

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.

CHAPTER 5 -- 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 hanged, the gallows are prepared.

CHAPTER 6 -- 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. Before Haman can speak, 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.

CHAPTER 7 -- 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.

CHAPTER 8 -- THE REVERSAL IS COMPLETE

Mordechai is named prime minister to replace Haman. A second royal edict is promulgated empowering the Jews to fight and kill anyone who would try to harm them.

CHAPTER 9 -- THE HOLIDAY OF PURIM

On the 13th of Adar, a day that had been designated for Jewish destruction, the Jews are victorious over their enemies. The 10 sons of Haman are hung. The 14th and 15th of Adar are designated to celebrate the salvation. These are the days of Purim. Mordechai initiates the Purim practices -- consisting of a festive meal, the exchange of gifts of food, and the giving of monetary gifts to the poor.

CHAPTER 10 -- MORDECHAI AND PERSIA

Persia, with Mordechai as prime minister, flourishes. The role of Mordechai in the history of the Persian empire is recorded in the king's chronicles.

From Esther, Chapter 7

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⁵ King Achashverosh asked Queen Esther, "Who is he? Where is he—the man who has dared to do such a thing?"

⁶ Esther said, "An adversary and enemy! This vile Haman!"

Then Haman was terrified before the king and queen. ⁷The king got up in a rage, left his wine and went out into the palace garden. But Haman, realizing that the king had already decided his fate, stayed behind to beg Queen Esther for his life.

⁸ Just as the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was reclining.

The king exclaimed, "Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?"

As soon as the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. ⁹ Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, "A pole reaching to a height of fifty cubits stands by Haman's house. He had it set up for Mordechai, who spoke up to help the king."

The king said, "Impale him on it!" ¹⁰ So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordechai. Then the king's fury subsided.

Bonus ? Why doesn't the Book of Esther end after Haman is killed?

Chapter 8

¹ That same day King Achashverosh gave Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordechai came into the presence of the king, for Esther had told how he was related to her. ² The king took off his signet ring, which he had reclaimed from Haman, and presented it to Mordechai. And Esther appointed him over Haman's estate.

? The King knows now about the connection between Esther and Mordechai. Furthermore, he passed the signet ring from Haman to Mordechai. In addition, Esther appointed Mordechai over Haman's estate. Why doesn't the Book of Esther end here?

³ Esther again pleaded with the king, falling at his feet and weeping. She begged him to put an end to the evil plan of Haman the Agagite, which he had devised against the Jews. ⁴ Then the king extended the gold scepter to Esther and she arose and stood before him.

⁵ "If it pleases the king," she said, "and if he regards me with favor and thinks it the right thing to do, and if he is pleased with me, let an order be written overruling the dispatches that Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, devised and wrote to destroy the Jews in all the king's provinces. ⁶ For how can I bear to see disaster fall on my people? How can I bear to see the destruction of my family?"

Bonus ? Haman was killed and Mordechai is now the second in command. Yet Queen Esther needs to beg the king to spare the lives of her people. What can we learn from this?

⁷ King Achashverosh replied to Queen Esther and to Mordechai the Jew, "Because Haman attacked the Jews, I have given his estate to Esther, and they have impaled him on the pole he set up. ⁸ Now write another decree in the king's name on behalf of the Jews as seems best to you, and seal it with the king's signet ring—for no document written in the king's name and sealed with his ring can be revoked."

Extra Bonus ? "Now write another decree in the king's name on behalf of the Jews as seems best to you, and seal it with the king's signet ring—for no document written in the king's name and sealed with his ring can be revoked." What does King Achashverosh's reply to Esther tell us about the status of the Jews in Persia and Media?

⁹ At once the royal secretaries were summoned—on the twenty-third day of the third month, the month of Sivan. They wrote out all Mordechai's orders to the Jews, and to the satraps, governors and nobles of the 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush. These orders were written in the script of each province and the language of each people and also to the Jews in their own script and language. ¹⁰ Mordechai wrote in the name of King Achashverosh, sealed the dispatches with the king's signet ring, and sent them by mounted couriers, who rode fast horses especially bred for the king.

¹¹ The king's edict granted the Jews in every city the right to assemble and protect themselves; to destroy, kill and annihilate the armed men of any nationality or province who might attack them and their women and children, and to plunder the property of their enemies. ¹² The day appointed for the Jews to do this in all the provinces of King Achashverosh was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar. ¹³ A copy of the text of the edict was to be issued as law in every province and made known to the people of every nationality so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

¹⁴The couriers, riding the royal horses, went out, spurred on by the king's command, and the edict was issued in the citadel of Shushan.

¹⁵When Mordechai left the king's presence, he was wearing royal garments of blue and white, a large crown of gold and a purple robe of fine linen. And the city of Shushan held a joyous celebration.

Bonus ? Why is it important to know what was Mordechai wearing when he left the king's presence?

¹⁶For the Jews it was a time of happiness and joy, gladness and honor.

¹⁷In every province and in every city to which the edict of the king came, there was joy and gladness among the Jews, with feasting and celebrating. And many people of other nationalities became Jews because fear of the Jews had seized them.

Extra Bonus ? Why were many people of other nationalities afraid of the Jews?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

Chapter 9

¹ On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, the edict commanded by the king was to be carried out. On this day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, but now the situation was reversed, and the Jews got the upper hand over those who hated them.

Bonus ? Why did the Jews have enemies?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

²The Jews assembled in their cities in all the provinces of King Achashverosh to attack those determined to destroy them. No one could stand against them, because the people of all the other nationalities were afraid of them. ³ And all the nobles of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and the king's administrators helped the Jews, because fear of Mordechai had seized them. ⁴

Mordechai was prominent in the palace; his reputation spread throughout the provinces, and he became more and more powerful.

? Why did the nobles, the satraps, the governors and the king's administrators help the Jews?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

Extra Bonus ? What is the one reason for which the nobles, the satraps, the governors and the king's administrators didn't help Jews?

⁵ The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.⁶ In the citadel of Shushan, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men. ⁷ They also killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸ Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, ⁹ Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha, ¹⁰ the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

? Who did the Jews kill with the sword?

? Why did the Jews kill the ten sons of Haman?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Extra Bonus ? King Achashverosh gave permission to the Jews to plunder the property of their enemies. Why didn't they?

¹¹ The number of those killed in the citadel of Shushan was reported to the king that same day.¹² The king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman in the citadel of Shushan. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now what is your petition? It will be given you. What is your request? It will also be granted."

Extra Bonus ? How can you explain King Achashverosh eagerness to keep granting Esther's wishes?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

¹³ "If it pleases the king," Esther answered, "give the Jews in Shushan permission to carry out this day's edict tomorrow also, and let Haman's ten sons be impaled on poles."

? Why did Esther request one more day for the Jews to continue the fight?

? Why did Esther request that the ten sons of Haman be impaled on poles?

¹⁴ So the king commanded that this be done. An edict was issued in Shushan, and they impaled the ten sons of Haman. ¹⁵ The Jews in Shushan came together on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and they put to death in Shushan three hundred men, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

¹⁶ Meanwhile, the remainder of the Jews who were in the king's provinces also assembled to protect themselves and get relief from their enemies. They killed seventy-five thousand of them but did not lay their hands on the plunder.

Bonus ? Why did the Jews kill 75,000 people in the provinces?

¹⁷ This happened on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.

¹⁸ The Jews in Shushan, however, had assembled on the thirteenth and fourteenth, and then on the fifteenth they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.

Bonus ? Why did the Jews celebrate on the 14th of Adar in the provinces and in the 15th of Adar in Shushan?

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²⁸ These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family, and in every province and in every city. And these days of Purim should never fail to be celebrated by the Jews—nor should the memory of these days die out among their descendants.

Bonus ? Why shouldn't the memory of these days (the days of Purim) die among the Jews?

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Let's Talk

Extra Bonus ? In many schools and synagogues, most of chapters 8 and 9 in the Book of Esther is not being taught or discussed. Why?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

Answer 4 _____

Answer 5 _____

Answer 6 _____



Let's Talk

Alan Dershowitz said: "They say Jews have too much power. I say we are not powerful enough!"

? Why do you think many non-Jews would like Jews to have less power?

Extra Bonus ? Why do you think many Jews would like Jews to have less power?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

Appendix

The "Greatest Generation" and its Relationship with Money



◆ AI Overview

The generation that grew up during the Great Depression (roughly 1929–1939), often referred to as part of the "Greatest Generation" or "Silent Generation" (born 1928–1945), developed a deep-rooted, cautious, and frugal relationship with money shaped by scarcity and trauma. Having experienced, or witnessed, extreme economic deprivation, bank failures, and high unemployment, this cohort prioritized financial security, stability, and debt aversion above all else.

Key Aspects of Their Relationship with Money:

- **Extreme Frugality:** Defined by the motto "Use it up, wear it out, make do or do without," this generation learned to waste nothing. This included saving food, reusing materials, mending clothing, and buying used items.
- **Deep-Rooted Saving Culture:** Savings were viewed as an essential survival mechanism rather than for luxury. They distrusted banks early on and preferred keeping cash in secure places.
- **Aversion to Debt:** Having seen neighbors and family lose homes and businesses to foreclosure when income disappeared, they strongly preferred to pay for items in full with cash.
- **Resourcefulness and Self-Reliance:** They were highly adaptive, with skills in repairing household items, gardening, and canning, reducing dependence on expensive, store-bought goods.
- **Financial Conservatism:** They were generally risk-averse, particularly regarding the stock market, favoring steady employment and homeownership as safer forms of wealth.
- **Preparedness for "What-ifs":** Even decades after the Depression, many continued to stockpile necessities (food, supplies) in preparation for future crises.

! **Let's Talk** ? How is the "Greatest Generation" and its relationship with money related to chapters 8 and 9 in the Book of Esther?