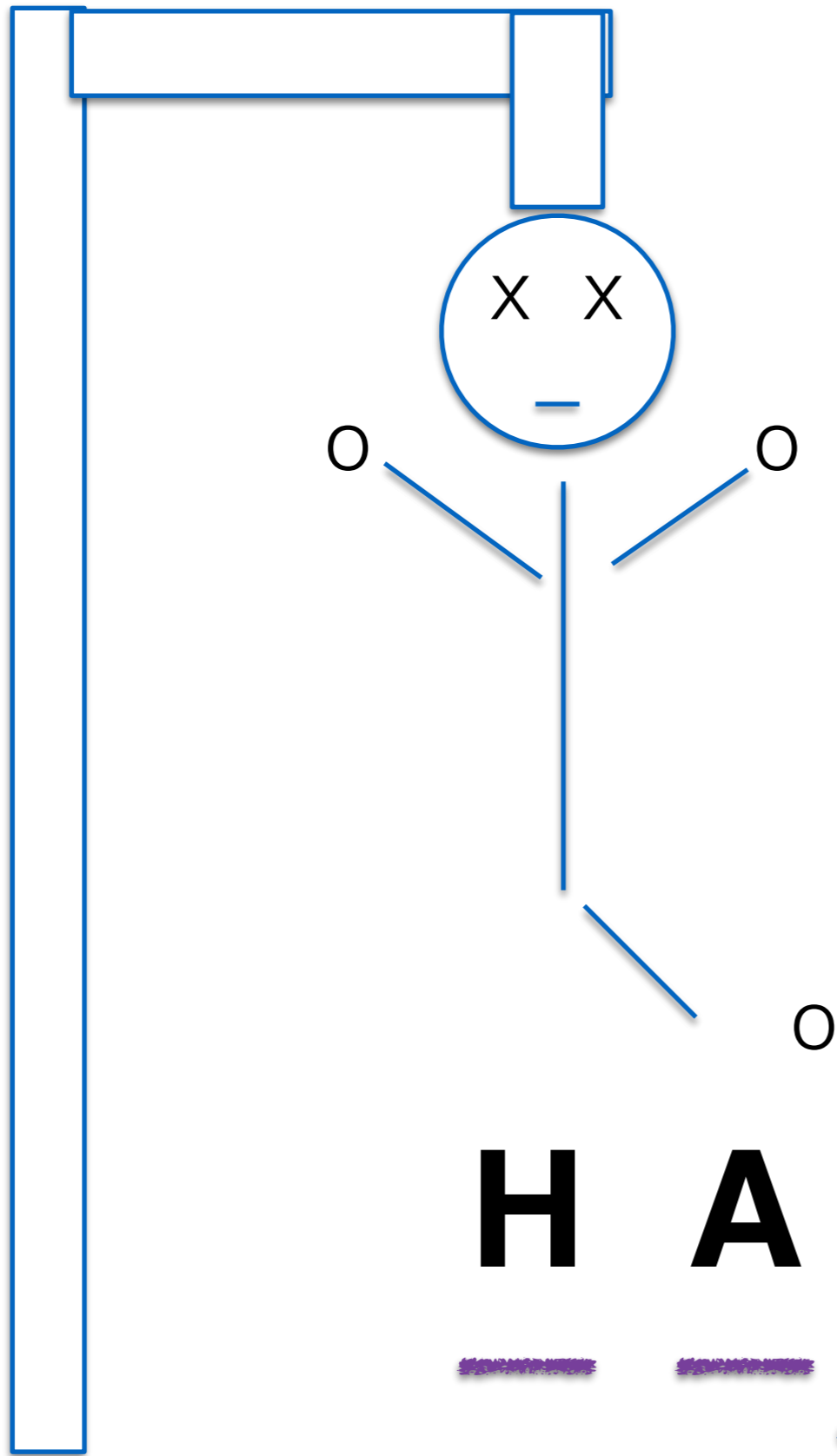


The guards tell the king that Haman built a gallows for Mordecai (who saved the King) and then they put a cover Haman's head (to execute him) not even being ordered

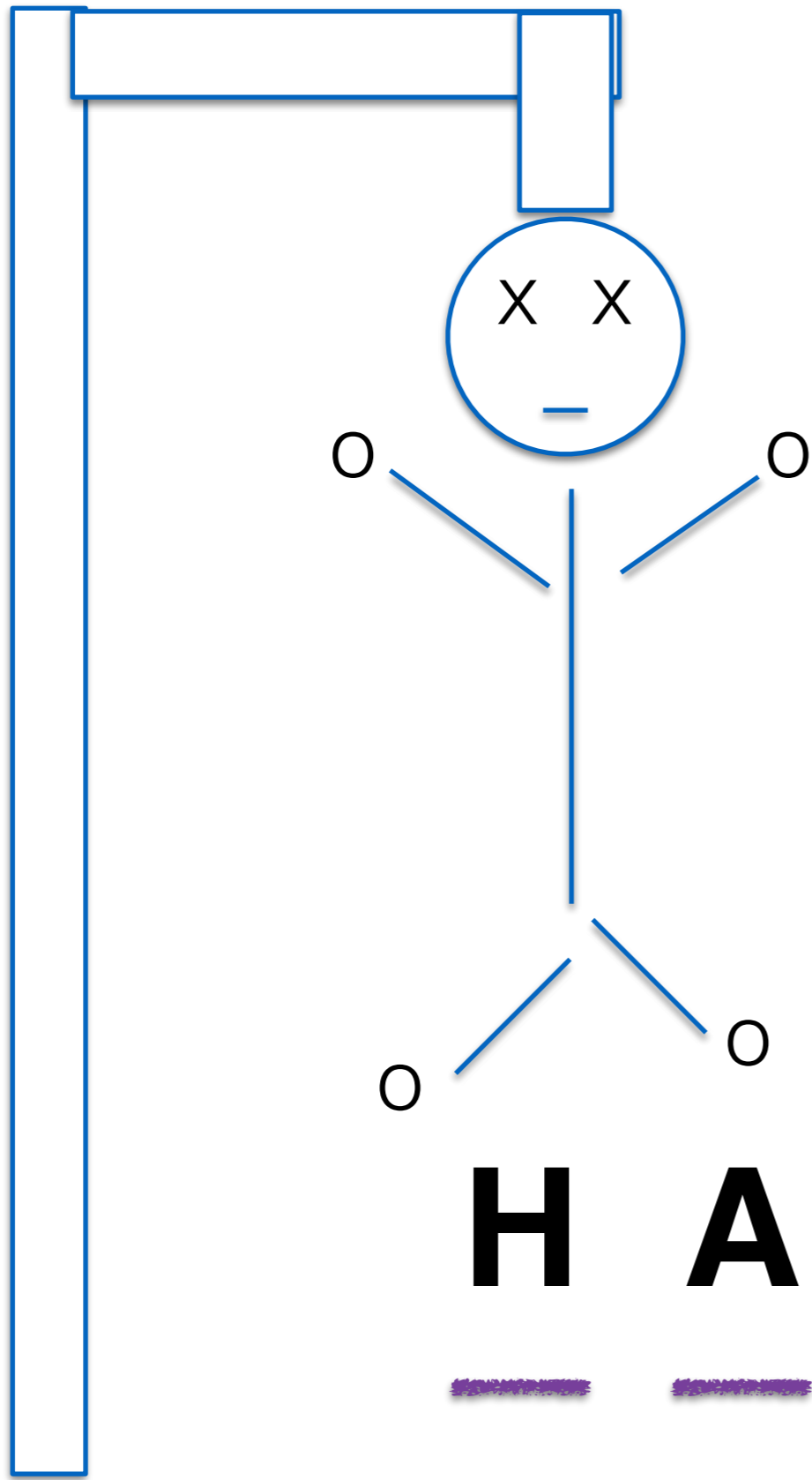
**A**

**M**

**A**



'Not being asked' has an N  
'Heap of trouble' has an H



And the providence  
of God is  
seen more clearly

**H A**

**M A N**

**n g**

*Ch 8*

# Esther saves the Jews



Once more Esther goes before the King and asks that something be done to undue damage because of 'The Letters of Haman'



She diplomatically doesn't say to reverse an unreversable law (that the King signed)





Give **a day** for Jews to defend themselves  
have the right to bear arms and assemble

Unsurprisingly next day .... yet another request by Esther



Give **another** day for Jews to defend themselves  
have right to bear arms and assemble

And 75 thousand enemies in Susa alone die  
but nothing plundered

(God forbid plundering the Amalakites.  
Saul disobeyed but the Jews  
of Esther's day obeyed)

*Ch 9*

# **self defense and salvation**



**but no plundering**

The lot was turned in favor of the Jews



But, there are 'a lot' of reversals

## Reversals in the book



At the start, a king invites a queen to a banquet  
and she refuses

At the end, a queen invites a king to a banquet  
and she goes (twice)

## Reversals in the book



At the start, a king conquers 'the 300' Greeks

But the king's heart is conquered by a Jewish orphan girl

## Reversals in the book



At the start, Haman is furious a Jew will not bow to him

At the end, Haman falls before a Jewish woman



# Reversals in the book



Haman's mood reverses many times

## Reversals in the book



At the start, Esther hid her Jewish identity and was not immediately ready to help other Jews.

At the end, Haman and Esther acted more as people of faith seeing God working

## Reversals in the book



There is no quoting of scripture or overt prayer or worship  
The Jews remaining did not go back to Israel with  
Ezra or Nehemiah

Under crisis there was fasting, but it seems that God worked  
and used circumstances despite unfaithfulness

## Reversals in the book



At the start, a lot is cast for the doom of the Jews

At the end, God causes the lot to result in  
the betterment of the Jews

## Reversals in the book



Esther put herself under 'the curse of the law' going before the King in order to save her people

She points forward to a greater Mordecai and Esther, who put himself under the curse of the law (on the cross) to save those who would believe

And so there is a commemoration



The feast of 'Purim'  
aka 'the die'

**The book points to several things:**

**The providence of God**

**The mercy of God**

**The struggle between the seed of the serpent  
and the seed of the woman**

**Points to Christ, the greater Mordecai**

**In the Jewish Bible, in many traditions Esther follows lamentations. There is this story of victory following a deep story of sorrow.**



## *Ch 10*

The King's power and rule was recounted  
beginning with his power to **tax**  
(as you recall at the wedding of Esther  
he lowered taxes)

Mordecai's accomplishments were recounted  
and highlighted that  
**he worked for the welfare of his people**

I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia,  
the myrtle, and the olive. I will set in the desert  
the cypress, the plane and the pine together,  
Isaiah 41:9 on God putting Myrtle in the dessert



**fin'**