

Esther 7:1 – 8:8

Wrath and responsibility



Although there are plainly some laugh-out-loud moments in this book, reaching their peak in chapter 6, the last four chapters are rapidly sobering. From the start of chapter 7, it becomes a headlong dash to prevent the catastrophe of Jewish genocide. Esther finally makes her key move with, once again, carefully considered words.

➤ **Esther's first plea** (7:1-5)

She has obviously planned for – perhaps even rehearsed – this moment. How often should we be carefully preparing our words – and how would you go about it? But also ... what are the limitations of rehearsed speeches?

Is Esther really saying that racial slavery would have been acceptable? Is the national economy really the bottom line?

➤ **The demise of Haman** (7:6-10)

Probably nobody would argue that “this wicked Haman” doesn't deserve some kind of come-uppance, but ...

... the death penalty?

... on a technicality of court etiquette?

➤ **Esther's second plea** (8:1-6)

Esther yet again has prepared her words (5), but note that, this time, these come *after* an emotional outburst (3). So upset that Ahasuerus couldn't understand (or handle) her, and needing to rephrase things calmly? Is it possible to be *too* calm, *too* detached? *Shouldn't* we feel some things strongly? Such as ...?

➤ **Ahasuerus' withdrawal** (8:7-8)

It looks as if Ahasuerus is saying that he's done all he can ... but if Mordecai and Esther think they can make a better job of it, he will let them try. How do you rate Ahasuerus as a leader?