

**YEAR 1, PROPER 20, WEDNESDAY:  
EVENING PRAYER**

**For use with the First Lesson**

Adapted from *The Vocabulary of the Church* (1960):

Big'tha-na	BIG-thah-nuh
Ahasu-er'us	uh-haz-yuu-AIR-uhs
Te'resh	TEE-resch
Ha'man	HAY-muhn
Ze'resh	ZEE-resch

*The First Lesson. The Reader begins*

**A Reading from the Book of Esther**

On that night the king could not sleep; and he gave orders to bring the book of memorable deeds, the chronicles, and they were read before the king. And it was found written how Mor'decai had told about Big'tha-na and Te'resh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, and who had sought to lay hands upon King Ahasu-er'us. And the king said, "What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mor'decai for this?" The king's servants who attended

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ESTHER 6:1–14; MATTHEW 5:38–48

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him said, “Nothing has been done for him.” And the king said, “Who is in the court?” Now Ha'man had just entered the outer court of the king's palace to speak to the king about having Mor'decai hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for him. So the king's servants told him, “Ha'man is there, standing in the court.” And the king said, “Let him come in.” So Ha'man came in, and the king said to him, “What shall be done to the man whom the king delights to honor?” And Ha'man said to himself, “Whom would the king delight to honor more than me?” And Ha'man said to the king, “For the man whom the king delights to honor, let royal robes be brought, which the king has worn, and the horse which the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown is set; and let the robes and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble princes; let him array the man whom the king delights to honor, and let him conduct the man on horseback through the open square of the city, proclaiming before him: ‘Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor.’ ” Then the king said to Ha'man, “Make haste, take the robes and the horse, as you have said, and do so to Mor'decai the Jew who sits at the king's gate. Leave out nothing that

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you have mentioned.” So Haman took the robes and the horse, and he arrayed Mor'decai and made him ride through the open square of the city, proclaiming, “Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor.” Then Mor'decai returned to the king’s gate. But Ha'man hurried to his house, mourning and with his head covered. And Ha'man told his wife Ze'resh and all his friends everything that had befallen him. Then his wise men and his wife Ze'resh said to him, “If Mor'decai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of the Jewish people, you will not prevail against him but will surely fall before him.” While they were yet talking with him, the king’s eunuchs arrived and brought Ha'man in haste to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

*The Reader concludes*

The Word of the Lord.

*The Second Lesson. The Reader begins*

**A Reading from the Gospel According to Matthew**

Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right

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cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well; and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

*The Reader concludes*

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