

The Chiasm of Esther 6-10: Haman's Evil Plot Foiled

The second half of the book of Esther, like the first half, is written as a chiasm, a literary structure where the words or themes of the first section of a passage are repeated in reverse order in the second. Typically whatever is in the center of the chiasm is what is being emphasized. In Esther 6-10, the emphasis is on the failure of Haman's plot (Esth 8:3-7).

- A The king reads the royal records about Mordecai's deeds (6:1-2)
- B Morecai is honored (6:3-14)
- C
 - 1 The king asks Esther for her request on the second day (7:1-2)
 - 2 Esther requests that the Jews not be killed (7:3-4)
 - 3 Haman hanged (7:5-10)
- D
 - 1 Mordecai's new prominence in the palace (8:1)
 - 2 All that was supposed to be Haman's is given to a Jew (8:2)
- E CENTER: Haman's plot foiled (8:3-17)
- D'
 - 1 Mordecai's new prominence in the palace (9:1-4)
 - 2 All that was supposed to be done to the Jews by their enemies, the Jews do to them (9:5-10)
- C'
 - 1 The king asks Esther for her request which is for a second day (9:11-13)
 - 2 Esther requests that the Jews be allowed to kill one more day (9:13)
 - 3 Haman's sons hanged and second day is granted (9:14-19)
- B' Morecai is honored (9:20-32))
- A' Mordecai's deeds are recorded in the royal records (10:1-3)¹

¹ Adapted from David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 164.