

Esther 9:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did what they would unto those that hated them.

Analysis

Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword (וַיַּכּוּ מִכַּתְחֶרֶב הַקֶּהוּדִים בְּכָל־אֹיְבֵיהֶם)—The Hebrew makkāt-ḥereb ('stroke of the sword') describes decisive military action. **And did what they would unto those that hated them** (שָׁנְאוֹתָם, sōnē'êhem)—this phrase emphasizes the complete reversal: those who plotted the Jews' destruction now face judgment themselves.

This is not random violence but judicial execution under Persian law (8:11). The edict gave Jews the right to defend themselves and execute judgment on those who sought their genocide. God's providence works through human governments to preserve His covenant people, foreshadowing how He will ultimately judge those who persecute His church (Rev 19:11-21).

Historical Context

On the 13th of Adar (March 473 BC), the day Haman had chosen for Jewish extermination, the tables turned completely. The Persian Empire's legal system, which made royal edicts irrevocable (1:19, 8:8), meant both Haman's genocide decree and Mordecai's defense decree remained in force. Jews exercised their legal right to self-defense.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's providence turn evil plots against His people into opportunities for His glory?
2. What does this historical deliverance teach about God's faithfulness to preserve His covenant people through all generations?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּכּוּ	כֹהֲנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	בְּכָל	אֶיְבֹיָהֶם	מִכַּת	חֶרֶב
smote	Thus the Jews	H3605	all their enemies	with the stroke	of the sword
H5221	H3064		H341	H4347	H2719
וְהָרַג	וְאַבְדָּה	וַעֲשֵׂה	בְּשֹׂנְאֵיהֶם	כְּרָצוֹנָם:	
and slaughter	and destruction	and did	unto those that hated	what they would	
H2027	H12	H6213	H8130	H7522	