

ADDITIONS TO ESTHER

¹ In the second year of the reign of Artaxerxes the great, in the first day of the month Nisan, Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, had a dream; ^{1b} who was a Jew, and dwelt in the city of Susa, a great man, serving in the king's court; ^{1c} and he was of the captivity, which Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon carried from Jerusalem with Jeconiah king of Judea; ^{1d} and this was his dream: Behold, noise and tumult, thunderings and earthquake, and uproar upon the earth: ^{1e} and, behold, two great dragons came forth, both of them ready to fight, and their cry was great. ^{1f} And at their cry all nations were ready to battle, that they might fight against the righteous nation. ^{1g} And, lo, a day of darkness and gloominess, tribulation and anguish, affliction and great uproar upon the earth. ^{1h} And the whole righteous nation was troubled, fearing the evils that should befall them, and were ready to perish. ¹ⁱ Then they cried unto God, and upon their cry, as it were from a little fountain, there came a great river, *even* much water. ^{1k} The light and the sun rose up, and the lowly were exalted, and devoured the glorious. ^{1l} Now when Mordecai, who had seen this dream, and what God had determined to do, was awake, he bare it in mind, and until night by all means was desirous to know it. ^{1m} And Mordecai took his rest in the court with Gabatha and Tharra, the two eunuchs of the king, that were keepers of the court. ¹ⁿ And he heard their communings, and searched out their purposes, and learned that they were

about to lay hands upon Artaxerxes the king; and he certified the king of them. ¹⁰ Then the king examined the two eunuchs, and after that they had confessed it, they were led to execution. ^{1p} And the king wrote these things for a memorial; Mordecai also wrote concerning these things. ^{1q} So the king commanded Mordecai to serve in the court, and for this he gave him gifts. ^{1r} Howbeit Haman the son of Hammedatha, a Bougean, who was in great honor with the king, sought to molest Mordecai and his people because of the two eunuchs of the king.

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^{13a} Now this is the copy of the letter: The great king Artaxerxes writeth these things to the princes of a hundred and seven and twenty provinces from India unto Ethiopia, and to the governors that are set under them. ^{13b} After that I became lord over many nations, and had dominion over the whole world, not lifted up with presumption of my authority, but carrying myself always with equity and mildness, I purposed to settle my subjects continually in a quiet life, and making my kingdom peaceable, and open for passage to the utmost borders, to renew peace, which is desired of all men. ^{13c} Now when I asked my counselors how this might be brought to pass, Haman, that excelled in wisdom among us, and was approved for his constant good will and steadfast fidelity, and had the honor of the second place in the kingdom, ^{13d} declared unto us, that in all nations throughout the world there was scattered a certain malignant people, that had laws contrary to all nations, and continually set aside the commandments of kings, so as the uniting of our kingdoms, honorably intended by us, cannot go forward. ^{13e} Seeing then we

understand that this nation is alone continually in opposition unto all men, following perversely a life which is strange to *our* laws, and evil affected to our state, working all the mischief they can, that our kingdom may not be firmly established: ^{13f} therefore have we commanded, that they that are signified in writing unto you by Haman, who is ordained over the affairs, and is a second father unto us, shall all, with their wives and children, be utterly destroyed by the sword of their enemies, without all mercy and pity, the fourteenth day of the twelfth month Adar of this present year: ^{13g} that they, who of old and now also are malicious, may in one day with violence go down to Hades, and so ever hereafter cause our affairs to be well settled, and without trouble.

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^{17a} Then *Mordecai* made his prayer unto the Lord, calling to remembrance all the works of the Lord, and said, ^{17b} O Lord, Lord, thou King Almighty: for the whole world is in thy power, and if it be thy will to save Israel, there is no man that can gainsay thee: ^{17c} for thou hast made heaven and earth, and all the wondrous things that are beneath the heaven; and thou art Lord of all, and there is no man that can resist thee, who art the Lord. ^{17d} Thou knowest all things, and thou knowest, Lord, that it was neither in contempt nor pride, nor for any desire of glory, that I did not bow down to proud Haman. For I could have been content with good will for the salvation of Israel to kiss the soles of his feet. ^{17e} But I did this, that I might not prefer the glory of man above the glory of God: neither will I bow down unto any but to thee, who art my Lord, neither will I do it in pride. ^{17f} And now, O Lord, thou God *and* King, the God of Abraham, spare thy people: for their eyes are upon us to bring us to nought,

and they desire to destroy the heritage, that hath been thine from the beginning. ^{17g} Despise not thy portion, which thou didst redeem out of the land of Egypt for thine own self. ^{17h} Hear my prayer, and be merciful unto thine inheritance: and turn our mourning into feasting, that we may live, O Lord, and sing praises to thy name: and destroy not the mouth of them that praise thee, O Lord.

¹⁷ⁱ And all Israel cried out mightily, because their death was before their eyes. ^{17k} Queen Esther also, being seized as *it were* with the agony of death, resorted unto the Lord: and laid away her glorious apparel, and put on the garments of anguish and mourning: and instead of the most excellent ointments, she covered her head with ashes and dung, and she humbled her body greatly, and all the places of the ornaments of her joy she covered with her tangled hair. And she prayed unto the Lord, the God of Israel, saying, ^{17l} O my Lord, thou only art our King: help me that am desolate and have no other helper but thee: for my danger is in my hand. ^{17m} From my youth up I have heard in the tribe of my family, that thou, O Lord, tookest Israel from among all the nations, and our fathers from all their progenitors, for a perpetual inheritance, and didst perform for them whatsoever thou didst promise. ¹⁷ⁿ And now we have sinned before thee, and thou hast given us into the hands of our enemies, because we glorified their gods: O Lord, thou art righteous. ^{17o} Nevertheless it satisfieth them not, that we are in bitter captivity: but they have stricken hands with their idols, that they will abolish the thing that thou with thy mouth hast ordained, and destroy thine inheritance, and stop the mouth of them that praise thee, and quench the glory of thy house, and thine altar, ^{17p} and open the mouths of the heathen to set forth the virtues of idols,

and that a fleshly king shall be magnified forever. ^{17q} O Lord, give not thy scepter unto them that are nothing, and let them not laugh at our fall; but turn their device upon themselves, and make him an example, that hath begun this against us. ^{17r} Remember, O Lord, make thyself known in the time of our affliction, and give me boldness, O King of the gods, and holder of all dominion. ^{17s} Give me eloquent speech in my mouth before the lion: and turn his heart to hate him that fighteth against us, that there may be an end of him, and of them that are like-minded with him: ^{17t} but deliver us with thy hand, and help me that am desolate and have no other *helper* but thee, O Lord. ^{17u} Thou hast knowledge of all things; and thou knowest that I hate the glory of the wicked, and abhor the bed of the uncircumcised, and of every alien. ^{17w} Thou knowest my necessity: that I abhor the sign of my high estate, which is upon my head in the days wherein I show myself. I abhor it as a menstruous rag, and I wear it not when I am private by myself. ^{17x} And thy handmaid hath not eaten at Haman's table, neither have I honored the king's feast, nor drunk the wine of the drink offerings. ^{17y} Neither had thy handmaid any joy since the day that I was brought hither to this present, but in thee, O Lord, thou God of Abraham. ^{17z} O God, that art mighty above all, hear the voice of the forlorn, and deliver us out of the hands of the mischievous, and deliver me out of my fear.

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¹ And upon the third day, when she had ended her prayer, she laid away her garments of service, and put on her glorious apparel. ^{1a} And being majestically adorned, after she had called upon the all-seeing God and savior, she took her two maids with her: and upon the one

she leaned, as carrying herself delicately; and the other followed, bearing up her train. ^{1b} And she was ruddy through the perfection of her beauty, and her countenance was cheerful *and* right amiable: but her heart was in anguish for fear. ^{1c} Then having passed through all the doors, she stood before the king, who sat upon his royal throne, and was clothed with all his robes of majesty, all *glittering* with gold and precious stones; and he was very dreadful. ^{1d} Then lifting up his countenance that was flushed with glory, he looked *upon her* in fierce anger: and the queen fell down, and turned pale, and fainted, and she bowed herself upon the head of the maid that went before. ^{1e} Then God changed the spirit of the king into mildness, who in an agony leaped from his throne, and took her in his arms, till she came to herself again, and comforted her with soothing words, and said unto her, ^{1f} Esther, what is the matter? I am thy brother, be of good cheer: thou shalt not die, for our commandment is for our subjects: come near. ² So he held up his golden scepter, and laid it upon her neck, and embraced her, and said, Speak unto me. ^{2a} Then said she unto him, I saw thee, my lord, as an angel of God, and my heart was troubled for fear of thy glory. For wonderful art thou, my lord, and thy countenance is full of grace. ^{2b} And as she was speaking, she fell down for faintness. Then the king was troubled, and all his servants comforted her.

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^{12b} The great king Artaxerxes unto the governors of countries in a hundred and seven and twenty provinces from India unto Ethiopia, and unto them that are well affected to our state, greeting. ^{12c} Many, the more often

they are honored with the great bounty of their benefactors, the more proud they are waxen, and endeavor to hurt not our subjects only, but not being able to bear abundance, do take in hand to practice also against those that do them good: ^{12d} and take not only thankfulness away from among men, but also lifted up with the boastful words of them that were never good, they think to escape the evil-hating justice of God, who always seeth all things. ^{12e} Oftentimes also fair speech of those that are put in trust to manage their friends' affairs, hath caused many that are in authority to be partakers of innocent blood, and hath enwrapped them in remediless calamities: ^{12f} beguiling with the false deceit of their lewd disposition the innocent good will of princes. ^{12g} Now ye may see this, as we have declared, not so much by more ancient histories, as ye may, if ye search what hath been wickedly done of late through the pestilent behavior of them that are unworthily placed in authority. ^{12h} And we must take care for the time to come, to render our kingdom quiet and peaceable for all men, ¹²ⁱ both by changing our purposes, and always judging things that come before our eyes with more equal proceeding. ^{12k} For Haman, a Macedonian, the son of Hammedatha, an alien in truth from the Persian blood, and far distant from our goodness, being as a guest received of us, ^{12l} had so far forth obtained the favor that we show toward every nation, as that he was called our father, and was continually honored of all men, as the next person unto the royal throne. ^{12m} But he, not bearing his high estate, went about to deprive us of our kingdom and our life; ¹²ⁿ having by manifold and cunning deceits sought of us the destruction, as well of Mordecai, who saved our life, and continually procured our good, as also of Esther the

blameless partaker of our kingdom, together with their whole nation. ^{12o} For by these means he thought, finding us destitute of *friends*, to have translated the kingdom of the Persians to the Macedonians. ^{12p} But we find that the Jews, whom this most ungracious wretch hath delivered to utter destruction, are no evildoers, but live by most just laws: ^{12q} and that they are children of the most high and most mighty living God, who hath ordered the kingdom both unto us and to our progenitors in the most excellent manner. ^{12r} Wherefore ye shall do well not to put in execution the letters sent unto you by Haman the son of Hammedatha. For he, that was the worker of these things, is hanged at the gates of Susa with all his family: God, who ruleth all things, speedily rendering vengeance to him according to his deserts. ^{12s} Therefore ye shall publish openly the copy of this letter in all places, and let the Jews live after their own laws, and ye shall aid them, that even the same day, being the thirteenth day of the twelfth month Adar, they may defend themselves against those who set upon them in the time of their affliction. ^{12t} For Almighty God hath made this day to be a joy unto them, instead of the destruction of the chosen people. ^{12u} And ye shall therefore among your commemorative feasts keep it a high day with all feasting: that both now and hereafter there may be safety to us, and the well affected Persians; but to those who do conspire against us a memorial of destruction. ^{12x} Therefore every city or country whatsoever, which shall not do according to these things, shall be utterly destroyed without mercy with fire and sword; it shall be made not only unpassable for men, but also most hateful to wild beasts and fowls forever.

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^{3a} Then Mordecai said, These things are of God. ^{3b} For I remember the dream which I saw concerning these matters, and nothing thereof hath failed. ^{3c} As for the little fountain that became a river, and there was light, and the sun, and much water, the river is Esther, whom the king married, and made queen: ^{3d} and the two dragons are I and Haman: ^{3e} and the nations *are those* that were assembled to destroy the name of the Jews: ^{3f} and my nation, this is Israel, which cried to God, and were saved: for the Lord hath saved his people, and the Lord hath delivered us from all these evils, and God hath wrought signs and great wonders, which have not been done among the nations. ^{3g} Therefore hath he made two lots, one for the people of God, and another for all the nations. ^{3h} And these two lots came at the hour, and time, and day of judgment, before God among all the nations. ³ⁱ So God remembered his people, and justified his inheritance. ^{3k} Therefore these days shall be unto them in the month Adar, the fourteenth and fifteenth day of the month, with an assembly, and joy, and with gladness before God, throughout the generations forever among his people Israel.

^{3l} In the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, Dositheus, who said he was a priest and Levite, and Ptolemy his son, brought the epistle of Purim *here* set forth, which they said was the same, and that Lysimachus the son of Ptolemy, that was in Jerusalem, had interpreted it.

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