

Feast of Purím

Story of Esther

Proverbs 16:33

The lot is cast into the lap, But
every decision by it is from
יהוה (YAH).

Elohim is not mentioned in the Book of Esther even once. But Esther was clear that in this particular situation, a heavenly response was needed for an earthly situation. Esther needed direction. When we need Elohim's grace, fasting and prayer opens the portals for spiritual growth, removes distractions and places us on a path to humility.

CHAPTER 4:1-16

ESTHER'S MISSION

BECOMES CLEAR

Mordechai tears his clothes and puts on sackcloth and ashes as a sign of public mourning. Mordechai sends a copy of the decree to Esther and asks her to intercede with the king.

Esther replies that to approach the king without being summoned is to risk death. Mordechai tells her that she has no choice. Esther tells Mordechai to ask the Jews to fast and pray for three days before she will approach the king.

1. And Mordekai learned of all that had been done, and Mordekai tore his garments and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried out with a loud and bitter cry.

2. And he went up to the front of the sovereign's gate, for no one might enter the sovereign's gate wearing sackcloth.

3. And in every province where the sovereign's command and decree came, there was great mourning among the Yehudim, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing. And many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4. And Estēr's young women and eunuchs came and told her, and the sovereigness was deeply pained, and sent garments to Mordekai to wear, and to take away his sackcloth from him, but he refused.

5. And Estēr called Hathak, one of the sovereign's eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend her, and she gave him a command concerning Mordekai, to learn what and why this was.

6. And Hathak went out to Mordekai,
to an open space of the city, in front
of the sovereign's gate.

7. And Mordekai told him all that
befell him, and all about the silver
that Haman promised to pay into the
sovereign's treasuries to destroy the
Yehudim.

8. And he gave him a copy of the written decree to destroy them, which was given at Shushan, to show it to Estēr and explain it to her, and to command her to go in to the sovereign to make supplication to him, and plead before him for her people.

9. And Hathak came and told
Estēr the words of Mordekai.

10. And Estēr spoke to
Hathak, and gave him a
command for Mordekai,

11. "All the sovereign's servants and the people of the sovereign's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the sovereign, who has not been called, he has but one law: to be put to death, except the one to whom the sovereign holds out the golden sceptre, who then shall live. But I have not been called to come in to the sovereign these thirty days."

12. And they declared to Mordekai
the words of Estēr.

13. And Mordekai commanded them
to answer Estēr, "Do not think
within yourself to escape in the
sovereign's palace any more than all
the other Yehudim.

14. "For if you keep entirely silent at this time, relief and deliverance shall arise for the Yehudim from another place, while you and your father's house perish. And who knows whether you have come to the reign for such a time as this?"

15. And Estēr commanded to reply to Mordekai,

16. "Go, gather all the Yehudim who are present in Shushan, and fast for me, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I too, and my young women shall fast in the same way, then I shall go to the sovereign, which is against the law. And if I shall perish, I shall perish!"

Elohim's Providence

Does not Negate Human Responsibility

17. Mordekai then went away
and did according to all that
Esther commanded him.

Esther was willing to die to save her people. Sometimes we must stand in courage, even when it is not popular to do so, and risk it all.

CHAPTER 5: 1-14
ESTHER'S STRATEGY,
HAMAN'S FURY

King Achashverosh receives Esther and grants her virtually any request. Esther's request: that the king and Haman join her at a banquet. After the banquet, Haman sees Mordechai who once again refuses to bow. When Zeresh, Haman's wife, suggests that Mordechai be hung, the gallows are prepared.

Elohim's Providence

Proverbs 21:30

The sovereign's heart is as
channels of water In the hand
of יהוה (YAH); He turns it
wherever He wishes.

1. And it came to be on the third day that
Ester put on royal apparel and stood in
the inner court of the sovereign's
palace, in front of the sovereign's
house, while the sovereign sat on his
royal throne in the royal house,
opposite the entrance of the house.

2. And it came to be, when the sovereign saw Sovereignness Estěr standing in the court, that she found favour in his eyes, and the sovereign held out to Estěr the golden sceptre which was in his hand. And Estěr went near and touched the top of the sceptre.

3. And the sovereign said to her, "What is it, Sovereignness Estër, and what is your request? Up to half my reign, and it is given to you!"

4. And Estër answered, "If it pleases the sovereign, let the sovereign and Haman come today to the feast which I have prepared for him."

5. And the sovereign said, "Get Haman at once, to do as Estér has said." Then the sovereign and Haman went to the feast which Estér had prepared.

6. And the sovereign said to Estér at the feast of wine, "What is your petition? And it is given you. And what is your request? Up to half my reign, and it is done!"

7. And Estēr answered and said, “My petition and request is this:

8. “If I have found favour in the eyes of the sovereign, and if it pleases the sovereign to give my petition and perform my request, then let the sovereign and Haman come to the feast which I make for them, and tomorrow I shall do according to the word of the sovereign.”

9. And Haman went out that day rejoicing and with a glad heart. But when Haman saw Mordekai in the sovereign's gate, and that he did not stand or tremble before him, he was filled with wrath against Mordekai.

10. But Haman held himself in, and came to his house, and he sent and called for his loved ones and Zeresh his wife.

11. And Haman recounted to them
the esteem of his wealth, and his
many sons, and all in which the
sovereign had promoted him, and
how he had exalted him above the
officials and servants of the
sovereign.

12. And Haman said, "Besides, Estēr the sovereigness let no one but me come in with the sovereign to the feast which she prepared. And tomorrow too I am invited by her, along with the sovereign."

13. "But all this does not suit me, as long as I see Mordekai the Yehudi sitting at the sovereign's gate."

14. So his wife Zeresh and all his loved ones said to him, "Let a wooden structure be made, fifty cubits high, and in the morning speak to the sovereign that Mordekai be hanged on it. And go with the sovereign to the feast, rejoicing." And the word pleased Haman, and he had the wooden structure made.

CHAPTER 6: 1-14

THE REVERSAL BEGINS

The king can't sleep and asks to hear the royal chronicles. For the first time, the king learns of the assassination plot that Mordechai had revealed. That same night, Haman comes to see the king about hanging Mordechai.

The king tells Haman to honor Mordechai by dressing him in royal garments, to place him on a royal stallion and to personally lead him through the streets of Shushan, capital of Persia.

1. On that night the sleep of the sovereign fled, and he commanded to bring the book of the records of the annals. And they were read before the sovereign.

2. And it was found written that Mordekai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the sovereign's eunuchs, the doorkeepers who had sought to lay hands on Sovereign Ahashwerosh.

3. Then the sovereign said, "What has been done in value or in greatness to Mordekai for this?" And the sovereign's servants who attended him said, "Naught has been done for him."

4. And the sovereign said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had come into the outer court of the sovereign's palace to speak to the sovereign to hang Mordekai on the wooden structure that he had prepared for him.

5. And the sovereign's servants said to him, "Look, Haman is standing in the court." And the sovereign said, "Let him come in."

6. And when Haman came in, the sovereign asked him, "What is to be done for the man whom the sovereign delights to value?" Now Haman thought in his heart, "Whom would the sovereign delight to value more than me?"

7. And Haman answered the sovereign,
“For the man whom the sovereign
delights to value,

8. let a royal robe be brought which
the sovereign has worn, and a horse on
which the sovereign has ridden, one
with a royal crest placed on its head.

9. "And let this robe and horse be given into the hand of one of the sovereign's most noble princes. Let them dress the man whom the sovereign delights to value. And make him ride on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him, 'Thus it is done to the man whom the sovereign delights to value!'"

10. And the sovereign said to
Haman, "Hurry, take the robe and
the horse, as you have spoken,
and do so for Mordekai the Yehudi
who sits in the sovereign's gate.
Let no word fail of all that you
have spoken."

11. And Haman took the robe and the horse, and robed Mordekai and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus it is done to the man the sovereign delights to value."

12 Then Mordekai went back to the sovereign's gate. But Haman hurried to his house, mourning and with covered head.

13. And when Haman related to his wife Zeresh and all his loved ones all that had befallen him, his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordekai, before whom you have begun to fall, is from the seed of the Yehudim, you are not going to prevail against him but certainly fall before him."

14. While they were still speaking
with him, the sovereign's
eunuchs came, and hurried to
bring Haman to the feast which
Esther had prepared.

CHAPTER 7:1-10

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE

At the second banquet, Esther reveals her identity and announces that she and her people are about to be murdered. Esther identifies Haman as her arch enemy. The king has Haman hung on the gallows that had been prepared for Mordechai.

1. And the sovereign and Haman came in, to drink with Sovereigness Estër.

2. And again on the second day, at the feast of wine, the sovereign said to Estër, "What is your petition, Sovereigness Estër? And it is given to you. And what is your request? Up to half my reign, and it is done!"

3. And Sovereignness Estër
answered and said, "If I have found
favour in your eyes, O sovereign,
and if it pleases the sovereign, let
my life be given me at my petition,
and my people at my request.

4. "For we have been sold, my people and I, to be cut off, to be killed, and to be destroyed. And if we had been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept silent, although the adversary could not make up for the sovereign's loss."

5. Then Sovereign Ahashwërosh asked Sovereignness Estër, "Who is he, and where is he, whose heart is set to do so?"

6. And Estër said, "The adversary and enemy is this evil Haman!" Then Haman was afraid before the sovereign and sovereignness.

7. And the sovereign, arising in his wrath from the feast of wine, went into the palace garden. And Haman remained before Sovereignness Estēr, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil had been decided against him by the sovereign.

8. And when the sovereign returned from the palace garden to the place of the feast of wine, Haman was falling on the couch where Estér was. Then the sovereign said, "Also to ravish the sovereignness while I am in the house?"

As the word left the sovereign's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

9. And Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the sovereign, "Also, see the wooden structure, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordekai, who spoke good on behalf of the sovereign, is standing at the house of Haman." And the sovereign said, "Impale him on it!"

10. And they hanged Haman
on the wooden structure that
he had prepared for
Mordekai, and the sovereign's
wrath abated.