

Chapter 9

Verse 1

Now in the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's command and edict were about to be carried out, on the very day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, the reverse occurred: the Jews gained mastery over those who hated them.

The day had come (February-March). This is the day that Haman had cast lots to **choose** this day. The enemies of the Jews had hoped to **destroy** them and take their riches. But their plan failed (**Jeremiah 30:16**).

*Therefore all who devour you shall be devoured,
and all your foes, every one of them, shall go into captivity;
those who plunder you shall be plundered,
and all who prey on you I will make a prey.*

Verse 2

The Jews gathered in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm. And no one could stand against them, for the fear of them had fallen on all peoples.

"No one could stand" - does not mean no one attacked. It means they could not **prevail** against the Jews for two reasons.

1. The Jews had time to **prepare**.
2. The change of **power** from Haman to Mordecai.

Verse 3

All the officials of the provinces and the satraps and the governors and the royal agents also helped the Jews, for the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them.

Mordecai was now the Grand Vizer and these **rulers** wanted to please him.

Verse 4

For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces, for the man Mordecai grew more and more powerful.

Mordecai had gone through some very **difficult days**, but God came through for him and his people.

Verse 5

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

This does not mean they went crazy and started killing people. No. This refers to **defensive action** taken by the Jews within the limits given by the king.

Verses 6-10

In Susa the citadel itself the Jews killed and destroyed 500 men, 7and also killed Parshandatha and Dalphon and Aspatha 8and Poratha and Adalia and Aridatha 9and Parmashta and Arisai and Aridai and Vaizatha, 10the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, but they laid no hand on the plunder.

We see the ten sons of Haman killed and these 500 men were probably **supporters** and **relatives** of the sons of Haman.

Did not take any plunder - This statement tells us two things:

1. The Jews considered this a **holy war**. We see this practice in Genesis 14 when Abram did not take booty when saving Lot and the king of Sodom (Joshua 6). Achin sinned and took booty, Saul (I Samuel 15) when he failed to completely destroy the Amalekites.
2. This indicated that the Jews were in **control** of themselves and not motivated by greed.

Verses 11-12

That very day the number of those killed in Susa the citadel was reported to the king. 12And the king said to Queen Esther, "In Susa the citadel the Jews have killed and destroyed 500 men and also the ten sons of Haman. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your wish? It shall be granted you. And what further is your request? It shall be fulfilled."

It would appear the king was not very **upset** about the loss. In fact, it would have been much worse if Haman's edict alone had been obeyed.

Verses 13-14

And Esther said, "If it please the king, let the Jews who are in Susa be allowed tomorrow also to do according to this day's edict. And let the ten sons of Haman be hanged on the gallows." 14So the king commanded this to be done. A decree was issued in Susa, and the ten sons of Haman were hanged.

Esther knew that some of their enemies had **escaped** the government building (palace) and had escaped into Susa and they might plan revenge upon the Jews for the death of Haman and his supporters. Also, Esther asked that the **bodies** of the ten sons of Haman be hanged. The king gave the order that the Jews could **defend** themselves one more day and the ten bodies displayed.

It should be noted, this was a **common** Near Eastern custom to humiliate the defeated enemy. We see this in I Samuel 31. The bodies of King Saul and Jonathan were hung in shame.

Verse 15

The Jews who were in Susa gathered also on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and they killed 300 men in Susa, but they laid no hands on the plunder.

They only killed those who **attacked** them and once again we see that the Jews were under **control** and did not **plunder** as they were legally permitted to do.

Verse 16

Now the rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces also gathered to defend their lives, and got relief from their enemies and killed 75,000 of those who hated them, but they laid no hands on the plunder.

A couple of things to observe:

1. We are not sure of the number. In the Septuagint, it says 15,000. The Targum, an early Jewish translation into Aramaic, says 10,107 men. The point is the Jews **defended** themselves only from people who attacked them.
2. Once again, the Jews did not go after the **plunder** of their enemies.

Verse 17

This was on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made that a day of feasting and gladness.

This is the first Purim celebration which began as a spontaneous celebration and in the following verses, this feast will be **explained**. The Feast of Purim started in Persia and it would be observed among the Jews of Palestine **even** to this day.

Verses 18-19

But the Jews who were in Susa gathered on the thirteenth day and on the fourteenth, and rested on the fifteenth day, making that a day of feasting and gladness. 19Therefore the Jews of the villages, who live in the rural towns, hold the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day for gladness and feasting, as a holiday, and as a day on which they send gifts of food to one another.

Purim means "lots" - the days vary.

2021- February 25-26

2022- March 16-17

2023- March 6-7

These verses tell us it lasted **two days** because the fighting lasted one day later in Susa.

Gift of food - This kindness **strengthened** the unity of the people.

Today

- Exchange of gifts, food and drink
- **Donating** charity to the poor
- Reading of Esther
- Celebratory meal, dressing up in costumes

It should be noted that the Nazi's, during their reign of terror, **hated** the book of Esther. If a Jew came to a concentration camp with this book they would be **shot**. But, still the Jews, from **memory**, would produce the Book of Esther, which would be shared.

Verse 20

And Mordecai recorded these things and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,

Mordecai has a key role in the **founding** of this holiday. It is unknown where he recorded the events. It was either in the court records or in the letter he sent out.

Verses 21-22

obliging them to keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same, year by year, 22as the days on which the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

This feast was to be **celebrated** annually.

Verses 23-28 are the third account of the institution of the feast.

Verses 29-32 Queen Esther also wrote a letter that confirmed the **practices** of Purim.

The records probably refer to the Persian royal Court Annuals.

Chapter 10

Verses 1-2

King Ahasuerus imposed tax on the land and on the coastlands of the sea. 2And all the acts of his power and might, and the full account of the high honor 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?

The book ends as it begins, **praising** Xerxes, the ruler of Persia.

Verse 3

For Mordecai, the Jew was second in rank to King Ahasuerus, and he was great among the Jews and popular with the multitude of his brothers, for he sought the welfare of his people and spoke peace to all his people.

Mordecai became famous for being a **great** Prime Minister, who did right and **looked** out for his people.