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Ester

translated from the Greek Septuagint

Introduction

This Greek account of *Ester* follows a young Jewish woman who becomes queen in the empire of Paras (Persia). Her guardian Mordekai refuses to bow to the powerful official Haman, who responds by planning to destroy all the Yehudim (Jews) in the empire. Ester must decide whether to risk her own life by approaching the king and identifying herself with her threatened people.

Readers of the other OET account of Ester will recognise the main events, but this version also includes Mordekai's dream, prayers for rescue, royal letters, and further details about Ester's approach to the king. These passages explicitly describe the characters' dependence on God and his part in their rescue. The account also explains the celebration called 'Purim', when the people remember how their sorrow was turned into joy.

The book of Ester in the Greek Septuagint contains five additions that the traditional Hebrew text doesn't have. These additions are recognised as Deuterocanonical Scripture by the Romaios Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Russian Orthodox Churches. Those additions are enclosed in [square brackets]. Because the additions by themselves make little sense without the broader context of the book, we present here a translation of the whole book of Ester from the Greek.

We have chosen not to distract the reader with confusing out-of-order chapter numbers that would result from using the KJB versification, but rather merge these 5 additions as extensions at the beginning of 1:1 and after 3:13, 4:17, 8:12, and 10:3. This makes some verses (1:1, 5:1, and 8:12) really long, but it also makes the verses line up with the same verse numbers in Ester as translated from the traditional Hebrew text. Some of the proper names in this book have been changed to the more familiar Hebrew form instead of the direct transliteration from the Greek.

Main components of this account

Mordekai's dream and Ester's rise to become queen *1:1–2:23*
Haman's threat and the prayers of Mordekai and Ester *3:1–4:47*
Ester appeals to the king and Haman is executed *5:1–7:10*
The Yehudim defend themselves and establish Purim *8:1–9:32*
Mordekai's position and the explanation of his dream *10:1-14*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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Mordekai's dream and the plot against the king

1:1 [In the second year of the reign of Ahashverosh (Ahasuerus) the great king, on the first day of Nisan, Mordekai the son of Yair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benyamin, a Yehudi (Jew) dwelling in the city Shushan (Susa), a great man, serving in the king's palace, saw a vision. Now he was one of the captives whom Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) king of Bavel (Babylon) had carried captive from Yerushalem (Jerusalem) with Yekaneyah the king of Yehudah (Judea). This was his dream: Listen, voices and a noise, thunders and earthquake, tumult on the earth. And two great serpents came out, both ready for conflict. A great voice came from them. Every nation was prepared for battle by their voice, even to fight against the nation of the just. Listen, a day of darkness and blackness, suffering and anguish, affection and tumult on the earth. And all the righteous nation was troubled, fearing their own afflictions. They prepared to die, and cried to God. Something like a great river from a little spring with much water, came from their cry. Light and the sun arose, and the lowly were exalted, and devoured the honourable.

Mordekai, who'd seen this vision and what God desired to do, having arisen, kept it in his heart, and desired by all means to interpret it, even until night.

Mordekai rested quietly in the palace with Gabatha and Teresh the king's two chamberlains, eunuchs who guarded the palace. He heard their conversation and searched out their plans. He learnt that they were preparing to lay hands on King Ahashverosh; and he informed the king about them. The king examined the two chamberlains. They confessed, and were led away and executed. The king wrote these things for a record. Mordekai also wrote about these matters. The king commanded Mordekai to serve in the palace, and gave gifts for this service. But Haman the son of Hamedata the Bugaean was honoured in the sight of the king, and he endeavoured to harm Mordekai and his people, because of the king's two chamberlains.][1]

King Ahashverosh's lavish feasts

And it happened after these things[2] in the days of Ahashverosh, —(this Ahashverosh ruled over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces from Hodu)— **2** in those days, when King Ahashverosh was on the throne in the city of Shushan, **3** in the third year of his reign, he made a feast for his friends, for people from the rest of the nations, for the leading citizens of the Persians and Madim (Medes), and for the chief of the local governors. **4** After this—after he'd shown them the wealth of his kingdom and the abundant glory of his wealth during one hundred and eighty days— **5** when the days of the wedding feast were completed, the king made a banquet lasting six days for the people of the nations who were present in the city, in the courtyard of the king's house, **6** which was adorned with fine linen and flax on cords of fine linen and purple, fastened to golden and silver studs on pillars of white marble and stone. There were golden and silver couches on a pavement of emerald stone, and of mother-of-pearl, and of white marble, with transparent coverings variously flowered, having roses arranged around it. **7** There were gold and silver cups, and a small cup of carbuncle set out, of the value of thirty thousand talents, with abundant and sweet wine, which the king himself drank. **8** This banquet wasn't according to the appointed law, but as the king desired to have it. He charged the stewards to perform his will and that of the company.

Queen Vashti refuses the king's command

9 Also Vashti the queen made a banquet for the women in the palace where King Ahashverosh lived. **10** Now on the seventh day, the king, being merry, told Haman, Bazan, Teresh, Baraze, Zatholtha, Abataza, and Tharaba, the seven chamberlains, servants of

1 RV 1:1 · Note Note: The Hebrew and some copies of LXX, don't have these first few lines.

2 RV 1:1 · Note Greek words.

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King Ahashverosh, 11 to bring in the queen to him, to[3] enthrone her, and crown her with the diadem, and to show her to the princes, and her beauty to the nations, for she was beautiful. 12 But queen Vashti refused to come with the chamberlains; so the king was grieved and angered. 13 And he said to his friends, "This is what Vashti said. Therefore pronounce your legal judgement on this case."

14 So Arkesaeus, Sarsathaeus, and Malisear, the princes of the Persians and Madim (Medes), who were near the king, who sat chief in rank by the king, drew near to him, 15 and reported to him according to the laws what it was proper to do to queen Vashti, because she hadn't done the things commanded by the king through the chamberlains. 16 And Memukan said to the king and to the princes, "Queen Vashti hasn't wronged the king only, but also all the king's rulers and princes; 17 for he's told them the queen's words, and how she[4] disobeyed the king. As she then refused to obey King Ahashverosh, 18 so this day the other wives of the chiefs of the Persians and Madim, having heard what she said to the king, will dare in the same way to dishonour their husbands. 19 If then it seems good to the king, let him make a royal decree, and let it be written according to the laws of the Madim and Persians, and let him not alter it: 'Don't allow the queen to come in to him any more. Let the king give her royalty to a woman better than she.' 20 Let the king's law which he'll have made be widely proclaimed in his kingdom. Then all the women will give honour to their husbands, from the poor even to the rich." 21 This advice pleased the king and the princes; and the king did as Memukan had said, 22 and sent into all his kingdom through the several provinces, according to their language, so that men might be feared in their own houses.

The search for a new queen

2:1 After this, the king's anger was pacified, and he no more mentioned Vashti, bearing in mind what she'd said, and how he'd condemned her. 2 Then the king's servants said, "Let chaste, beautiful young virgins be searched for for the king. 3 Let the king appoint local governors in all the provinces of his kingdom, and let them select beautiful, chaste young ladies and bring them to the city Shushan (Susa), into the women's apartment. Let them be consigned to the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women. Then let things for purification and other needs be given to them. 4 Let the woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti."

This thing pleased the king; and he did so.

5 Now there was a Yehudi (Jew) in the city Shushan, and his name was Mordekai, the son of Yair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benyamin. 6 He'd been brought as a prisoner from Yerushalem (Jerusalem), whom Nevukadnetsar (Nebuchadnezzar) king of Bavel (Babylon) had carried into captivity. 7 He had a foster child, daughter of Aminadav his father's brother. Her name was Ester. When her parents died, he brought her up to womanhood as his own. This lady was beautiful. 8 And because the king's ordinance was published, many ladies were gathered to the city of Shushan under Hegay's hand; and Ester was brought to Hegay, the keeper of the women. 9 The lady pleased him, and she found favour in his sight. He hurried to give her the things for purification, her portion, and the seven maidens appointed her out of the palace. He treated her and her maidens well in the women's apartment. 10 But Ester didn't reveal her family or her kindred, for Mordekai had charged her not to tell. 11 But Mordekai used to walk every day by the women's courtyard, to see what'd become of Ester.

12 Now this was the time for a virgin to go into the king, when she'd completed twelve months; for so are the days of purification fulfilled, six months while they're anointing themselves with oil of myrrh, and six months

3 **RV 1:11 · Note** Greek to make her queen.

4 **RV 1:17 · Note** Greek contradicted.

Readers' Version

with spices and women's purifications. 13 And then the lady goes in to the king. The officer that he commands to do so will bring her to come in with him from the women's apartment to the king's chamber. 14 She enters in the evening, and in the morning she departs to the second women's apartment, where Hegay the king's chamberlain is keeper of the women. She doesn't go in to the king again, unless she's called by name.

Ester becomes queen

15 And when the time was fulfilled for Ester the daughter of Aminadav the brother of Mordekai's father to go in to the king, she neglected nothing which the chamberlain, the women's keeper, commanded; for Ester found grace in the sight of all who looked at her. 16 So Ester went in to King Ahashverosh (Ahasuerus) in the twelfth month, which is Adar, in the seventh year of his reign. 17 The king loved Ester, and she found favour beyond all the other virgins. He put the queen's crown on her. 18 The king made a banquet for all his friends and great men for seven days, and he highly celebrated the marriage of Ester; and he granted a remission of taxes to those who were under his dominion.

Mordekai uncovers a plot against the king

19 Meanwhile, Mordekai served in the courtyard. 20 Now Ester hadn't revealed her country, for so Mordekai commanded her, to fear God, and perform his commandments, as when she was with him. Ester didn't change her manner of life.

21 Two chamberlains of the king, the chiefs of the body-guard, were grieved, because Mordekai was promoted; and they tried to kill King Ahashverosh. 22 And the matter was discovered by Mordekai, and he made it known to Ester, and she declared to the king the matter of the conspiracy. 23 And the king examined the two chamberlains and hanged them. Then the king gave orders to make a note for a memorial in the royal library of the goodwill shown by Mordekai, as a commendation.

Haman plans to annihilate the Yehudim

3:1 After this, King Ahashverosh highly honoured Haman the son of Hamedata, the Bugaean. He exalted him and set his seat above all his friends. 2 All in the palace bowed down to him, for so the king had given orders to do; but Mordekai didn't bow down to him. 3 And they in the king's palace said to Mordekai, "Mordekai, why do you transgress the king's commands?" 4 They questioned him daily, but he didn't listen to them; so they reported to Haman that Mordekai resisted the king's commands; and Mordekai had shown to them that he was a Yehudi (Jew). 5 When Haman understood that Mordekai didn't bow down to him, he was greatly enraged, 6 and plotted to utterly destroy all the Yehudim (Jews) who were under the rule of Ahashverosh.

7 In the twelfth year of Ahashverosh's reign, Haman made a decision by casting lots by day and month, to kill the race of Mordekai in one day. The lot fell on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar. 8 So he spoke to King Ahashverosh, saying, "There's a nation scattered among the nations in all your kingdom, and their laws differ from all the other nations. They disobey the king's laws. It isn't expedient for the king to tolerate them. 9 If it seem good to the king, let him make a decree to destroy them, and I'll remit into the king's treasury ten thousand talents of silver."

10 So the king took off his ring, and gave it into Haman's hands to seal the decrees against the Yehudim. 11 The king said to Haman, "Keep the silver, and treat the nation as you will." 12 So the king's recorders were called in the first month, on the thirteenth day, and they wrote as Haman commanded to the captains and governors in every province, from Hodu even to Kush (Ethiopia), to one hundred and twenty-seven provinces; and to the rulers of the nations according to their languages, in King Ahashverosh's name. 13 The message was sent by couriers throughout Ahashverosh's kingdom, to utterly destroy the race of the Yehudim on the first day of the twelfth month,

which is Adar, and to plunder their goods.[5] [The following is the copy of the letter. "From the great King Ahashverosh to the rulers and the governors under them of one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from Hodu even to Kush, who hold authority under him:

"Ruling over many nations and having obtained dominion over the whole world, I was determined (not elated by the confidence of power, but ever conducting myself with great moderation and gentleness) to make the lives of my subjects continually tranquil, desiring both to maintain the kingdom quiet and orderly to its utmost limits, and to restore the peace desired by all men. When I'd asked my counsellors how this should be brought to pass, Haman, who excels in soundness of judgement among us, and has been manifestly well inclined without wavering and with unshaken fidelity, and had obtained the second post in the kingdom, informed us that a certain ill-disposed people is scattered among all the tribes throughout the world, opposed in their law to every other nation, and continually neglecting the king's commands, so that the united government blamelessly administered by us isn't quietly established. Having then conceived that this nation is continually set in opposition to every man, introducing as a change a foreign code of laws, and injuriously plotting to accomplish the worst of evils against our interests, and against the happy establishment of the monarchy, we instruct you in the letter written by Haman, who's set over the public affairs and is our second governor, to destroy them all utterly with their wives and children by the swords of the enemies, without pitying or sparing any, on the fourteenth day of the twelfth month Adar, of the present year; that the people formerly and now ill-disposed to us having been violently consigned to death in one day, may in the future secure to us continually a well constituted and quiet state of affairs."]
14 Copies of the letters were published in every province; and an order was given to all the nations to be ready for that day. **15** This business was hastened also in Shushan (Susa). The king and Haman began to drink, but the city was confused.

Mordekai asks Ester to help her people

4:1 But Mordekai, having perceived what was done, tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and sprinkled dust on himself. Having rushed forth through the open street of the city, he cried with a loud voice, "A nation that's done no wrong is going to be destroyed!" **2** He came to the king's gate, and stood; for it wasn't lawful for him to enter into the palace wearing sackcloth and ashes. **3** And in every province where the letters were published, there was crying, lamentation, and great mourning on the part of the Yehudim. They wore sackcloth and ashes. **4** The queen's maids and chamberlains went in and told her; and when she'd heard what was done, she was deeply troubled. She sent clothes to Mordekai to replace his sackcloth, but he refused. **5** So Ester called for her chamberlain Hatak, who waited on her; and she sent to learn the truth from Mordekai. **7** Mordekai showed him what was done, and the promise which Haman had made the king of ten thousand talents to be paid into the treasury, that he might destroy the Yehudim. **8** And he gave him the copy of what was published in Shushan about their destruction to show to Ester; and told him to charge her to go in and entreat the king, and to beg him for the people. "Remember, he said, the days of your humble condition, how you were nursed by my hand; because Haman, who holds the next place to the king, has spoken against us to cause our death. Call on the master, and speak to the king about us, to deliver us from death."

9 So Hatak went in and told her all these words. **10** Ester said to Hatak, "Go to Mordekai, and say, **11** 'All the nations of the empire know that any man or woman who goes in to the king into the inner courtyard without being called, that person must die, unless the king stretches out his golden sceptre; then he'll live. I haven't

5 **RV 3:13 · Note** Note: The part in brackets is not in Hebrew

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been called to go into the king for thirty days.' "
12 So Hatak reported to Mordekai all Ester's
words. 13 Then Mordekai said to Hatak, "Go,
and say to her, 'Ester, don't say to yourself that
you alone will escape in the kingdom, more
than all the other Yehudim. 14 Because if you
keep quiet on this occasion, help and protec-
tion will come to the Yehudim from another
place; but you and your father's house will per-
ish. Who knows if you've been made queen for
this occasion?' "
15 And Ester sent the messenger who came to
her to Mordekai, saying, 16 "Go and assemble
the Yehudim that are in Shushan (Susa), and all
of you fast for me. Don't eat or drink for three
days, night and day. My maidens and I'll also
fast. Then I'll go in to the king contrary to the
law, even if I must die."
17 So Mordekai went and did all that Ester
commanded him.[6]

Mordekai prays for his people

18 [He prayed to the master, making mention
of all the master's works. 19 He said, "master
God, you're king ruling over all, for all things
are in your power, and there's no one who can
oppose you in your purpose to save Yisrael (Is-
rael); 20 for you've made the heaven and the
earth and every wonderful thing under heaven.
21 You're master of all, and there's no one who
can resist you, master. 22 You know all things.
You know, master, that it isn't in insolence, nor
arrogance, nor love of glory, that I've done this,
to refuse to bow down to the arrogant Haman.
23 Because I'd gladly have kissed the soles of his
feet for the safety of Yisrael. 24 But I've done
this that I might not set the glory of man above
God's glory. I won't worship anyone except you,
my master, and I won't do these things in arro-
gance. 25 And now, Oh master God, the King,
the god of Avraham, spare your people, for our
enemies are planning our destruction, and
they've desired to destroy your ancient inheri-
tance. 26 Don't overlook your people, whom
you've redeemed for yourself out of the land of
Mitsrayim (Egypt). 27 Listen to my prayer. Have
mercy on your inheritance and turn our
mourning into gladness, that we may live and
sing praise to your name, Oh master. Don't ut-
terly destroy the mouth of those who praise
you, Oh master."
28 All Yisrael cried with all their might, for
death was before their eyes.

Ester prays for courage and help

29 And queen Ester took refuge in the master, be-
ing taken as it were in the agony of death.
30 Having taken off her glorious clothing, she
put on clothes of distress and mourning. In-
stead of grand perfumes she filled her head
with ashes and dung. She greatly humbled her
body, and she filled every place of her glad
adorning with her tangled hair. 31 She implored
the master God of Yisrael, and said, "Oh my
master, you alone are our king. Help me. I'm
destitute, and have no helper but you, 32 for my
danger is near at hand.[7] 33 I've heard from my
birth in the tribe of my kindred that you, mas-
ter, took Yisrael out of all the nations, and our
fathers out of all their kindred for a perpetual
inheritance, and have done for them all that
you've said. 34 And now we've sinned before
you, and you've delivered us into our enemies'
hands, 35 because we honoured their gods.
You're righteous, Oh master. 36 But now they
haven't been content with the bitterness of our
slavery, but have laid their hands on the hands
of their idols 37 to abolish the decree of your
mouth, and utterly to destroy your inheritance,
and to stop the mouth of those who praise you,
and to extinguish the glory of your house and
your altar, 38 and to open the mouth of the
Gentiles to speak the[8] praises of vanities, and
that a mortal king should be admired forever.
39 Oh master, don't surrender your sceptre to
those who don't exist, and don't let them laugh
at our fall, but turn their counsel against them-
selves, and make an example of him who's be-

6 **RV 4:17 · Note** Note: The part between brackets, i.e. to the end of chapter 5 is not in the Hebrew

7 **RV 4:32 · Note** Greek in my hand.

8 **RV 4:38 · Note** Greek virtues.

gun to injure us. 40 Remember us, Oh master! Manifest yourself in the time of our affliction. Encourage me, Oh King of gods, and ruler of all dominion! 41 Put harmonious speech into my mouth before the lion, and turn his heart to hate him who fights against us, to the utter destruction of those who agree with him. 42 But deliver us by your hand, and help me who am alone and have no one but you, Oh master. 43 You know all things, and know that I hate the glory of transgressors,[9] and that I abhor the bed of the uncircumcised and of every stranger. 44 You know my necessity, for I abhor the symbol of my proud station, which is on my head in the days of my[10] splendour. I abhor it as a menstruous cloth, and I don't wear it in the days of my tranquillity. 45 Your handmaid hasn't eaten at Haman's table, and I haven't honoured the banquet of the king, neither have I drunk wine of libations. 46 Neither has your handmaid rejoiced since the day of my promotion until now, except in you, Oh master God of Avraham. 47 Oh god, who has power over all, listen to the voice of the desperate, and deliver us from the hand of those who devise mischief. Deliver me from my fear.]

Ester approaches the king

5:1 On the third day, when she'd finished praying, she took off her servant's dress and put on her glorious clothing. Being splendidly dressed and having called on God the Overseer and Preserver of all things, she took her two maids, and she leaned on one, as a delicate female, and the other followed bearing her train. She was blooming in the perfection of her beauty. Her face was cheerful and looked lovely, but her heart was filled with fear. Having passed through all the doors, she stood before the king. He was sitting on his royal throne. He'd put on all his glorious clothing, covered all over with gold and precious stones, and was very terrifying. And having raised his face resplendent with glory, he looked with intense anger. The queen fell, and changed her colour as she fainted. She bowed herself on the head of the maid who went before her. But God changed the king's spirit to gentleness, and in intense feeling, he sprang from off his throne, and took her into his arms, until she recovered. He comforted her with peaceful words, and said to her, "What's the matter, Ester? I'm your relative. Cheer up! You won't die, for our command is openly declared to you: 'Draw near.' "[11]

2 And having raised the golden sceptre, he laid it on her neck, and embraced her. He said, "Speak to me."

So she said to him, "I saw you, my lord, as an angel of God, and my heart was troubled for fear of your glory; for you, my lord, are to be wondered at, and your face is full of grace." While she was speaking, she fainted and fell.

Then the king was troubled, and all his servants comforted her. 3 The king said, "What do you desire, Ester? What's your request? Ask even to the half of my kingdom, and it'll be yours."[12]

4 Ester said, "Today is a special day. So if it seems good to the king, let both him and Haman come to the feast which I'll prepare this day."

5 The king said, "Hurry and bring Haman here, that we may do as Ester said." So they both came to the feast about which Ester had spoken. 6 At the banquet, the king said to Ester, "What's your request, queen Ester? You'll have all that you require."

7 She said, "My request and my petition is: 8 if I've found favour in the king's sight, let the king and Haman come again tomorrow to the feast which I'll prepare for them, and tomorrow I'll do as I've done today."

Haman plans to hang Mordekai

9 So Haman went out from the king very glad and merry; but when Haman saw Mordekai the

9 **RV 4:43 · Note** Or, opinion.

10 **RV 4:44 · Note** Greek vision.

11 **RV 5:1 · Note** From the first verse to the third, the Greek widely differs from the Hebrew

12 **RV 5:3 · Note** From the first verse to the third, the Greek widely differs from the Hebrew

Readers' Version

Yehudi (Jew) in the courtyard, he was greatly enraged. **10** Having gone into his own house, he called his friends, and his wife Zeresh. **11** He showed them his wealth and the glory with which the king had invested him, and how he'd promoted him to be chief ruler in the kingdom. **12** Haman said, "The queen has called no one to the feast with the king but me, and I'm invited tomorrow. **13** But these things don't please me while I see Mordekai the Yehudi in the courtyard.

14 Then Zeresh his wife and his friends said to him, "Let a fifty cubit tall[13] gallows be made for you. In the morning you speak to the king, and let Mordekai be hanged on the gallows; but you go in to the feast with the king, and be merry."

The saying pleased Haman, and the gallows was prepared.

The king honours Mordekai

6:1 The master removed sleep from the king that night; so he told his servant to bring in the[14] books, the registers of daily events, to read to him. **2** And he found the[15] records written about Mordekai, how he'd told the king about the king's two chamberlains, when they were keeping guard, and tried to lay hands on Ahashverosh (Ahasuerus). **3** The king said, "What honour or favour have we done for Mordekai?"

The king's servants said, "You haven't done anything for him."

4 And while the king was enquiring about Mordekai's kindness, look, Haman was in the courtyard. The king said, "Who's in the courtyard? Now Haman had come in to speak to the king about hanging Mordekai on the gallows which he'd prepared. **5** The king's servants said, "Listen, Haman stands in the courtyard."

And the king said, "Call him!"

6 The king said to Haman, "What should I do for the man whom I wish to honour?"

Haman said within himself, "Whom would the king honour but myself?" **7** He said to the king, "As for the man whom the king wishes to honour, **8** let the king's servants bring the robe of fine linen which the king puts on, and the horse on which the king rides, **9** and let him give it to one of the king's noble friends, and let him dress the man whom the king loves. Let him mount him on the horse, and proclaim through the[16] streets of the city, saying, "This is what'll be done for every man whom the king honours!"

10 Then the king said to Haman, "You've spoken well. Do so for Mordekai the Yehudi (Jew), who waits in the palace, and let not a word of what you've spoken be neglected!"

11 So Haman took the robe and the horse, dressed Mordekai, mounted him on the horse, and went through the streets of the city, proclaiming, "This is what'll be done for every man whom the king wishes to honour." **12** Then Mordekai returned to the palace; but Haman went home mourning, with his head covered.

13 Haman related the events that'd happened to him to Zeresh his wife and to his friends. His friends and his wife said to him, "If Mordekai is of the race of the Yehudim (Jews), and you've begun to be humbled before him, you'll assuredly fall; and you won't be able to withstand him, for the living god is with him." **14** While they were still speaking, the chamberlains arrived to rush Haman to the banquet which Ester had prepared.

Ester exposes Haman's plan

7:1 So the king and Haman went in to drink with the queen. **2** The king said to Ester at the banquet on the second day, "What's it, queen Ester? What's your request? What's your petition? It'll be done for you, up to half of my kingdom."

3 She replied, "If I've found favour in the sight of the king, let my life be granted as my petition, and my people as my request. **4** Because

13 **RV 5:14 · Note** Greek a tree cut.

14 **RV 6:1 · Note** Greek letters.

15 **RV 6:2 · Note** Greek letters.

16 **RV 6:9 · Note** Or, wide space.

both I and my people are sold for destruction, pillage, and genocide. If both we and our children were sold for male and female slaves, I wouldn't have bothered you, for this[17] isn't worthy of the king's palace."

5 The king said, "Who's dared to do this thing?"

6 Ester said, "The enemy is Haman, this wicked man!"

Then Haman was terrified in the presence of the king and the queen. 7 The king rose up from the banquet to go into the garden. Haman began to beg the queen for mercy, for he saw that he was in serious trouble. 8 The king returned from the garden; and Haman had fallen on the couch, begging the queen for mercy. The king said, "Will you even assault my wife in my house?"

And when Haman heard it, his expression changed. 9 And Bigtan, one of the chamberlains, said to the king, "Listen, Haman has also prepared a gallows for Mordekai, who spoke about the king, and a fifty cubit high gallows has been set up on Haman's property."

The king said, "Let him be[18] hanged on it!" 10 So Haman was hanged on the gallows that'd been prepared for Mordekai. Then the king's anger was abated.

The Yehudim are allowed to defend themselves

8:1 On that day, King Ahashverosh (Ahasuerus) gave to Ester all that belonged to Haman the slanderer. The king called Mordekai, for Ester had told that he was related to her. 2 The king took the ring which he'd taken away from Haman and gave it to Mordekai. Ester appointed Mordekai over all that'd been Haman's. 3 She spoke yet again to the king, and fell at his feet, and implored him to undo Haman's mischief and all that he'd done against the Yehudim. 4 Then the king extended the golden sceptre to Ester; and Ester arose to stand near the king. 5 Ester said, "If it seems good to you, and I've found favour in your sight, let an order be sent that the letters sent by Haman may be reversed—letters that were written for the destruction of the Yehudim who are in your kingdom. 6 Because how could I see the affliction of my people, and how could I survive the destruction of my[19] kindred?"

7 Then the king said to Ester, "If I've given and freely granted you all that was Haman's, and hanged him on a gallows because he laid his hands on the Yehudim (Jews), what more do you seek? 8 Write in my name whatever seems good to you, and seal it with my ring; for whatever is written at the king's command, and sealed with my ring, can't be countermanded. 9 So the scribes were called in the first month, which is Nisan, on the twenty-third day of the same year; and orders were written to the Yehudim, whatever the king had commanded to the[20] local governors and chiefs of the local governors, from Hodu even to Kush—one hundred and twenty-seven local governors, according to the several provinces, in their own languages. 10 They were written by order of the king, sealed with his ring, and the letters were sent by the couriers. 11 In them, he charged them to use their own laws in every city, to help each other, and to treat their adversaries and those who attacked them as they pleased, 12 on one day in all Ahashverosh's kingdom, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is Adar.

The king's letter protecting the Yehudim

13 Let the copies be posted in conspicuous places throughout the kingdom. Let all the Yehudim be ready against this day, to fight against their enemies. The following is a copy of the letter containing orders:

[The great King Ahashverosh (Ahasuerus) sends greetings to the rulers of provinces in one hundred and twenty-seven local gover-

17 **RV 7:4 · Note** see Hebrew: slanderer

18 **RV 7:9 · Note** Or, impaled.

19 **RV 8:6 · Note** Greek country.

20 **RV 8:9 · Note** Greek stewards.

Readers' Version

nance regions, from Hodu to Kush (Ethiopia), even to those who are faithful to our interests. Many who've been frequently honoured by the most abundant kindness of their[21] benefactors have conceived ambitious designs, and not only endeavour to hurt our subjects, but moreover, not being able to bear prosperity, they also endeavour to plot against their own benefactors. They not only would utterly abolish gratitude from among men, but also, elated by the boastings of men who are strangers to all that's good, they supposed that they'd escape the sin-hating vengeance of the ever-seeing God. And often evil exhortation has made partakers of the guilt of shedding innocent blood, and has involved in irremediable calamities many of those who'd been appointed to offices of authority, who'd been entrusted with the management of their friends' affairs; while men, by the false sophistry of an evil disposition, have deceived the simple goodwill of the ruling powers. And it's possible to see this, not so much from more ancient traditional accounts, as it's immediately in your power to see it by examining what things have been wickedly[22] perpetrated by the baseness of men unworthily holding power. It's right to take heed with regard to the future, that we may maintain the government in undisturbed peace for all men, adopting needful changes, and ever judging those cases which come under our notice with truly equitable decisions. Because whereas Haman, a person from Makedonia, the son of Hamedata, in reality an alien from the blood of the Persians, and differing widely from our mild course of government, having been hospitably entertained by us, obtained so large a share of our universal kindness as to be called our father, and to continue the person next to the royal throne, reverenced of all; he however, overcome by[23] pride, endeavoured to deprive us of our dominion, and our life;[24] having by various and subtle artifices demanded for destruction both Mordekai our deliverer and perpetual benefactor, and Ester the blameless consort of our kingdom, along with their whole nation. Because by these methods he thought, having surprised us in a defenceless state, to transfer the dominion of the Persians to the people from Makedonia. But we find that the Yehudim, who've been consigned to destruction by the[25] most abominable of men, aren't malefactors, but living according to the most just laws, and being the sons of the living god, the most high and[26] mighty, who maintains the kingdom, to us as well as to our forefathers, in the most excellent order. You'll therefore do well in refusing to obey the letter sent by Haman the son of Hamedata, because he who's done these things has been hanged with his whole family at Shushan's (Susa's) gates, Almighty God having swiftly returned to him a worthy punishment. We enjoin you then, having openly published a copy of this letter in every place, to give the Yehudim permission to use their own lawful customs and to strengthen them, that on the thirteenth of the twelfth month Adar, on the self-same day, they may defend themselves against those who attack them in a time of affliction. Because in the place of the destruction of the chosen race, Almighty God has granted them this time of gladness. Therefore you also, among your notable feasts, must keep a distinct day with all festivity, that both now and in the future it may be a day of deliverance to us and who are well disposed towards the Persians, but to those that plotted against us a memorial of destruction. And every city and province collectively, which won't do accordingly, will be consumed with

21 RV 8:13 · Note perhaps rulers, see Luke 22. 25.

22 RV 8:13 · Note Greek contrived.

23 RV 8:13 · Note Greek not having borne.

24 RV 8:13 · Note Greek spirit.

25 RV 8:13 · Note Greek thrice guilty.

26 RV 8:13 · Note Greek greatest.

vengeance by spear and fire. It'll be made not only inaccessible to men, but most hateful to wild animals and birds forever.][27] Let the copies be posted in conspicuous places throughout the kingdom and let all the Yehudim be ready against this day, to fight against their enemies. 14 So the horsemen went forth quickly to perform the king's commands. The ordinance was also published in Shushan.

15 Mordekai went out robed in royal clothing, wearing a golden crown and a diadem of fine purple linen. The people in Shushan saw it and rejoiced. 16 The Yehudim had light and gladness 17 in every city and province where the ordinance was published. Wherever the official announcement took place, the Yehudim had joy and gladness, feasting and mirth. Many of the Gentiles were circumcised and became Yehudim for fear of the Yehudim.

The Yehudim defeat their enemies

9:1 Now in the twelfth month, on the thirteenth day of the month, which is Adar, the letters written by the king arrived. 2 In that day, the adversaries of the Yehudim perished; for no one resisted, through fear of them. 3 Because the chiefs of the local governors, and the princes and the royal scribes, honoured the Yehudim; for the fear of Mordekai was on them. 4 Because the order of the king was in force, that he should be celebrated in all the kingdom. 6 In the city Shushan the Yehudim killed five hundred men, 7 including Pharsannes, Delphon, Phasga, 8 Pharadatha, Barea, Sarbaca, 9 Marmasima, Ruphaeus, Arsaeus, and Zabuthaeus, 10 the ten sons of Haman the son of Hamedata the Bugaean, the enemy of the Yehudim; and they plundered their property on the same day. 11 The number of those who perished in Shushan was reported to the king.

12 Then the king said to Ester, "The Yehudim have slain five hundred men in the city Shushan. What do you think they've done in the rest of the country? What more do you ask, that it may be done for you?"

13 Ester said to the king, "Let it be granted to the Yehudim to do the same to them tomorrow. Also, hang the bodies of the ten sons of Haman."

14 He permitted it to be done; and he gave up to the Yehudim of the city the bodies of the sons of Haman to hang. 15 The Yehudim assembled in Shushan on the fourteenth day of Adar and killed three hundred men, but plundered no property.

16 The rest of the Yehudim who were in the kingdom assembled, and helped one another, and obtained peace and security from their enemies; for they destroyed fifteen thousand of them on the thirteenth day of Adar, but took no spoil. 17 They rested on the fourteenth of the same month, and kept it as a Rest Day with joy and gladness.

18 The Yehudim in the city of Shushan assembled also on the fourteenth day and rested; and they also observed the fifteenth with joy and gladness. 19 On this account then, the Yehudim dispersed in every foreign land keep the fourteenth of Adar as a[28] holy day with joy, each sending gifts of food to his neighbour.

The celebration named 'Purim'

20 Mordekai wrote these things in a book and sent them to the Yehudim, as many as were in Ahashverosh's (Ahasuerus') kingdom, both those who were near and those who were far away, 21 to establish these as joyful days and to keep the fourteenth and fifteenth of Adar; 22 for on these days the Yehudim obtained rest from their enemies; and in that month, which was Adar, in which a change was made for them from mourning to joy, and from sorrow to a holiday, to spend the whole of it in good days of[29] feasting and gladness, sending portions to their friends and to the poor. 23 And the Yehudim consented to this as Mordekai wrote to them, 24 showing how Haman the son of Hamedata the person from Makedonia fought

27 **RV 8:13 · Note** the passages in brackets are not in the Hebrew.

28 **RV 9:19 · Note** Greek good day.

29 **RV 9:22 · Note** Greek weddings.

against them, how he made a decree and threw[30] lots to destroy them utterly; **25** also how he went in to the king, telling him to hang Mordekai; but all the calamities he tried to bring on the Yehudim came on himself, and he was hanged, along with his children. **26** Therefore these days were called Purim, because of the lots (for in their language they're called Purim) because of the words of this letter, and because of all they suffered on this account, and all that happened to them. **27** Mordekai established it, and the Yehudim took on themselves, on their offspring, and on those who were joined to them to observe it, neither would they on any account behave differently; but these days were to be a memorial kept in every generation, city, family, and province. **28** These days of Purim must be kept forever, and their memorial must never be forgotten in any generation.

29 Queen Ester the daughter of Aminadav and Mordekai the Yehudi (Jew) wrote all that they'd done, and gave the confirmation of the letter about Purim. **31** Mordekai and Ester the queen established this decision on their own, pledging their own well-being to their plan. **32** And Ester established it by a command forever, and it was written for a memorial.

Mordekai's greatness

10:1 The king levied a tax on his kingdom both by land and sea. **2** As for his strength and valour, and the wealth and glory of his kingdom, look, they're written in the book of the Persians and Madim (Medes) for a memorial.

3 Mordekai[31] was viceroy to King Ahashverosh (Ahasuerus), and was a great man in the kingdom, honoured by the Yehudim (Jews), and lived his life loved by all his nation.[32]

Mordekai explains his dream

4 [Mordekai said, "These things have come from God. **5** Because I remember the dream which I had about these matters; for not one detail of them has failed. **6** There was the little spring which became a river, and there was light, and the sun and much water. The river is Ester, whom the king married and made queen. **7** The two serpents are Haman and me. **8** The nations are those which combined to destroy the name of the Yehudim. **9** But as for my nation, this is Yisrael (Israel), even those who cried to God and were delivered; for the master delivered his people. The master rescued us out of all these calamities; and God worked such signs and great wonders as haven't been done among the nations. **10** Therefore he ordained two lots. One for God's people, and one for all the other nations. **11** And these two lots came for an appointed season, and for a day of judgement, before God, and for all the nations. **12** God remembered his people and vindicated his inheritance. **13** They must observe these days in the month Adar, on the fourteenth and on the fifteenth day of the month, with an assembly, joy, and gladness before God, throughout the generations forever among his people Yisrael. **14** In the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemaios (Ptolemy) and Kleopatra (Cleopatra), Dositheos, who said he was a priest and Levite, and Ptolemaios his son brought this letter of Purim, which they said was authentic, and that Lusimakos the son of Ptolemaios, who was in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), had inter-

30 **RV 9:24 · Note** Greek lot.

31 **RV 10:3 · Note** Greek succeeded to Or, came into the place of.

32 **RV 10:3 · Note** the passages in brackets are not in the Hebrew.

preted.]

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