

The Book of Esther, from which the celebration of Purim originated, does not seem, on the surface, to have anything to do with the biblical Feast of Passover. Yet, it contains so many allusions to the events surrounding the crucifixion that it cannot be ignored. At the very outset, the reader is drawn to the fact that the main events of the narrative took place during the month of Nisan, the month during which Passover is celebrated (Esther 3:7) hinting at a similitude.

Concealment is the theme of the story, concealment of an underlying story. Even the name of G-d is hidden within its pages. Although G-d's name never appears openly, His name Yahweh, appears four times in the form of an acrostic. In fact, three ancient manuscripts are known in which the acrostic letters are written larger than the others so that they stand out boldly. Esther's Hebrew name even emphasizes concealment. Her name was Hadassah (myrtle), but her cousin Mordecai called her Esther (star), which comes from the Hebrew root 'seter', meaning 'hidden or concealed'.

### The Legend

The story begins with the king of Persia, Ahasuerus, holding a great feast during which he orders his queen Vashti to come out wearing the royal crown to show off her beauty, but she refuses. Ahasuerus deposes Vashti and holds a kingdom-wide search for another queen. Mordecai, a Jew exiled to Babylon during King Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Judah, had raised his very beautiful, orphaned cousin, Hadassah whom he called Esther. She is chosen to be King Ahasuerus' new queen.

A decree was issued that all subjects of the kingdom must prostrate themselves before Haman, the new Prime Minister. Mordecai the Jew refuses to bow, infuriating Haman who then slanders the Jews to the King and advises their extermination. The King agrees. Haman then casts lots for the best day to slaughter the Jews and steal their property. In anticipation of his victory, Haman builds a gallows on which to hang Mordecai.

Mordecai sends word to Esther that it is time for her to reveal her Jewish identity and plead with the king for her life and those of her people. She goes to the king, but asks only that he appear with Haman at a banquet she has prepared. At the banquet, she requests that he and Haman come to a second banquet the next day.

Ahasuerus, unable to sleep that night, reads his book of remembrances, discovering that Mordecai the Jew had uncovered a plot to overthrow his throne and was never rewarded. In the morning, the king orders Haman to honor Mordecai by putting the king's robe and crown on him and parading him through the city on the king's horse, announcing to everyone that this is what the king does for one so honored. Thoroughly humiliated after being forced to honor the man he despised, Haman rushes home only to be quickly whisked away to the second banquet prepared by Esther.

At the second feast, Esther requests that her life be spared and those of her people because they had been condemned to die. When asked by the king who would dare to do such a thing, she points her finger at Haman. The king becomes enraged and orders that Haman be hung on the gallows he built for Mordecai.

### Passover and Purim

Passover is celebrated in the first month of the Hebrew religious calendar (Nisan) and Purim is celebrated in the last month (Adar). Passover is described as the *beginning* of the redemption of mankind and Purim points to the *end*

. At the time G-d determined to redeem the Israelites from slavery and from idolatry in Egypt, the world was looking to the stars for guidance. Therefore, G-d chose the night between the 14<sup>th</sup>

and 15<sup>th</sup>

of Nisan (at the 'rising' of the full moon) to begin redemption because the Egyptians believed that the heavenly sign of

[Aries](#);  
<sup>[1]</sup>

the ram guided their firstborn sons and was most powerful during the full moon of that month. G-d *began*

redemption by bringing judgment on all the G-ds of Egypt, particularly on the ram (or lamb) that represented their heavenly guide. It was slain at the very hour during which its power was said to be the greatest and then G-d slew all their firstborn sons who were supposedly empowered by Aries.

Aries, as a heavenly body, was a type of Satan or Lucifer who is also a heavenly body, a fallen angel. Isaiah (14:4-24) and Ezekiel (28:12-19) both describe Satan's aspirations to *be* G-d. The New Testament calls him 'the man of sin' or simply 'sin'. The Bible records that Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21); that is, He

*became*

the man of sin, Satan, by proxy. In the Garden of Gethsemane, meaning 'olive press', the sins of the world were 'pressed into' Jesus (Luke 22:44). His arrest, trial and crucifixion symbolized G-d's indictment and judgment of Satan and sin. G-d demonstrated through the Roman authorities, His power and dominion over Satan, the false heavenly guide.

From the moment Jesus took the sins of the world upon Himself, becoming Satan by proxy, He would not 'open His mouth' in defense of Himself because He would not defend Satan (e.g. Isaiah 53:7, Matthew 26:63). The Roman soldiers unwittingly mocked Satan, who declared that he would rule and reign in the Heavens. They adorned Jesus with a kingly robe and a crown of thorns, giving him a reed as his scepter. Then they stripped Jesus, illustrating that Satan was about to be stripped of his power and authority over mankind. They beat him so thoroughly that Jesus became unrecognizable, symbolizing the repulsiveness with which G-d views sin. Jesus carried his own cross, being the visible manifestation of the heavy weight of judgment that was on Satan's shoulders. He was humbled before the multitudes as his mutilated body was paraded through the streets. He was dealt a cruel, painful death, demonstrating not only Satan's future demise, but also the immediate demise of his spiritual power over mankind. Satan was symbolically crucified, cursed of G-d (Deuteronomy 21:23)! The apostle Paul said that Jesus made a public display of G-d's victory over Satan on the cross (Colossians 2:15).

### **Haman versus Mordecai**

As part of the celebration of Purim, the story of Esther is acted out as a skit or play. Each time Haman's name is mentioned, the audience spins a grogger (noisemaker used on Purim) and shouts "venahafoch hu" ( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICNMYdUVjX4> ) meaning "the opposite happened". This theme becomes obvious when the story is compared to the crucifixion of Yeshua (Jesus).

The plot begins when Mordecai, a type of Yeshua (Jesus), refuses to bow to Haman, a type of the devil (Esther 3:5 & Matthew 4:10). Haman then concocts a scheme to destroy the Jewish people.

**From the very beginning, Satan has determined to destroy the Jewish people, through whom G-d said He would destroy Satan and his minions (Jeremiah 51:19-21).**

On Nisan 1 Haman began casting lots day to day to determine the day he would kill the Jewish people (Esther 3:7). On Nisan 13, the lot fell to Adar 13. (Esther 3:12,13).

**On the 13<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, the same day that Haman betrayed the Jewish people, Judas betrayed Yeshua (Jesus) (Mark 14:1, 10, 11). Both Haman and Judas were hung, being cursed of G-d (Deuteronomy 21:23).**

Haman then went to the king seeking permission to carry out his evil plan. The king agreed and placed his seal upon Haman's decree. In the same way that Satan had to get permission from G-d to harm Job (Job 1:6-12), permission had to be granted to kill Yeshua (Jesus). Yeshua said to Pilate who claimed he held the power to crucify him, "You could have no power at all against me unless it had been given from above." And in Acts 2:23a, Peter said, "Yeshua [was] delivered [to the Roman authorities to be crucified] by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of G-d." (Also Isaiah 53:10, Matthew 26:53-54, John 10:15b, 18) and Acts 4:27-28)

**Satan can do nothing against G-d's people without G-d's permission, which is only granted if it serves G-d's purposes.**

Haman agreed to pay a large sum of money – 10,000 talents of silver – for the betrayal of the Jewish people (Esther 3:9).

**This demonstrates the high value God places on His treasured covenant people. On the other hand, the Jewish leadership of Israel agreed to pay a small sum of money – 30 pieces of silver – (Matthew 26:15) for the betrayal of Yeshua (Jesus) who was standing in proxy for Satan. They paid the price for injury done to a slave (Exodus 21:32) indicating the low value G-d places on His slave Satan.**

Haman paraded Mordecai through the streets, being given great honor and glory from the king.

**G-d paraded Yeshua (Jesus), in proxy for Satan, through the streets in humiliation and disgrace.**

Haman built gallows on which to hang Mordecai (Esther 5:14) resulting in his being hung on the gallows intended for his enemy.

**Satan planned to hang Yeshua (Jesus) on the cross for His destruction, but instead it was Satan being hung on the cross for *his* destruction.**

Paul speaks of the mystery of the reversal of events that took place at the crucifixion of Yeshua (Jesus) who stood in proxy for Satan. "But we speak the wisdom of G-d in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which G-d ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age understood; for had they known, they would not have crucified the L-rd of glory (1 Corinthians 2:7, 8). The mystery is that Yeshua, by standing in proxy for Satan on the cross, "...canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, (sins) which stood against us and condemned us, He has taken it away, nailing it (sins-Satan) to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross." (Colossians 2:14-15)

Haman's property was bequeathed to Esther who was a type of G-d's people.

**The Scriptures promise that G-d will restore the fortunes of His people and their land. The last part of Passover Seder is dedicated to rehearsing the future when the Messiah will come to redeem His people and restore them to their land.**

Mordecai was given Haman's power and authority, being second only to the king.

**Yeshua (Jesus) was given all power and authority, second only to G-d Himself (Ephesians 1:21-22).**

As the new Prime Minister of Persia, Mordecai issued a decree giving the Jews permission to defend themselves on the date set by Haman for their destruction. Mordecai and Esther declared that a holiday be perpetually observed on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Adar to commemorate the day when G-d turned the tables on their enemies.

**Jesus, at His death, also issued a new decree— “It is finished”, declaring that the power of sin over mankind was ended. G-d declared that a holiday be perpetually observed on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Adar to commemorate the day when G-d turned the tables on our enemy Satan.**

We proclaim, “Venahafoch hu”, the opposite happened!

Barukh HaShem

Blessed is the Name of the L-rd

1 G-d said He placed the stars, the moon, and the sun in the heavens for signs and seasons. Psalm 19 says they "utter speech", "show knowledge" and "declare the glory of G-d" to the whole world. The Bible calls the Zodiac "Mazzeroth" and six books of the Bible mention G-d's name for some of the constellations of the Zodiac. "Aires" the Ram is recognized as the first constellation or 'sign' of the Zodiac. Therefore, it begins the story of redemption that is told through the twelve constellations. This should never be confused with astrology, which is an abomination to the L-rd. Renowned Bible scholar, E.W. Bullinger and others have written extensively on this subject.