

Esther 8-10 Commentary

Esther 5-7

Esther
Commentaries

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[Jensen's Survey of the OT - used by permission](#)
[Swindoll's Intro and Overview Chart](#)
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CHRONOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIP OF EZRA-NEHEMIAH-ESTHER				
538-515 BC	483-473 BC	457 BC	13 Year Gap	444-425 BC
Ezra 1-6	Book of Esther	Ezra 7-10		Book of Nehemiah
First Return of Jews from Babylonian Exile	58 Year Gap	Second Return of Jews from Babylonian Exile		Third Return of Jews from Babylonian Exile

**ESTHER:
THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD**

Esther 1	Esther 2	Esther 3	Esther 4	Esther 5	Esther 6	Esther 7	Esther 8	Esther 9	Esther 10
Es 1:1-22	Es 2:1-23	Es 3:1-15	Es 4:1-17	Es 5:1-14	Es 6:1-14	Es 7:1-10	Es 8:1-17	Es 9:1-32	Es 10:1-3
Esther's Exaltation		Haman's Cunning Plot		Haman's Humiliation			Mordecai's Exaltation		
Feast of Ashasuerus		Fast of Mordecai		Feast of Esther			Feast of Purim		
Exaltation		Persecution		Preservations			Commenoration		
Jewish Existence Threatened			Jews Spared						
Gentile Setting	Jewess Elevated	Threat to Jews	Influence of a Jewess				Deliverance of Jews		A Jew Exalted
Feast of Ahasuerus				Feast of Esther and Purim					

Location of Events:
Persian

10 Years
(483-473BC)
[Timeline of Ezra-Nehemiah-Esther-See page 38](#)
[Timeline of Esther related to Ezra & Nehemiah - Parallel lines for Medo-Persian Kings & Daniel, Zechariah, Haggai and Malachi - see page 15](#)

Key Passages: Esther 4:14, 16, Esther 8:17, Esther 9:26, 31

Key Words: See list under "Precept Ministries Inductive Study on Esther"

The Book of Esther is unusual - God's Name is not mentioned once, yet God's "Hand" is clearly present and active throughout the book, to the extent that many see the book of Esther as a veritable "treatise" on the doctrine of Divine Providence (see separate study)

- [Purim Music Video - Purim with a beat. Give it a listen as you ponder "For such a time as this!"](#)
- Marty Goetz and Misha's song - [For Such A Time As This \(Esther's Song\)](#)

"UPS AND DOWNS OF ESTHER'S MAJOR CHARACTERS"
Source: [Bible Study Magazine - Volume 11, Issue 2, Jan/Feb, 2019](#)
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Esther 8:1 On that day King Ahasuerus gave the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther; and Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had disclosed what he was to her.:

- **the house:** Job 27:16,17 Ps 39:6 49:6-13 Pr 13:22 28:8 Eccl 2:18,19 Lk 12:20
- **came before:** Esther 1:14 2:7,15

EXALTATION OF MORDECAI

(Es 8:1-2)

On that day - Whenever you encounter a time phrase, always stop and ask "What time is it?", "To what is the author referring?", etc. This will usually force you to examine (re-read) and ponder (meditate on) the context. In this case we are forced to re-read Esther 6:1-7:10, a day which began with King Xerxes' inability to sleep. And oh what a **day** it proved to be, one that would impact not only time but eternity! In fact, the events of Esther 3-7 all occurred within a few days

Note the incredible reversal - Esther received the wealth of Haman. Mordecai received the position of Haman. And both "rewards" were from King Xerxes! This is the same king who had not that long ago promoted Haman the enemy of the Jews (Esther 3:1) and who willingly (albeit probably in ignorance regarding the identity of the intended victims) agreed to his plot to annihilate an entire race of people (Esther 3:10-11)! The king who had given Haman's a "*thumbs up*" to kill the Jews, ends up giving Haman a "*thumbs down*" condemning him to hang on his own gallows (Talk about reaping corruption after sowing to the flesh! Gal 6:8note). And NOW (**on that day**) this same powerful, capricious king changes his mind! **Why?** Read Pr 21:1 ([J Vernon McGee's Comments](#); F B Meyer's Comments)

What would have happened if Mordecai had bowed to Haman in Esther 3 and Esther 4? Undoubtedly he would still be in power. Mordecai's courage and commitment to not bow set in motion the series of divine "coincidences" in Esther 5-7 which resulted in the death of Haman and ultimately the exaltation of Mordecai to the number two position in Persia!

Wait for the LORD, and keep His way, And He will exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you will see it. I have seen a violent, wicked man Spreading himself like a luxuriant tree in its native soil. Then he passed away, and lo, he was no more; I sought for him, but he could not be found. (Ps 37:34-36)

Omanson comments that "This chapter continues to develop the theme of reversal. The situation is changing for Mordecai and for the Jews...A number of translations place the first two verses of chapter 8 with the preceding section as part of the triumph of Esther and Mordecai over Haman." (A handbook on the book of Esther: UBS Handbook Series)

Haman the enemy of the Jews (Esther 3:10) - One might as well write on his epitaph "Haman the enemy of God!" Anyone who is an enemy of the Jews is by divine default an enemy of the covenant keeping God of the Jews! God's oath in Genesis 12:3 should be inscribed on the door of everyone who seeks God's favor...

**"I will bless those who bless you,
And the one who curses you I will curse."**

THOUGHT - Beloved, if you are reading these notes and find yourself bristling or chaffing at God's favor to the

Jews (irrespective of whether they believed in Him or obeyed Him), then perhaps you might be guilty of latent (or even overt) Anti-Semitism. And if you find yourself in this unenviable position, I would beg you to implore God to change your heart attitude toward those who He calls the "apple of His eye" (Zech 2:8, cp Dt 32:10) for your good and His glory. Amen

Jews or Jews is a **key word** in Esther (53x out of a total of 99 OT uses) - Esther 2:5; 3:4, 6, 10, 13; 4:3, 7, 13, 14, 16; 5:13; 6:10, 13; 8:1, 3, 5, 7,8,9, 11, 13, 16,17; 9:1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 10:3

PROVIDENTIAL IRONY

Gave the house of Haman ("all the property" = TEV, "the estate" = NET, CSB) - What does this signify? The idea is that Haman's estate was given to Queen Esther, a Jew! All that Haman had collected by "hook or crook" was now forfeited! Indeed, this must have been a great largess, for Haman had himself talked about the "**glory of his riches**" in Esther 5:11. The riches of a Jew hater to a Jew! Is this not an incredible (providentially inspired and enabled) irony? Haman who had "the world by the tail," ended up on his own gallows with nothing, not even a decent legacy to pass on. In fact the only legacy he left his ten sons was a "death sentence!" (Esther 9:12-14)

Alexander Raleigh notes that "When a traitor or a great culprit like Haman dies, he forfeits all his estates and possessions to the crown. This has been the law in nearly every country and was likely to be so in its most rigorous form in Persian." ([Esther 8:1-7 Esther Going in to the King to Make Request](#))

David Guzik quipped that "One might say that he (Haman) had climbed the ladder of success, but it was leaning against the wrong building."

For - A term of explanation. What is the author explaining? He is explaining why Mordecai came before the king.

**To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven.**

Ecclesiastes 3:1KJV

The time had come to tell the king about her relationship to Mordecai. Is this not another subtle marker of the providential working of God? Too soon could have been detrimental and too late might have been of no great import as **Alexander Raleigh** explains below.

to do a thing, a good thing, at the wrong time, is sometimes worse than not doing it at all. If it is done too soon--the evil powers have warning, opposing currents set in, and head winds blow in the face of the good purpose, and effort is in vain. If it is done too late, then--although perhaps there are no contrary winds, no strong currents to be stemmed, the silent tide of time and circumstance has turned, and the vessel of your purpose must go with it. If Esther had declared the secret sooner, Haman would have known it, and *might* have found some diabolical means of destroying even the queen herself and all the Jews. If she had declared it later, some one else, meantime, might have got the right of office instead of Mordecai, for, as we have already said, his relationship to the queen certainly seems to have been *one* reason for his appointment, and was probably even the deciding one. Yes, "to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens:" a time to keep silence and a time to speak. One says that "He that would be able to speak *when* and *as* he ought, must first learn silence as the Pythagoreans did of old." St. Jerome saith, "Let us first learn not to speak, that afterwards we may open our mouths to speak wisely." Some one gives this as a rule: "Either keep silence or give that which is better than silence."...But oh! How all-important is it in the great matters of life to speak in the right time as did Esther! And how all-important that we should speak to the great King asking His grace while yet it is the day of grace. Blessed by His name, this is heaven's "time" and "season" for all men. "Now!" Now is the accepted time. "Now"-- the tide is full, but still flowing: turn your vessel and glide over the bar while you may. "Now"--the gale is blowing gently and favorably; spread the sail of your purpose, and catch its favorable breath and haste away from breaker and sandbank over the quiet seas to the realms of sunshine (Ed: Son-shine). "Now"--the drawbridge is down--enter the castle of safety."Now"--the door is open. Come in-- for in no long time a voice from within will say to those who come knocking, "The door is shut!" ([Esther 8:1-7 Esther Going in to the King to Make Request](#))

Esther had disclosed what he was to her - Esther had told the king that her mother and father had died and that her older cousin Mordecai the Jew had taken her in as her guardian and treated her **as his own daughter** (Esther 2:7). It is as if the king says "A friend of my dear Esther, is a friend of mine, for not only have you saved her life, but you have saved my life!" The king's action in

Esther 8:2 is therefore not surprising to the reader.

Chuck Swindoll sees the events of Esther as something **"Theologians call...sovereignty**. I call it **God's surprising sovereignty!** I can remember a time early on in my ministerial training, when the sovereignty of God was frightening to me. Not understanding its implications as fully as I do now some thirty-five years later, I felt it would make me passive and virtually irresponsible. Furthermore, I feared what it would do to my theology of evangelism. If I really threw myself into this doctrine, God could become a distant deity, sort of a celestial brute, pushing and maneuvering His way through nameless humanity, as He did what He pleased to get what He wanted. I could see my zeal waning and my passion for souls drained to the point of indifference. Through a series of events far too numerous and complicated to describe, I've come to realize that, rather than being frightened by God's sovereignty, I'm comforted in it. Since He alone is God, and since He, being God, "does all things well" and in doing them has only "good" as His goal, how could I do anything but embrace it? Does that mean I can explain it? No, only rarely, when hindsight yields insight. Does that mean I always anticipate it? No, like you, I occasionally rush to judgment or respond in panic, wondering why He is so silent, allowing wrong to run its course so long. But looking back in more reasonable moments, with my emotions under better control (His control!), I can see what He was about. I can even see why He delayed, or why He acted when He did. Usually, I freely admit, I think He is awfully slow (I can't number the times I've pleaded, "O, God—please hurry up!") and I am usually surprised, though I shouldn't be, at how beautifully things work out. But, the good news is that I've come full circle. I find enormous comfort in knowing, in the final analysis, God is God and He will have His way when He pleases and for His glory. What could be better than that? In all the mystery of His waiting and working and in all the wrong of our doing and undoing, He can still be trusted. The big thing is that you and I remain sensitive to those moments when He breaks the silence (which we're tempted to call absence) and suddenly intervenes on our behalf. Furthermore, I'm more than ever concerned over the lost! But in the final analysis, their salvation rests with Him, not with me. ([Esther A Woman of Strength and Dignity](#))

Esther 8:2 The king took off his signet ring which he had taken away from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.:

- **his ring:** Esther 3:10 Ge 41:42 Isa 22:19-22 Lk 15:22
- **Esther set:** 2Sa 9:7-10 Ps 37:34 Ec 2:18,19-26 5:13,14 Da 2:48

NET Bible = The king then removed his signet ring (the very one he had taken back from Haman) and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther designated Mordecai to be in charge of Haman's estate.

FAME & FORTUNE BESTOWED ON MORDECAI

The king took off his signet ring which he had taken away from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai - Apparently before he was hanged, the king had retrieved his **signet ring** from Haman the enemy of the Jews and, in an amazing (providentially orchestrated) turn of events, gave it to the Mordecai the Jew. The Septuagint translates the Hebrew (abar) "had taken away" with the Greek verb **aphaireo** which means to take away by force ("cut off" in Lk 22:50).

Signet ring (Esther 3:10, 12, 8:8, 8:10) - This would be Mordecai's visible symbol of his high honor and office. Ultimately the king's signet ring conveyed **authority** to the possessor. Practically the king's **signet ring** was used to seal official documents that carried the king's authority (cp the edict to destroy all Jews in Esther 3:12). We see that as a result of God's paradoxical, providential working behind the scene, the very ring that had been used by Haman to seal the fate of the Jews was now bestowed on a Jew!

Swindoll quips that giving the **signet ring** was like saying "Take my credit card. You sign for me. You pass the edicts."

Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman - Clearly the queen had authority in the Persian kingdom. As noted above the king gave Haman's estate to Esther and she in turn gave the "**glory of his (Haman's) riches**" (Esther 5:11) to Mordecai. The king bestowed fame and the queen bestowed fortune on Mordecai. This is another evidence of the providential hand of God. The man who sought to king the Jews and plunder their wealth ends up giving his wealth to a Jew! God is the avenger of the evil that Haman had perpetrated against Mordecai and the Jews.

Mordecai is exalted (receiving both fame and fortune) reminding us of Peter's words

Humble (aorist imperative = command to do this now. Be willing to be humbled.) yourselves, therefore (In light of 1Pe 5:5-note), under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the **proper time (kairos** - see discussion of this very significant word) (1Pe 5:6-note)

Warren Wiersbe adds a cautionary comment to this great scene of Mordecai's exaltation "God doesn't always give this kind of a

“happy ending” to everybody’s story. Today, not all faithful Christians are promoted and given special honors. Some of them get fired because of their stand for Christ! God hasn’t promised that we’ll be promoted and made rich, but He has assured us that He’s in control of all circumstances and that He will write the last chapter of the story. If God doesn’t promote us here on earth, He certainly will when we get to glory. ([Be Committed - Ruth & Esther - Doing God's Will Whatever the Cost](#))

Haman should have lived his life for God instead of self as Solomon (who had everything the world offers but found it empty and ultimately unfulfilling) wrote near the end of his life...

The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God (cp Rev 14:6-7 [note](#)) and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. **For (term of explanation)** God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. (Eccl 12:13-14).

GOD THE CHANGER OF HEARTS

Chuck Swindoll ascribes the heart change in King Ahasuerus' to God's ability to change any heart (Pr 21:1) noting that "that you may have some such individual who has one major goal in life: to make your life miserable. You may work alongside him, or you may go to school with him or even room with him. You may be married to him, or have once been married to him. Now then, it is essential that in the midst of this to remember there is no wall so strong that Almighty God is not stronger still. There is no will so stubborn that He is not able to soften it. If God can change the heart of an Ahasuerus, He can change any heart—any heart! Read that again. You who live your days intimidated and threatened, anxious over the falling of the next shoe, listen to this counsel! God is able to take the heart of anyone and change it, just as He did with the heart of this king. Yes, anyone." (Ed: And all God's people said "Praise the Lord. Amen!")

Esther 8:3 Then Esther spoke again to the king, fell at his feet, wept and implored him to avert the evil scheme of Haman the Agagite and his plot which he had devised against the Jews.:

- **fell:** 1Sa 25:24 2Ki 4:27
- **wept:**, Isa 38:2 Hos 12:4 Heb 5:7
- **plot:** Esther 3:8-15, Esther 7:4

NET Bible - Then Esther again spoke with the king, falling at his feet. She wept and **begged him for mercy**, that he might nullify the evil of Haman the Agagite which he had intended against the Jews.

ESTHER'S SECOND INTERCESSION FOR HER PEOPLE THE JEWS

(Es 8:3-8)

Then Esther spoke again to the king - This marks a separate encounter, one in which she was not summoned as indicated by the fact that the king extended the golden scepter in Esther 8:4. Esther is interceding at the king's throne which resulted in her people Israel being saved from certain death.

THOUGHT - How much more should we who know Christ be continually interceding (at the King's throne Heb 4:16-note) for those around us that they might receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ so that they might not die and enter a Christ-less eternity! Are you interceding for souls God has brought providentially into your life? It's a once in a lifetime opportunity!

Warren Wiersbe adds that "Esther's example encourages us to come to God's throne and intercede on behalf of others, especially the nations of the world where lost souls need to be delivered from death. One concerned person devoted to prayer can make a great difference in this world, for prayer is the key that releases the power of God. "Yet you do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2, NKJV)." (Ibid)

Fell at his feet - This action reflects a different approach to the king by Esther. Earlier the queen was **standing** (Esther 5:2) but now she is falling. Such a prostrate attitude expresses the utmost lowliness and humility before the king. Whether she knew it or not it is eternally true that God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble (Jas 4:6-note). **Lxx = prospipto** - prostrate oneself before someone, falling at their feet.

Imploring - On this occasion Esther is speaking even before the king's scepter is even extended (Esther 8:4).

Implored (02603) (**chanan/hanan**) means to be gracious toward, to favor, to have mercy on. It describes gracious acts toward

someone in need (Job 19:21; Pr 19:17). The English word **implore** means to petition, to call upon (in supplication) and includes a suggestion of great urgency or anguished appeal. The Greek translation uses the **imperfect tense** which vividly pictures her act of imploring as occurring over and over.

Wept - Esther now weeps, something which she had not done in the earlier encounter with the king. Why is she weeping? Surely she knows that there is a chance the king could deny her request. **Raleigh** adds that "there may be legal difficulties in setting edict against edict in a country where the law is that no duly-enacted law can be reversed."

Matthew Henry comments on Esther's humble attitude "Let none be so great as to be unwilling to stoop, none so merry as to be unwilling to weep, when thereby they may do any service to God's...people."

Guzik comments that "This was the request we might have expected to come back at Esther 5:4, where Esther was first invited to make her request to king Ahasuerus. Yet God's wisdom operating in her life gave her the tact and ability to approach this great request in stages."

THE EVIL THAT MEN DO LIVES AFTER THEM!

His plot which he had devised against the Jews - Although Haman had been executed, his edict was still "executable" because Persian law could not be repealed (See Esther 1:19, 8:8) Esther was wise and careful not to implicate the king in the plot, but instead giving Haman full ownership.

Matthew Henry has some wise words concerning Haman's lingering effect noting that "Many a man's mischief survives him, and the wickedness he devised operates when he is gone. What men project and write may, after their death, be either very profitable or very pernicious.

THOUGHT: Corollary = Let us be wise in the actions we project and the words we speak or write in this short life, that they might be wholesome, edifying and give grace to those who hear - Eph 4:29+).

Esther 8:4 The king extended the golden scepter to Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king.:

ESTHER AGAIN FAVORED BY KING XERXES

Extended the golden scepter (cp Esther 4:11, 5:2) - This statement implies that the Queen came a second time into King Xerxes' presence without being summoned. This is another evidence of her sincerity when she declared "**If I perish, I perish!**" (Esther 4:16) Indeed death was a real possibility for Esther even at this second royal encounter. However, the king's gesture is a clear sign of his approval and acceptance, and encouraged Esther to present her specific petition.

So Esther arose - Picture her weeping and imploring at his feet. This reminds us of Peter's exhortation alluded to above in reference to Mordecai's exaltation (1Pe 5:6-note) Indeed, Esther's willingness to humble herself, was followed by her arising in due season - the season was the countdown to the extermination of the Jewish race, but God's exaltation of Esther would soon counter the evil countdown!

Esther 8:5 Then she said, "If it pleases the king and if I have found favor before him and the matter seems proper to the king and I am pleasing in his sight, let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the king's provinces.:

NET Bible - She said, "If the king is so inclined and if I have met with his approval and if the matter is agreeable to the king and if I am attractive to him, let an edict be written rescinding those recorded intentions of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, which he wrote in order to destroy the Jews who are throughout all the king's provinces.

Then she said - It is notable that on the first occasion of the king sparing her life, he immediately followed with a query **What is your request?**" (Esther 5:2). On this occasion, she speaks immediately after arising before him. It is possible he gave her some non-audible sign but we cannot speculate where the text does not clearly say.

Pleases...found favor...seems proper...pleasing in his sight - Note Esther continues her skillful, yet cautious approach to the king who we have seen has been quick to **anger** in the past (Esther 1:12, Esther 7:7, 10) Remember also that the king himself had been (albeit unknowingly) party to the plot to kill the Jews, so caution by Esther was the better part of valor.

As **Raleigh** puts it "*The fair advocate is full of self-depreciation and self-distrust, and at the same time renders ample reverence and honour to the king and to the law.*"

If it pleases the king - Esther knows that absolutely nothing can be done against the king's good pleasure!

If I have found favor before him - The Hebrew word is **chen** (02580) which is translated "grace" 38x in the KJV and 8x in NAS. The Septuagint translates chen with the Greek noun **charis**, the NT word which signifies unmerited favor. **Charis** is used 8x in Esther (Esther 2:9, 2:15, 5:2, 5:8, 6:3, 7:3, 8:5), seven times for "favor" and once for "dignity" (Esther 6:3).

The matter seems proper - "if the thing seems right" (ESV).

Matthew Henry comments of Queen Esther's "demure" approach to King Xerxes...

"If the thing itself seem right and reasonable before the king, and if I that ask it be pleasing in his eyes, let the decree be reversed." Even when we have the utmost reason and justice on our side, and have the clearest cause to plead, yet it becomes us to speak to our superiors with humility and modesty, and all possible expressions of respect, and not to talk like demandants when we are supplicants. There is nothing lost by decency and good breeding. As soft answers turn away wrath, so soft askings obtain favour.

Let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman - It is interesting that she asked this. Did she not know the king's edict could not be revoked?

Revoke (07725 - shub/sub) means to turn back, to go back, to withdraw. From Esther 1:19 we know that Persian law could not be revoked.

Destroy the Jews who are in all the king's provinces - This is the first time that the king is told specifically that the people who Haman sought to destroy were the **Jews**. (Compare Esther 7:3, 4 where she uses the non-specific phrase "my people".)

Destroy/destruction (Key word in Esther) - Esther 3:6 3:9 3:13 4:7 4:8 7:4 8:5 8:6 8:11 9:5 9:6 9:12 9:24)

MEDO-PERSIAN LAW COULD NOT BE REVOKED

Daniel's adversaries (much like Haman the enemy of the Jews) attempted to destroy, kill and annihilate the Jew Daniel, a godly man devoted to prayer, by enticing King Darius to issue an injunction that Persian law stipulated could not be repealed...

Now, O king, establish the injunction (no prayer to any god or man but Darius for 30 days - Da 6:7note) and sign the document so that it **may not be changed**, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which **may not be revoked**. 9 Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction. Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed (**Ed**: Daniel would have been familiar with the unchangeable nature of this injunction, but he choose to obey God), he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously....Then they approached and spoke before the king about the king's injunction, "Did you not sign an injunction that any man who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, O king, for thirty days, is to be cast into the lions' den?" The king answered and said, "The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which **may not be revoked**....Then (**Context**: The distressed king was trying to devise a way to deliver Daniel from the lion's den - Da 6:13-14) these men came by agreement to the king and said to the king, "Recognize, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that **no injunction or statute which the king establishes may be changed**." (Daniel 6:8-10,12,15-Daniel 6 Commentary)

Comment: What happened to Daniel? (Da 6:22-note) What happened to those men (and their families) who sought to destroy Daniel? (Da 6:24-note) What happened to the renown of God? (Da 6:25-27-note) How do Daniel's last days parallel Mordecai's last days? (Da 6:28-note, Esther 10:2-3) What fate will inevitably befall all who seek to destroy the Jews? Beloved, do you love Israel like God loves Israel or do you harbor a latent (or even overt) Anti-Semitic attitude? If the latter describes you, then from Biblical history, you need to beware of inciting God's defensive wrath reflected in His oath in Genesis 12:3. Similarly, any nation, including America, which opposes Israel is in effect opposing God and will in time be opposed by Him!

THOUGHT - Beloved, as I write these notes on July 11, 2012, I sense that our current President and many political leaders in Washington are actively opposed to Israel and behind the scenes are even overtly rejecting and "dissing" our longstanding best friend not only in the Middle East but in the world! If the book of Esther (and Daniel 6) teaches us anything, it teaches that anyone or any nation who opposes the Jews will be justly recompensed. May we who love Israel, pray for our nation's leaders to continue to actively support the nation of Israel (not because they deserve it or are always right in their actions but because they remain forever the "apple of God's eye" Zec 2:8) even as we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Amen

Esther 8:6 "For how can I endure to see the calamity which will befall my people, and how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?":

For (term of explanation) - Esther presents the king the reason for her strongly emotional plea.

How can I endure to see the calamity - The latter half of this verse in the Septuagint is translated into English as "*how shall I be able to survive the destruction of my kindred?*" It is as if she is saying to the king "*If my people die, something inside of me dies*" and this seems to be too much for the king to bear.

This is the climax of Esther's appeal. She is appealing to the king's heart, to his affection for her. Earlier he had said he would give her up to half the kingdom (a figure of speech), but now this final plea moves him to give up in a sense "all the kingdom", for the new edict will effect every province where people are planning on killing and plundering Jews.

We encounter a similar deep sacrificial intercession in Moses' plea for idolatrous Israel who God is threatening to destroy...

But now, if Thou wilt, forgive their sin-- and if not, please blot me out from Thy book which Thou hast written!" (Ex 32:32)

Comment: Moses' request was not an attempt to bargain with God. Rather, it demonstrated his strong identity with the people for whom he was praying.

We see a similar intercessory pattern in Paul's passion for his people the Jews and yet who had not accepted their Messiah

I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh (physically Jews but not born again), (Ro 9:1-3).

Comment: Paul's plea is primarily for the spiritual life of his Jewish brethren, whereas Esther plea was for their physical life.

My kindred - NAB "my race"; NIV "my family"; NLT "my people and my family"; NET "my relatives."

Esther had earlier identified herself with her **people** for whom she had also interceded...

Then Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me as my petition, and **my people as my request** (Esther 7:3)

Comment: Although we cannot state with certainty, it appears that King Xerxes still did not fully comprehend who Esther's people were in Chapter 7. However here in Chapter 8, she again identifies herself with "**my people**" but now clearly identifies them as **Jews** (Esther 8:5)

Esther 8:7 So King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, "Behold, I have given the house of Haman to Esther, and him they have hanged on the gallows because he had stretched out his hands against the Jews.:

So King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew - Observe that Mordecai apparently was in the room when Esther was falling at the king's feet, weeping and imploring.

Mordecai the Jew - Not Mordecai the prime minister, even though that was in essence his new title (Esther 10:3).

He had stretched out his hands against the Jews - If Esther is a Jew and the law cannot be repealed, theoretically what should

happen to Queen Esther? Whether such thoughts entered into the king's reasoning for his following statement is unclear, but is at least possible.

Esther 8:8 "Now you write to the Jews as you see fit, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's signet ring; for a decree which is written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's signet ring may not be revoked.":

- Esther 3:12 1Ki 21:8
- **revoked:** Esther 8:5 1:19 Da 6:8,12-15 2Ti 2:19 Heb 6:17,18

Write to the Jews as you see fit - Esther and Mordecai were given a royal "*carte blanche!*" This is interesting because the Queen had not put words in the king's mouth, but left the next course of action to his discretion. Surely this is once again a manifestation of the providential hand of God as pictured in Pr 21:1.

Edict/decree (key word in Esther) - Esther 1:19, 1:20, 2:1, 2:8, 3:9, 3:14, 3:15, 4:3, 4:8, 8:8, 8:13, 8:14, 8:17, 9:1, 9:13, 9:14

Esther 8:9 So the king's scribes were called at that time in the third month (that is, the month Sivan), on the twenty-third day; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded to the Jews, the satraps, the governors and the princes of the provinces which extended from India to Ethiopia, 127 provinces, to every province according to its script, and to every people according to their language as well as to the Jews according to their script and their language.:

MORDECAI'S DECREE COUNTERS HAMAN'S DECREE

(Es 8:9-17)

As an aside, Esther 8:9 is the longest verse in "The Writings", which is the name for the third major division of the Hebrew Bible.

Sivan - This word was used after the Babylonian Captivity as the name of **the third month** of the Jewish year, which is roughly equivalent to our modern **May-June** (some say June-July). Recall that Haman's original decree was written on "**the thirteen day of the first month**" so that the 23rd day of Sivan would be 2 months and 10 days later. This left 8 months and 20 days until Haman and Mordecai's decrees would both become effective. In other words, the Jews would have almost 9 months to prepare to defend themselves. Remember that the reason they had such a long warning and preparatory time was because superstitious Haman had "rolled the dice" (**pur**) to determine which day he should carry out the Jewish extermination. And since God controls the roll of the **pur** (See Pr 16:33), the day of destruction fell 12 months after the actual evil edict was sent to all 127 provinces. Clearly the **providence of God** was working to save the Jews from total annihilation!

It was written according to all that Mordecai commanded the Jews - The royal "okay" had been given to Esther, but here we see it is actually Mordecai who prepared the actual counter decree (although it is not actually called a decree or edict in this verse).

Jews according to their script and their language - What does this statement indicate, especially since the first part of the verse has already specified "to the Jews"? While we cannot be dogmatic, it appears that there were Jews in the provinces who had continued to write in Hebrew script and speak the Hebrew dialect. This detail is not specified in Haman's edict. And it is interesting that the Septuagint omits the addendum of to the **Jews according to their script and their language**. See the chart below for the comparison of the two edicts.

Pulpit Commentary adds that...

Copies of the former edict had not been sent especially to the Jews. They had been left to learn their danger indirectly from the people among whom they dwelt; but Mordecai took care that they should be informed directly of their right of defense.

TWO PERSIAN EDICTS THAT IMPACTED THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD

NOTE: Major Differences in Red

AUTHOR	Haman (Es 3:12)	Mordecai (Es 8:9)
DATE EDICT SENT	1-13 (13th of Nisan) (Es 3:12)	3-23 (23rd of Sivan) (Es 8:9)
GEOGRAPHY	Each Province (Es 3:12)	Every Province (Es 8:9)
RECIPIENTS	Each People (Es 3:12)	Every People The Jews (Es 8:9)
LANGUAGE	According to its Script According to its Language (Es 3:12)	According to its Script According to its Language Jews according to their script & language (Es 8:9)
AUTHORITY	Name of King Sealed w/ Signet Ring (Es 3:12)	Name of King Sealed w/ Signet Ring (Es 8:10)
DISTRIBUTION	By couriers (Es 3:13)	By couriers Royal steeds (Es 8:10, 14) Hastened & impelled (Es 8:14)
SPECIFIC LAW	Destroy, kill, annihilate All the Jews Plundering allowed (Es 3:13)	Destroy, kill, annihilate Assemble, Defend Any who attack them Plundering allowed (Es 8:11)
DATE EDICT TAKES EFFECT	One day 12-13 (13th of Adar) (Es 3:13)	One day 12-13 (13th of Adar) (Es 8:12)
WHY COPY OF EDICT ISSUED AS LAW?	So that they Should be ready for this day (Es 3:14)	So that the Jews would be ready to avenge themselves (Es 8:13)
EFFECT ON SUSA	In confusion (Es 3:15)	Shouted & Rejoiced (Es 8:15)
EFFECT ON JEWS	Great Mourning Fasting, weeping, wailing (Es 4:3)	Gladness and joy A feast, A holiday (Es 8:16,17)

Esther 8:10 He wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, and sealed it with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horses, riding on steeds sired by the royal stud.:

- In the name of King: 1Ki 21:8 Eccl 8:4 Da 4:1

Sealed it with the king's signet ring - This very same action was taken to authenticate Haman's edict (Esther 3:12)

Sent by couriers on horses, riding on steeds sired by the royal stud - This detail about steeds sired by the royal stud is not

mentioned in the context of the distribution of Haman's edict (Esther 3:13).

Esther 8:11 In them the king granted the Jews who were in each and every city the right to assemble and to defend their lives, to destroy, to kill and to annihilate the entire army of any people or province which might attack them, including children and women, and to plunder their spoil,:

- **to assemble:** Esther 9:2-16
- **to destroy:** Ps 37:14,15 68:3 137:8 146:6-9 Eze 39:10
- **spoil:** Esther 3:13 9:10,15,16 Isa 10:6

In them - The letters of the preceding verse.

The right to assemble and to defend their lives ("to gather for self-defense") - This is the key to the counter edict - to give the Jews time (almost 9 months) to prepare to defend themselves from those who were waiting to carry out Haman's edict of extermination!

Defend their lives - Literally "to stand upon their nepesh (soul)" thus the KJV has "stand for their life." The New Jewish Version renders it "to fight for their lives."

It is worth noting that Mordecai's decree was in complete harmony with God's covenant with Abraham

And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 12:3; cp some of Isaac's last words to Jacob - Ge 27:29, Ex 23:22, Nu 24:9)

To destroy, to kill and to annihilate - This is the exact phrase used in Haman's decree which also included the right to kill women, children and to plunder spoil (Esther 3:13).

Children and women - The NIV gives a different sense to the passage "NIV - The king's edict granted the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves; to destroy, kill and annihilate any armed force of any nationality or province that might attack them and their women and children; and to plunder the property of their enemies.

Esther 8:12 on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar):

- **one day:** Esther 9:1 Ex 15:9,10 Jdg 1:6,7

On one day - 13th of Adar, the very same day of Haman's edict (Esther 3:13-14), the day before Passover!

Esther 8:13 A copy of the edict to be issued as law in each and every province was published to all the peoples, so that the Jews would be ready for this day to avenge themselves on their enemies.:

- **avenge themselves:** Jdg 16:28 Ps 37:14,15 Ps 68:23 Ps 92:10,11 Ps 149:6-9 Lk 18:7 Rev 6:10

So that the Jews would be ready for this day to avenge themselves on their enemies-

Esther 8:14 The couriers, hastened and impelled by the king's command, went out, riding on the royal steeds; and the decree was given out at the citadel in Susa.:

Hastened and impelled by the king's command - As noted in the chart these specific facts are not mentioned in the courier distribution of Haman's edict (Es 3:13). It as if the king understands the urgency of the matter, and although there was almost 8 months until both edicts would dramatically clash, the more time the Jews had to prepare to defend themselves, the better would be their chances.

Wiersbe contrasts this sense of urgency among the ancients with the often complacent attitude of the church with its life saving message of the Gospel - If only the church today were like those secretaries and couriers! How we need to tell the peoples of the world in their own languages the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ! The King has commanded us, and we must go, but for some reason we linger. If a group of pagan scribes and messengers, without modern means of transportation and communication, could take Mordecai's decree to an entire empire, how much more should Christian workers be able to take Christ's Gospel to a lost world! (Ibid)

Hastened (0926) (**bahal**) means to tremble inwardly or palpitate, make alarmed or agitated. **Bahal** usually expresses an emotion of one who is confronted with something unexpected, threatening or disastrous.

Impelled (01765) (**dahap**) means to hurry, to hasten, to do something quickly. There are only 4 uses in the OT (2Chr 26:20, Esther 3:15, 6:12, 8:14). The same phrase -- **impelled by the king's decree** -- was used to describe the distribution of Haman's decree (Esther 3:15).

The Septuagint uses only one verb in place of the two Hebrew verbs. The Greek verb is **speudo** (present tense) which means to hasten, to hurry, to do something as quickly as possible.

Guzik - There was an urgency to get the word out about this important decree of the king. Christians should show a similar urgency when it comes to being heralds of the decree that the justice of God has been satisfied for us in Jesus Christ.

Esther 8:15 Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal robes of blue and white, with a large crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced.:

- **royal robes:** Esther 5:1 6:8,11 Ge 41:42 Mt 6:29 11:8 Lk 16:19

Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal robes of blue and white - Mordecai's royal apparel befitted his new position as second in command even exceeding his first reward for saving the king. **Blue and white** were the royal colors of the Persian Empire.

Guzik - God's purpose in all these matters goes farther than the sparing of the Jews from destruction; He also purposed to raise up Mordecai as the prime minister - as a replacement of Haman.

City of Susa shouted and rejoiced - This is the same city that was thrown into **confusion** by Haman's decree (Esther 3:15)! Haman was proud. Mordecai was humble. It would seem that few lamented Haman's fall. Indeed **Proverbs** records that...

When the righteous increase, the people **rejoice** (samach), but when a wicked man rules, people groan. (Pr 29:2)

Rejoiced (08055) (**samach**; Lxx = chairo = rejoice, be glad or delighted)

Esther 8:16 For the Jews there was light and gladness and joy and honor.:

- **Jews:** Esther 4:1-3,16 Ps 30:5-11
- **Was light** - Esther 9:17 Ps 18:28 97:11 Pr 4:18,19 11:10 Isa 30:29,30 35:10

For the Jews there was light - Notice that came before the day appointed for the Jews to be attacked and yet able to defend themselves. However, because of the decree of the king, they are confident of victory and thus able rejoice ahead of time. The fear of impending doom is gone, and the Jews find themselves in "lightness." The dark cloud which had so long hung over them was dispelled; and again the sunshine of prosperity beamed upon them.

Esther 8:17 In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree arrived, there was gladness and joy for the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.:

- **a feast:** Esther 9:17,19,22 1Sa 25:8 Ne 8:10

- **many among the people:** Ps 18:43 Zec 8:20-23
- **dread:** Esther 9:2 Ge 35:5 Ex 15:16 Dt 2:25 11:2

There was gladness and joy for the Jews - What a contrast this news brought with Haman's edict where "**the city of Susa was in confusion.**" (Esther 3:15) There is another contrast between the beginning of this chapter with Esther in tears (Es 8:3) and the ending in **gladness and joy**. Notice also that this **gladness and joy** was probably several months before the day the Jews would be defend and avenge themselves from their enemies. Prior to the second edict, the Jews were doomed and they mourned, but now their mourning had been turned into rejoicing.

Feast - This is the 8th feast mentioned so far in Esther.

And many among the peoples of the land became Jews - The non-Jews became proselytes, embracing the religion of the Jews. Why did they become Jewish proselytes? The text plainly gives us the reason (**for** is a term of explanation) explaining that "**the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.**" The key term is "**dread**" (see Ge 35:5 Ex 15:16 Dt 2:25 Dt11:25) which is discussed in more detail in Esther 9:2 which gives an almost identical explanation for why the enemies of the Jews could not stand before them. The short answer is that God was with the Jews. Yes, they had the royal edict to defend themselves and yes they exuded gladness and joy, but ultimately the King of kings was their commander and their strong Warrior! In the final analysis the Battle was the Lord's, for the enemies of the Jews had invoked the curse of Genesis 12:3, a curse that God had sworn He would fulfill.

Proselyte is from the Greek word **prosēlytos/proselutos** (from **proserchomai** = to come near in turn derived from **pros** = near + **erchomai** = to come [-ēlytos akin to ēlythe = he went]). Proselyte is strictly speaking one who comes from his own people to another. The Greek Septuagint used this word **proselutos** to describe a stranger or foreigner who came to dwell among the Jews and embraced their religion (Ex 12:48, 49; Ex 20:10; Lev 17:8, 10, 12, 15; Nu 9:14) In short, a proselyte was one who converted from heathenism to Judaism (cp Mt 23:15; Acts 2:10; Acts 6:5; Acts 13:43, cp Jn 12:20)

Several passages help us understand what becoming a proselyte entailed...

Genesis 17:9-14 - Teaches that a proselyte must be circumcised, which was a sign that the man identified with the covenant promises of Abraham.

Exodus 12:43-49 -Teaches that a stranger can celebrate Passover only if he is circumcised.

Exodus 20:8-11 - Teaches that the Sabbath was to be kept holy (sanctified, set apart). Ex 20:10 specifically stated "the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you."

Leviticus 24:13-22 - Teaches that the alien and the native shall both be put to death if they blaspheme the Name of God or if they kill another man. Lev 24:22 says "There shall be one standard for you; it shall be for the stranger as well as the native, for I am the LORD your God." The upshot is that the proselyte came under the same requirements as the native Jew.

Numbers 15:14-16NLT "And if any **foreigners living among you (~proselytes)** want to present an offering by fire, pleasing to the LORD, they must follow the same procedures." 15 Native Israelites and **foreigners** are the same before the LORD and are **subject to the same laws**. This is a permanent law for you. 16 The same instructions and regulations will apply both to you and to the foreigners living among you."

Ruth is one of the most famous **proselytes** - In Ru 1:16 she tells Naomi she is wholeheartedly committed to God declaring - "Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." After marrying the Jewish Boaz, she had a son named Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David (Ru 4:17) and was named in the line of the Messiah in Mt 1:1, 5-6.

For (term of explanation) the dread ("fear" - ESV) **of the Jews had fallen on them** - I do not like the NET translation which says "Many of the resident peoples **pretended** to be Jews." In fairness to the NET, they do admit that the Greek Septuagint version favors these as legitimate conversions to Judaism. Thus the NET Note adds that...

The LXX apparently understood the conversion described here to be genuine, since it adds the words "they were being circumcised and" before "they became Jews."

Brenton's English translation of the Septuagint reads "many of the Gentiles were circumcised, and became Jews, for fear of the Jews."

John A Martin comments on that the rise to power of the Jews...

caused many Gentiles to become Jewish proselytes. God's good hand was then becoming obvious to the world at large. No longer were these events being viewed simply as happenstance; now people were beginning to realize that the God of the Jews was protecting them. ([Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., et al: The Bible Knowledge Commentary. 1985. Victor](#) or [Logos](#) or [Wordsearch](#))

Esther 9

Esther 9:1 Now in the **twelfth month** (that is, the month [Adar](#)), on the **thirteenth day** when the king's command and edict were about to be executed, **on the day** when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, it was turned to the contrary so that the Jews themselves gained the mastery over those who hated them.:

THE TWO EDICTS EFFECTED

(Es 9:1-10)

CSB The king's command and law went into effect on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month Adar. On the day when the Jews' enemies had hoped to overpower them, just the opposite happened. The Jews overpowered those who hated them.

NET In the twelfth month (that is, the month of Adar), on its thirteenth day, the edict of the king and his law were to be executed. It was on this day that the enemies of the Jews had supposed that they would gain power over them. But contrary to expectations, the Jews gained power over their enemies.

GWN On the thirteenth day of Adar, the twelfth month, the king's command and decree were to be carried out. On that very day, when the enemies of the Jews expected to overpower them, the exact opposite happened: The Jews overpowered those who hated them.

SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR PROVIDENCES OF GOD BEHIND THE SCENE ("SEEN")

Here is a review of some (not all) of the "coincidences" that reveal the providential workings of the "hidden" God, Who although behind the scene (the "seen"), is nevertheless, in control of the scenes He is behind!

- (1) Fall of Queen Vashti which brings Esther to the attention of King Ahasuerus and to the position of Queen of Persia (Es 1:10-12; Es 2:1-14)
- (2) Mordecai's revelation of a plot to assassinate King Xerxes, a deed which is recorded in the king's chronicles but which coincidentally is not rewarded at that time (Es 2:21-23);
- (3) King's sleepless night resulting in his discovery of Mordecai's unrewarded service, precisely while Haman is on duty in the palace and can be tapped to name and extend the reward to Mordecai (Es 6:1-5)
- (4) Haman's jealousy of Mordecai, which results in his preparing a gallows for Mordecai—from which Haman himself is hung (Es 5:14; 7:9-10)
- (5) Esther's disclosure to the king of Haman's plot to destroy all Jews, herself among them, the king leaves the room in a rage, but returns just as Haman further compromises himself in the eyes of the king by flinging himself upon the queen to beg for mercy.
- (6) Last-minute reversal edict with an order to slay those who want to kill Jews (Es 9:1-17).

THOUGHT - The king of Persia may think he is in control of matters, but the Book of Esther demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt that it is the King of kings Who is in full control. Yes, we do need eyes of faith to see God behind the "seen", but oh how encouraging is this Spirit given illumination to our hearts when we see His Hand of providence at work. Indeed, He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow (Heb 13:8), and is actively involved in each of our lives behind the "seen!" And so the Book of Esther serves to increase our faith (Ro 10:17), so that we can trust God as being actively involved in every ("seen") detail of our lives even though we cannot see Him! Lord, we believe; help our unbelief! (Mk 9:24). Amen. Hallelujah!

Now in the twelfth month (that is, the month [Adar](#)), on the thirteenth day - The thirteenth day of the **twelfth month**, [Adar](#),

arrived for the carrying out of both edicts (cf. Esther 3:7, 13; 8:12). The nine months that elapsed since the second decree was signed are passed over in silence (cf. Esther 8:9).

Adar (means glorious, high, large) - The name Adar was first used after the Babylonian Captivity and was in fact the Babylonian name for the twelfth month of the year. Adar was the sixth month of the civil and the twelfth of the ecclesiastical year of the Jews (Esther 3:7, 13; 8:12; 9:1, 15, 17, 19, 21, only other use Ezra 6:15). **Adar** includes the days extending from the new moon of our **March** to the new moon of **April**.

Another indication of the sovereign providence of God.

The Jews carry out the edict of Mordecai eight months and 20 days later.

It was turned to the contrary (literally "it was turned over") - The 13th day of Adar had originally been set aside for *evil* but God **turned** it out for *good*! (cp Ge 50:20) Now because of Queen Esther's intercession and Mordecai's intervention and "counter" edict, the outcome **"was turned to the contrary."** As we would say today, "the tables were turned"! The "shoe is now on the other foot!" Yes a woman and man are recorded as the instruments, but the Master artist in this great drama is our Great God of Providence!

Gained mastery (literally gained power) - The Jews now had "the upper hand" over those who hated them. Esther 9 assumes a universal hatred of the Jews (i.e., all the provinces were implicated! = Esther 9:2, 16) a truth we had not seen expressed previously in this book. Indeed, worldwide Anti-Semitism is increasing in these last of the last days and will climax when the Anti-Christ makes a seven year covenant of "peace" with Israel and then proceeds to break it at the midpoint (3.5 years), which marks the beginning of Jacob's distress (Jer 30:7), a time of distress (Da 12:1), the time Jesus referred to as the Great Tribulation. (Mt 24:15, 21, See Da 9:27)

Those who hated them - Who are those who hated them? This refers to peoples in all 127 provinces. In other words, in Esther 3:6 only Haman expressed hatred of the Jews, but now in Esther 9 it is clear that there is widespread (127 provinces) Anti-Semitism (Read Esther 9:2, 5, 16) How apropos is this truth to our present day when we find that worldwide Anti-Semitism is on the rise. There is little doubt that Israel is the most hated nation in the history of the world. Theologically this is reasonable because Satan is "the god of this world" (2Corinthians 4:4) and "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1Jn 5:19). Satan's hatred of Israel is implacable not only because she preserved God's Scriptures, the Word of Truth and Life, but also because it was Israel that gave us Jesus the Messiah, a Jew Who "is indeed the Savior of the world" (John 4:42) and Who also defeated the devil (Heb 2:14, 15).

HAMAN-LIKE HATRED FOR THE JEWS CONTINUES

What is in the Jew's and modern Israel's future? According to an article in the Jerusalem Post of June 17, 2011, Israel is at a **'do-or-die moment.'** (See [A do-or-die moment - Jerusalem Post](#)) "As was the case in May, 1967, when the combined Arab armies gathered with the express purpose of wiping the Jewish state off the map – today again, Israel is alone in its hour of greatest peril."

John Weldon writes that...

The United Nations has had more resolutions against the tiny nation of Israel than against all member nations combined, about 200 to 20 in one sampling. Consider a few comments by the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations: "The Human Rights Council has, in fact, passed more resolutions against Israel than all other countries — combined." "... between the Arab Group (22 countries), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (56 countries) and the Non-Aligned Movement (118 members) — all of whom vote consistently against Israel irrespective of the facts on the ground — Israel's condemnatory treatment in the halls of the United Nations is virtually assured."..."In only one of countless examples [of UN Palestinian committee bias], during the 2005 United Nations Annual Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the main ceremony featured a map of the region in which all of modern Israel was labeled 'Palestine.'"

In Europe, anti-Semitism is relatively commonplace. For example, in Hungary, the new openly anti-Semitic Jobbik party, apparently Nazi-sympathetic, with hundreds of thousands of members, has arisen to become the third-largest political party in the nation.⁶⁸ Within the 1.5 billion member Muslim community, anti-Semitism is also commonplace. Just type in "anti-Semitism" on Google to see more illustrations....

"Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has actively promoted Holocaust denial; Iran's Jewish population faces official discrimination, and the official media outlets regularly produce anti-Semitic propaganda. The Syrian government routinely demonizes Jews through public statements and official propaganda. In Belarus, state enterprises freely produce and distribute anti-Semitic material. And in Venezuela, President Hugo Chavez has publicly demonized Israel and utilized stereotypes about Jewish financial influence and control,

while Venezuela's government-sponsored mass media have become vehicles for anti-Semitic discourse, as have government news media in Saudi Arabia and Egypt." (If you are interested in an excellent summary of Israel, it's past and it's certain future, then I strongly recommend you read this 119 page book by John Weldon - [God's Heart for Israel \(and Us\) on Kindle](#))

Esther 9:2 The Jews assembled in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm; and no one could stand before them, for the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples.:

- **Assembled:** Esther 9:10,16 Esther 8:11
- **sought:** Dt 2:30 Jos 11:20 Ps 71:13,24 Isa 8:9
- **dread:** Esther 8:17 Ge 35:5 Ex 23:27 Jos 2:9)

VICTIMS BECOME THE VICTORS!

Those who sought their harm - There was a strong Anti-Semitic sentiment in all 127 provinces, so strong that it motivated the haters to seek the death of the Jews.

For the dread (fear) of them had fallen on all the peoples - **For** is a **term of explanation** and in this context explains why no one could stand before them. Earlier we read that **many among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.** (Esther 8:17)

The teaching that those who try to destroy the Jews will be destroyed appears repeatedly in the Scriptures.

Those who plunder you will be plundered; all who make spoil of you I will despoil (Jer 30:16).

As an aside, believers though persecuted and killed and despised and hated today, will like the hated Jews of Persian, one day no longer be the victims but the victors, for the unrepealable royal edict has been issued stating that we are

More than conquerors Through Him Who loved us.

(Ro 8:37-note)

We see a similar providential protection by God of His people in Genesis after Simeon and Levi had killed the males in Shechem (avenging Shechem's rape of Dinah - Ge 34:2) which incited the Canaanites against Jacob (cp Ge 34:30)...

As they journeyed, there was a **great** (Hebrew = **elohim**) **terror** (Better translated > "a terror from God" = ESV, CSB, "afraid of God" = NET) upon the cities which were around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. (Ge 35:5)

Comment: The NAS mistranslates the Hebrew word **Elohim** as "great" instead of as "God" and in so doing "hides" (or at least obscures) the fact that the **fear** or **terror** on the Gentile cities was not from Jacob but was from God. God providentially sent or caused fear and this fear in turn restrained the Canaanites from taking revenge on Jacob. **This may seem like a "small matter" but it is almost certain that the Gentiles would have avenged the killing of "every male" (cp Ge 34:25) and thus would have annihilated Jacob's line which in effect would have annihilated the Jews and thus destroyed the line of the Messiah!**

In another parallel passage **God** tells **Moses**...

"I will send My **terror** ahead of you, and throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. (Ex 23:27, cp Dt 2:25, 11:25)

Finally we should note that **Rahab the harlot** (in the line of Messiah = Mt 1:5) understood the **fear of God** when she declared to the two Hebrew spies that had entered Jericho...

I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. **For (term of explanation** - you will always do well [and be rewarded] if you stop to interrogate "for" when it is used to explain something!) we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. And when

we heard it, **our hearts melted and no courage remained** in any man any longer **because of you**; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. (Joshua 2:9-11)

Esther 9:3 Even all the princes of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and those who were doing the king's business assisted the Jews, because the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them.:

- **princes:** Esther 3:12 8:9 Ezr 8:36 Da 3:2 6:1,2
- **Dread:** Esther 3:2-6 8:5

Neighbours records another interesting historical deliverance...

Jerusalem was captured by God and not by guns. When General Allenby had learned that the Germans and Turks had mined all the sacred places in Jerusalem and the order had gone forth that just as soon as the British made entry every sacred place was to be blown into atoms that the British might get the blame and the shame, Allenby called together his military staff. Not a word was said about military affairs. **The staff was summoned to pray, and they spent one hour and a half on their knees, asking the God of Jerusalem to give them the city without the destruction of the sacred places.** After prayer Allenby ordered one division down the right, another down the left, his airplanes took the air. The enemies got frightened, ran and left their fortifications, and Allenby and his staff walked safely through the open gates (**Ed: Another "divine coincidence!"**).—From an intimate friend of Allenby's, through Dr. A. C. Dixon. (Wells of Living Water - Wells of Living Water – Volume 4)

Esther 9:4 Indeed, Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for the man Mordecai became greater and greater.:

- **great:** Ps 18:43
- **his fame:** Jos 6:27 1Sa 2:30 1Ch 14:17 Zep 3:19 Mt 4:24
- **became greater:** 2Sa 3:1 1Ch 11:9 Ps 1:3 Pr 4:18 Isa 9:7

Esther 9:5 Thus the Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying; and they did what they pleased to those who hated them:

- Ps 18:34-40,47,48 20:7,8 149:6-9 2Th 1:6
- **sword:** Jer 18:21

This verse gives a summary overview of all the fighting that took place in Persian on this monumental day.

While the Jews carried out the task of defending themselves and killing their enemies, we must remember that behind the scenes is the God Who alone is the Avenger. Through a series of coincidences He had orchestrated this final lethal blow at Haman's evil plan of extermination. And yet we must always remember Paul's words of warning and not seek revenge for wrongs committed against us...

Never take your own revenge, beloved, but **leave** (aorist imperative) room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. (Ro 12:19-note)

God is the Avenger and unless extraordinary circumstances occur in our lives as did in the Book of Esther, we are to leave it to God to extract the appropriate retribution at the perfect time. We can rest assured He will. In the meantime we must **pray** (present imperative) for those who persecute us (Mt 5:44-note). As an aside don't try to obey this command from Jesus in your own strength. You cannot do it! Only as you submit to the Spirit, will you be given the desire and the power to pray for those who persecute you!

Breneman writes that "The expression "they did what they pleased," however, should not be understood as a reference to cruelty but to the reversal of Haman's plans. The king had given him authority to "do with the people as you please" (3:11). That royal authorization, however, had been overturned by a higher authority. (The New American Commentary).

Barry Davis adds that "the clause "did what they pleased" does not imply that the Jews act sadistically toward those who hate them,

rather that the Jews have no difficulty in dispatching quickly their enemies. (Ruth & Esther: God behind the Seen: Focus on the Bible Commentary)

Esther 9:6 At the citadel in Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men,;

Kill (02026)(**charag/harag**) is first used in Ge 4:8 (Cain killing Abel) implies violent killing and means to murder (Ex 21:14, Jezebel's killing of the prophets = 1Ki 18:13), as well as to carry out judicial execution or to kill animals (butchering cattle - Isa 22:13). Esther 9 is a "**bloody chapter**" for the word **Kill** is a "key word" being used six times (Es 9:6 Es 9:10 Es 9:11 Es 9:12 Es 9:15 Es 9:16, also in Es 3:13 Es 7:4 Es 8:11) In Amos 4:10 has God as the subject carrying out the act of slaying.

Esther 9:7 and Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha

And - Now the writer lists 10 specific names, the names of the sons of Haman. Remember Mordecai's edict allowed the Jews to assemble and defend. It follows that the 10 sons of Haman must have attacked the Jews and for this reason were killed.

Wiersbe notes that "In the text of the Hebrew Scriptures, the ten names are arranged on the page to look like a gallows. On the Feast of Purim, the synagogue reader reads these ten names all in one breath because the sons of Haman all died together."

Why are they specifically named? One cannot be sure except that their names will live in infamy, much like 10 of Hitler's top associates who were put to death by hanging after their trial at Nuremberg in 1946. One of Hitler's henchmen, **Julius Streicher**, expressed an awareness of the parallel with the events of Esther, for as he was on the way to the gallows, he shouted "Purim Fest 1946!" Here is the account in **Wikipedia**...

"...For his 25 years of speaking, writing and preaching hatred of the Jews, Streicher was widely known as 'Jew-Baiter Number One.' In his speeches and articles, week after week, month after month, he infected the German mind with the virus of anti-Semitism, and incited the German people to active persecution... Streicher's incitement to murder and extermination at the time when Jews in the East were being killed under the most horrible conditions clearly constitutes persecution on political and racial grounds in connection with war crimes, as defined by the Charter, and constitutes a crime against humanity."

Streicher was hanged in the early hours of 16 October 1946, along with the nine other condemned defendants from the first Nuremberg trial (Göring, Streicher's nemesis, committed suicide only hours earlier). Streicher's was the most melodramatic of the hangings carried out that night. At the bottom of the scaffold he cried out "Heil Hitler!". When he mounted the platform, he delivered his last sneering reference to Jewish scripture, snapping "**Purim-Fest 1946!**". ([Julius Streicher - Wikipedia](#))

Judaism 101 also records that "Another echo of Purim is found in the Soviet Union a few years later. In early 1953, Stalin was planning to deport most of the Jews in the Soviet Union to Siberia, but just before his plans came to fruition, he suffered a stroke and died a few days later. He suffered that stroke on the night of March 1, 1953: the night after Purim (note: Jewish days end at sunset; you will see March 1 on the calendar as Purim). The plan to deport Jews was not carried out. ([Judaism 101 Purim](#))

Esther 9:8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,;

Esther 9:9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha,;

Esther 9:10 the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.:

- **ten sons:** Esther 5:11 Ex 20:5 Job 18:18,19 27:13-15 Ps 21:10 109:12,13
- **enemy:** Esther 3:1 7:4,6 Ex 17:16
- **plunder:** Esther 9:15,16 Esther 8:11 Ge 14:23 Ro 12:17 Php 4:8

Esther 9:11 On that day the number of those who were killed at the citadel in Susa was reported to the king:

ESTHER'S ADDENDUM

(Esther 9:11-15)

Esther 9:12 The king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman at the citadel in Susa. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your petition? It shall even be granted you. And what is your further request? It shall also be done.":

The outcome for Haman's wife Zeresh and his wise men is unknown (Esther 5:14; 6:12, 13).

Now what is your petition? - The king seems to be relatively unperturbed by the casualty report!

Esther 9:13 Then said Esther, "If it pleases the king, let tomorrow also be granted to the Jews who are in Susa to do according to the edict of today; and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows.":

If it pleases the king (Esther always defers to the king), **let tomorrow also be granted** - Esther has a two fold request: (1) an extra day (14th of Adar) for the Jews in Susa to assemble and defend themselves. The reason is not stated but the clear implication is that there are enemies in Susa who desire to kill the Jews and somehow Esther is aware of this. (2) Haman's 10 sons hanged. Recall that ancient hanging was more like being impaled on a post that swinging from a rope.

Guzik comments that "Many have criticized Esther for this (E.g. Charles Ryrie writes "Perhaps she was simply being vindictive, or perhaps she had learned of further attacks being planned against the Jews."), saying it showed a lack of love towards her enemies. Yet she displays the same principle found so often in Joshua - she would not settle for less than total victory.

Let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows - Why? The sons had already been killed. Hanging in addition at first glance seems excessive, even vindictive on Esther's part, but was it? Herodotus tells us that this was a common practice in the Persian period, especially for those who were convicted of insurrection (Herodotus 3:125). Hanging a criminal's corpse from a tree or post attached a further humiliation to capital punishment. Clearly the display of the hanging corpses of Haman's sons would serve as a powerful deterrent to any who might contemplate further attacks against the Jews.

Swindoll comments on the display of the dead bodies of Haman's sons...

What was the point of this, since they were already dead? It was a way of saying publicly, "What these men and their father stood for will never be allowed again!" There's a needed message of fear eloquently communicated in capital punishment.

Moses alluded to hanging in **Deuteronomy**...

And if a man has committed a sin worthy of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance. (Dt 21:22-23)

MacArthur comments: After an execution, the body was permitted to hang on a tree for the rest of the day as a public display of the consequences of disobedience. However, the body was not to remain on the tree overnight, but was to be properly buried before sunset.

Peter Craigie comments: The sequence in this verse indicates that hanging was not a method of execution, but something that was done **after** the death of a criminal, on the same day. When the man was dead, he would be hanged on a tree or a "wooden post" of some kind; the gruesome sight would then serve as a warning to the population of the results of breaking those laws which were punishable by death....

An object accursed. The body was not accursed of God (or lit. "curse of God") because it was hanging on

a tree; it was hanging on a tree because it was **accursed** of God. And the body was not accursed of God simply because it was dead (for all men die), but it was **accursed** because of the **reason for the death**. To break the law of God and live as though He did not matter or exist, was in effect to curse Him; and He who cursed God would be accursed of God. To break the law of God and incur thereby the penalty of death, was to die the worst possible kind of death, for the means of death was a formal and terminal separation from the community of God's people. Hence the use of this verse in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians is very forceful. Christ took upon himself the **curse of the law, the penalty of death**, thereby redeeming us from the curse of the law. (Gal. 3:13) The manner of His death, crucifixion, symbolized dramatically the meaning of His death. His separation from the family of God made possible our admission to the family of God, because the curse of the broken law—which would have permanently barred admission—had been removed.

Esther 9:14 So the king commanded that it should be done so; and an edict was issued in Susa, and Haman's ten sons were hanged.:

Haman's ten sons were hanged - They had already been killed that same day, but now would be impaled for all to see (and be warned) for the remainder of the day, presumably being taken off the posts before sunset (in accordance with Dt 21:22-23).

Guzik writes that "Haman and his sons were descendants of the ancient Amalekites (comparing Es 3:1 and 1Sa 15:8-33). God commanded Saul, the son of Kish, to execute the full extent of God's judgment against the Amalekites (1Sa 15:2-3). Samuel failed; but this later descendant of the tribe of Benjamin and a son of Kish named Mordecai (Es 2:5-6) completed God's judgment against the Amalekites."

Spurgeon adds that "Now it was God's intent that a last conflict should take place between Israel and Amalek: the conflict which began with Joshua in the desert was to be finished by Mordecai in the king's palace."

Esther 9:15 The Jews who were in Susa assembled also on the **fourteenth day of the month Adar and killed three hundred men in Susa, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.:**

The fourteenth day of the month Adar - The original "target" date was the 13th day, but Esther had requested and received an extension of one day (Es 9:13).

But they did not lay their hands on the plunder - As in Esther 9:10, 16 the failure to take spoils from their victims shows that the Jews were not out to pillage and enrich themselves, but only to defend their lives. This also suggests that the Jews did not kill women and children but instead left the property for them.

Esther 9:16 Now the rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces assembled, to defend their lives and rid themselves of their enemies, and kill 75,000 of those who hated them; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder:

KILLING FIELDS IN THE PROVINCES

(Es 9:16-17)

Rid themselves - Literally this reads "to have rest from" (their enemies)

Rid (05118) (**nuach**) refers to a resting place, a freeing of oneself from something. This noun is also used in Es 9:17 (rested), Es 9:18 (rested) and Es 9:22 (rid). Every use in the Septuagint is translated with anapauo which means to cause one to gain relief from toil and thus to refresh or revive them. This is the word Jesus used of spiritual rest in Mt 11:28.

75,000 of those who hated them - Given 127 provinces, the number killed averages out to about 600 per province. Remember that the Jews were not the aggressors. Those killed attacked the Jews. They did not have just a minor case of Anti-Semitism but a hatred which drove them to seek to murder the Jews. And so we see that Anti-Semitism was not restricted to the capital city but was throughout the kingdom, much like Anti-Semitism today is worldwide.

Esther 9:17 This was done on the **thirteenth day of the month Adar**, and on the **fourteenth day** they rested and made it a **day of feasting and rejoicing**..:

They...made it a day of feasting and rejoicing - This jubilant atmosphere continues to this very day when Jews annually celebrate the Feast of Purim.

Banquet/feast (key word in Esther) - Esther 1:3, 1:5, 1:9, 2:18, 5:4, 5:5, 5:6, 5:8, 5:12, 5:14, 6:14, 7:2, 8:17, 9:17, 9:18, 9:19,9:22

Esther 9:18 But the Jews who were in Susa assembled on the **thirteenth and the fourteenth of the same month**, and they rested on the **fifteenth day** and made it a **day** of feasting and rejoicing.:

SUSA REDUX

(Es 9:18-19)

Assembled on the thirteenth and the fourteenth of the same month - Because of the extra day to defend themselves as requested by Queen Esther and granted by King Xerxes.

Esther 9:19 Therefore the Jews of the rural areas, who live in the rural towns, make the **fourteenth day of the month Adar** a holiday for rejoicing and feasting and sending portions of food to one another.:

Make the fourteenth day of the month Adar a holiday - The Jews outside of Susa celebrated on the day the Jews in Susa were still assembling.

Holiday - Literally "a good day" (yom tov). Our English word **holiday** is (from **halig** = holy and **d + g** = day) is literally a "holy day!" It is a day marked by a general suspension of work in commemoration of the event being celebrated.

Esther 9:20 Then Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,:

MORDECAI'S FIRST LETTER

(Es 9:20-22)

These events - What events? Surely the historical events that led up to the day which saw the Jews victorious over their enemies.

Esther 9:21 obliging them to celebrate the **fourteenth day of the month Adar**, and the **fifteenth day of the same month, annually**,:

Mordecai's letter called for the Jews to set aside **two days of celebration**, but the modern feast of Purim is generally only celebrated on one day.

Esther 9:22 because on **those days** the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and it was a month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and rejoicing and sending portions of food to one another and gifts to the poor.:

- **those days**: Es 3:12,13 Ex 13:3-8 Ps 103:2 Isa 12:1,2 Isa 14:3
- **sorrow**: Ps 30:11 Mt 5:4 Jn 16:20-22
- **sending portions**: Es 9:19 Ne 8:10-12 Lk 11:41 Acts 2:44-46 Gal 2:10

Because - A term of explanation, in this case explaining why two days were set aside.

Sorrow to gladness....mourning into a holiday (literally "good day") - reminds one of the words of David...

**Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing;
Thou hast loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness**

(Ps 30:11)

Spurgeon comments on **Ps 30:11** - Observe the contrast, God takes away the mourning of his people; and what does he give them instead of it? Quiet and peace? Aye, and a great deal more than that. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing. He makes their hearts to dance at the sound of his name. He takes off their sackcloth. That is good. What a delight to be rid of the habiliments of woe! But what then? He clothes us. And how? With some common dress? Nay, but with that royal vestment which is the array of glorified spirits in heaven. Thou hast girded me with gladness. This is better than to wear garments of silk or cloth of gold, bedight with embroidery and bespangled with gems. Many a poor man wears this heavenly apparel wrapped around his heart, though fustian and corduroy are his only outward garb; and such a man needs not envy the emperor in all his pomp. Glory be to thee, O God, if, by a sense of full forgiveness and present justification, thou hast enriched my spiritual nature, and filled me with all the fulness of God.

Gladness ((08057)(simchah) refers to joy, rejoicing, gladness, pleasure, especially the experience and the manifestations associated with joy and gladness. Thus it signifies a celebration of something with activities filled with joy and cheer. In some uses **simchah** functions as a synonym for the feasting (translated as "festival" in Neh 8:12). **Simchah** is used 6x in Esther (Es 8:16, 17, Es 9:17, 18, 19).

Gifts to the poor - This is a practice continued by Jews in the modern version of the Feast of Purim.

Esther 9:23 Thus the Jews undertook what they had started to do, and what Mordecai had written to them:

PURIM NAMED & COMMEMORATED

(Es 9:23-28)

NLT - So the Jews adopted Mordecai's suggestion and began this annual custom.

NIV - So the Jews agreed to continue the celebration they had begun, doing what Mordecai had written to them.

NAB - The Jews took upon themselves for the future this observance which they instituted at the written direction of Mordecai.

NJB Once having begun, the Jews continued observing these practices, Mordecai having written them an account

The author now presents a recapitulation of the events that led to the establishment of the annual celebration of Purim.

Wiersbe notes that "While Purim is not a Christian festival, Christians certainly ought to rejoice with their Jewish friends because every spiritual blessing we have has come through the Jews. The Jews gave to the world the knowledge of the true and living God, the Scriptures, and the Savior. The first Christians were Jewish believers, and so were the first missionaries. Jesus was a Jew who died on Passover, a Jewish feast day, and rose again from the dead on another Jewish holy day, the Feast of Firstfruits. The Holy Spirit came from heaven upon a group of Jewish believers on a Jewish holiday, Pentecost. "Salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). If there had been no Jews, there would be no church." (Ibid)

Esther 9:24 For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews, had schemed against the Jews to destroy them and had cast Pur, that is the lot, to disturb them and destroy them:

For - term of explanation = This verse introduces the explanation of why the celebration came to be named Purim, an explanation that continues through Es 9:26.

Esther 9:25 But when it came to the king's attention, he commanded by letter that his wicked scheme which he had devised against the Jews, should return on his own head and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.:

But - A term of conclusion, which in this case marks one of the greatest "reversals" in the history of the Jewish people, one that impacted the destiny of the all mankind!

Return on his own head - Another way of saying what one sows, he will surely reap (Gal 6:7-note, Gal 6:8-note)

Esther 9:26 Therefore they called these days **Purim after the name of **Pur**. And because of the instructions in this letter, both what they had seen in this regard and what had happened to them,:**

PURIM HONORS GOD WHO DIRECTED THE DECISION OF THE PUR

Therefore - (term of conclusion) The conclusion of Haman's evil edict and Mordecai's clever counter leading to Jewish victory and preservation of their race was the establishment of a feast to commemorate this great reversal of fortunes with the feast being named **Purim**, because of the central role played by the providential casting of the pur (see below).

MacArthur says **Purim** is "The first and last biblically revealed, non-Mosaic festival with perpetual significance."

Modern Jews celebrate **Purim** by reading the Book of Esther in the synagogue and whenever **Haman's** name is mentioned, they boo, hiss, stomp their feet and rattle their **gragers** ([Click to hear a grager](#))

Here's a great song that portrays the story of Esther and subsequent celebration associated with the festive day of **Purim** - [The Maccabeats - Purim Song](#)

Purim - This is the plural of **pur**, because there are two days (**purim**), not one (**pur**). **Why might they have named this feast Purim? Ultimately Who was behind the casting of the pur?** Although man casts the lot, but God directs the "decision" (Pr 16:33-[Spurgeon's devotional + notes: Sermon by Charles Simeon](#)), so the providential hand of God is behind the scene of the "seen." Had He not directed the decision to have the specific date of the Jewish annihilation be 12 months after Haman's initial "death warrant" was sent, the Jews would not have had sufficient time to prepare to defend themselves from their enemies who hated them! So in the final analysis the name **Purim** gives praise and glory the One Who directed the "decision" of the **pur**!

PLAY THIS SONG THAT REMINDS US THAT...

[GOD IS IN CONTROL](#)

The celebration of Purim usually falls in the month of March. Here are the dates for the next 4 **Purim** - sunset February 23, 2013 - nightfall February 24, 2013, sunset March 15, 2014 - nightfall March 16, 2014, sunset March 4, 2015 - nightfall March 5, 2015; sunset March 23, 2016 - nightfall March 24, 2016. Notice that in accord with Mordecai's letter, the festival of Purim takes place on **two** successive days!

May your study of the Book of Esther serve as a bridge to dialogue with your Jewish co-workers and friends regarding the significance of this miraculous event and how it made possible the greatest event in the history of the world, the **Coming of the Messiah** from the lineage of the Jews.

THOUGHT - May God open the eyes of many Jews in the last days (the day of the consummation the "edict" for all mankind is drawing nigh) to the deliverance found only in the good news of the Messiah's death, burial and resurrection. Amen

Judaism 101 site has the following note on **Purim** - Purim is celebrated on the 14th day of Adar, which is usually in March. The 13th of Adar is the day that Haman chose for the extermination of the Jews, and the day that the Jews battled their enemies for their lives. On the day afterwards, the 14th, they celebrated their survival. In cities that were walled in the time of Joshua, Purim is celebrated on the 15th of the month, because the book of Esther says that in Shushan (a walled city), deliverance from the massacre was not complete until the next day. The 15th is referred to as Shushan Purim. ([Judaism 101 Purim - some interesting descriptive comments although much of it is not Biblical per se - so read it with a "grain of salt."](#))

Wiersbe has this note on the celebration of Purim - Today, the Jews begin their celebration with a fast on the thirteenth day of the month (Es 9:31), commemorating the date on which Haman's evil decree was issued (Es 3:12). They go to the synagogue and hear the Book of Esther publicly read; and whenever the name of Haman is mentioned, they cry out, "May he be accursed!" or "May his name perish!" Children bring a special Purim rattle called a "**grager**" and use it to make noise every time they hear Haman's name read. On the morning of the fourteenth day of the month, the Jews again go to the synagogue, where the Esther story is read again and the congregation engages in prayer. The story about Moses and the Amalekites (Ex. 17:8-16) is also read. Then the celebrants go home to a festive holiday meal with gifts and special foods, and the celebrating continues on the next day. They also send gifts and food to the poor and needy so that everybody can rejoice together. (Ibid)

Esther 9:27 the Jews established and made a custom for themselves and for their descendants and for all those who allied themselves with them, so that they would not fail to celebrate these two days according to their regulation and according to their appointed time annually.:

CSB - the Jews bound themselves, their descendants, and all who joined with them to a commitment that they would not fail to celebrate these two days each and every year according to the written instructions and according to the time appointed.

ESV - the Jews firmly obligated themselves and their offspring and all who joined them, that without fail they would keep these two days according to what was written and at the time appointed every year,

NET - Therefore, because of the account found in this letter and what they had faced in this regard and what had happened to them (most versions include this text at the end of Es 9:26), the Jews established as binding on themselves, their descendants, and all who joined their company that they should observe these two days without fail, just as written and at the appropriate time on an annual basis.

Those who allied themselves with them - This describes proselytes who took up the Jewish religion. They also were instructed to celebrate the two days of Purim.

Allied (03867) (**lavah**) means to join or accompany and conveys the idea of one attaching himself to some one or some thing.

Esther 9:28 So these days were to be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, every family, every province and every city; and these days of Purim were not to fail from among the Jews, or their memory fade from their descendants.:

- **Remembered:** Ex 12:17 Ps 78:5-7 Ps 103:2
- **Memory fade:** Ex 13:8,9 Jos 4:7 Zec 6:14

PURIM: A MEMORIAL

These days of Purim were not to fail from among the Jews- That is they were not to fail to observe the two days of Purim.

Memory (02143) (**zeker**) is a noun which means remembrance.

Zeker - 23x in OT - Ex 3:15; 17:14; Deut 25:19; 32:26; Es 9:28; Job 18:17; Ps 6:5; 9:6; 30:4; 34:16; 97:12; 102:12; 109:15; 111:4; 112:6; 135:13; 145:7; Pr 10:7; Eccl 9:5; Isa 26:8, 14; Hos 12:5; 14:7 and is translated memorial-name(1), memory(12), mention(1), name(4), remembered(2), remembrance(2), renown(1).

THOUGHT - What effect would (should) this memorial day have on the Jews? To remind them that God is in Control. Do you believe that is true in your life? Have you set up any "memorial stones" to remind you and your children of His past deliverances? Listen to Twila Paris' song "[God Is In Control](#)" (it has some good words), thank Him for His manifold deliverances in your life and worship His hand of providence in your life.

After the children of Israel passed through the Jordan River on dry ground under the leadership of Joshua, they were instructed to establish a memorial of this great event...

Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.' So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever. (Joshua 4:7)

COMMENT: Have you set up any "memorials" in your life or the life of your family? As we can all attest, our tendency is to forget things, even the great things God has done in our lives. Setting up a memorial counters our natural tendency to forget. May God give you insight into how you might set up a personal and/or family memorial that commemorates the great act of God in your life. For example, instead of celebrating your physical birthday, you might choose to celebrate your spiritual birthday with your family. See Charles Spurgeon's sermon [Things to be Remembered](#). (See related [Preceptaustin Blog Post](#))

Esther 9:29 Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim.:

SECOND LETTER CONCERNING PURIM

(Es 9:29-32)

Second letter about Purim - While we cannot state with absolute certainty why there were two letters regarding Purim, there is no doubt that one effect on the Persian Jewish recipients would have been to add an extra measure of assurance that they would indeed now be able to experience **peace and truth** (security)! And now not only did the letter have the backing of the Prime Minister (Mordecai) but it was also affirmed by the Queen herself. Surely the effect on the Jews who had been appropriately anxious and fearful for their lives for many months could now put their anxious thoughts and fears to rest.

Esther 9:30 He sent letters to all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, namely, words of peace and truth:

PROCLAMATION OF PEACE AND TRUTH

The **NET** renders it "Letters were sent to all the Jews in the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the empire of Ahasuerus— words of true peace" with an explanatory note that...

The present translation is based on the Niphal form (vayyishalakh, "were sent"; so also NRSV, TEV, CEV, NLT) rather than the reading of the Massoretic Text (vayyishlakh, Qal, "and he sent"). The subject of the MT verb would have to be Mordecai (cf. NAB, NIV, NCV), but this is problematic in light of Esther 9:29, where both Esther and Mordecai are responsible for the letters.

Peace and truth (NIV = "goodwill and assurance") - This phrase is found 3 other times in Scripture - 2Ki 20:19 (repeated in Isa 39:8) is in the form of a question (actually a **declaration** in most of the other major translations - ESV, NET, NIV - which translate the Hebrew word as "security" rather than as "truth") from Hezekiah to the prophet Isaiah. In Jeremiah the words are in the form of a promise of Jehovah to faithless, exiled Judah and Israel...

Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them; and I will reveal to them an abundance of **peace and truth**. (ESV, NET = security) (Jer 33:6)

Criswell comments on Jeremiah 33:6-8: Here we find Yahweh's promise of restoration. In the restoration Yahweh will grant healing, peace, truth, cleansing, and forgiveness. Jer 33:8 contains three terms that express different aspects of the idea of sin: "iniquity" ('avon, Heb., "to stray from the appointed path"); "sinned" (hata, Heb., "to miss the mark"); and "transgressed" (pasha', Heb., "to rebel"). For these offenses God will grant "cleansing" (tahir, Heb., "to make ceremonially clean") and "pardon" (salah, Heb., "to forgive"). Central to the character of God is His willingness and desire to forgive. This is based on His grace (Eph 2:8, 9).

Comment: Notice that Jeremiah 33:8 is essentially describing the salvation and heart circumcision (cleansing) available only in the **New Covenant**. Thus although the world "New Covenant" is not used here, clearly it is implied. (See interesting discussion of New Covenant in the Old Testament)

Peace (07965) (**shalom** from **salam/salem/shalam** = to be safe, sound, healthy, perfect, complete [1Ki 7:51, Neh 6:18) signifies a sense of well-being and harmony both within and without (A message Esther and Mordecai would surely want to convey in their second letter!) It also signifies completeness, wholeness and peace.

Think about what this great Hebrew word meant to the Jewish recipients who had only months before been faced with the threat of total annihilation. Now they receive a communication that spoke of **shalom** to their hearts, for they understood the many great nuances of shalom including health, welfare, safety, soundness, tranquility, rest, harmony, absence of agitation or discord, state of calm without anxiety or stress. These attitudes and emotions were possible now that Haman's edict had been effectively countered!

Truth (0547) (**'emeth**) is derived from the word **aman** (related to **amen**) which describes firmness, certainty, and stability, thus the noun 'emeth describes firmness, faithfulness, truth with the nuances of stability, sureness, reliability, continuance. 'Emeth is frequently coupled with hesed (lovingkindness - Pr 3:3, Hos 4:1). The epitome and essence of truth is of course God Who is fittingly referred to as "the God of truth" (Ps 31:5).

In the context of Haman's recent threat of annihilation and disturbance of peace and tranquility, taking 'emeth as speaking of "**security**" might be a more contextually appropriate rendering than "**truth**."

W A Criswell comments that "This verse, together with Es 9:22, alludes to Zech. 8:19, indicating that this divine reversal of fortunes (cf. Es 4:3 and Es 8:16, 17) is taken as a sign confirming the ultimate fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy of peace and prosperity for God's people. The switching of "truth and peace" to "peace and truth" is typical of such allusions. Thus, the Book of Esther is not only historical, theological, and devotional, but also subtly prophetic."

Esther 9:31 to establish these days of Purim at their appointed times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had established for them, and just as they had established for themselves and for their descendants with instructions for their times of fasting and their lamentations.:

NLT - These letters established the Festival of Purim--an annual celebration of these days at the appointed time, decreed by both Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther. (The people decided to observe this festival, just as they had decided for themselves and their descendants to establish the times of fasting and mourning.)

Esther 9:32 The command of Esther established these customs for Purim, and it was written in the book.:

ESTHER 10 COMMENTARY

Esther 10:1 Now King Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land and on the coastlands of the sea:

MORDECAI'S EXALTATION & RULE

(Es 10:1-3)

See Spurgeon's Sermon - [Esther 10:3 He worked for the good of his people](#)

Tribute (04522) (**mas**) referred to forced labor or unpaid labor from a vassal to a lord or as in the present context forced payment of submissive peoples to a superior ruler. Webster defines our English word **tribute** as "a payment by one ruler or nation to another in acknowledgment of submission or as the price of protection."

HCSB Study Bible writes that "The mention of Ahasuerus imposing a **tax** (Heb = mas) throughout the land seems out of place. Some interpreters suggest this may be another example of reversal, as the tax relief given to the empire when Ahasuerus married Esther (Es 2:18) was now made up for with the new tax. More likely this is an echo of Joseph and his role as second in command in Egypt (Ge 41:40). Like Joseph before him, Mordecai the Jew helped a Gentile king bring prosperity to the crown."

Esther 10:2 And all the accomplishments of his authority and strength, and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia?:

And all the accomplishments of his authority and strength - This refers to King Ashasuerus "epitaph."

Are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia?- A rhetorical question. Yes they are written in the Book.

Henry Morris has an interesting thought on "**the Book**" noting that "Although this book and its records have not been found (perhaps destroyed by later emperors or conquerors), the essential historicity of the events is confirmed by the long-continued observance of the feast-days of Purim--an observance which could never have been initiated and sustained otherwise."

Esther 10:3 For Mordecai the Jew was second only to King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews and in favor with his many kinsmen, one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.:

Mordecai the Jew was second only to King Ahasuerus - Mordecai joins other renowned Jewish statesmen like Joseph, who ranked second in the Egyptian dynasty (Ge 41:37–45), and Daniel, who succeeded in both the Babylonian (Da 2:46–49; 5:29) and Medo-Persian Empires (Da 6:28).

Spurgeon exhorts us...

let each child of God rejoice that we have a guardian so near the throne. Every Jew in Shushan must have felt hope when he remembered that the queen was a Jewess. Today let us be glad that Jesus is exalted.

HCSB Study Bible writes that "The book of Esther ends with a picture of peace and tranquility, with Jewish people "living in harmony and mutual goodwill with the Gentile majority, under Jewish leaders who are respected and admired by the rulers, yet who are openly identified with the Jewish community and unashamed to advance its interests and to speak out in its defense" (J. Levenson, Esther, p. 234).

Ryrie has a historical note "Mordecai held the office of first minister no longer than eight years, for secular history records that another man was in that office in 465 B.C."

Here is **David Guzik's** summary of God's providential hand in Esther and what He arranged to transpire...

- God arranged for the noble Queen Vashti to lose her place.
- God arranged for a competition to replace Queen Vashti.
- God arranged for Esther to enter the competition.
- God arranged special favor for Esther among the other women.
- God arranged for Mordecai to have access to both Esther and the affairs of the kingdom.
- God arranged the lot that was cast to give 11 months warning before the evil event (Esther 3:12-13).
- God arranged that the decree command that the Jews be killed by private hands, instead of by the army of Persia - which would have been much more difficult to stop.
- God arranged that Haman restrain his anger and not kill Mordecai immediately (Esther 5:10).
- God arranged for Esther to delay her request; first asking for a banquet with the king and then another banquet.
- God arranged for Haman's anger to come to a peak on one particular day.
- God arranged for Ahasuerus to have a sleepless night.
- God arranged for Ahasuerus to pick up a certain book in his sleepless night.
- God arranged for Ahasuerus to read the passage about Mordecai in that particular book.

Spurgeon sums up the book of Esther...

There it is; man is a free agent in what he does, responsible for his actions, and verily guilty when he does

wrong, and he will be justly punished too, and if he be lost the blame will rest with himself alone: but yet there is One who ruleth over all, who, without complicity in their sin, makes even the actions of wicked men to subserve his holy and righteous purposes. Believe these two truths and you will see them in practical agreement in daily life, though you will not be able to devise a theory for harmonizing them on paper.