



## The Feast of Purim | 9:14-32

- The Biblical Account – vv. 14-32
  - Verse 17 - Outside of Shushan the feast was observed on the 14th of Adar.
  - Verse 18 - Inside Shusan the feast was held on the 15th of Adar.
  - Verse 19 - Still today, Jews living in villages and unwalled towns celebrate on the 14th, but in walled cities they celebrate on the 15th. The sages determined that a city must have been walled from the time of Joshua to be considered walled, therefore no modern city is "walled." The observance of Purim on the 15th is called *Sushan Purim*.
  - Verse 26 - The word **pur** is the Persian word for *lot*. The "coincidence" of finding rest from enemies on the day of destruction is indicative the way in which God deals with His elect nation when they are out of fellowship with Him.
  - Verse 27 - Not only did the original Jews observe the feast, but committed that future Jews should do so as well, and that Gentile converts should observe the feast.
  - Verse 28 - Though Purim is found in the Bible, it is not considered one of the seven Biblical feasts. This feast was instituted by Mordecai, the others by God. The other feast that is observed by the Jews but not a Biblical feast is Hanukkah.
- Purim in history and modern observance –<sup>1</sup>
  - The Maccabean battle against the Seleucid General Nicanor ended in victory on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Adar, one day before Purim.
    - “And they all decreed by public vote never to let this day go unobserved, but to celebrate the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—which is called Adar in the Aramaic language—the day before Mordecai’s day.” – 2 Maccabees 15:36
    - It became traditional from this point to have “Esther’s Fast” on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of Adar.
      - The fast is not obligatory
      - If Purim is on a Sunday, the fast takes place on Thursday, since no fasting is allowed on Friday or Saturday.
  - The Ottoman Turks called the feast *Id El Sukar*, Arabic for “Feast of Sugar” because the Jews would give their Arab neighbors sweets on that day.
- The five activities of Purim:
  - Feasting
  - Gladness
  - “A Good Day”
  - Giving “portions” to one another
  - Giving gifts to the poor.
- Seven obligations of modern Jews at Purim:
  - Read the *Megillah Esther* (scroll of Esther)

<sup>1</sup> Information about the observance of Purim drawn from: Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. *The Messianic Bible Study Collection*. Vol. 177. Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1983. Print.

- Done at the Synagogue
- Done twice – morning and evening
- When the name Hamaan is mentioned, stomp, make noise, etc to drown out his name.
- Read Exodus 17:8-16 (The war with Amelek)
- Recite certain prayers at Synagogue services and meals
- Send at least two portions of food to one friend
- Give at least two gifts to the poor
- Refrain from fasting and from eulogies on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>
- Eat, drink, and be merry!
  - “One famous rabbi of the Talmud by the name of Rava, said “A man is obligated to drink until he no longer knows the difference between blessing Mordecai and cursing Haman.” (Fruchtenbaum)
  - Jews generally look down upon drunkenness
- Children and many adults will often masquerade on Purim, a reminder that God’s hand was hidden in the story of Esther. Often adults will dress elegantly as a reminder of the feast given by Esther.

### The Conclusion | 10:1-3

The greatness and fame of Mordecai became chronicled in the annals of Media and Persia, and the Jews prospered in the land