

Esther 3

I. The PROMOTION of Haman (v.1-6)

A. Haman's POWER (v.1-4)

1. The son of Hammedatha the Agagite
2. **Exo 17:8-16**, war with Amalek, generation to generation
3. **Num 24:20-24**, Balaam's prophecy against Amalek
4. **Deu 25:17-19**, history with Amalek attacking
5. **1 Sam 15:1-9**, Saul destroys Amalekites, spares king Agag, disobeyed God
6. Haman is advanced, elevating above all princes
7. King's commands to all: reverence (act of submission, prostration) – bow (get on one knee) – bowing and kneeling, continual act of submission
8. Mordecai did none of it, disobeys king's command, servants ask daily
9. Continual prodding by servants, Mordecai tells them he is a Jew

B. Haman's PRIDE (v.5-6)

1. Mordecai refused – Haman saw this, filled with wrath
2. “Filled”, lit: to be filled up, completed, overflowing, the completion of an event – Gen 6:11, “filled” with violence
3. (v.6) “Disdained, abandoned the thought of laying hands on Mordecai – servants told him Mordecai was a Jew
4. Seeks a way to destroy, annihilate, wipe off the face of the earth – all Jews
5. Mordecai the focal point of Haman's anger

II. The PROPOSITION to the king (v.7-14)

A. It was DETAILED (v. 7-8)

1. 12th year of Ahasuerus, 1st month (Nisan)
2. Cast the lot (Pur), related to Babylonian word “puru” – lit: “the lot” and also “fate”
3. Determine the day and month, fell on the 12th month (Adar) – why systematically cast lots?
4. (v.7) “it fell on the”, not in the original text – 1) did they cast lots for 11 months until Adar OR 2) did they cast lots until it came up Adar?

A. (v.12) scribes draft the edit on the 13th day of the first month – would have written it ASAP

B. Pagan culture (Babylonian pantheon of gods, etc.), divination and priests to determine the outcome – some sort of significance, could be month of Adar because of Babylonian religion, gods came together as the New Year to seal the fate of men for the coming year; any oracle obtained in that month would be very effective.

B. It was DECEITFUL (v.8-11)

1. “scattered and dispersed”, Jews were assimilated, embedded far and wide in the kingdom – “dispersed”, lit: broken apart – no pockets of Jews as they are everywhere

2. Haman used “the laws” as an entry point – laws were unchangeable, only another law could cancel it

3. “not fitting” to let them remain, cf. 7:4, sense of comparison or equality – not worth the time, effort or money

4. Destroy all Jews because of Mordecai – doesn’t single out Mordecai’s disobedience, uses it as a segue into bigger things

5. (v.9) People paid to attack, keep the plunder? – not sure how it gets back into the king’s treasuries

6. King gives Haman the authority (signet ring) – (v.11) “money and people”, Haman has full authority

C. It was DESTRUCTIVE (v.12-14)

1. 13th day of Nisan decree was written – decree out to all provinces, people, empire-wide

2. (v.13) Kill all Jews on a single day – “to destroy, kill and annihilate”, “young and old, children and women” – why all three?

3. 13th of Adar (12th month) – plunder their possessions

4. Published to all people, “be ready” – lit. be in a ready state, fully involved with a sense of readiness

III. The PERPLEXITY of the people (v.15)

A. Couriers delivered the decree – “hastened”, lit. pushed along, thrust

B. Why the rush when the day is 11 months away? – was it to allow the attackers time to plan?

C. King and Haman drink together – idea of dwelling together, share a drink, friends for the wrong reasons

D. Shushan is “perplexed” – lit. “entangled, wander about in perplexity” – everyone is confused by the decree