

Esther 8

Verses 1- 2

On that day King Ahasuerus gave the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther; and Mordecai came before the king, because Esther had disclosed what he was to her. ² Then 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.

¹ On that day King Ahasuerus gave the house of Haman to Queen Esther. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

Given the high position that Haman held before he was hung on the gallows it is likely that the house of Haman was a castle and its furnishings. This would have also included numerous servants and attendants that Haman had to oversee the daily needs of his family. After receiving the house of Haman Esther turned it over to Mordecai.

² Then 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.

Mordecai was now the Prime Minister and he had a residence appropriate to his new office. More importantly, the Jews now had two direct lines to the king

Verses 3 - 6

³ Then Esther spoke again to the king, fell at his feet, wept, and pleaded for his compassion to avert the evil *scheme* of Haman the Agagite and his plot which he had devised against the Jews. ⁴ And the king extended the golden scepter to Esther. So Esther got up and stood before the king. 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 eliminate the Jews who are in all the king’s provinces. ⁶ For how can I endure to see the disaster which will happen to my people, and how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?”

³ Then Esther spoke again to the king, fell at his feet, wept, and pleaded for his compassion to avert the evil *scheme* of Haman the Agagite and his plot which he had devised against the Jews.

Haman was dead but the decree which he had devised was still in force and it could not be revoked according to Medo Persian law.

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We know this could not happen but it never hurts to try. One thing that this does reveal however is that Esther did not have a spirit of revenge. She did not want to see the blood of her enemies but simply wanted the edict to be revoked.

Verses 7 - 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 they have hanged him on the wooden *gallows* because he had reached out with his hand against the Jews.

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.”

The king could not reverse the decree but he gave the Jews the legal authority to defend themselves. In doing this the enemies of the Jews no longer had the advantage.

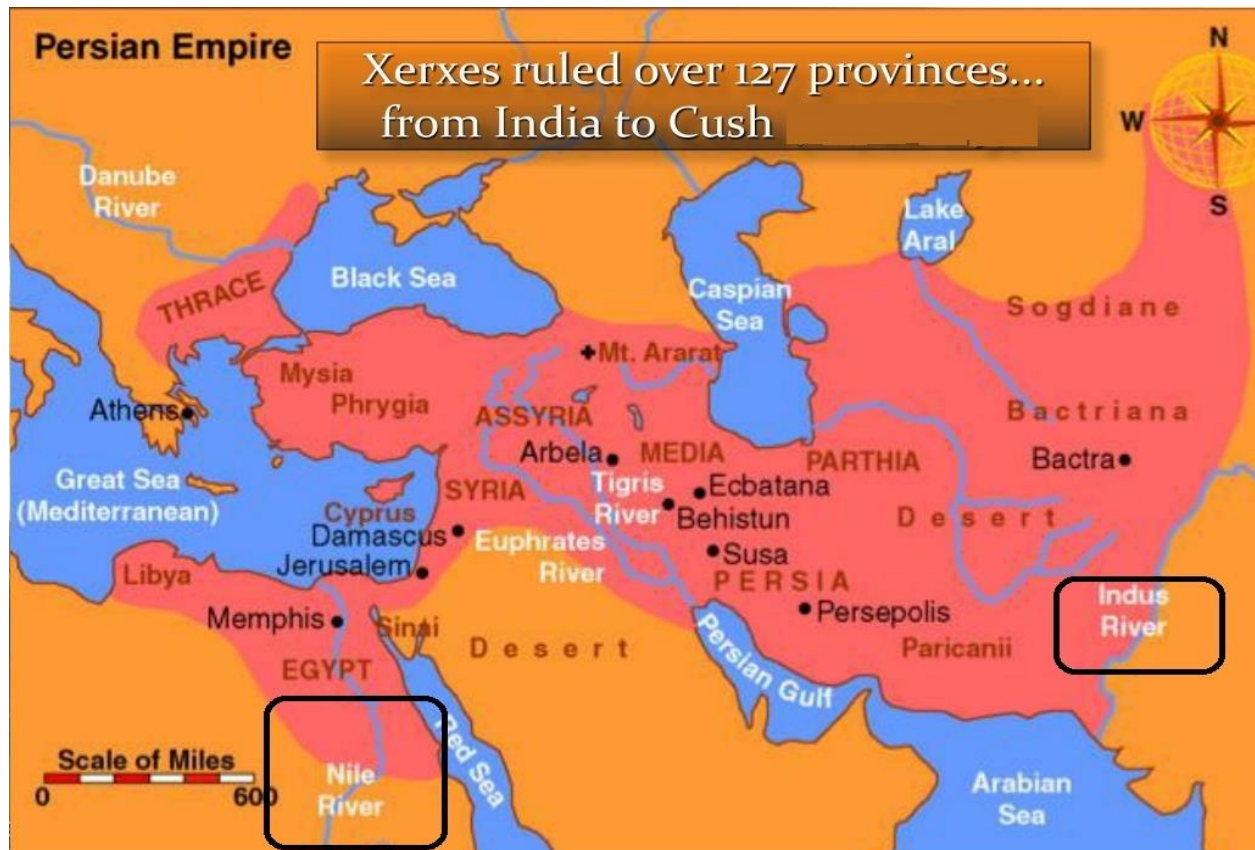
Verses 9 - 10

⁹ So the king’s scribes were summoned at that time in the third month (that is, the month Sivan), on the twenty-third day; and it was written in accordance with everything that Mordecai commanded the Jews, the satraps, the governors, and the officials of the provinces which *extended* from India to Cush, 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. 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 royal relay horses, offspring of racing mares.

This new decree was sent out about two months after the first decree was issued so the Jews had plenty of time (about 8 months) to prepare for battle against their enemies.

The letters were sent by RRH (Royal relay horses) that were breed from racing mares. This was important given the size of the Medo Persian Empire.

See Map 805



Verses 11 - 14

¹¹ In the letters the king granted the Jews who were in each and every city *the right* to assemble and to defend their lives, to destroy, kill, and eliminate the entire army of *any* people or province which was going to attack them, *including* children and women, and to plunder their spoils, ¹² on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar). 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. ¹⁴ The couriers, hurrying and speeded by the king's command, left, riding on the royal relay horses; and the decree was issued at the citadel in Susa.

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What Haman intended for the Jews was not completely nullified because the Jews had been living in peace among the various peoples of Persia but now there was still the possibility of armed conflict. However, this was as close to a reversal of the Haman edict that anyone could possibly hope for given the Persian law.

The Jews were authorized to take the property of their attackers but when the time came they waived that right. This put them in the position of being admired by the general public because this was seen as an act of defending themselves not a conflict based on greed or profit

Verses 15 - 17

¹⁵ Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in a royal robe of violet and white, with a large crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced. ¹⁶ For the Jews there was light, joy, jubilation, and honor. ¹⁷ In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree arrived, there was joy and jubilation for the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews, because the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.

^{17a} In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree arrived, there was joy and jubilation for the Jews, a feast and a holiday.

This shows that most of the people in Persia were not "Jew haters" but people who wanted to live in peace and they saw this as a time of celebration.

^{17b} and many among the peoples of the land became Jews, because the dread of the Jews had fallen on them

The miraculous events that had taken place in favor of the Jews convinced many people that the God of the Jews was real and caused them to become proselytes.