

Esther Chapter 9 — Crawford Standard Bible

Victory, Vengeance, and the Birth of Purim

Introduction

Esther Chapter 9 is the great **turning point** of the book. The Jews had once been marked for destruction, but the day that was intended to destroy them became a day of victory.

Haman had cast the **Pur**, or lot, to determine the date when the Jews would be destroyed. Yet what appeared to be a fixed date of death became a day of deliverance.

The chapter teaches several important truths:

- God can **turn an evil plan around**.
- God's people must sometimes **stand together in courage**.
- Victory should not produce **greed or selfishness**.
- God's deliverance should be **remembered and passed to future generations**.
- The celebration of **Purim** became a permanent reminder of God's preservation of His people.

Although God's name is not directly mentioned in Esther, His providence is clearly seen throughout the chapter.

I. THE JEWS DEFEND THEMSELVES

Esther 9:1

“In the twelfth month, the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day—the day when the king’s command and decree were to be carried out—the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them. But the tables were turned, and the Jews overpowered those who hated them.”

Cross References

Esther 3:7 — Haman cast the lot, called Pur, to determine the month and day when his plan would take place.

Esther 3:13 — The king's decree ordered the Jews to be killed, including men, women, and children, on the thirteenth day of Adar, with their possessions taken.

Psalms 30:11 — God can turn mourning into dancing, remove sorrow, and replace it with joy.

Bible Study

The enemy thought the outcome had already been decided.

The date was established.

The decree had been written.

The armies were prepared.

But the enemy had forgotten one important fact:

God is greater than the plans of men.

The very day designed for Jewish destruction became a day of Jewish victory.

Spiritual Lesson

Sometimes circumstances appear to have already been decided against us. But God can change the outcome.

The enemy may write a plan, but God has the final word.

II. THE JEWS STAND TOGETHER

Esther 9:2

“The Jews assembled in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to attack those who sought their destruction. No one could stand against them, because fear of them had fallen on all the people.”

Cross References

Exodus 15:16 — Fear and dread fell upon Israel's enemies because of God's mighty power, and they became still as Israel passed through.

Deuteronomy 2:25 — God told Israel that He would cause the nations to fear and tremble because of Israel.

Joshua 2:9 — Rahab told the Israelite spies that fear of Israel had fallen upon the people and that the inhabitants were afraid because they had heard what God had done.

Bible Study

The Jews did not sit passively waiting for their enemies to attack.

They assembled together and defended themselves.

Their strength was found in unity.

There is an important spiritual principle here:

God's people should not allow fear to scatter them when trouble comes.

III. GOD ELEVATES MORDECAI

Esther 9:3

“All the provincial officials—the satraps, governors, and royal administrators—helped the Jews, because they were afraid of Mordecai.”

Cross References

Genesis 35:5 — As Jacob and his family traveled, the surrounding cities were afraid of them, and God prevented their enemies from pursuing them.

Exodus 23:27 — God promised to send His fear ahead of Israel and cause their enemies to turn away.

Esther 9:4 — Mordecai had become powerful in the king's palace, and his reputation was spreading throughout the provinces.

Bible Study

Mordecai had gone from sitting at the king's gate in humility to becoming one of the most influential men in the kingdom.

This is another reversal in Esther.

Haman had been promoted above everyone.

Haman wanted Mordecai destroyed.

But now Mordecai had authority, while Haman was dead.

Spiritual Lesson

God can change a person's position without changing the person's character.

Mordecai did not have to destroy Haman's reputation himself. God allowed circumstances to reveal the truth.

IV. MORDECAI'S INFLUENCE GROWS

Esther 9:4

“Mordecai had become powerful in the king’s palace. His reputation spread throughout the provinces, and he became more and more influential.”

Cross References

Genesis 41:40 — Pharaoh placed Joseph over his entire house and made him ruler over Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself.

2 Samuel 5:10 — David became greater and greater because the LORD God was with him.

Daniel 6:3 — Daniel distinguished himself above the other administrators because an excellent spirit was in him, and the king planned to place him over the entire kingdom.

Bible Study

Mordecai's advancement was not merely political.

It became part of God's providential plan for protecting His people.

Mordecai's position gave him influence at exactly the time it was needed.

Spiritual Lesson

God may be preparing you for a future assignment long before you understand why He has placed you where you are.

V. THE JEWS DEFEAT THEIR ENEMIES

Esther 9:5

“The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them. They did whatever they pleased to those who hated them.”

Cross References

Exodus 17:13 — Joshua and the Israelites defeated Amalek and his army with the sword.

1 Samuel 15:3 — God commanded Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites because of their longstanding opposition to Israel.

Esther 9:1 — The enemies had expected to overpower the Jews, but the Jews gained the victory instead.

Bible Study

This was not simply an offensive campaign motivated by greed. The Jews were responding to an existing decree that had authorized their destruction.

The important detail comes later:

They did not take the possessions of their enemies.

That demonstrated that their purpose was not personal enrichment.

VI. VICTORY IN SUSAN

Esther 9:6

“In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.”

Cross References

1 Samuel 15:8 — Saul captured Agag, the king of the Amalekites, but destroyed the rest of the people with the sword.

Exodus 32:28 — The Levites obeyed Moses' command, and about three thousand people died because of their rebellion.

Esther 9:5 — Throughout the empire, the Jews defeated those who sought their destruction.

Bible Study

The battle was widespread, but Susa was especially important because it was the center of the Persian government.

The victory there demonstrated that the Jews were no longer helpless victims of Haman's decree.

VII. HAMAN'S TEN SONS ARE DEFEATED

Esther 9:7–10

“They also killed the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews— Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha. But they did not lay hands on the plunder.”

Cross References

1 Samuel 15:33 — Samuel killed Agag, the Amalekite king, because of the violence and destruction he had committed.

Exodus 17:14 — God declared that the memory of Amalek would eventually be completely removed.

Deuteronomy 25:19 — Israel was commanded to remember Amalek and, when God gave them rest, to remove Amalek's memory from the land.

Bible Study

The ten sons of Haman represented the continuation of his opposition to the Jews.

But notice an important statement:

“They did not lay hands on the plunder.”

That statement is repeated because the Jews were not fighting merely to become wealthy.

They were defending themselves from those who had been authorized to destroy them.

VIII. ESTHER IS GIVEN ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK

Esther 9:11–12

“That day, the number of people killed in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king. The king said to Queen Esther, ‘The Jews have killed five hundred men and Haman’s ten sons in Susa. What must they have done in the rest of my provinces! Now what is your petition? It will be granted to you. What is your further request? It will be done.’”

Cross References

Esther 5:3 — The king asked Esther what her request was and promised to grant it.

Esther 7:2 — The king again asked Esther for her petition and promised to fulfill her request.

1 Kings 3:5 — God appeared to Solomon and said, “Ask what you want Me to give you.”

Bible Study

The king continued to give Esther an opportunity to make requests.

This demonstrates how Esther's courage had transformed her relationship with the king.

She had once been afraid to approach him.

Now the king repeatedly invited her to speak.

IX. ESTHER REQUESTS AN EXTENSION

Esther 9:13

“Esther replied, ‘If it pleases the king, let the Jews in Susa be allowed to do again tomorrow as they have done today. And let Haman’s ten sons be hanged on the gallows.’”

Cross References

Esther 7:9 — Harbonah pointed out the gallows Haman had built for Mordecai, and the king ordered Haman to be hanged on it.

Numbers 25:4 — God commanded Moses to publicly execute the leaders responsible for Israel's rebellion so that His anger would turn away from Israel.

Deuteronomy 21:22 — When a person committed a crime deserving death and was executed, his body could be displayed on a tree.

Bible Study

Esther asked for additional protection because the original threat had been extensive.

The Jews were not simply dealing with one enemy. The decree had spread throughout the entire empire.

X. HAMAN'S SONS ARE HANGED

Esther 9:14

“The king agreed, and the edict was issued in Susa. Haman’s ten sons were hanged.”

Cross References

Esther 9:13 — Esther requested that Haman's sons be hanged.

2 Samuel 21:9 — Several descendants of Saul were publicly executed as judgment for a serious offense.

Joshua 8:29 — The king of Ai was executed and his body was displayed until evening.

Bible Study

The fate of Haman's sons demonstrates that evil can have consequences that extend beyond the individual who begins it.

Haman's hatred had become a family legacy.

But the greater principle is that **wickedness eventually brings judgment.**

XI. THE JEWS REFUSE TO TAKE PLUNDER

Esther 9:15–16

“On the fourteenth day of Adar, the Jews in Susa assembled again and killed three hundred men. But again, they took no plunder.”

“Meanwhile, the rest of the Jews in the king’s provinces also assembled to protect themselves and gain relief from their enemies. They killed seventy-five thousand of their enemies, but they did not seize their possessions.”

Cross References

1 Samuel 15:9 — Saul and the people spared what they considered valuable instead of completely obeying God's command.

1 Samuel 15:19 — Samuel confronted Saul for taking spoil when God had commanded otherwise.

Genesis 14:23 — Abraham refused to take the possessions of Sodom's king because he did not want anyone to say that the king had made Abraham wealthy.

Bible Study

The repeated statement that the Jews **did not take the plunder** is extremely important.

Their victory was not about becoming rich.

Their objective was survival and protection from those who had been authorized to destroy them.

Spiritual Lesson

Victory should never become an excuse for greed.

XII. SORROW BECOMES JOY

Esther 9:17

“This happened on the thirteenth day of Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.”

Cross References

Joshua 11:23 — After Israel's battles, the land had rest from war.

Deuteronomy 25:19 — Israel would receive rest from its enemies when God gave them victory.

Exodus 17:13 — Joshua defeated the Amalekites in battle.

Bible Study

The thirteenth day was a day of conflict.

The fourteenth became a day of rest and celebration.

This is a picture of God's ability to bring **rest after conflict**.

XIII. THE JEWS IN SUSAN CELEBRATE

Esther 9:18

“But the Jews in Susa had assembled on the thirteenth and fourteenth days. So on the fifteenth day, they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.”

Cross References

Esther 9:17 — Jews outside Susa rested and celebrated on the fourteenth day.

Leviticus 23:5 — The Passover was observed at the appointed time.

Leviticus 23:6 — The Feast of Unleavened Bread began immediately after Passover.

Bible Study

The timing differed between the Jews in the villages and those in Susa because the battles lasted different lengths of time.

This explains why Purim eventually involved both the **fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar**.

XIV. THE ORIGIN OF PURIM

Esther 9:19

“That is why rural Jews—those living in villages—observe the fourteenth day of Adar as a day of joy and feasting, a festive day of giving food to one another.”

Cross References

Nehemiah 8:10 — The people were told to celebrate, eat good food, drink, and share with those who had nothing prepared, because the joy of the LORD was their strength.

Deuteronomy 16:11 — Israel was to rejoice before the LORD together with family, servants, Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows.

Esther 9:22 — These days were to remember the Jews' relief from their enemies and the turning of sorrow into joy.

Bible Study

Purim was not simply a party.

It was a **memorial of deliverance**.

The Jewish people were instructed to remember the time when their sorrow became joy.

XV. MORDECAI RECORDS THE DELIVERANCE

Esther 9:20

“Mordecai recorded these events and sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far.”

Cross References

Esther 9:29 — Esther and Mordecai later wrote another letter confirming the observance of Purim.

Exodus 17:14 — God commanded Moses to write the account of Amalek as a permanent memorial.

Jeremiah 30:2 — God instructed Jeremiah to write His words in a book so they could be remembered.

Bible Study

Mordecai understood the importance of recording what God had done.

A testimony that is remembered can become a testimony that is passed down.

Spiritual Lesson

Never forget what God has brought you through.

XVI. THE DAYS OF PURIM ARE ESTABLISHED

Esther 9:21–22

“He urged them to celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar as the days when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy, and their mourning into celebration. These were to be days of feasting and joy, giving food to one another, and gifts to the poor.”

Cross References

Exodus 12:14 — God commanded Israel to remember Passover as a permanent memorial throughout their generations.

Leviticus 23:41 — Israel was commanded to celebrate God's appointed feast from generation to generation.

Psalms 30:11 — God can turn mourning into dancing and remove sorrow.

Isaiah 61:3 — God gives beauty instead of ashes, joy instead of mourning, and praise instead of despair.

Nehemiah 8:10 — The people were told to celebrate and share food with those who had nothing because the joy of the LORD was their strength.

Bible Study

The words are powerful:

Sorrow was turned into joy.

Mourning was turned into celebration.

The people were not simply told to remember their victory.

They were told to **share their blessings with others**, including the poor.

Spiritual Lesson

A genuine testimony of God's deliverance should produce **gratitude, generosity, and remembrance**.

XVII. THE PEOPLE ACCEPT THE CELEBRATION

Esther 9:23

“So the Jews agreed to continue the celebration, as Mordecai had written to them.”

Cross References

Esther 9:27 — The Jews established the observance for themselves, their descendants, and everyone who joined them.

Nehemiah 10:29 — The people committed themselves to follow God's law and His commands.

Joshua 24:25 — Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and established a commitment for Israel.

Bible Study

The people accepted the responsibility of preserving the memory of their deliverance.

A generation that remembers God's faithfulness can teach the next generation to trust Him.

XVIII. HAMAN'S PLAN IS REMEMBERED

Esther 9:24

“For Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted to destroy them and had cast the lot, called Pur, to crush and annihilate them.”

Cross References

Esther 3:1 — Haman the Agagite was promoted above the other officials.

Esther 3:7 — Haman cast the Pur, or lot, to determine the day for attacking the Jews.

Psalms 83:4 — Israel's enemies plotted to destroy God's people and wanted Israel's name to disappear.

Bible Study

The Jews remembered both the **danger** and the **deliverance**.

We should remember both as well.

When we remember what God brought us through, we become more aware of His faithfulness.

XIX. HAMAN'S EVIL RETURNS UPON HIM

Esther 9:25

“But when the matter came before the king, he issued orders in writing that the evil plan Haman had devised against the Jews should come back upon his own head—and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.”

Cross References

Psalm 7:16 — The trouble a wicked person causes returns upon his own head, and his violence falls back on him.

Psalm 9:15 — The nations can fall into the pit they themselves have made, and their own traps catch them.

Proverbs 26:27 — Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and whoever rolls a stone may have it roll back on him.

Bible Study

This is one of the clearest themes in Esther:

The trap Haman prepared for someone else became his own trap.

Haman built the gallows for Mordecai.

Haman died on the gallows.

He planned destruction for the Jews.

His own plan brought destruction upon him.

Spiritual Lesson

Sin often contains the seeds of its own destruction.

XX. WHY IT WAS CALLED PURIM

Esther 9:26

“Therefore these days were called Purim, from the word Pur. Because of all that was written in this letter, and what they had seen and experienced...”

Cross References

Esther 3:7 — The word Pur referred to the lot Haman cast.

Exodus 17:15 — Moses built an altar and named it “The LORD Is My Banner” as a memorial of God's victory.

Joshua 5:9 — God said that He had removed the shame of Egypt from Israel, and that place was called Gilgal.

Bible Study

Names often became reminders of important events.

Purim reminded the Jewish people of a time when an enemy had attempted to destroy them, but God turned the situation around.

XXI. PURIM BECOMES A PERMANENT TRADITION

Esther 9:27–28

“The Jews established and made it a custom for themselves, their descendants, and all who joined them, to observe these two days every year in the appointed way and at the appointed time. These days should be remembered and observed in every generation, by every family, in every province and city. And these days of Purim should never fail among the Jews, nor fade from their memory or their descendants.”

Cross References

Esther 9:23 — The Jews agreed to continue the celebration.

Exodus 12:24 — Israel was commanded to observe God's instructions concerning Passover as a lasting practice.

Joshua 4:7 — The stones taken from the Jordan were to serve as a memorial for future generations.

Bible Study

God's people were commanded to remember.

Why?

Because people forget.

A generation can experience God's faithfulness and the next generation may only hear about it.

That is why testimony must be preserved.

Spiritual Lesson

Tell your children what God has done.

Tell them about the prayers God answered.

Tell them about the doors God opened.

Tell them about the battles God brought you through.

Tell them about the times God made a way when there seemed to be no way.

XXII. ESTHER AND MORDECAI CONFIRM PURIM

Esther 9:29

“Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Jew, wrote a second letter with full authority to confirm the celebration of Purim.”

Cross References

Esther 9:20 — Mordecai originally recorded the events and sent letters to the Jews.

Esther 9:31 — The letter confirmed the appointed times of Purim and the associated fasting and mourning.

2 Chronicles 30:1 — Hezekiah sent letters throughout Israel and Judah calling the people to observe Passover.

Bible Study

Esther and Mordecai worked together.

Their roles were different, but their purpose was united.

Esther had access to the king.

Mordecai had influence in the kingdom.

God used both.

XXIII. WORDS OF PEACE AND TRUTH

Esther 9:30

“Letters were sent to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, with words of peace and truth.”

Cross References

Esther 1:1 — Ahasuerus ruled 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia.

Zechariah 8:19 — God promised that former times of fasting would become occasions of joy, gladness, and celebration, and He commanded His people to love truth and peace.

Jeremiah 29:11 — God declared that His plans for His people were plans for peace and a future filled with hope.

Bible Study

The chapter began with a death decree.

It ends with **peace and truth**.

That is another dramatic reversal.

The people who were facing annihilation were now receiving messages of peace.

XXIV. FASTING AND MOURNING ARE REMEMBERED

Esther 9:31

“The observance of Purim was confirmed at the appointed times, as Mordecai and Queen Esther had established it for themselves and their descendants, including the times of fasting and mourning.”

Cross References

Esther 4:16 — Esther called the Jews to fast for three days while she prepared to approach the king.

Esther 4:3 — The Jews fasted, wept, mourned, and wore sackcloth because of the decree against them.

Joel 2:15 — God called His people to declare a fast, gather together, and seek Him.

Bible Study

The celebration did not erase the memory of the suffering.

The people remembered both:

the mourning before deliverance

and

the joy after deliverance.

That is spiritually important.

We appreciate deliverance more when we remember what we were delivered from.

XXV. THE DECREE IS WRITTEN DOWN

Esther 9:32

“Esther’s decree confirmed these regulations about Purim, and it was written down in the records.”

Cross References

Esther 2:23 — Mordecai's discovery of the assassination plot was recorded in the official chronicles.

Deuteronomy 31:24 — Moses finished writing the words of God's law in a book.

Jeremiah 30:2 — God instructed Jeremiah to write His words in a book.

Bible Study

The story was written down so that it would not be forgotten.

The preservation of the record demonstrates the importance of remembering God's acts of deliverance.

KEY LESSONS FROM ESTHER CHAPTER 9

1. God Can Turn the Tables

The Jews were supposed to be destroyed.

Instead, they defeated those who sought their destruction.

What the enemy intended for evil can be turned by God's providence.

2. Victory Does Not Mean Greed

The Jews repeatedly refused to take the possessions of their enemies.

Their purpose was protection, not personal enrichment.

Godly victory should not produce selfishness.

3. God Can Turn Mourning Into Joy

The Jews went from:

weeping → rejoicing

mourning → celebration

fear → courage

danger → deliverance

death sentence → victory

God is able to transform circumstances that appear hopeless.

4. God's Deliverance Should Be Remembered

Purim became a permanent memorial.

The people were instructed to tell future generations what had happened.

Never forget what God has done for you.

5. God Uses People Together

Esther and Mordecai had different positions, personalities, and responsibilities.

Yet God used them together.

One person may have influence in one place while another has influence somewhere else.

God can bring those abilities together for His purpose.

6. Evil Can Fall Into Its Own Trap

Haman built the gallows for Mordecai.

Haman was hanged on those gallows.

This illustrates the principle found in Psalm 7:16:

The evil a person plans against others can eventually return upon himself.

XXXVI. QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

What happened on the thirteenth day of Adar?

Answer:

The enemies of the Jews had planned to destroy them, but the Jews were given the right to defend themselves. The situation was completely reversed, and the Jews defeated those who sought their destruction.

Question 2

Why were the provincial officials willing to help the Jews?

Answer:

They were afraid of Mordecai because his influence and authority had become great throughout the empire.

Question 3

What does Mordecai's rise in power teach us?

Answer:

It teaches us that God can raise a person from a position of weakness to a position of influence when that position is needed for His purposes.

Question 4

Why is it significant that the Jews did not take the plunder?

Answer:

It shows that their purpose was not greed or personal enrichment. They were defending themselves against those who had been authorized to destroy them.

Question 5

What happened to Haman's ten sons?

Answer:

The ten sons of Haman were killed, and afterward they were publicly hanged according to the king's decree.

Question 6

Why did Esther ask for another day of fighting in Susa?

Answer:

Because the threat against the Jews was widespread, Esther requested additional time for the Jews in Susa to defend themselves against their enemies.

Question 7

What happened to the Jews after their enemies were defeated?

Answer:

They rested, celebrated, feasted, experienced joy, and shared food with one another and with the poor.

Question 8

What does Purim commemorate?

Answer:

Purim commemorates the deliverance of the Jews from the destruction planned by Haman. It remembers how their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into celebration.

Question 9

Why was it important for Mordecai to write down what had happened?

Answer:

It preserved the story of God's deliverance so that future generations would remember what had happened and continue celebrating the deliverance.

Question 10

What does Esther 9 teach us about remembering God's faithfulness?

Answer:

It teaches us that God's people should deliberately remember His acts of deliverance and teach those events to future generations.

XXXVII. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Question 1

Have you ever experienced a situation that seemed hopeless but eventually turned around?

Answer:

The lesson of Esther encourages us to remember that circumstances are not always as permanent as they appear. God can work through circumstances, people, authorities, and unexpected events to bring about His purposes.

Question 2

What should we do when God gives us victory?

Answer:

We should give thanks, remain humble, refuse greed, help others, and remember what God has done.

Question 3

Why should Christians remember past deliverances?

Answer:

Remembering God's faithfulness strengthens our faith when new difficulties arise. If God has helped us before, His past faithfulness becomes a testimony that encourages us to trust Him again.

Question 4

What can we learn from the fact that Esther and Mordecai worked together?

Answer:

God does not require every person to perform the same assignment. He can use different people with different positions and abilities to accomplish one purpose.

Question 5

What does Haman's downfall teach us about pride?

Answer:

Pride can cause a person to become consumed with power, recognition, and revenge. Haman's pride eventually destroyed the very man who believed he was untouchable.

Question 6

How can we preserve God's work for the next generation?

Answer:

We can tell our children and grandchildren what God has done, record testimonies, teach Scripture, pray together, and make God's faithfulness part of our family's history.

CONCLUSION

Esther Chapter 9 is a chapter of **divine reversal**.

The Jews were supposed to die.

They lived.

They were supposed to be defeated.

They won.

They were supposed to mourn.

They celebrated.

Haman expected to become more powerful.

He was destroyed.

Mordecai had been threatened with death.

He became a powerful leader.

The people who were facing annihilation received **peace, joy, honor, and deliverance**.

The greatest lesson of Esther 9 is that **God can work behind the scenes even when His name is not visible in the circumstances**.

The Jews did not see every move God was making, but when the story was finished, they could look backward and see that God had been working all along.

The enemy had a plan.

Haman had a plan.

The king had a plan.

But God had the final word.

And that is why the story of Esther continues to remind God's people:

What looks like the end may only be the beginning of God's reversal.