

Esther

The year is roughly 486 BC. In the wake of the final years of Darius, King of Persia, Egypt rebels more and more, eventually pushing towards autonomy. Upon the death of Darius, his son Xerxes takes the throne. The first thing he does is to avenge his father, crushing Egypt without mercy. Coming off this decisive (and brutal) victory, he throws a 6-month party to raise morale before attacking Greece to further clean up his father's unfinished business. This is where we catch up with Xerxes, otherwise known as Ahasuerus.

1-1) To start with, what identification is given to Ahasuerus here?

1-2) Where was his throne (this is the winter palace of Persian kings, synonymous with Susa)?

1-3) Who did he make a feast for (6)?

1-4) What did he put on display (2)?

1-5) For how many days did this feast go on?

1-6) What did he do after the feast days were completed?

1-7) How long was this feast to last?

1-8) Who was this feast for?

1-9) Clearly, this was quite the opulent party! Where did all this stuff come from?

1-10) What was not mandatory for this feast (does this imply that such a thing WAS sometimes mandatory? What does this tell you about the times this story is set in)?

1-11) Who else threw a party, and for whom was the party?

1-12) We then have a time stamp. On what day of the king's party is it?

1-13) What was the condition of the king at this time? What does this mean?

1-14) He gives a command to 7 guys. What was their....condition?

1-15) What was the king's command?

1-16) What was his motivation for ordering such a thing?

1-17) What was the queen's response?

1-18) How did the king take the news that his queen had defied him (2)?

1-19)Who did the king consult about this matter?

1-20) What did these guys supposedly know (2)?

1-21) do we read about these 7 guys (3)?

1-22) So the king consults his counselors. Who did Memucan say the queen had wronged (3)?

1-23) What would happen to this news about her actions, and what would be the result?

1-24) What would be the result (2 “excessives”)?

1-25) What was his advice (4 steps)?

1-26) What was the desired effect of the news of this decree?

1-27) What did the king do with this advice?

1-28) What was the decree (2)?

2-1) What is the condition of the king at the opening of this chapter?

2-2) What did he remember about Vashti (2)?

2-3) What was the king’s servants’ advice (4 “lets”)?

2-4) What was the king's reaction to this (duh)?

2-5) We are now introduced to one of the protagonists of this book. What is his name, and what is his lineage/genealogy?

2-6) Where did this man live?

2-7) We are given a bit of background about his great-grandfather. What had happened to him?

2-8) Now, we are introduced to our other protagonist. What is her name in Hebrew and Persian?

2-9) What 2 physical traits are mentioned about her?

2-10) What relation was Mordecai to her, and how did he view her?

2-11) What happened to Esther as a result of the king's decree?

2-12) Who was in charge of these girls?

2-13) What did he think of Esther?

2-14) What was given to her as a result (4)?

2-15) What did she not reveal (2)?

2-16) Why not?

2-17) What did Mordecai do every day?

2-18) How long was the preparation, and how was that time divided?

2-19) What happened after preparation, and what was given to her?

2-20) What would happen in the evening and the morning?

2-21) Who was then in charge of them? What does his title and occupation indicate about the new identity of these girls?

2-22) What was the only way for a girl to come to the king again?

2-23) When it was Esther's turn, what did she ask for?

2-24) What was the result?

2-25) When was Esther taken to King Ahasuerus (month and year of reign)?

2-26) Did he like her? How do you know?

2-27) What did she obtain in his sight (2)?

2-28) What did he do for her (2)?

2-29) Then what did he do for all his officials and servants?

2-30) What was done on this holiday?

2-31) Now, the virgins are gathered again. What was Mordecai doing?

2-32) Had Esther obeyed his command? What was his command again?

2-33) What was going on with 2 of the king's eunuchs (2)?

2-34) Who found out, and what did he do about it?

2-35) What did she, in turn, do about it?

2-36) What happened to the 2 conspirators?

2-37) Where was this information, including Mordecai's involvement, written?

3-1) At the onset of this chapter, we are introduced to our protagonist. Who is he, and what is his nationality?

3-2) Read I Samuel 15:1-9. What is the name of the king that should have been wiped out, but was spared? Who then in Esther is his descendent?

3-3) What did Ahasuerus do for Haman (3)?

3-4) What did the king's servants do, at the command of the king (2)?

3-5) Who refused to do so?

3-6) What reason did he give for not doing so?

3-7) How did Haman react to this?

3-8) Haman's hatred does not just stop at Mordecai. Who else is implicated in his mind?

3-9) Now, we have another time stamp. What is it?

3-10) What did they do during this month?

3-11) What was the result?

3-12) What did Haman tell Ahasuerus that the Jews were like (2)?

3-13) What did Haman say was not fitting for the king to do?

3-14) What decree does he want written?

3-15) What does he personally offer to see this done?

3-16) Think about this: 1 talent = 75 lbs. Multiply the number of talents by 75, then multiply that number by 16 to get the ounces. If you are able, check on the internet what the price of silver is per ounce, and multiply it by this number.

3-17) What did the king give Haman? What does this indicate?

3-18) What does the king say that he has given to Haman for whatever he desires (2)?

3-19) On what day was the decree written?

3-20) To whom was it written (5)?

3-21) In whose name was this written?

3-22) What were the letters sent by couriers ordering to do to the Jews (3)?

3-21) Who does that include in the destruction (4)?

3-22) What day was given for this destruction?

3-23) What else was allowed under this decree?

3-24) How many people in the kingdom was this published for?

3-25) We then have 2 different reactions in Shushan. What was the king and Haman's reaction?

3-26) What was the reaction of the inhabitants of the city?

4-1) When Mordecai learns of the decree, what does he do (6)?

4-2) Why didn't he enter the king's gate?

4-3) What did the mourning look like for the Jews when they heard (5)?

4-4) What was Esther's reaction when she heard the news?

4-5) What did she try to give Mordecai?

4-6) Did he accept? Why not, do you think?

4-7) Who did Esther send to find out why this was?

4-8) What did Mordecai tell him (2)?

4-9) What did Mordecai give him?

4-10) What did he hope would be accomplished by giving this (4)?

4-11) What would happen to a person who came into the inner court of the king without being summoned?

4-12) What would prevent this fate for such a one?

4-13) How long had it been since Esther had been called in to the king?

4-14) When these words were told to Mordecai, he warns her not to think something. What is it?

4-15) What does he say will happen if she remains silent (2)?

4-16) At the end of his response, what does he want her to consider?

4-17) What does Esther entreat the Jews in Shushan to do?

4-18) What will she and her gals do?

4-19) What does she say she will do after these days?

4-20) What is her conclusion about the matter?

5-1) What did she do on the 3rd day (2)?

5-2) What was the king's reaction when he saw her (2)?

5-3) What did Esther do with this?

5-4) What did the king ask and promise?

5-5) What was Esther's request?

5-6) So the king and Haman rush to come. What kind of banquet is it?

5-7) What did the king ask (again)?

5-8) What was Esther's request?

5-9) What was Haman's condition when he left the banquet (2)?

5-10) What brought this to a screeching halt (2)?

5-11) What did Haman then do in v. 10 (4)?

5-12) What did he tell his guests (5)?

5-13) Why did all of this avail him nothing?

5-14) What did his wife and guests advise he do (3)?

5-15) If a cubit is about 18 inches, how tall is this thing?

5-16) How did Haman feel about this advice?

6-1) What was happening with the king at the beginning of this chapter?

6-2) What did he do about it (see the humor in this)?

6-3) What did they find in these records?

6-4) The king then asks what has been done for Mordecai. What was the response?

6-5) Who happened to be in the court at the time?

6-6) Why was he there?

6-7) What does the king ask Haman?

6-8) Who did Haman think the king was talking about?

6-9) What was Haman's suggestion, thinking this honor was for himself (6)?

6-10) What was the king's reply to this (oh the irony!)?

6-11) Where did Mordecai go afterwards?

6-12) Where did Haman go, and in what 2 ways did he go?

6-13) So Haman goes home and tells his wife and wise men what just happened. What then is their bit of wisdom they impart to him in his time of distress?

6-14) What happened while they were still talking?

7-1) The second banquet of wine begins! What did the king ask on the second day (yet again)?

7-2) What does Esther ask for this time (2)?

7-3) What did Esther say had happened to them?

7-4) To what end were they to be sold (3)?

7-5) What does she consider it to be for the king, had they been sold as slaves?

7-6) What does the king ask in response?

7-7) When she identifies Haman, she calls him 3 things. What are they?

7-8) What was Haman's reaction?

7-9) What did the king immediately do (2)?

7-10) What did Haman do?

7-11) Why?

7-12) What did the king discover when he returned?

7-13) What did he say?

7-14) As he said this, what did they do?

7-15) What timely bit of information did Harbonah give the king?

7-16) Upon learning this, what did the king order?

* Many believe that the Persian method of "hanging" is actually impaling on a spike.

7-17) What happened once Haman was hanged?

8-1) What did the king give Esther that day?

8-2) What was Haman called here?

8-3) What did Esther tell the king about Mordecai?

8-4) What did the king give Mordecai?

8-5) What did Esther do for Mordecai?

8-6) What then did Esther do (3)?

8-7) What did the king hold out to her? What does this tell you about her visit?

8-8) What does Esther ask the king to revoke?

8-9) What does Esther think she cannot endure (2)?

8-10) Why does the king say that Haman was hanged?

8-11) What does he tell them to do?

8-12) What is the significance of the seal with the signet ring?

8-13) Who then was gathered, and what was the time stamp for this? Compare to 3:12 to see what else these people wrote.

8-14) Who was written to (4)?

8-15) What range did these provinces include, and how many provinces total?

8-16) Compare this to 1:1. How much of Ahasuerus' kingdom was covered with this writing?

8-17) What was this written in (3)?

8-18) What did he do with the letter (3)?

8-19) What did these letters allow the Jews to do (2)?

8-20) What did this include (3)? Compare this to 3:13 and 7:4 to see the irony.

8-21) Why was decree to be issued and published everywhere for everyone?

8-22) Why were the couriers hastened and pressed on?

8-23) How did Mordecai go out from the presence of the king (3)?

8-24) What did the inhabitants of Shushan do (2)?

8-25) What did the Jews have now (4)?

8-26) What did they have wherever the decree was issued (4)?

8-27) What else happened as a result of the command?

8-28) Why?

9-1) The big day finally comes. What did the enemies of the Jews hope to do on this day?

9-2) What ended up happening instead?

9-3) What did the Jews gather in all the cities to do?

9-4) Why could no one withstand them?

9-5) Who helped the Jews (4)?

9-6) Why?

9-7) What happened to Mordecai (3)?

9-8) With what did the Jews defeat their enemies (3)?

9-9) How many of the Jews' enemies were killed in Shushan?

9-10) Now, 10 guys are listed. Who are they, and what happened to them?

9-11) What did the Jews not do after killing them? Compare this to Haman's plan in 3:13.

9-12) Now that all of this death and destruction (and annihilation) has happened, what does the king ask Esther?

9-13) What does she ask for (2)?

9-14) What did they do to Haman's sons' corpses?

9-15) What did the Jews in Shushan do on the 14th day (2)?

9-16) What did they NOT do?

9-17) What did the rest of the Jews in the other regions do on that day (2)?

9-18) What did they have that day?

9-19) How many enemies did they kill?

9-20) What did they NOT do?

9-21) What did they make a feast of on this 14th day of Adar (2)?

9-22) What had the Jews in Shushan done on the 13th and 14th day?

9-23) What did they do on the 15th day?

9-24) What kind of day did they make it (2)?

9-25) Who else celebrated thte 14th of Adar?

9-26) What did they proclaim it, and what did that entail?

9-27) What did Mordecai do (2)?

9-28) Why did he do this?

9-29) List out what this celebration is all about.

9-30) Did the Jews acknowledge this?

9-32) What does Pur mean?

9-33) Why did they call the holiday Purim?

9-34) Because of these words and events, what did the Jews resolve that they and their descendents would do?

9-33) According to what (2)?

9-34) Who should these days be remembered among (4)?

9-35) What shall the memory of what happened not do?

9-36) Who wrote to confirm this 2nd letter (2)?

9-37) What did Mordecai's letters come with (2)?

9-38) What were his letters to confirm?

9-39) What did Esther's decree confirm?

9-40) Where was it written?

10-1) What did Ahasuerus impose tribute upon (2)?

10-2) Where are all his acts and the account of Mordecai written?

10-3) What position was Mordecai in the Persian kingdom?

10-4) How was he seen by the Jews, and what was he known for?