Esther Issue 6 Group Handout

The Enemy at the Table | November 12, 2026 | Issue 6 v6.6

Tonight's reading is Esther 7:1–8:7, with 8:8b at the comic's close. Follow how Esther makes her case, how power changes hands, and why she has to speak again after receiving so much.

7:00 sharing • 7:18 Scripture and the first half • 7:45 centerfold
7:52 second reading • 7:55 second half • 8:12 activity • 8:25 prayer

Hear how Esther makes her case

At the wine course the king repeats his offer. Esther answers his request-and-petition language with her life and her people (7:2–3). The queen places herself inside the threatened community. Listen to how that changes the conversation.

Read these passages together	What to notice
3:8 and 7:3–4	Haman describes a troublesome people whose customs differ. Esther identifies the threatened people as her own. A policy acquires a face and a family.
3:9 and 7:4	Haman offers money for the campaign. Esther says her people have been sold. Her wording may echo Haman's offer; "sold" can also mean handed over.
3:13 and 7:4	Esther repeats the decree's three destructive verbs. She brings the content of the order into the room where its consequences can no longer be treated casually.

Tact can make the truth harder to evade

The NET translators observe that the passive wording about being sold avoids immediately accusing the king. Yet the reader remembers his ring and permission in 3:10–11. Esther's careful address gives him room to respond while forcing him to hear what his authorization means.

We can observe her choice of words and their effect. Her entire private strategy remains unstated. The comparison invites us to consider how courage, timing, and precise language can work together.

NET notes on Esther 7 • Translation notes on 7:4 • Howard on royal responsibility

Put Sonder to work

Borrow the king's position for a moment. A group he discussed at a distance now includes the woman speaking to him. What could he see if he took the next step and imagined every threatened household with that same attention?

Read Esther online

https://esther.gappjunction.com

Scan the code or use the address above. Sign in and choose Read Esther to open the digital issues.

Fear Judgment and Responsibility

Esther 7:5–10 | Story pages 5–11

The reader knows more than the king

The text gives us	The question it raises
The king asks who has dared to do this (7:5). He earlier authorized Haman's proposal (3:10–11).	What has he failed to connect? What responsibility follows from lending someone your authority?
Haman stays to beg Esther for his life (7:7). The returning king interprets the couch scene as assault (7:8).	How does knowing Haman's plea affect our reading of the accusation?
Harbona names the pole prepared for Mordecai, who helped the king (7:9).	How does one servant's testimony connect the present judgment to an earlier act of loyalty?

Creasy imagines Haman clinging to Esther while pleading. The comic stages unwanted contact and Esther's resistance. Those gestures make an interpretation visible. Scripture records his plea, his position at the couch, and the king's accusation.

Listen to the two pleas for life

Esther asks for her life and her people's lives (7:3). Haman seeks his own survival (7:7). His terror is explicit. The passage gives us no confession of the harm or attempt to repair it. That leaves a searching question about what we want when our own actions catch up with us.

A plan turns against its maker

Compare the structure Haman commissions in 5:14 with its use in 7:10. The reversal resembles the biblical image of a person falling into the pit they dug for another (Psalm 7:15–16). It exposes the destructive direction of Haman's ambition. Consider both accountability and the suffering that his actions have set in motion.

Whose crisis has ended at the centerfold?



The king's anger subsides (7:10).

Compare 2:1, where his anger over Vashti also subsides. Then read Esther's tears in 8:3–6. The ruler's emotional relief and the people's safety move on different timelines. Whose situation should we examine before calling the crisis resolved?

Issue 6 v6.6, story pp. 10–11, physical booklet pp. 12–13. © 2026 Joshua D. Gapp.

NET notes on Esther 7 • Translation notes on 7:4 • Howard on royal responsibility

What Does the Transfer of Power Accomplish

A seven-minute Bible activity | Esther 3:10–11 and 8:1–6

Work with a partner. Read 8:1–2 and identify the giver, recipient, and responsibility in each row. Then compare 3:10–11 and ask how the same royal authority could be used differently. Finish by reading Esther's request in 8:3–6.

What passes to someone	Who gives it and who receives it	What changes as a result
Haman's estate 8:1	_____ _____	_____ _____
The royal signet 8:2a	_____ _____	_____ _____
Management of the estate 8:2b	_____ _____	_____ _____

Find the need these transfers leave unresolved

From 8:3–6, what still threatens the people, and what does Esther ask the king to do?

_____

After comparing your answers

Esther receives the estate. Mordecai receives the signet from the king and responsibility for the estate from Esther. Property, delegated royal authority, and stewardship are three distinguishable gifts. The signet matters because orders bearing royal authorization affect people who never enter this room.

Look back at the first transfer of the ring in 3:10. A new person now holds this power. What would you look for to know that he was using it for the people's good?

Creasy hears an echo of Joseph

Compare Genesis 41:41–43, especially the giving of Pharaoh's signet, with Esther 8:2. Both scenes place a member of a vulnerable family in a position of responsibility under a foreign king. The parallel raises a question about how authority will serve other lives. Esther's next appeal supplies the need before them.

Listen outside the royal room

On story p. 17, Joel reports Haman's death and Ada asks about the order. Sarai asks Esther for permission to go home. These imagined people help us test what the palace's good news means in another life. Ask what each person actually needs before deciding what help to offer.

Esther 8 and translation notes • Genesis 41

What We Can Learn Tonight

Courage can become more specific. Esther moves from seeking an audience to naming the harm, the person responsible, and the action she needs. Advocacy takes shape in what she actually asks (7:3–6; 8:5–6).

Relief brings a further responsibility. Esther receives security and resources, then returns to the people still exposed. Her words in 8:6 show how belonging directs the use of her position.

Providence includes human responsibility. A Christian reading can see God's care in the story's timing while taking seriously Esther's speech, Harbona's testimony, and the royal decisions that caused harm.

Dr. Creasy and other scholars

Creasy follows the irony from Haman's estate to Mordecai's signet and the Joseph parallel. Cameron B. R. Howard asks us to examine the king's responsibility and judgment. Kathryn Schifferdecker connects faith in God's care with the wisdom and courage of people who act.

Howard • Schifferdecker

Keep Scripture beside the panels

Use the scene-by-scene comparison on page 5 when a detail raises a question. It distinguishes the biblical narrative from the comic's staging and added encounters. The dates are on that same page; the illustrated people guide is on page 6.

For our conversation

- Compare Haman's description of the Jews in 3:8 with Esther's words in 7:3–4. What becomes visible when she says "my life" and "my people"?
- Compare the pleas for life in 7:3 and 7:7. Whose lives concern each speaker? What evidence would help us distinguish fear of consequences from repentance?
- At 7:10 the king's anger subsides. By 8:6 Esther is still pleading. Whose experience should determine whether the problem has been addressed?
- Where would you be tempted to stop the story and call it a success? What would it mean to keep listening to Ada or Sarai, and what action could you take for someone still waiting this week?

One response this week

Name one person, the need you will ask about, and a step you can take by next week.

Follow the Dates

Issue 6 reference | Susa under Xerxes | Use alongside the panels

The story has reached Xerxes' twelfth year. Follow the sequence below; the Bible gives fewer exact dates here than the comic's continuous action might suggest.

Date or sequence	Approx. BCE	Event and passage
Year 12, Nisan 13	c. 474	The decree is written and sealed (3:7, 12–15).
Third day of the fast; calendar date unstated	c. 474	Esther approaches the king and holds the first banquet (4:16–5:8).
Next day after the first banquet	c. 474	After the sleepless night and Mordecai's honor, the second banquet brings Haman's downfall (5:8; 6:1–14; 7:1–10).
Same day as Haman's downfall	c. 474	Esther receives the estate. The signet and estate management pass to Mordecai in this episode (8:1–2).
Another appeal; no new date given	c. 474	Esther asks for the destructive letters to be reversed (8:3–7).

BCE estimates follow the usual identification of Ahasuerus with Xerxes I. Scripture gives no exact calendar date for either banquet or the renewed appeal.

Scripture beside the panels

Use the printed story numbers below. Physical/PDF page numbers are two higher. Faces, gestures, pacing, and added conversations are the artist's choices.

Story pp.	Scripture	What the comic adds or arranges
1–5	7:1–6. Esther asks for life and names Haman.	Service and pauses shape the confrontation. Esther states her Jewish identity explicitly.
6–9	7:7–8. Garden, plea for life, couch, and the king's accusation.	Haman invokes the king's permission. The contact while groveling and the ring-removal moment are dramatized.
10–11	7:9–10. Harbona's report, royal command, and Haman's death.	The centerfold combines testimony and command with an imagined city panorama and execution setting.
12–15	8:1–2. Estate, kinship disclosure, signet, and stewardship.	Embrace and memories develop the reunion. Esther receives the property; Mordecai administers it.
16–20	8:3–7. Esther pleads again, receives the scepter, and asks for reversal.	Sarai and the household are invented. The approach is staged as unsummoned. Dialogue orders the verses as 8:7, 8:6, then 8:5.
21	8:8b. The sealed order cannot be revoked.	This part of verse 8 closes the issue; the first part is reserved for Issue 7. The king's apology is added.

Esther 3 and dates • Esther 5–7 sequence • Esther 8

People to Follow

Choose someone whose eyes you can borrow for a scene. Blue labels identify people named in Scripture. Rust labels identify people created for the comic. Dialogue and actions can be dramatized for either group.



Esther

Biblical

The Jewish queen asks for her life and her people, then identifies Haman. After gaining his estate, she pleads again because the order against her people remains in force (7:3–6; 8:1–6).



Xerxes

Biblical king

Called Ahasuerus in Hebrew. He hears Esther's accusation, orders Haman's death, and transfers property and authority. The comic explores the gap between his gifts to Esther and the protection her people still need (7:5–10; 8:1–7).



Haman

Biblical

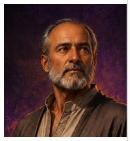
The minister behind the destruction order attends the second banquet still wearing the king's signet. Esther names him, and he begs her for his life. The pole he prepared for Mordecai becomes his own end (7:1–10).



Mordecai

Biblical

Esther's cousin and adoptive father enters the royal presence after she reveals their relationship. He receives the king's signet and responsibility for Haman's estate. The comic lets their reunion show what this means personally (8:1–2).



Harbona

Biblical figure

A royal eunuch who tells the king about the pole Haman built for Mordecai (7:9). The comic also gives him duties at the banquet and the estate transfer, imagining the work behind the court's decisions.



Hathach

Biblical figure

Esther's attendant, named in 4:5. In this issue, the comic has him admit Mordecai to the court and later carry the king's invitation. Scripture does not name the attendant performing these actions in chapter 8.



Tirah

Invented

Esther's attendant moves toward her when Haman begs beside the couch, then helps pull him away. Later she tells Esther that Sarai has asked after her. These imagined acts give the queen practical protection and companionship.



Sarai

Invented

Esther's friend remains within the second harem. She notices Esther's trembling hands and gives her time to sit. When offered a nearer room, she explains that she wants to go home. Esther promises to speak for her.



Mitra

Invented

A palace server welcomes Haman to his place and attends the second banquet. His ordinary work helps the meal continue while Esther prepares to speak. Scripture describes the banquet but leaves its servers unnamed (7:1–2).



Navid

Invented

A palace guard present when Xerxes returns to the banquet room. He takes hold of Haman as Boran covers his face. Scripture reports the covering but leaves the people carrying it out unnamed (7:8).



Joel

Invented

A member of the Jewish family at the repair workshop. He brings news that Haman has been killed, but cannot report a changed order. His brief conversation with Ada connects events in the palace to danger at home.



Rina and Ada

Invented

Daughter and mother, pictured left to right. In this issue Ada pauses over a repair to ask whether the order has changed, while Rina listens. Their household shows why Haman's death has not yet brought safety.

Watch the people at the edges

Boran, an invented palace guard, also appears. Notice who brings news, carries out an order, waits for permission, or asks for help. The comic gives these people individual lives and work to do.