

May I remind you that Satan has always wanted to destroy the Jewish people. He will never win. Past history has proven that as we read the events in the Book of Esther, we see another victory that will be re-celebrated this month called the Feast of Purim. **Here's its history from my Newsletter archives!** So please share. Although it is not one of the major seven Feasts of Leviticus 23, it nonetheless plays an important part in the eschatological teachings of God, as do all the other Jewish Feasts. Christians today are privileged to be partakers of this restored knowledge from our forefathers of the first century.

As with most stories of the First Testament, this too, is a type of the end times. We meet King Ahasuerus who is a picture of God. Vashti represents the unbelievers; Esther the believers; Mordecai is a picture of the Messiah; and Haman is the adversary, the anti-Christ or Satan. It tells of events that will soon take place on the earth in what we call the Tribulation.

In the book of Esther, Vashti was called to appear before the King, but she refused and lost her place in the kingdom. A search was made for a new queen, one more worthy than Vashti. After two years the beautiful and submissive Esther, an unknown Jew and ward of her older cousin Mordecai, was chosen. In Hebrew her name is "Chadassah" which means 'myrtle', a symbol of everlasting life and a pleasant fragrance.

As the story progresses, Haman, a treacherous enemy of Mordecai and all the Jews, plots to exterminate the Jewish race. (*something Satan's been trying to do since God's promise in the Garden of Eden and never succeeds*) Haman's ancestor is Agag, an enemy of Israel's first King Saul, from whom Mordecai is descended. Saul's disobedience in eliminating all the Agagites shows why it is important to obey God or reap the consequences later as we see in this story! Therefore, Haman and Mordecai are caught re-enacting a scene, the stage of which had been set much earlier. Another proof that history repeats itself.

Haman is second in command next to the king in this kingdom, but as long as Mordecai lives he cannot have any peace. Out of bitter jealousy, Haman succeeds in destroying Mordecai's favor with the King, and proceeds to construct gallows on which to hang Mordecai and annihilate all the Jews. Haman casts lots (purim) in the first month of the biblical calendar, Nisan 13, to decide when to have the hanging. The lots fall on the thirteenth day of Adar (the twelfth month).

When Mordecai realizes Haman's evil plan, he beseeches Queen Esther (still the king does not know she is Jewish) to intercede with the king on behalf of her people. She tells Mordecai to fast for the next three days, the thirteenth, fourteenth and the fifteenth at which time Esther requests admittance into the king's presence.

This was taking a big risk, for no one could enter the king's presence, under penalty of death unless he called them first, even his wife. But out of his great love for her, the king agrees and promises her anything. She tells Mordecai to fast for the next three days, the thirteenth, fourteenth and the fifteenth at which time Esther requests admittance into the king's presence. This was taking a big risk, for no one could enter the king's presence, under penalty of death unless he called them first, even his wife. But out of his great love for her, the king agrees and promises her anything.

Her request is for the king and Haman to come to a banquet that she will prepare for them the following day. Still again the king asks her what she desires. This time her request is for the king and Haman to come to another banquet yet again the next day.

It is now the 17 of Nisan, (that is so significant) and Esther, during the course of this banquet, reveals the plot of the wicked Haman to kill the Jews, along with the truth about herself being Jewish. So the king orders Haman and his ten sons to be hanged on the very gallows Haman had made for the Jews. The Jewish people were spared, and a descendant of Queen Esther's (Cyrus) had the vision of rebuilding the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, paving the way for its reconstruction and the diaspora to Israel.

Each time I read this story I see more pictures, and I hope you, too, will read and try to find your own. The more obvious ones are the dates. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, Jesus rose from the dead, giving new life to all who believe, defeating Satan. Let's also not forget that on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, the Israelites crossed through the Red Sea, giving them new life from bondage while defeating Pharaoh and his army, also a picture of defeating Satan and his demons. And Noah's ark landed on Mt. Ararat, representing new life to the human race. Also if Haman represents the anti-christ who rules over ten nations (horns), could that perhaps be why he had ten sons?

During the month of Adar, our March 10th this year, when Haman's lot originally fell, the festival of Purim (lots) takes place. In celebration, it is a time of fun, game playing, dressing in costumes and joyful remembrance. During the reading of Esther (called the "Megillah"), Mordecai and Esther are cheered, but Haman is booed, to the point that no one wants to hear his name over the uproar. A three-cornered cookie filled with fruit is eaten to commemorate Haman's three-cornered hat. So be sure to read the Book of Esther this week and have a Purim celebration with your children for a great learning experience of God's Word!



