

Learning to Trust God's Unseen Hand

A Study of Esther

Esther 7:1-10

Lesson #9: The Lord will always rewards those faithful to Him.

Introduction: Derek Prime writes: “Every day is like a fresh blank sheet of paper given us by God, and we can never tell what wonderful surprises he may choose to write upon it. So much can happen in just a few hours. Our lives may proceed at an ordinary pace, with nothing of great importance appearing to happen. Then, suddenly, without warning, dramatic and amazing events may crowd into the space of a single day.”¹

Verses 1-6

- The pace of the narrative quickens as we approach the climax. The narrative exhibits a masterful job of maintaining suspense and keeping the action moving without using superfluous details. In this chapter the banquet of Esther proves to be the arena for surprise and intense activity. And yet, this is not the climax.²
- What is of great interest is the way that the situation is about to be reversed. Haman and Xerxes are ignorant of this fact. Only Esther, Mordecai, and the reader are aware of the changed about to take place.
- Xerxes foolishly assumes that Esther’s only concern is material things, when in fact her primary concern is same as the Lord’s: people, specifically the impending annihilation of her people.
- What should be noticed is Esther’s calm demeanor throughout the entire situation.
- Most likely, Esther’s delays—definitely the first and quite possibly the second—are a programmed part of her plan. The delays (i.e., banquets) function in such a way as to lubricate the social relationship between Esther and the king, thereby reducing any tension that may exist between them (cf. 4:11). They place the king in a jovial and receptive mood, almost guaranteeing that he will be amenable to Esther’s requests.³
- As Esther explains the actions of Haman (and using the same words as was in the edict: destroyed, killed, annihilated), the writer uses some Hebrew words that are

¹ Derek Prime, *Unspoken Lessons About the Unseen God: Esther Simply Explained*, Welwyn Commentary Series (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2001), 107.

² Mervin Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, electronic ed., vol. 10, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 347.

³ Barry C. Davis, “Expositions of the Book of Esther,” in *Ruth & Esther: God behind the Seen*, Focus on the Bible Commentary (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2003), 286.

- difficult to translate to argue that Haman's financial offer (3:9) would not compensate for the king's damages (i.e., lost revenue from the Jews).⁴
- The writer uses a hendiadys to describe Haman... a literary tool describing one concept that uses two separate words or phrases.⁵

Verses 7-10

- The king getting up in an observable rage and abruptly leaving the room was enough for Haman to know that he was going to be condemned to death. This was apparently a Persian custom to denote royal displeasure and vengeance.⁶
- The irony here is that Haman, who had demanded that Mordecai bow before him, was at the feet of the Jew Esther. Furthermore, the character of the three protagonists is brought out. Haman was a prideful man with a cowardly heart. The king was easily influenced and weak in spite of his appearance of power. Esther was courageous and steadfast. She is not to be considered hard and calloused because she would not listen to Haman's pleas. She could not have helped even if she had wished to do so.⁷
- Haman, true to his character as a blundering dunce, begged for the queen's mercy, thus breaking protocol with the king's harem. He magnified his folly by stumbling to her couch, creating the appearance of improprieties and thereby sealing his doom with the irate king.⁸
- The irony is quite clear: All of Haman's support dried up in an instant. He suffered the fate that he had earlier condemned upon someone else as a result of jealous, insecure, and greedy ambition. Haman only cared for steamrolling his agenda and using whatever he could to make it so.
- However, the story is not over. The narrative has shown the rise and fall of Haman, but the edict of annihilation is still intact. More is at stake here than just Mordecai's life; also at stake are the lives of all of the Jews in the Persian Empire.⁹

I. Be faithful, even when you are the victim. 1 Peter 2:13-25

II. Be faithful, God will give you the words to say and the actions to perform. Luke 12:8-12, 21:10-18

⁴ R. C. Sproul, ed., *The Reformation Study Bible: English Standard Version* (Orlando, FL; Lake Mary, FL: Ligonier Ministries, 2005), 686.

⁵ John D. Barry et al., *Faithlife Study Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2012).

⁶ James M. Freeman and Harold J. Chadwick, *Manners & Customs of the Bible* (North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 1998), 299.

⁷ Breneman, 350.

⁸ Kenneth A. Mathews, "The Historical Books," in *Holman Concise Bible Commentary*, ed. David S. Dockery (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 196.

⁹ Breneman, 350.

III. Be faithful, God always knows how to perfectly time and execute His justice.
Psalm 22-23