

## The Book of Esther

<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus (that is, the Ahasuerus that reigned from India even to Ethiopia, over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces), <sup>2</sup> in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the fortress, <sup>3</sup> in the third year of his reign, he made a feast to all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and the princes of the provinces being before him; <sup>4</sup> when he shewed the glorious wealth of his kingdom and the splendid magnificence of his grandeur many days, a hundred and eighty days. <sup>5</sup> And when these days were expired, the king made a feast to all the people that were present in Shushan the fortress, both to great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace. <sup>6</sup> White, green, and blue [hangings] were fastened with cords of byssus and purple to silver rings and pillars of white marble; couches of gold and silver [lay] upon a pavement of red and white marble, and alabaster, and black marble. <sup>7</sup> And they gave drink in vessels of gold (the vessels being diverse one from another), and royal wine in abundance, according to the king's bounty. <sup>8</sup> And the drinking was, according to commandment, without constraint; for so the king had appointed to all the magnates of his house,

that they should do according to every man's pleasure. <sup>9</sup> Also the queen Vashti made a feast for the women of the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus. <sup>10</sup> On the seventh day, when the king's heart was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of king Ahasuerus, <sup>11</sup> to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the royal crown to shew the peoples and the princes her beauty; for she was of beautiful countenance. <sup>12</sup> But the queen Vashti refused to come at the word of the king which was [sent] by the chamberlains; and the king was very wroth, and his fury burned in him. <sup>13</sup> And the king said to the wise men who knew the times (for so was the king's business [conducted] before all that knew law and judgment; <sup>14</sup> and the next to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, [and] Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who saw the king's face, and who sat first in the kingdom), <sup>15</sup> What shall be done to the queen Vashti according to law, because she has not performed the word of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains? <sup>16</sup> Then said Memucan before the king and the princes, The queen Vashti has not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the peoples that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus. <sup>17</sup> For the act of the queen will come abroad to all women, so as to render their husbands contemptible in their eyes, when they shall say, The king Ahasuerus commanded the queen Vashti to be brought in before

him, and she came not! <sup>18</sup> And the princesses of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's act, will say it this day to all the king's princes, and there will be contempt and anger enough. <sup>19</sup> If it please the king, let a royal order go forth from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it may not pass, That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate to another that is better than she; <sup>20</sup> and when the king's edict which he shall make shall be heard throughout his realm – for it is great – all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, from the greatest to the least. <sup>21</sup> And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan. <sup>22</sup> And he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people according to their language, That every man should bear rule in his own house, and should speak according to the language of his people.

## 2

<sup>1</sup> After these things, when the fury of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her. <sup>2</sup> Then said the king's servants that attended upon him, Let there be maidens, virgins of beautiful countenance, sought for the king; <sup>3</sup> and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the young virgins of beautiful countenance to Shushan the fortress, to the house of the women,

unto the custody of Hegai the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given. <sup>4</sup> And let the maiden that pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so. <sup>5</sup> There was in Shushan the fortress a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjaminite, <sup>6</sup> who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. <sup>7</sup> And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter; for she had neither father nor mother — and the maiden was fair and beautiful — and when her father and mother were dead, Mordecai took her for his own daughter. <sup>8</sup> And it came to pass when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the fortress, unto the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was brought into the king's house, unto the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women. <sup>9</sup> And the maiden pleased him, and obtained favour before him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, and her portions, and the seven maidens selected to be given her, out of the king's house; and he removed her and her maids to the best [place] of the house of the women. <sup>10</sup> Esther had not made known her people nor her birth; for Mordecai had charged her that she should not make it known. <sup>11</sup> And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should

become of her. <sup>12</sup> And when every maiden's turn came to go in to king Ahasuerus after that she had been treated for twelve months, according to the manner of the women (for so were the days of their purification accomplished – six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with spices, and with things for the purifying of the women, <sup>13</sup> and thus came the maiden in unto the king), whatever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women to the king's house. <sup>14</sup> In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, unto the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, keeper of the concubines. She came in to the king no more, unless the king delighted in her, and she were called by name. <sup>15</sup> And when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, came to go in to the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained grace in the sight of all them that saw her. <sup>16</sup> So Esther was taken to king Ahasuerus, into his royal house, in the tenth month, that is, the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. <sup>17</sup> And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins, and he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. <sup>18</sup> And the king made a great feast to all his princes and his servants, Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave presents according to the king's bounty. <sup>19</sup> And when the virgins were gath-

ered together the second time, Mordecai sat in the king's gate. <sup>20</sup> (Esther, as Mordecai had charged her, had not yet made known her birth nor her people; for Esther did what Mordecai told her, like as when she was brought up with him.) <sup>21</sup> In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the threshold, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. <sup>22</sup> And the thing became known to Mordecai, and he related it to Esther the queen, and Esther told it to the king in Mordecai's name. <sup>23</sup> And the matter was investigated and found out; and they were both hanged on a tree. And it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

### 3

<sup>1</sup> After these things king Ahasuerus promoted Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. <sup>2</sup> And all the king's servants that were in the king's gate bowed and did Haman reverence, for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did [him] reverence. <sup>3</sup> Then the king's servants, who were in the king's gate, said to Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment? <sup>4</sup> And it came to pass as they spoke daily to him, and he hearkened not to them, that they informed Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand; for he had told them that he was a Jew. <sup>5</sup> And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, Haman was

full of fury. <sup>6</sup> But he scorned to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had made known to him the people of Mordecai; therefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were in all the kingdom of Ahasuerus – the people of Mordecai. <sup>7</sup> In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman for each day and for each month, to the twelfth [month], that is, the month Adar. <sup>8</sup> And Haman said to king Ahasuerus, There is a people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from [those of] every people, and they keep not the king's laws; and it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. <sup>9</sup> If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those that have charge of the affairs, to bring [it] into the king's treasuries. <sup>10</sup> And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it to Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy. <sup>11</sup> And the king said to Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as seems good to thee. <sup>12</sup> Then were the king's scribes called, in the first month, on the thirteenth day of the [month], and there was written according to all that Haman commanded unto the king's satraps, and to the governors over every province, and to the princes of every people; to every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people according to their language: in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with

the king's ring. <sup>13</sup> And the letters were sent by couriers into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, upon the thirteenth of the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar, and [to take] the spoil of them for a prey. <sup>14</sup> That the decree might be given in every province, a copy of the writing was published to all peoples, that they should be ready against that day. <sup>15</sup> The couriers went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the fortress. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city of Shushan was in consternation.

## 4

<sup>1</sup> And when Mordecai knew all that was done, Mordecai rent his garments, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and bitter cry, <sup>2</sup> and came even before the king's gate; for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. <sup>3</sup> And in every province, wherever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing: many lay in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>4</sup> And Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told [it] her; and the queen was exceedingly grieved: and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him; but he received [it] not. <sup>5</sup> Then Esther called for Hat-ach, [one] of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to wait upon her, and gave him

a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was. <sup>6</sup> And Hatach went forth to Mordecai, unto the public place of the city which was before the king's gate. <sup>7</sup> And Mordecai told him of all that had happened to him, and of the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them. <sup>8</sup> And he gave him a copy of the writing of the decree that had been given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew [it] to Esther, and to declare [it] to her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication to him, and to make request before him, for her people. <sup>9</sup> And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai. <sup>10</sup> And Esther spoke to Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai: <sup>11</sup> All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces do know that whoever, whether man or woman, shall come to the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is **one** law, to put [him] to death, except [such] to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live; and I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days. <sup>12</sup> And they told Mordecai Esther's words. <sup>13</sup> And Mordecai bade to answer Esther: Imagine not in thy heart that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. <sup>14</sup> For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there arise relief and deliverance to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall perish. And who knows whether thou art [not] come to the kingdom for such a time as this? <sup>15</sup> And Esther bade to answer

Mordecai: <sup>16</sup> Go, gather together all the Jews that are found in Shushan, and fast for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise, and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish. <sup>17</sup> And Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

## 5

<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house. And the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the entrance to the house. <sup>2</sup> And it was so, when the king saw the queen Esther standing in the court, that she obtained grace in his sight; and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand; and Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. <sup>3</sup> And the king said to her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be given thee even to the half of the kingdom. <sup>4</sup> And Esther said, If it seem good to the king, let the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him. <sup>5</sup> And the king said, Hasten Haman, that it may be done as Esther has said. And the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. <sup>6</sup> And the king said to Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee; and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be done. <sup>7</sup> And Esther

answered and said, My petition and my request is, <sup>8</sup> If I have found grace in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to-morrow according to the king's word. <sup>9</sup> And Haman went forth that day joyful and glad of heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up nor moved for him, he was full of fury against Mordecai. <sup>10</sup> But Haman controlled himself, and came home; and he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife. <sup>11</sup> And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king. <sup>12</sup> And Haman said, Yea, Esther the queen let no man come in with the king to the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to-morrow also I am invited to her with the king. <sup>13</sup> Yet all this is of no avail to me so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate. <sup>14</sup> Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends to him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and in the morning speak to the king that Mordecai may be hanged on it: then go in merrily with the king to the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.

## 6

<sup>1</sup> On that night sleep fled from the king. And he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the

king. <sup>2</sup> And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, keepers of the threshold, who had sought to lay hand on king Ahasuerus. <sup>3</sup> And the king said, What honour and dignity has been done to Mordecai for this? And the king's servants that attended upon him said, Nothing has been done for him. <sup>4</sup> And the king said, Who is in the court? Now Haman had come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak to the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. <sup>5</sup> And the king's servants said to him, Behold, Haman is standing in the court. And the king said, Let him come in. <sup>6</sup> So Haman came in. And the king said to him, What is to be done with the man whom the king delights to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to me? <sup>7</sup> And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delights to honour, <sup>8</sup> let the royal apparel be brought with which the king arrays himself, and the horse that the king rides upon, and on the head of which the royal crown is set; <sup>9</sup> and let the apparel and horse be delivered into the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, and let them array the man whom the king delights to honour, and cause him to ride on the horse through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honour! <sup>10</sup> And the king said to Haman, Make haste, take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do so to Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king's gate: let nothing

fail of all that thou hast said. <sup>11</sup> And Haman took the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and caused him to ride through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honour! <sup>12</sup> And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hastened to his house, mourning and having his head covered. <sup>13</sup> And Haman recounted to Zeresh his wife and to all his friends all that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife to him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but wilt certainly fall before him. <sup>14</sup> While they were yet talking with him, the king's chamberlains came, and hastened to bring Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

## 7

<sup>1</sup> And the king and Haman came to drink with Esther the queen. <sup>2</sup> And the king said again to Esther on the second day, at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee; and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be done. <sup>3</sup> And Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found grace in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request; <sup>4</sup> for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the adversary could not compensate the king's

damage. <sup>5</sup> And king Ahasuerus spoke and said to Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he that has filled his heart to do so? <sup>6</sup> And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. <sup>7</sup> And the king in his wrath rose up from the banquet of wine, [and went] into the palace garden; but Haman stayed to make request for his life to Esther the queen, for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king. <sup>8</sup> And the king returned out of the palace garden into the house of the banquet of wine, and Haman was fallen upon the couch on which Esther was. And the king said, Will he even force the queen before me in the house? The word went forth out of the king's mouth, and they covered Haman's face. <sup>9</sup> And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold, also, the gallows fifty cubits high, that Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good for the king, stands in the house of Haman. And the king said, Hang him on it! <sup>10</sup> So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. And the king's wrath was appeased.

## 8

<sup>1</sup> On that day did king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman the Jews' oppressor to Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was to her. <sup>2</sup> And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman. <sup>3</sup> And Esther spoke

yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device which he had devised against the Jews. <sup>4</sup> And the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. And Esther arose and stood before the king, <sup>5</sup> and said, If it please the king and if I have found grace before him, and the thing seem right to the king, and I be pleasing in his sight, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews that are in all the king's provinces. <sup>6</sup> For how shall I endure to see the evil that shall befall my people? and how shall I endure to see the destruction of my kindred? <sup>7</sup> And king Ahasuerus said to queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he stretched forth his hand against the Jews. <sup>8</sup> Write ye then for the Jews as seems good to you, in the king's name, and seal [it] with the king's ring. For a writing that is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, cannot be reversed. <sup>9</sup> Then were the king's scribes called at that time, in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth [day] thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, and to the satraps, and the governors, and the princes of the provinces which are from India even to Ethiopia, a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, to every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people according to their language, and

to the Jews according to their writing and according to their language. <sup>10</sup> And he wrote in the name of king Ahasuerus, and sealed [it] with the king's ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback riding on coursers, horses of blood reared in the breeding studs: <sup>11</sup> [stating] that the king granted the Jews that were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that might assault them, [their] little ones and women, and to [take] the spoil of them for a prey, <sup>12</sup> upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, upon the thirteenth of the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar. <sup>13</sup> That the decree might be given in every province, a copy of the writing was published to all the peoples, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. <sup>14</sup> The couriers mounted on coursers [and] horses of blood went out, being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at Shushan the fortress. <sup>15</sup> And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a mantle of byssus and purple; and the city of Shushan shouted and was glad. <sup>16</sup> The Jews had light, and joy, and gladness, and honour. <sup>17</sup> And in every province, and in every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews had fallen upon them.

## 9

<sup>1</sup> And in the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day thereof, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them (but it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had power over them that hated them), <sup>2</sup> the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout the provinces of king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt. And no man could withstand them; for the fear of them had fallen upon all the peoples. <sup>3</sup> And all the princes of the provinces, and the satraps, and the governors and officers of the king, helped the Jews; for the fear of Mordecai had fallen upon them. <sup>4</sup> For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went forth throughout the provinces; for the man Mordecai became continually greater. <sup>5</sup> And the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword and slaughter and destruction, and did what they would to those that hated them. <sup>6</sup> And in Shushan the fortress the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men. <sup>7</sup> And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha, <sup>8</sup> and Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha, <sup>9</sup> and Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha, <sup>10</sup> the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the oppressor of the Jews, they slew; but they laid not their hands on the prey. <sup>11</sup> On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the fortress was brought before the king. <sup>12</sup> And the king said to Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed

five hundred men in Shushan the fortress, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? And what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee; and what is thy request further? and it shall be done. <sup>13</sup> And Esther said, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews that are in Shushan to do tomorrow also according to this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows. <sup>14</sup> And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons. <sup>15</sup> And the Jews that were in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and slew three hundred men at Shushan; but they laid not their hand on the prey. <sup>16</sup> And the other Jews that were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, and stood for their life, and had rest from their enemies; and they slew of them that hated them seventy-five thousand (but they laid not their hand on the prey), <sup>17</sup> on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and joy. <sup>18</sup> But the Jews that were at Shushan gathered themselves together on the thirteenth [day] thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and joy. <sup>19</sup> Therefore the Jews of the villages that dwell in the country towns make the fourteenth of the month Adar a day of joy and feasting, and a good day, and on which they send portions one to another. <sup>20</sup> And Mordecai wrote

these things, and sent letters to all the Jews near and far that were in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, <sup>21</sup> to establish [this] among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, <sup>22</sup> as the days on which the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month that was turned to them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day; that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. <sup>23</sup> And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written to them. <sup>24</sup> For Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the oppressor of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that is, the lot, to consume them and to destroy them; <sup>25</sup> and when [Esther] came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he had devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head; and they hanged him and his sons on the gallows. <sup>26</sup> Therefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur. Therefore, according to all the words of this letter, and for what they had seen concerning this matter and what had happened to them, <sup>27</sup> the Jews ordained and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves to them, so that it should not fail, that they would observe these two days according to their writing and according to their fixed time, every year; <sup>28</sup> and that these days should be remembered and observed throughout every generation, in every family, every province, and every city,

and that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them cease from among their seed. <sup>29</sup> And queen Esther the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority to confirm this second letter of Purim. <sup>30</sup> And he sent letters to all the Jews, to the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, words of peace and truth, <sup>31</sup> to confirm these days of Purim in their fixed times, according as Mordecai the Jew and queen Esther had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for themselves and for their seed, as to the matters of the fastings and their cry. <sup>32</sup> And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

## 10

<sup>1</sup> And king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land and the isles of the sea. <sup>2</sup> And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? <sup>3</sup> For Mordecai the Jew was second to king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the welfare of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

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