

Apr 19, 2020



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

**Lesson Leaders:**

James Haymon

**Class Leaders:**

Inreach: Pat Hester

Deacon: C M Hester

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

The scales of Divine justice always balance— if not here, then hereafter

**POEM FOR THE WEEK:**

The call for justice must be strong To show what's right, to thwart what's wrong, But let's reject the smallest part Of vengeance harbored in the heart. —D. De Haan

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

*Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord*

**(Rom 12:19 NKJV)**

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Oct 25, 2011)*

**Series: Justice and the Prophets**

**UNIT: God Promises a Just Kingdom**

**NEXT WEEK**

**A Justice-Loving God (Isaiah 61:8-11; 62:2-4)**

## An Executed Scoundrel Esther 7:1-10

**Lesson Background and Introduction**

Though the book of Esther does not mention God by name anywhere, its many twists and turns strongly hint at God's providential hand with His covenant people. From Esther's selection as queen, to Haman's execution, to the Jews' deliverance, the eyes of faith clearly see these events as much more than luck or happenstance. Rather, God was at work behind the scenes. We therefore should see God as the main character in the account. The actions of its human characters are of mixed quality. Ahasuerus consistently acted under the influence of alcohol and with a hot temper. Haman always acted in self-interest and pride. Esther and Mordecai seem not to have resisted Esther's participation in a contest that resulted in marriage to a pagan king (contrast Ezra 10). But God worked His will through all parties nonetheless. Like Esther and her relative Mordecai, we are God's imperfect servants in rectifying the wrongs in the world. But God can and does work through us nonetheless. There are two extremes to avoid: (1) thinking that confronting evil is all up to us and (2) thinking that confronting evil is all up to God. The proper path to take in any given situation will depend on prayer, Bible study, and openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We must always consider the possibility that God has placed us in a circumstance "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). There is no guarantee that every incident in the lives of God's people will have a tidy ending, as the book of Esther does. Evil sometimes enjoys temporary victories. The path to triumph over evil is often unclear, recognized only in twenty-twenty hindsight. But with Christ working in us and through us, we can live with the assurance that "all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28).

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

**A Horrible Plan** - The Book of Esther lays out a historical account of a plot to commit genocide against all Jews living in the Persian Empire. The plan was stopped when a young Jewish woman named Esther became queen and was given the opportunity to boldly address this horrible plan. King Ahasuerus [ah-haz-you-ee-rus] of Persia, called Xerxes [zurk-seez] by the Greeks, chose Esther to become his new queen and wife. About the same time, Esther's cousin Mordecai, the person who raised her after the death of her parents, refused to bow to one of the king's high officials named Haman. As a result, Haman devised a plan to destroy Mordecai and all other Jews as well.

**The Right Person in Place** - Mordecai strongly encouraged Esther to speak out on behalf of her people saying she had been made queen "for such a time as this" (Esth. 4:14). Esther wisely invited Haman and King Ahasuerus to attend two banquets (5:1-8). At the second banquet, the king urged Esther to tell him the petition she had asked for. The queen then pleaded for her life and her people. She exposed Haman's deadly plot that included her death along with all other Jews in the empire.

**Justice for the Jews** - The enraged king demanded to know who was behind the plan, and when Esther identified Haman, the king ordered Haman's swift execution. Because Esther put her life on the line and spoke out against this injustice, she and her people were saved.

**God's Children Should Take a Stand** - The Holy Spirit reveals to us injustices in the world around us. Sometimes a loud outcry needs to happen so others will see the injustice. Other times a silent defiance in the face of injustices is what God asks of us. Either way, God's children always need to do what they can to stand against unfair treatment in society and not be afraid of the consequences.

*(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **Request Provided (Esther 7:1-4)**

#### *Promise of fulfillment (1-2)*

- Promises that are always "YES" in Jesus (2 Cor 1:20)
- Promises founded on Jesus (Heb 8:3-6)
- Promises made with the Divine power (2 Peter 1:3-4)
- Promises that are being completely satisfied in the present age (Heb 11:13-16)
- Promises of an eternal life (1 John 2:24-25)
- Promises fulfilled because God is faithful (Heb 10:23)
- Promises God will bring justice to His chosen ones (Luke 18:7)

#### *Request for life (3)*

- Life through believing in Jesus (John 3:14-16)
- Life through doing good (Rom 2:7)
- Life through freedom from sin (Rom 6:22-23)
- Life abundant through the coming of Jesus (John 10:10)
- Life that is the result of pleasing the Holy Spirit (Gal 6:8)
- Life to which we are called (1 Tim 6:12)

#### *Release from slavery (4)*

- Freedom from the hostility of slavery (Rom 6:6)
- Freedom from the slavery of the fear of death (Heb 2:14-15)
- Freedom that God sets prisoners free (Ps 146:7-9)
- Freedom in the time of God's favor (Isa 49:8-9)
- Freedom from the chains of slavery (Ps 107:13-15)
- Freedom through the Holy Spirit from slavery of fear (Rom 8:15)

### **Adversary Exposed (Esther 7:5-8)**

#### *Seeking responsible person (5)*

- Seeking by questions of guilt (John 13:21-24)
- Seeking by prayer to God (Josh 7:4-8)
- Seeking by questioning the cause of problems (John 9:2)
- Seeking those who have stumbled (James 2:10)
- Seeking guilty to not share in the guilt (Lev 19:17)

#### *Identification of responsible person (6)*

- Identification through the Bible (Rom 3:20)
- Identification through the precepts of God (Ps 19:8)
- Identification through obedience (Rom 2:13)
- Identification through disobedience (Rom 4:15)
- Identification through spiritual warfare (Rom 8:7)
- Identification through the Law (Rom 2:12)

#### *Attempt to escape punishment (7-8)*

- Pleading for the pity of God (Mark 9:21-24)
- Pleading earnestly for help (Luke 7:2-5)
- Pleading for God willingness (Luke 5:12-13)
- Pleading won't help if one hasn't believed in God (Luke 13:23-25)

### **Scoundrel Executed (Esther 7:9-10)**

#### *Method of execution (9)*

- Method of reaping what has been sown (Gal 6:7-8)
- Method of producing the fruit of their ways (Prov 1:31)
- Method of punishment based on what has been done (Rom 2:6-9)
- Method of producing what has been planted (Hos 10:13)
- Method based on results of one's lifestyle (Rev 22:11)

#### *Wrath and death experienced (10)*

- Wrath because it is the punishment for the ungodliness and wickedness (Rom 1:18)
- Wrath because of man's stubbornness and unrepentant heart (Rom 2:5)
- Wrath because it comes on those who are disobedient (Eph 5:6)
- Wrath because of a sinful and earthly nature (Col 3:5-6)
- Wrath that God expresses each day (Ps 7:11)
- Wrath because of God's discipline (Ps 38:1-3)