

The Problem of the Irreversible Decree

(Esther Chapter 8)



Haman persuaded the King to issue a decree to destroy all Jews on a certain day. This was an irreversible decree that not even the King could change (Esther 1:19; 8:8). Even after Haman died, the royal decree was still in force. The law of the Persians could not be reversed (Daniel 6:8,15). Even though the King could not reverse the decree, he gave Mordecai permission to write **another decree** (a counterdecree) which would nullify the first decree. He could not remove the first decree, but he could add the second. The second decree gave the Jews royal permission to assemble together and defend themselves against their enemies on that day of destruction. It wonderfully worked and the Jews survived Haman's plot!

The King of the universe has issued an irreversible decree: **“The LORD...will not at all acquit the wicked”** (Nahum 1:3; Numbers 14:18; Exodus 23:7). This means the LORD must punish those who are guilty. He cannot let the guilty ones escape justice. This decree dooms every one of us! The guilty must be punished and the punishment is death (Rom. 1:32; 6:23). Can this decree be reversed? Can God change His mind and say, “Please disregard what I have written in My Word. I have now decided to allow guilty people to go unpunished”? Can a holy God justify the ungodly and not punish them for their sins? God the King cannot change the first decree, but He can send forth a second decree. The second decree says this: **My Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, will go to the cross and He will be punished as a Substitute for the guilty ones** (1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Those who believe on Him will be completely justified (Romans 3:26; 4:5). The first decree says: **The guilty ones must die!** The second decree says: **The believing ones will live!**

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