

Esther

How the story of Esther is part of Israel's history.

In Genesis Chapter 12, God called Abraham to leave his country, his tribe and his close relations and go to a new country that God was going to give him and his family forever.

A long time later, Abraham had a son, Isaac, who then had 2 sons, Jacob and Esau.

Jacob had a lot of sons and a daughter but all of the family that came from Jacob ended up as slaves in Egypt.

At the right time, God made a way for his people to get away from Egypt and God led them back to the country that he had promised to Abraham.

God was their king. He wanted to look after them and he wanted to make them the winners over all their enemies.

When God's people were just about to go and take over the new country, God gave them a warning. He said that if they lived his way, they would have a good life in that new country. But if they did not live his way, they would have a hard life and he would take them out of the country that he had given them. And in the end that is what happened.

The trouble started when the Israelites asked Samuel, their leader at the time, to give them a man to be their king. God was not happy when his people turned away from him but he did what they asked and he made Saul their first king.

Saul did not do what God wanted and so God made David king of Israel. When David died, his son Solomon, was the next king.

But Solomon did not follow God all the way. God warned him, but Solomon did not take any notice. Then after Solomon died, God split Israel into 2 parts.

The north part was made up of 10 tribes and that part was called Israel. The south part had 2 tribes and it was called Judah.

The people in Israel did not follow God and so God let the Assyrian people come and grab all the people and take them away as prisoners. Then the Assyrians let other people from different nations go and live in Israel and later on, those people were called Samaritans.

The people in Judah, the south part, didn't follow God the right way either. So God let the Babylonian nation come and grab them and take them away as prisoners. And by that time, the people in the south were called Jews. This name comes from the name Judah.

The Babylonians took the Jews back to where Abraham, their grandfather from a long time ago, had come from. That country was called Babylonia. (See the map 1.)

Later on, the Persians came and had a fight with the Babylonians and the Persians were the winners. The Persians had done the same thing to a lot of smaller nations, so everything and everyone in Babylonia became part of the Persian country. One of the main nations in Persia was the

*Media nation and the people were called Medes.
(See map 2.)*

*The story of Esther happened when Zerk-sees
(Xerxes) was the king of Persia.*

The king had a big party

¹ This story comes from the time when Zerk-sees (Xerxes) was the king of a big country called Persia. Persia was made up of 127 different nations. On the east side of Persia there was a country called India and on the west side there was another country called Ethiopia. Ethiopia is to the south of Egypt.

² King Zerk-sees lived in Susa, the main town of Persia. It was a very big town and part of that town had really strong walls around it to keep everyone safe. Susa was where King Zerk-sees made all the laws for his people.

³ Zerk-sees was the king for 2 years, and then in the third year he gave a party. He invited all the leaders from the Persian and the Median armies, and he invited the important people from all the other nations that were in Persia.

⁴ That party went on for half a year, and all that time Zerk-sees showed off to the people that were at the party. He wanted them to see that he was a great and powerful king and that his country was rich and powerful too.

⁵ When that party was finished and everyone had gone home, Zerk-sees had another party in the gardens of the palace, his big house in Susa. Zerk-sees gave that party for all the important people and everyone else that lived inside that

part of Susa that had strong walls. And this second party went on for 7 days.

⁶ Around the gardens of his palace there were a lot of big strong poles made from smooth stone, and on the top of every pole there were metal rings made of silver. Shade cloths made of light purple and white material were tied to those silver rings using purple and white ropes.

At this party, the people lay down on long chairs made of silver and gold. The floor looked really beautiful. It was made of a lot of different coloured stones that cost a lot of money. It even had some pretty sea shells in it.

⁷ The people drank from gold cups and every cup looked different. The king wanted to be kind to the people and so he let them drink a lot of his private wine.

⁸ The king told his workers to let the people drink as much as they wanted.

⁹ King Zerk-sees had a wife who was called Queen Vashti. At the same time as Zerk-sees was having his party, Vashti was having a party for the women in Zerk-sees' palace.

¹⁰⁻¹¹ On the last day of the party, King Zerk-sees had been drinking a lot of wine and he was feeling very happy. He sent his 7 special workers to go and get Queen Vashti to come to his party. The names of his special workers were Me-human, Biz-tha, Harbona, Big-tha, Abag-tha, Zethar and Karkas.

Zerk-sees wanted Vashti to come to the party wearing the queen's special hat called a crown.

So he said to his workers, “Tell Queen Vashti to come to my party and tell her to wear her crown.”

Queen Vashti was very beautiful so Zerk-sees wanted to show her off to all the people at his party.

¹² The workers did what Zerk-sees asked them to do. They went to Queen Vashti and said, “The king wants you to go to his party, and he wants you to wear your crown.”

But Queen Vashti said, “No, I will not go to his party.”

When the workers told Zerk-sees what Vashti said, he got really wild and it was like he had a fire inside him.

¹³ At that time the king had a group of helpers who knew about the Persian laws and how to do the right thing. And so Zerk-sees asked

¹⁴ Car-shena, Shethar, Ad-matha, Tar-shish, Mer-es, Mar-sena and Mem-u-can to help him. They were 7 of the important men in the country of Persia and Media. These men sat next to the king and were allowed to talk to him any time they wanted to.

¹⁵ And so King Zerk-sees said to them, “What do you think we should do to Queen Vashti? I sent my workers to tell her to come to my party but she said, ‘No!’ What does our law say should happen to her?”

¹⁶ One of the helpers named Mem-u-can got up and said to the king and all the important men there, “Queen Vashti has done the wrong thing to you King Zerk-sees. She has done the wrong thing to all the important men in your country too. And

she has done the wrong thing to all the people in all your country that goes from India to Ethiopia.

¹⁷ All the wives in Persia and Media will hear what the queen said. They will not respect their husbands and might be, they will not do what their husbands tell them to do.

¹⁸ By the time the sun goes down tonight, all the wives of the important men in Persia and Media will know what Vashti did and all those women will copy her. They will not respect their husbands and there will be a lot of trouble everywhere.

¹⁹ And so King Zerk-sees, we think that you should make a new law, and you know that the laws written down in Persia and Media cannot be changed. You should have this new law written down on paper and sent out everywhere. That law will tell everyone that Vashti is not the queen anymore and that she can never go near the king again. King Zerk-sees, you should pick a better woman to be your queen.

²⁰ You must have this law paper sent out everywhere in your big country. Then every important woman and all the other women in the country of Persia will respect their husbands.”

²¹ The king and all the important men were happy with this idea and so Zerk-sees did what Mem-u-can said. He made that new law.

²² In all the nations that were in the country of Persia there were a lot of different languages. And so King Zerk-sees got his men to put that law into every one of those languages. That way everyone in Persia would understand the new law. Then the papers were sent out so that all the

people knew that every man in Persia was the boss in his own home.

2

Esther was picked to be the new queen

¹ Some time later, after King Zerk-sees (Xerxes) stopped being angry with Queen Vashti, he started to think about her and what she had done. And he thought about the law that stopped her from coming to see him.

² Zerk-sees' helpers said to the king, "We think that you should send men everywhere to find beautiful young women that have never been to bed with a man. Your workers can bring them back here to be second wives for you and live in your palace. Then you can pick one of them to be your new queen.

³ We think you should pick leaders from every part of Persia to bring those young women here to Susa. When they get here, they can go and live where all the king's women live. Give those young women to Hegai, he is the one who looks after all the king's women. And he can make sure those young women have all sorts of baths and are rubbed with nice smelling oils to make them look beautiful for the king.

⁴ And then you can pick the woman you like the best and make her the queen instead of Vashti."

The king liked the idea and so that is what he did.

⁵⁻⁶ Many years before this time, King Neb-you-cad-nezzar (Nebuchadnezzar), the king of Babylon, grabbed Jehoi-achin the king of

Judah and a lot of other Jewish people who were living in Jerusalem. Then he took them all back to Babylon as prisoners. Later on, the Persian army beat the Babylonian army and took all the Babylonian country and people for themselves. That is why there were Jewish people living in Persia.

There was a Jewish man from the Benjamin tribe named More-dek-eye (Mordecai) who lived in the part of Susa that had really strong walls. More-dek-eye's father's name was Jair, his grandfather's name was Shim-eye and his great grandfather's name was Kish. And Kish was one of the people who was taken from Jerusalem as a prisoner by Neb-you-cad-nezzer, the king of Babylon.

⁷ More-dek-eye had a cousin named Hadassah. Abi-hail was her father and both Abi-hail and Hadassah's mother had died. So More-dek-eye adopted her and looked after her like she was his own daughter.

Hadassah was her Jewish name but everyone called her Esther. She was very beautiful.

⁸ When the king's law was read out, the men that the king had picked were sent out all over the country. They found Esther and a lot of other beautiful young women and took them to a special part of the king's palace in Susa. And that was where Hegai, the king's worker, looked after them.

⁹ Hegai really liked Esther and so she was the first of the young women to have the nice smelling oils rubbed on her. Hegai gave Esther

the best food and 7 women from the king's palace to help her. And he gave Esther and her women helpers the best rooms where all the women lived in the king's palace.

¹⁰ Some time before Esther was taken to the king's palace, More-dek-eye said to her, "Do not tell anyone that you are a Jew or that I am your cousin." And so Esther did what More-dek-eye said.

¹¹ When Esther was living in the king's palace, More-dek-eye worried for her. So every day he walked near the yard in front of where the women lived. He tried to find out what they were doing to her and if she was alright.

¹² Every one of the young women had to have a lot of nice things done to her for 12 months so that she was ready to meet the king. So, for 6 months she rubbed her body with a special smelling oil. And then for the next 6 months they gave her other nice smelling oils and perfumes to put on her body.

¹³ At the end of the 12 months it was time for each woman to meet the king. When the woman went to be with the king, she was allowed to take whatever she wanted from her room.

¹⁴ When it was night time, the woman went to the king's room to spend the night with him. Then in the morning someone took her to another part of the palace. In those days, the king had other wives who were not as important as his main wife, the queen. Those second wives lived in a special place in the palace and a man

named Shay-ash-gaz (Shaashgaz) looked after them for King Zerk-sees.

None of the women in that part of the house were allowed to go back to see the king unless he was really pleased with her. Then the king would send someone to call out her name and take her to be with the king.

¹⁵ Esther's father's name was Abi-hail. Abi-hail was More-dek-eye's uncle. More-dek-eye adopted Esther after her parents died.

When the time came for Esther to go to the king, Hegai told her what clothes and what pretty things to take with her. Esther did what Hegai said, and everyone who saw Esther liked her.

¹⁶ Zerk-sees had been the king of Persia for 6 years, and then in the cool weather time of the 7th year, Esther went to meet Zerk-sees in his palace.

¹⁷ King Zerk-sees loved Esther more than any other woman in his house. He was really pleased with her, and he liked her more than any of the other young women that were taken to the palace. So Zerk-sees put the special hat called a crown on Esther's head and he made her the queen of Persia instead of Vashti.

¹⁸ And then the king invited all the leaders and all the important people to a big party for Esther. Zerk-sees said that everyone in Persia was allowed to have a holiday, and he gave really nice presents to people.

More-dek-eye saved the king's life

¹⁹ Esther's cousin More-dek-eye was one of the important workers for the king and so he was

allowed to sit near the gate to the king's palace. And he was sitting there when Esther and all the other young women were meeting together for the second time.

²⁰ Esther had always done what More-dek-eye told her to do right from when she went to live in his house. And More-dek-eye had warned her not to tell anyone that she was his cousin and that she was a Jew.

²¹ One day while More-dek-eye was sitting near the gate to the palace, 2 of the men who were the guards at the door to the king's private rooms got angry with the king. Their names were Big-thana and Ter-resh, and they made plans to kill the king. ²² When More-dek-eye found out what they were planning to do, he told Esther and she told the king what More-dek-eye had said.

²³ The king sent some men to make sure that the story was true. They found out that the 2 men really were planning to kill the king. So the king sent his soldiers to put the 2 men up on wooden poles until they were dead. The king told one of his workers to write down in *The Book about the Persian Nation* how More-dek-eye saved the king.

3

Haman tried to hurt the Jewish people

¹ Later on, King Zerk-sees (Xerxes) was very happy with a man named Haman. Haman's father was Ham-me-datha from the Aga-gite tribe.*

* **3:1** The Aga-gites came from the Amal-kites who came from Jacob's brother Esau.

The king made Haman more important than any other man in the government.

² And so, King Zerk-sees made a law that said all the king's workers at the palace gates had to bow down to Haman. They had to get down on their knees to show him deep respect. All the king's workers did this, but More-dek-eye (Mordecai) would not follow that new law. He would not get down on his knees to show respect to Haman.

³ The king's workers at the palace gates said to More-dek-eye, "Why don't you follow the king's law and show respect to Haman?"

⁴ More-dek-eye answered, "I am a Jew, and that is why I cannot bow down and show deep respect to Haman."

The king's workers kept on asking him every day to follow the king's law, but he would not listen to them. And so they told Haman. They wanted to find out what Haman would do to More-dek-eye.

⁵ When the king's workers told Haman that More-dek-eye would not bow down to show him deep respect, Haman got really angry.

⁶ He was so wild, he wanted to kill More-dek-eye. And when someone told him that More-dek-eye was a Jew, Haman made up his mind to do more than just kill More-dek-eye. He wanted to kill all the Jews that lived in King Zerk-sees' country.

⁷ But Haman wanted to know the best time to kill all the Jews. In the Persian culture, there was a ceremony called *Pur*. In that ceremony, someone would drop special stones onto the

ground. Then they would look at the stones and tell everyone the best day of the year to do whatever they were planning to do.

So someone did that ceremony for Haman and said that the best time to kill all the Jews was in the last month of that 12th year. The Pur ceremony for Haman was done in the first month of the 12th year after Zerk-sees started to be the king of Persia.

⁸ Someone told Haman that news and so he went to talk to King Zerk-sees. Haman said, “I have found out that there is a group of people from a different nation living in every part of your country. They keep their own culture and so they do not fit in with everyone else. They have their own laws and that is why they will not follow your laws. I think you should get rid of them.

⁹ And if you think that is a good idea, why don't you make a law so that all those people can be killed. If all those people are killed, I promise you that I will give you a lot of money.”

¹⁰ King Zerk-sees liked the idea. So he took off his law ring and gave it to Haman the Aga-gite, the man who hated the Jews.

¹¹ Then Zerk-sees said to Haman, “You can keep your money, and you can do what you like to those people.”

¹² On the 13th day of the first month of the year, Haman had a meeting with all the men that wrote the law papers for the king. At that meeting Haman told them how to write the king's new law. That law said that all the Jewish people

had to be killed. Persia was made up of a lot of different nations at that time, and they all had their own languages. And so Haman told his men to write that new law in different languages for all the nations that were part of Persia. Then Haman said to them, “Send those law papers to all the leaders in every part of the country and to all the important people of every tribe.”

Those law papers were written like the king wrote them himself. Each paper was rolled up and a small drop of hot wax was put on the edge of the paper to close it up. Then the king's law ring was pushed into the wax. This was done so that when people saw the picture in the wax they knew that the law came from the king and they had to do what was written on that paper. ¹³ Then those law papers were taken by messengers to every part of Persia.

The new law said that all the Jewish people in Persia had to be killed so that none of them was left alive. All the old people, the young people, men, women and children. Every Jewish person had to be killed, and it all had to happen on the 13th day of the last month of that year. The new law said that the people who killed the Jews could take all the things the dead people left behind.

¹⁴⁻¹⁵ The king told his messengers to go quickly from his palace and give out those papers in Susa and all over Persia. That way everyone would be ready to kill the Jews on the 13th day of the last month of that year.

Then the king and Haman sat down to drink wine together, but the rest of the people in Susa

were upset by the new law.

4

More-dek-eye (Mordecai) asked Esther to help her people

¹ When More-dek-eye found out what was going to happen to all the Jews, he did what Jewish people did when they were really upset. He ripped his clothes and then put on rubbish clothes made from old sacks. He put ashes from a fire all over his face and he walked around the town and cried out loudly just like people cry when a relation dies.

² When More-dek-eye got near to the gates of the king's big house, the palace, he stopped. No-one was allowed to go inside the palace yard if they were wearing rubbish clothes.

³ When all the Jewish people in every part of the country found out about the law that the king had sent out, they got really upset too. They stopped eating and they cried out loud just like they did when a relation died. A lot of them were so sad that they put ashes all over themselves and lay down on their beds in rubbish clothes.

⁴ When Esther's young women and her other workers told her that More-dek-eye was walking around the town in rubbish clothes and crying all the time, she got very upset too. She found some good clothes and sent a worker to give them to More-dek-eye, but More-dek-eye would not take them.

⁵ So Esther asked Hat-hack, one of the special workers that the king had given her, to go and

find out why her cousin More-dek-eye was so upset.

⁶ Hat-hack found More-dek-eye in the meeting place near the gates to the king's palace, and he asked him what was going on.

⁷ More-dek-eye told Hat-hack about everything that had happened to him and how much money Haman promised to pay the king to have the Jewish people killed.

⁸ Then More-dek-eye gave Hat-hack one of the papers that came from the king in Susa. On that paper was the news that every Jewish person had to be killed.

More-dek-eye said to Hat-hack, "I want you to take this paper and show it to Esther so that she knows that all her Jewish people are going to be killed. She has to go and talk to the king and ask him to be kind to her. She must ask him to stop her people from being killed."

⁹ Hat-hack went back to Esther. He showed her the paper and told her everything More-dek-eye said.

¹⁰ Then Esther gave Hat-hack this message for More-dek-eye.

¹¹ She said, "All the king's workers in the palace and people everywhere know that it is against the law for anyone to walk into the king's room whenever they want to. The law says that if a man or a woman does that, they have to die. The only way for that person to stay alive is for the king to point at that person with his golden stick. A person can only see the king if he sends someone to get them. And he has not sent anyone

to get me for 30 days. I am frightened to do what you are asking me to do.”

¹² Hat-hack took the message to More-dek-eye,

¹³ and More-dek-eye sent back this message. “Esther, you live in the king's palace, but don't think that you will be safe when all the rest of the Jewish people are killed.

¹⁴ If you stay quiet and if you do not talk to the king, somebody else will come and save the Jewish people. But I tell you this, you, and all your close family will die. Who knows, might be you were picked to be the queen at this time so that you can save your people.”

¹⁵ When Esther got More-dek-eye's message, she sent this message back to him,

¹⁶ “Go and get all the Jewish people in Susa to meet together in one place so that you can all pray for me. I want all of you to stop eating and drinking for 3 days and nights. I will do the same and so will all the women that work for me. At the end of the 3 days I will go and talk to the king. I know that it is against the law and that I might die, but I am ready to die for my people.”

¹⁷ So when More-dek-eye got Esther's message, he went and told all the Jewish people in Susa what Esther wanted them to do.

5

Queen Esther went to see King Zerk-sees (Xerxes)

¹ The Jewish people did what Esther said and they all stopped eating for 3 days. On the 3rd day, Esther put on her queen's clothes and went to the

king's palace. She walked into the king's waiting room.

Zerk-sees was sitting on the king's chair and he could see into the waiting room.

² He looked up and saw Queen Esther standing there and he was really happy to see her. He held out his golden stick as a sign that she could come closer to him. Esther saw him do that and so she walked into the king's room and touched the end of the stick.

³ The king said to her, “Queen Esther, what do you want to ask me? I will give you whatever you want, even if you ask for one half of everything in my country!”

⁴ Esther answered, “I told my workers to get a special supper ready for you today. I would like you and Haman to come and have supper with me.”

⁵ The king said to one of his workers, “Go quickly and get Haman so that we can have the supper Queen Esther has got ready.”

So King Zerk-sees and Haman went to eat supper with Esther.

⁶ While they were drinking wine, Zerk-sees said to Esther, “What is it you want to ask me Esther? I will give you whatever you want, even if it is half of my country.”

⁷ Esther said, “This is what I want to ask you, my king.

⁸ If I have made you happy and if you want to give me whatever I ask for, can you come and eat supper with me again tomorrow? I will get it

ready, and I want you to bring Haman with you. Then I will tell you what I want.”

Haman made a plan to kill More-dek-eye (Mordecai)

⁹ At the end of the supper, Haman left the king's palace and went home. He was very happy and was feeling good inside himself. But when he got to the palace gate, he saw that More-dek-eye did not stand up or show him any respect and he got really angry with More-dek-eye.

¹⁰ But he did not show how angry he was, he just went home.

When he got home, Haman asked his friends and his wife, Zeresh, to come and have a meeting with him.

¹¹ Haman started to talk about himself too much. He told them about how much money and how many sons he had. And he told them all the ways the king showed him respect and how the king made him more important than all the other men in the government.

¹² He said, “But that's not all, Queen Esther wanted me to go with the king to the supper she got ready today. I am the only other person she has asked, and she wants me to go with the king to her supper again tomorrow.

¹³ I should be happy, but every time I see More-dek-eye the Jew sitting next to the gate outside the king's palace, I cannot be happy.”

¹⁴ Haman's wife Zeresh, and all his friends said, “We think you should tell your workers to build a very tall pole. Then tomorrow morning, ask the king to put More-dek-eye up on that pole until he

is dead. And then you can go to Esther's party with the king and enjoy yourself.”

Haman liked that idea and told his workers to build the hanging pole.

6

King Zerk-sees (Xerxes) wanted to show More-dek-eye (Mordecai) respect

¹ In those days it was someone's job to write down in a book everything that happened in the country of Persia. It was called *The Book about the Persian Nation*.

When the supper with Queen Esther was finished, King Zerk-sees went home to sleep. But he could not go to sleep, so he asked one of his workers to get *The Book about the Persian Nation*, and read it to him.

² The worker did that, and he got to the story about the 2 workers named Big-thana and Ter-resh. Those men were the guards at the door to the king's private rooms and they were the ones that had talked about killing the king. Then the king found out that More-dek-eye was the man that had warned him that 2 of his guards were going to kill him.

³ The king said, “More-dek-eye saved my life. Did we give him anything to say thank you? Did we show him any respect?”

The king's workers said, “No my master, nothing was done for him.”

⁴ And the king said, “Who is outside in the palace waiting room?” Just as he said that, Haman walked into the waiting room. He was on

his way to ask the king to put More-dek-eye up on the pole that his workers had built.

⁵ The king's helpers said to the king, "Haman is waiting outside."

So Zerk-sees said, "Bring him in to me."

⁶ Haman went in and the king said to Haman, "There is a man that has done a good thing for me. I want everyone to know that I am happy with him and that I respect him. What should I do for that man?"

Haman said to himself, "The king must be talking about me. There is no-one more important than me!"

⁷ And so he said to the king, "These are the things you can do to show respect for that man.

⁸⁻⁹ Tell your workers to get one of the coats that you wear and put it on that man. Then tell your workers to get one of the horses that you ride. Make sure that your workers put a small king's crown on the horse's head to show that the horse belongs to you. Tell your workers to put the man that you want to respect on the horse. Then you should tell one of your important leaders to walk with the horse and the man everywhere in the town. That way everyone can see them. The person leading the horse has to shout out, 'Look at what the king is doing for this man. The king is really happy with him and wants to show him respect.'

¹⁰ The king said to Haman, "Good idea! Go quickly and get my coat and my horse. Then find More-dek-eye the Jew who sits at my gate. And do to him everything you just said."

¹¹ Haman took the king's coat and horse and went to find More-dek-eye. Haman put the coat on More-dek-eye, and put him on the king's horse. Then Haman led them up and down all the streets in the town so that everyone could see them. Haman shouted out, "Look at what the king is doing for this man. The king is really happy with him and wants to show him respect."

¹² When Haman and More-dek-eye got back to the king's palace, More-dek-eye went back and sat at the gate, but Haman was so shamed and upset, he ran home with his face looking down at the ground.

¹³ He told his wife Zeresh and all his friends what had happened to him, and they said, "Oh no! That man has shamed you. He is a Jew and if you keep on fighting him, you will lose and he will be the winner."

¹⁴ They were still talking when the king's special workers got to Haman's house. They took him quickly to the palace where Esther had got a supper ready.

7

Haman is put up on his own pole

¹ So King Zerk-sees (Xerxes) and Haman went to have a second supper with Queen Esther.

² When they were drinking wine, Zerk-sees asked Esther again, "What do you want Queen Esther? I will give you whatever you want, even if it is half of my country."

³ Then Queen Esther answered, "You have asked me what I want and this is my answer. If

you are happy with me, my king, and if it makes you happy, can you save me and my people?

⁴ Someone is trying to kill me and all my people. They want to finish us up and make it look like we were never alive. If we were going to be sold as slaves that would be all right and I wouldn't have said anything to you, but someone wants to kill me and all my people.”

⁵ King Zerk-sees said to Esther, “Who wants to kill you? Who has made up his mind to do such a bad thing? Where is that man?”

⁶ Esther said, “That man sitting next to you. He is really bad and he is the one who hates me and my people. He is the enemy of my people.”

When Esther said that, Haman got very frightened of the king and the queen.

⁷ The king was so wild, he got up. He left the wine he was drinking and walked out into the palace garden. But Haman stayed inside and asked Queen Esther again and again to save his life. He knew that the king was going to tell his soldiers to kill him.

⁸ When King Zerk-sees came back to the supper room after walking in the garden, he saw Haman falling down on the long chair Esther was lying on. The king shouted out loud, “Haman is trying to hurt the queen. And he is doing it in front of me and in my own house!”

As soon as he said those words, the king's workers covered Haman's face. They did that to show that Haman was going to die.

⁹ Harbona, one of the king's special workers said to Zerk-sees, “King Zerk-sees, Haman told his

workers to build a very high pole in front of his house. He was going to ask you to put More-dek-eye (Mordecai) up on it. More-dek-eye was the man that warned you about the men who wanted to kill you.”

Then Zerk-sees said, “Take Haman away and put him up on his own pole!”

¹⁰ So, the king's soldiers put Haman up on the pole that was made to kill More-dek-eye. Then the king stopped being angry.

8

A new law was written to help the Jewish people

¹ That same day, King Zerk-sees (Xerxes) gave Queen Esther everything that used to belong to Haman, the enemy of the Jewish people. And she told Zerk-sees that More-dek-eye (Mordecai) was her cousin. So Zerk-sees sent someone to bring More-dek-eye to him.

² Before this time, King Zerk-sees took back the special law ring that he gave Haman and put it on his own finger. When Zerk-sees met More-dek-eye, he took that law ring off his finger again and gave it to More-dek-eye. And Esther made More-dek-eye the boss over everything that Haman left behind when he died.

³ Then Esther went to talk to Zerk-sees again. She fell down at the king's feet and started to cry. She asked again and again, “My king, please stop that really bad thing Haman the Aga-gite wanted to do to my people, the Jews.”

⁴ The king held out his golden stick to Esther and she got up and went to stand in front of him.

⁵ She said, “My master, if you are happy with me and if you agree with my idea, can you write a new law? If you think it is the right thing to do, can the new law say that no-one has to take notice of the paper sent out by Haman the Aga-gite? You remember that paper said that all the Jewish people in every part of your country had to be killed.

⁶ I would be too upset if such a bad thing happened to my people, and I would be too upset if any of my family were killed.”

⁷ King Zerk-sees said to Queen Esther and to More-dek-eye the Jew, “Haman tried to kill you and all the Jewish people. But I told my soldiers to put him up on his own pole to die, and I gave all his things to Esther.

⁸ So, now I want you to write a new law. And I want you to write it so that people think that I wrote it. You can write whatever you want that will help your Jewish people. When you have finished writing those papers, roll them up and put the hot wax on the edge and mark the wax with my special law ring. Everyone knows that any law I have written that has the mark from my special law ring, can never be broken. Everyone has to follow that law.”

⁹ So on the 23rd day of the third month More-dek-eye had a meeting with all the men that wrote the law papers for the king. At that meeting More-dek-eye told them how to write the king's new law. That new law had to go to all the Jewish leaders and all the important men in every one of the 127 nations that were part of

Persia. That country went from India to Ethiopia which is south of Egypt. So they wrote the new law in all the different languages that people were speaking in Persia. And the law was written in the Jewish language too.

¹⁰ More-dek-eye told the men to make sure they put King Zerk-sees' name at the top of every paper. And when all the law papers were finished, each paper was rolled up and a small drop of hot wax was put on the edge of the paper to close it up. Then the king's law ring was pushed into the wax to show everybody that those papers came from the king and they had to do what was written inside. Then More-dek-eye sent those papers to every part of Persia. The papers were carried by messengers that rode on fast horses that belonged to the king.

¹¹ This is what was written on the law papers that had the king's name on it.

“The Jewish people in every town are allowed to get a group of fighting men together so that they can keep all their Jewish people safe. If anyone tries to fight them, the Jewish fighters are allowed to kill those men and make it look like they were never alive. And they are allowed to kill the wives and children of those men too. The Jewish people are allowed to grab everything that belongs to the people that try to kill them.

¹² The Jewish people in every part of King Zerk-sees' country are allowed to fight for themselves on the 13th day of the last month of

the year.”*

¹³ A copy of this law was sent out to every part of the country so that everybody knew that the Jewish people were ready and they were allowed to fight back if anyone tried to kill them.

¹⁴ The king wanted this new law to go everywhere quickly. That is why the messengers rode on the king's fast horses.

The new law was put up on walls everywhere in the town of Susa too.

¹⁵ Later on, after all the papers were sent out, More-dek-eye walked out of the king's room wearing some of the king's blue and white clothes. He had a big gold hat called a crown on his head and he wore a really nice purple coat that cost a lot of money. All the people in Susa were so happy that they shouted out loud.

¹⁶ It was a time for all the Jewish people to be really happy that they did not have to be frightened anymore. And all the other people in the town showed them respect.

¹⁷ When the king's new law was read out all over King Zerk-sees' country, all the Jewish people were really happy. In every town where the law was read out, they had a holiday and big parties. But in every part of the country, people that were not Jews were frightened of the Jewish people. And lots of them changed sides and started to live the way the Jewish people lived.

* **8:12** This was the same day Haman wanted all the Jewish people killed.

9

The Jewish people are the winners

¹ King Zerk-sees (Xerxes) had made a law that let the Jewish people fight back. The 13th day of the last month of the year was the day that the enemies of the Jews had planned to kill all the Jewish people. That day came, and so the Jews followed King Zerk-sees' new law to fight back. And that is what happened.

² In every town in Zerk-sees' country where Jewish people lived, groups of men got together to fight anyone that tried to kill them. When they did that, all the people that were not Jewish were frightened of the Jews. They knew they couldn't win.

³ All the leaders, government workers and important people in all the different nations in the big country of Persia were frightened of More-dek-eye (Mordecai). And so they helped the Jewish people too.

⁴ Everybody knew that More-dek-eye was an important man that worked for the king.

⁵ And so, on that day, the 13th day of the last month of the year, the Jewish fighting men did what they wanted to do to their enemies. And they used their swords to kill all the people that tried to kill them.

⁶ Inside the part of Susa that had really strong walls, the Jewish fighters killed 500 men that were trying to kill them.

⁷⁻¹⁰ Haman was the enemy of Jewish people, so the Jewish fighters killed all of Haman's 10 sons.

Their names were Par-shan-datha, Dal-fon (Dalphon), As-patha, Por-atha, Ada-lia, Ari-datha, Par-mashta, Ari-sai, Ari-dai, and Vai-zatha. But the Jews did not take the things that belonged to Haman's sons.

¹¹ On that day, someone told the king how many people died in the strong part of the town,

¹² and the king said to Queen Esther, “The Jewish fighters have killed a lot of people in the strong part of Susa and they have killed Haman's 10 sons too. They must have killed a lot of people in the rest of my country. What else do you want me to do? I will make it happen.”

¹³ Esther said, “My master, you said that my people could kill anyone that came to fight them today, but this is what I want. If you think it is a good idea, let my people kill anyone that fights them inside Susa again tomorrow, and I want your soldiers to put the bodies of Haman's 10 sons up on poles so that everyone can see them.”

¹⁴ King Zerk-sees agreed with what Esther said and so he got his men to write a new law. The new law let the Jewish people in Susa kill anyone that tried to kill them the next day. The soldiers put the bodies of Haman's 10 sons up on poles for everyone to look at.

¹⁵ And so, on the next day, on the 14th day of the last month in the year, the Jewish fighting men got together in Susa and killed another 300 men that came to fight them. But they did not take the things that belonged to those men.

¹⁶⁻¹⁷ This is what happened outside Susa on the 13th day of the last month of the year.

Everywhere, the Jewish people got together groups of fighting men to kill anyone that tried to kill them. They killed a big number of people, but they did not take what those people left behind.

The next day, the Jewish fighters had a rest and they did not fight again. They were all very happy and had a big party.

¹⁸⁻¹⁹ That is why Jewish people today that live in little communities outside the towns, have a party on the 14th day of the last month of the year. On that day they are all happy, they eat together and give each other presents.

But the Jewish people in Susa killed their enemies on the 13th and the 14th day of the last month of the year. Then on the 15th day they stopped fighting. And so, on the 15th day of that month they all have a party and are really happy.

More-dek-eye made a new time to remember

²⁰ More-dek-eye wrote down everything that happened and then he wrote a letter to all the Jewish people that lived everywhere in King Zerk-sees' country.

²¹ He told them to have a special party every year on the 14th and 15th days of the last month of the year to remember what happened when people tried to kill them.

²² More-dek-eye wrote that all the Jewish people had to remember how, in the last month of the year they were very sad, but then, after they beat their enemies they were really happy. He wrote that they should have a party at that same time every year. More-dek-eye said that

they should give food to one another and give presents to people that have nothing.

²³ All the Jewish people agreed with what More-dek-eye wrote in that letter, and they made up their minds to have that party every year.

²⁴⁻²⁷ They called that party *Purim*. Haman the Aga-gite, hated the Jews so much he wanted to kill them all on one day. But he wanted to know when it would be the right time to do that. He dropped the *Pur* stones onto the ground and those stones told him the best time. He used *Pur* stones and that is why the new party was called *Purim*.

When Queen Esther told King Zerk-sees what Haman wanted to do to her people, Zerk-sees made a new law. That new law said that what Haman wanted to do to all the Jewish people, had to happen to him. And that is why Haman and his sons were put up on poles.

When the Jewish people got More-dek-eye's letter they made up their minds to remember what had happened to their people. From that time they promised to have that party called Purim for 2 days every year. They promised to teach their children and all their families that came later on. And they promised to teach all the other people that became Jews too. More-dek-eye wrote in his letter how they should have that party and he said what days they should have it. The Jewish people promised to do what More-dek-eye said in his letter.

²⁸ They said, “From now on every Jewish person, and every Jewish family living in every town and country should have a Purim party to remember those 2 days. The Jewish people and the families that come from them must have that party every year for ever.”

²⁹ Then Queen Esther and More-dek-eye wrote a second letter to the Jewish people about the Purim party. Esther wrote at the top of her letter, “This letter is written by Queen Esther.” She did this to prove that what More-dek-eye had written in his letter was true.

³⁰⁻³¹ This is what they wrote in her letter, “We want all of you to know that from now on, you will have a quiet and safe life in this country.

We have other special days when we stop eating and we cry to remember what happened to our people. Just like we have those special days to remember things, we want you to have a Purim party every year. And have that party on the 14th and 15th days of the last month of that year.”

Then the letters were copied and sent to all the Jews who were living in the 127 different nations in Persia.

³² This is how Esther set up the rules for people to remember Purim and they were all written down in a book.

10

King Zerk-sees (Xerxes) and More-dek-eye (Mordecai)

¹ King Zerk-sees said that everybody in every part of his country had to pay tax money.

² In those days, everything the kings did in the country of Persia and Media were written down in *The Book about the Persian Nation*. All the great and powerful things King Zerk-sees did were written down in that book. In the same way, all the story of how Zerk-sees made More-dek-eye a great man was written down in that record book too.

³ More-dek-eye the Jew was the second leader behind King Zerk-sees and he was the most important man for the Jewish people. More-dek-eye worked hard for his people so that good things would happen to them. He would go and talk to the king to make sure that his people were safe and that is why they all respected him.

Barkly Bible Portions **The Holy Bible in the Barkly dialect of English, spoken in Australia**

copyright © 2024 Bible Society of Australia

Language: Barkly English (English)

Dialect: Barkly

This translation is made available to you under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivatives license 4.0. You may share and redistribute this Bible translation or extracts from it in any format, provided that:

You include the above copyright and source information.

You do not sell this work for a profit.

You do not change any of the words or punctuation of the Scriptures. Pictures included with Scriptures and other documents on this site are licensed just for use with those Scriptures and documents. For other uses, please contact the respective copyright owners.

2026-04-14

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 29 Apr 2026 from source files dated 14 Apr 2026

a970e1a9-7059-592c-b481-cf954f658c46