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Therefore These Days Were Called Purim, From the Word Pur
9: 26a

Therefore these days were called Purim, from the word Pur DIG: What is the origin of the word Purim? What is the equivalent Hebrew word? Who controls the *lot*? In what three ways is it used in the TaNaKh? It's one thing to be skeptical about the way Haman went about choosing the day for his slaughter of the Jews in Persia, but its quite another for the Jews to use the *goral* to determine the will of God. How do you feel about the three usages of the *goral*? Are they legitimate? Why would ADONAI choose to use such a method to communicate His will? Did God direct both the *purim* and the *goral*? How can you tell?

REFLECT: How do you determine the will of YHWH in your life? How seriously do you take the Word of God? Do you desire love ADONAI with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength (Deuteronomy 6:5)? Or do you hold back? Do you conveniently hold on to some of it? Your finances? Your relationships? Your sex life? Do you want all of the LORD? Well, I can tell you that He wants all of you!



In explaining the origin of the holiday, the author of **Esther** also explains the origin of its name, **Purim**. **Therefore**, meaning because of **verse 24**, **these days were called Purim,** which is the plural form of the word *pur* that means *lot* or *die* (singular of *dice*), **from the word *pur***. *Purim* is a Hebrew pluralized form of an

Akkadian word later also used by the Babylonians to refer to these cube-shaped objects of divination. **Haman** used them to determine the day of death for **the Jewish** race in **Persia** (**to see link click Av – The Lot Fell on the Twelfth Month, the Month of Adar, in the Presence of Haman**).

But even though casting the *purim* is like throwing the dice, ADONAI was still controlling the outcome because **Haman** had to wait almost a year to carry out **his** wicked plan. The hand of God controlled even **his** dice so that **the Jews** would have eleven months to prepare for **their** defense. **The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD (Proverbs 16:33).**

Dear Heavenly Father, Praise You that not only are You incredibly wise in creation, You also wisely guide all that happens in the life of Your children. You can do anything. ***For nothing will be impossible with God" (Luke 1:37).*** *As Your child seeks to follow you in all he does, he does not need to worry but can trust You with peace as he prays to You for You have chesed love.* ***Then ADONAI passed before him, and proclaimed, "ADONAI, ADONAI, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth, showing mercy to a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means leaving the guilty unpunished, (Exodus 34:6-7b)****.*

You are a wonderful Father and you delight in answering Your child's prayers to guide and to protect him. ***Do not be anxious about anything – but in everything, by prayer and petition [ask] with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the shalom of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Yeshua (Philippians 4:6-7).*** *In Yeshua's holy name and power of His resurrection. Amen*

The first time this foreign word *pur* is used **(3:7)**, and again in **9:24**, the author translates it into its Hebrew equivalent, *goral*, which the NIV translates **(that is, the lot)**. This infers that when **Esther** was written, the author did not believe that his readers would be familiar with the origin or meaning of either *pur* or *purim.*

Even though the word *pur* and its plural form *purim* appear only in the book of **Esther**, the equivalent Hebrew word, *goral*, appears frequently throughout the

TaNaKh. **It is used in three ways**. **First, it is used to determine the will of the LORD** (see my commentary on **Exodus Gb – The Urim and Thummim: The Means of Making Decisions**)**.** When Haman cast lots, he was seeking direction from "the gods." Ancient **Isra'el** also used the *goral* to seek **God's** will. For instance, **Joshua** used the *lot* to divide the Promised Land among the tribes, believing that **the LORD** would determine the allotment: **After you have written descriptions of the seven parts of the Land, bring them here to me and I will cast lots for you in the presence of ADONAI our God (Joshua 18:6).**

The second meaning refers to the thing allotted by the roll of the *goral.* The English word *lot* happens to have a wide semantic range. It can refer to either the means to make chance selections (as in the word *lottery*), or the result of a chance selection (as in the expression *my lot in life*). Continuing in **Joshua**, both the lots that were cast and the land allotted from the casting are referred to by the word *goral:* **The lot** [*goral*] **came up for the tribe of Benjamin, clan by clan. Their allotted** [*goralam*] **territory lay between the tribes of Judah and Joseph (Joshua 18:11).**

The third usage of the word *goral* refers to the circumstances of life that comes from the Lord. David recognized that his *lot* came from **God.** He said: **LORD, you have assigned me my portion**, *menoth*, **and my cup, you have made my lot** [*goral*] **secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance (Psalm 16:5-6).** As king of **Isra'el**, David spoke not only of his own personal life, but also as the representative of all **the Israelites**. He recognized that the destiny of **Isra'el** was **secure** only because God had secured it.

Therefore, the name of the feast, **Purim** is a play on words, signifying that the **lot**, or destiny, of God's people would not be determined by **Haman's** casting of **lots** before **his** gods. But only ADONAI can determine the roll of the *goral*, and only He determines the **lot** of His **people**.[121]

***LORD**, in the days of Mordecai and **Esther**, in Susa the capital, when the wicked **Haman** was against **them** when **he** sought to destroy, murder, and to eliminate all **the Jews**, from the young to the old, infants and women, in one day, on the thirteenth of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, and **their** wealth to plunder; You in great mercy frustrated **his** counsel and ruined **his** scheme, and You made **his** mischief to return upon **his** own head, hanging **him** and **his** sons upon the tree. And for these blessings, may Your name be exalted, our King, forever and to all*

generations. Amen.[122]