

Esther 9

Verses 1- 10

Now in the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar), on the thirteenth day, when the king's command and edict were to be put into effect, on the day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, it turned out to the contrary so that the Jews themselves gained mastery over those who hated them. ²The Jews assembled in their cities throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus to attack those who sought to harm them; and no one could stand against them, because the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples. ³Even all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and those who were doing the king's business were supporting the Jews, because the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them. ⁴For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and the news about him spread throughout the provinces; for the man Mordecai became greater and greater. ⁵So the Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying; and they did as they pleased to those who hated them. ⁶At the citadel in Susa the Jews killed and eliminated five hundred men, ⁷and they killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, ⁹Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha, ¹⁰the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

² The Jews assembled in their cities throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus to attack those who sought to harm them; and no one could stand against them, because the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples.

At this point in history, there were no predominately Jewish cities outside of Judea but there were groups of Jews in many cities.

³ Even all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and those who were doing the king's business were supporting the Jews, because the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them.

Politicians usually know which way the wind is blowing and with Mordecai as 2nd in command and the beloved queen next to the king, even if any of them didn't personally favor the Jews they would have been quick to speak and act in a favorable way toward them least they fall out of favor with the current administration or the people of their district.

⁵ So the Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying; and they did as they pleased to those who hated them.

Those who hated the Jews found themselves helpless before the enemy.

⁶ At the citadel in Susa the Jews killed and eliminated five hundred men, ⁷ and they killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸ Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, ⁹ Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha, ¹⁰ the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

We don't know what the population of Susa was at this time but we do know that Susa served as a primary royal residence for the Persian kings, particularly during the winter. The presence of a royal court means the city would have been a center of power and administration, attracting a large and varied population.

The fact that 500 men were killed shows that the Jews had more enemies than one might expect given that the King had promoted Mordecai to second in command and the king's wife was an adopted daughter of Mordecai.

The Jews had a right to take the spoil, but they waived that right because they were not fighting for material gain.

Verses 11 - 16

On that day the number of those who were killed at the citadel in Susa was reported to the king. ¹² And the king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and eliminated five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman at the citadel in Susa. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your request? It shall also be granted you. And what is your further wish? It shall also be done." ¹³ Then Esther said, "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 wooden *gallows*." ¹⁴ So the king commanded that it was to be done so; and an edict was issued in Susa, and Haman's ten sons were hanged. 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. 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 to kill seventy-five thousand of those who hated them; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

¹³ Then Esther said, “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 wooden gallows.”

Haman’s 10 sons had already been slain but Esther asked the king to have their bodies hung from the gallows the next day. One has to assume that this was done as a warning to any other enemies who might want to rise up against the Jews.

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.

On the 13th the Jews in Susa had killed 500 Persians and on the next day they killed 300 more. It appears that they had a lot more enemies than one might have thought or imagined. Haman hated Mordecai because he refused to bow down to him but why do you suppose these other 800 people hated the Jews?

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 to kill seventy-five thousand of those who hated them; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

All total nearly 76,000 enemies of the Jews were killed. It is true that the Persian Kingdom was huge but it is surprising that there were this many people who hated the Jews. Whatever the reason might have been God turned a possible massacre of the Jews into a day of victory for them.

Verses 17 - 19

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. 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.

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.

In Susa, the capital, they celebrated the 15th of Adar but in all the other cities and towns the Jews celebrated the 14th.

Verses 20 - 22

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, ²¹ obliging them to celebrate the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same month, annually, ²² because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and *it was* a month which was turned for them from grief into joy, and from mourning into a holiday; that they were to make them days of feasting and rejoicing, and sending portions *of food* to one another, and gifts to the poor.

This letter from Haman to the Jews in the kingdom marked the beginning of the Jewish feast of Purim. Mordecai suggested that they observe two days, the 14th and 15th of Adar. So instead of two different days being celebrated both days would be celebrated by the Jews.

Purim was to be a time of joy, celebration, and triumph. It became a custom to send portions *of food* to one another, and gifts to the poor.

See pic 905

Jewish calendars

The Jewish Calendar			
The Jews used two types of calendars			
The Civil: Used for kings, births, contracts & The Sacred: Used for festivals			
Month Name	Corresponds to	Civil Year	Sacred Year
Tishri	Sep-Oct	1st	7th
Heshvan	Oct-Nov	2nd	8th
Chislev	Nov-Dec	3rd	9th
Tebeth	Dec-Jan	4th	10th
Shebat	Jan-Feb	5th	11th
Adar	Feb-Mar	6th	12th
Nisan	Mar-Apr	7th	1st
Iyar	Apr-May	8th	2nd
Sivan	May-Jun	9th	3rd
Tammuz	Jun-Jul	10th	4th
Ab	Jul-Aug	11th	5th
Elul	Aug-Sep	12th	6th

Verses 23 – 28

²³ So the Jews undertook what they had started to do, and what Mordecai had written to them. ²⁴ For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews, had schemed against the Jews to eliminate them, and had cast Pur, that is the lot, to disturb them and eliminate them. 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 was to return on his own head, and that he and his sons were to be hanged on the wooden *gallows*. 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, ²⁷ the Jews established and made a custom for themselves, 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. 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 be neglected by the Jews, or their memory fade from their descendants.

²⁴ For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews, had schemed against the Jews to eliminate them, and had cast Pur, that is the lot, to disturb them and eliminate them. 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 was to return on his own head, and that he and his sons were to be hanged on the wooden *gallows*. 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 came from the word Pur which was the Persian word for "lot." Haman cast lots to decide when the Jews would be destroyed.

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 be neglected by the Jews, or their memory fade from their descendants.

The feast of Purim has been observed for 25 centuries, from 474 BC until 2025. It seems they obeyed the words of Haman better than some of the commandments that were spoken by God.

Verses 29 - 32

²⁹ Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim. ³⁰ He sent letters to all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, *namely*, words of peace and truth, 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 mourning. ³² The command of Esther established these customs for Purim, and it was written in the book.

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

The first letter was merely a recommendation but its favorable reception prompted Esther and Mordecai to make the feast official.

A day of fasting was added to the feast of Purim at a later date, sometime during the 8th century AD. It is called the Fast of Esther and the fast is observed on Adar 13th followed by the two days of feasting.