Esther

1 This is what happened in the days of
Ahasuerus,* who reigned over 127 provinces
from India to Cush.†
2 In those days King Ahasuerus sat on his royal
throne in the citadel of Susa.
3 In the third year of his reign, Ahasuerus held
a feast for all his officials and servants. The
military leaders of Persia and Media were there,
along with the nobles and princes of the
provinces.
4 And for a full 180 days he displayed the
glorious riches of his kingdom and the
magnificent splendor of his greatness.
5 At the end of this time, in the garden court of
the royal palace, the king held a seven-day feast
for all the people in the citadel of Susa, from the
least to the greatest.
6 Hangings of white and blue linen were
fastened with cords of fine white and purple
material to silver rings on the marble pillars.
Gold and silver couches were arranged on a
mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble,
mother-of-pearl, and other costly stones.
7 Beverages were served in an array of goblets
of gold, each with a different design, and the
royal wine flowed freely, according to the king's
bounty.

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* **1:1 1:1** Generally identified as Xerxes I of Persia; here and throughout Esther † **1:1 1:1** That is, the upper Nile region

8 By order of the king, no limit was placed on
the drinking, and every official of his household
was to serve each man whatever he desired.
9 Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the
women in the royal palace of King Ahasuerus.
10 On the seventh day, when the king's heart
was merry with wine, he ordered the seven
eunuchs who served him—Mehuman, Biztha,
Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carkas—
11 to bring Queen Vashti before him, wearing
her royal crown, to display her beauty to the
people and officials. For she was beautiful to
behold.
12 Queen Vashti, however, refused to come at
the king's command brought by his eunuchs.
And the king became furious, and his anger
burned within him.
13 Then the king consulted the wise men who
knew the times, for it was customary for him to
confer with the experts in law and justice.
14 His closest advisors were Carshena, Shethar,
Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and
Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and
Media who had personal access to the king and
ranked highest in the kingdom.
15 "According to law," he asked, "what should
be done with Queen Vashti, since she refused to
obey the command of King Ahasuerus delivered
by the eunuchs?"
16 And in the presence of the king and his
princes, Memucan replied, "Queen Vashti has
wronged not only the king, but all the princes

and the peoples in all the provinces of King
Ahasuerus.
17 For the conduct of the queen will become
known to all women, causing them to despise
their husbands‡ and say, ‘King Ahasuerus
ordered Queen Vashti to be brought before him,
but she did not come.’
18 This very day the noble women of Persia
and Media who have heard about the queen’s
conduct will say the same thing to all the king’s
officials, resulting in much contempt and wrath.
19 So if it pleases the king, let him issue a royal
decree, and let it be recorded in the laws of
Persia and Media so that it cannot be repealed,
that Vashti shall never again enter the presence
of King Ahasuerus, and that her royal position
shall be given to a woman better than she.
20 The edict the king issues will be heard
throughout his vast kingdom—and so all
women, from the least to the greatest, will honor
their husbands.”
21 The king and his princes were pleased with
this counsel; so the king did as Memucan
advised.
22 He sent letters to all the provinces of the
kingdom, to each province in its own script and
to each people in their own language, saying
that every man should be master of his own
household and speak in the language of his own
people.§

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‡ **1:17 1:17** Or *to disdain their husbands in their eyes* § **1:22 1:22** Or *proclaiming in the language of his own people that every man should be master of his own household*

2

1 Some time later, when the anger of King
Ahasuerus had subsided, he remembered Vashti
and what she had done, and what had been
decreed against her.
2 Then the king's attendants proposed, "Let a
search be made for beautiful young virgins for
the king,
3 and let the king appoint commissioners in
each province of his kingdom to assemble all the
beautiful young women into the harem at the
citadel of Susa. Let them be placed under the
care of Hegai, the king's eunuch in charge of the
women, and let them be given beauty
treatments.
4 Then let the young woman who pleases the
king become queen in place of Vashti."
This suggestion pleased the king, and he acted
accordingly.
5 Now there was at the citadel of Susa a Jewish
man from the tribe of Benjamin named
Mordecai son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son
of Kish.
6 He had been carried into exile from
Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon
among those taken captive with Jeconiah* king
of Judah.
7 And Mordecai had brought up Hadassah
(that is, Esther), the daughter of his uncle,
because she did not have a father or mother.
The young woman was lovely in form and
appearance, and when her father and mother

* **2:6 2:6** *Jeconiah* is a variant of *Jehoiachin*; see 2 Kings 24:12.

had died, Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter.

8 When the king's command and edict had been proclaimed, many young women gathered at the citadel of Susa under the care of Hegai. Esther was also taken to the palace and placed under the care of Hegai, the custodian of the women.
9 And the young woman pleased him and obtained his favor, so he quickly provided her with beauty treatments and the special diet. He assigned to her seven select maidservants from the palace and transferred her with them to the best place in the harem.

10 Esther did not reveal her people or her lineage, because Mordecai had instructed her not to do so.
11 And every day Mordecai would walk back and forth in front of the court of the harem to learn about Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.

12 In the twelve months before her turn to go to King Ahasuerus, the harem regulation required each young woman to receive beauty treatments with oil of myrrh for six months, and then with perfumes and cosmetics for another six months.
13 When the young woman would go to the king, she was given whatever she requested to take with her from the harem to the king's palace.
14 She would go there in the evening, and in the morning she would return to a second

harem† under the care of Shaashgaz, the king's
eunuch in charge of the concubines. She would
not return to the king unless he delighted in her
and summoned her by name.
15 Now Esther was the daughter of Abihail, the
uncle from whom Mordecai had adopted her as
his own daughter. And when it was her turn to
go to the king, she did not ask for anything
except what Hegai, the king's trusted official in
charge of the harem, had advised. And Esther
found favor in the eyes of everyone who saw
her.
16 She was taken to King Ahasuerus in the
royal palace in the tenth month, the month of
Tebeth,‡ in the seventh year of his reign.
17 And the king loved Esther more than all the
other women, and she found grace and favor in
his sight more than all of the other virgins. So he
placed the royal crown upon her head and made
her queen in place of Vashti.
18 Then the king held a great banquet, Esther's
banquet, for all his officials and servants. He
proclaimed a tax holiday in the provinces and
gave gifts worthy of the king's bounty.
19 When the virgins were assembled a second
time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate.§
20 Esther still had not revealed her lineage or
her people, just as Mordecai had instructed. She

† **2:14 2:14** Or *to another part of the harem* ‡ **2:16 2:16** *Tebeth* is the tenth month of the Hebrew lunar calendar, usually occurring within the months of December and January. § **2:19 2:19** Or *Mordecai had become a palace official*

obeyed Mordecai's command, as she had done
under his care.
21 In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at
the king's gate, Bigthan* and Teresh, two of the
king's eunuchs who guarded the entrance, grew
angry and conspired to assassinate King
Ahasuerus.
22 When Mordecai learned of the plot, he
reported it to Queen Esther, and she informed
the king on Mordecai's behalf.
23 After the report had been investigated and
verified, both officials were impaled on a stake.†
And all this was recorded in the Book of the
Annals‡ in the presence of the king.

3

1 After these events, King Ahasuerus honored
Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite,
elevating him to a position above all the princes
who were with him.
2 All the royal servants at the king's gate
bowed down and paid homage to Haman,
because the king had commanded that this be
done for him. But Mordecai would not bow
down or pay homage.
3 Then the royal servants at the king's gate
asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the
command of the king?"

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* **2:21 2:21** *Bigthan* is a variant of *Bigthana*; see Esther 6:2.
† **2:23 2:23** Literally *hanged on a tree*; or *hanged on the gallows*; similarly throughout Esther
‡ **2:23 2:23** Or *the Book of the Chronicles* or *the Book of the Historical Events*

4 Day after day they warned him, but he
would not comply. So they reported it to Haman
to see whether Mordecai's behavior would be
tolerated, since he had told them he was a Jew.

5 When Haman saw that Mordecai would not
bow down or pay him homage, he was filled
with rage.

6 And when he learned the identity of
Mordecai's people, he scorned the notion of*
laying hands on Mordecai alone. Instead, he
sought to destroy all of Mordecai's people, the
Jews, throughout the kingdom of Ahasuerus.

7 In the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, in the
first month, the month of Nisan,† the Pur (that is,
the lot) was cast before Haman to determine a
day and month. And the lot fell on the twelfth
month, the month of Adar.‡

8 Then Haman informed King Ahasuerus,
"There is a certain people scattered and
dispersed among the peoples of every province
of your kingdom. Their laws are different from
everyone else's, and they do not obey the king's
laws. So it is not in the king's best interest to
tolerate them.

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* **3:6 3:6** Hebrew *he disdained in his eyes* † **3:7 3:7** *Nisan* is the first month of the Hebrew lunar calendar, usually occurring within the months of March and April. ‡ **3:7 3:7** LXX *was cast before Haman—a day and month—and the lot fell on the fourteenth of the month of Adar*; Hebrew *was cast before Haman a day and month—the twelfth, Adar*; the month of *Adar* (also in verse 13) is the twelfth month of the Hebrew lunar calendar, usually occurring within the months of February and March.

9 If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to
destroy them, and I will deposit ten thousand
talents of silver§ into the royal treasury to pay
those who carry it out."
10 So the king removed the signet ring from his
finger and gave it to Haman son of
Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of the
Jews.
11 "Keep your money," said the king to Haman.
"These people are given to you to do with them
as you please."
12 On the thirteenth day of the first month, the
royal scribes were summoned and the order
was written exactly as Haman commanded the
royal satraps, the governors of each province,
and the officials of each people, in the script of
each province and the language of every people.
It was written in the name of King Ahasuerus
and sealed with the royal signet ring.
13 And the letters were sent by couriers to
each of the royal provinces with the order to
destroy, kill, and annihilate all the Jews—young
and old, women and children—and to plunder
their possessions on a single day, the thirteenth
day of Adar, the twelfth month.
14 A copy of the text of the edict was to be
issued in every province and published to all the
people, so that they would be ready on that day.
15 The couriers left, spurred on by the king's
command, and the edict was issued in the citadel

§ **3:9 3:9** *10,000 talents* is approximately 377 tons or 342 metric tons of silver.

of Susa. Then the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was in confusion.

4

1 When Mordecai learned of all that had happened, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the middle of the city, wailing loudly and bitterly.
2 But he went only as far as the king's gate, because the law prohibited anyone wearing sackcloth from entering that gate.
3 In every province to which the king's command and edict came, there was great mourning among the Jews. They fasted, wept, and lamented, and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.
4 When Esther's maidens and eunuchs came and told her about Mordecai, the queen was overcome with distress. She sent clothes for Mordecai to wear instead of his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.
5 Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs appointed to her, and she dispatched him to Mordecai to learn what was troubling him and why.
6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square in front of the king's gate,
7 and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury in order to destroy the Jews.
8 Mordecai also gave Hathach a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for the destruction of the Jews, to show and explain to Esther,

urging her to approach the king, implore his
favor, and plead before him for her people.
9 So Hathach went back and relayed
Mordecai's response to Esther.
10 Then Esther spoke to Hathach and
instructed him to tell Mordecai,
11 "All the royal officials and the people of the
king's provinces know that one law applies to
every man or woman who approaches the king
in the inner court without being
summoned—that he be put to death. Only if the
king extends the gold scepter may that person
live. But I have not been summoned to appear
before the king for the past thirty days."
12 When Esther's words were relayed to
Mordecai,
13 he sent back to her this reply: "Do not
imagine that because you are in the king's palace
you alone will escape the fate of all the Jews.
14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief
and deliverance for the Jews will arise from
another place, but you and your father's house
will perish. And who knows if perhaps you have
come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"
15 Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai:
16 "Go and assemble all the Jews who can be
found in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or
drink for three days, night or day, and I and my
maidens will fast as you do. After that, I will go
to the king, even though it is against the law.
And if I perish, I perish!*"

* **4:16 4:16** Or *if I am destroyed, then I will be destroyed!*

17 So Mordecai went and did all that Esther
had instructed him.

5

1 On the third day, Esther put on her royal
robes and stood in the inner court of the palace
across from the king's quarters. The king was
sitting on his royal throne in the royal
courtroom, facing the entrance.
2 As soon as the king saw Queen Esther
standing in the court, she found favor in his
sight. The king extended the gold scepter in his
hand toward Esther, and she approached and
touched the tip of the scepter.
3 "What is it, Queen Esther?" the king inquired.
"What is your request? Even up to half the
kingdom, it will be given to you."
4 "If it pleases the king," Esther replied, "may
the king and Haman come today to the banquet
I have prepared for the king."
5 "Hurry," commanded the king, "and bring
Haman, so we can do as Esther has requested."
So the king and Haman went to the banquet
that Esther had prepared.
6 And as they drank their wine, the king said
to Esther, "What is your petition? It will be given
to you. What is your request? Even up to half
the kingdom, it will be fulfilled."
7 Esther replied, "This is my petition and my
request:
8 If I have found favor in the sight of the king,
and if it pleases the king to grant my petition
and fulfill my request, may the king and Haman

come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for
them. Then I will answer the king's question."
9 That day Haman went out full of joy and glad
of heart. At the king's gate, however, he saw
Mordecai, who did not rise or tremble in fear at
his presence. And Haman was filled with rage
toward Mordecai.
10 Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself
and went home. And calling for his friends and
his wife Zeresh,
11 Haman recounted to them his glorious
wealth, his many sons, and all the ways the king
had honored and promoted him over the other
officials and servants.
12 "What is more," Haman added, "Queen
Esther invited no one but me to join the king at
the banquet she prepared, and I am invited back
tomorrow along with the king.
13 Yet none of this satisfies me as long as I see
Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."
14 His wife Zeresh and all his friends told him,
"Have them build a stake fifty cubits high,* and
ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai
impaled on it. Then go to the banquet with the
king and enjoy yourself."
The advice pleased Haman, and he had the
stake constructed.

6

1 That night sleep escaped the king; so he

* **5:14 5:14** *50 cubits* is approximately 75 feet or 22.9 meters high.

ordered the Book of Records, the Chronicles,* to be brought in and read to him.

2 And there it was found recorded that
Mordecai had exposed Bigthana† and Teresh,
two of the eunuchs who guarded the king's
entrance, when they had conspired to
assassinate King Ahasuerus.

3 The king inquired, "What honor or dignity
has been bestowed on Mordecai for this act?"

"Nothing has been done for him," replied the
king's attendants.

4 "Who is in the court?" the king asked.

Now Haman had just entered the outer court
of the palace to ask the king to impale Mordecai
on the stake he had prepared for him.

5 So the king's attendants answered him,
"Haman is there, standing in the court."

"Bring him in," ordered the king.

6 Haman entered, and the king asked him,
"What should be done for the man whom the
king is delighted to honor?"

Now Haman thought to himself, "Whom would
the king be delighted to honor more than me?"

7 And Haman told the king, "For the man
whom the king is delighted to honor,

8 have them bring a royal robe that the king
himself has worn and a horse on which the king
himself has ridden—one with a royal crest
placed on its head.

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* **6:1 6:1** Or *the Book of Memorials, the Annals* or *the Book of Records of Historical Events* † **6:2 6:2** *Bigthana* is a variant of *Bigthan*; see Esther 2:21.

9 Let the robe and the horse be entrusted to
one of the king's most noble princes. Let them
array the man the king wants to honor and
parade him on the horse through the city square,
proclaiming before him, 'This is what is done for
the man whom the king is delighted to honor!' "

10 "Hurry," said the king to Haman, "and do just
as you proposed. Take the robe and the horse to
Mordecai the Jew, who is sitting at the king's
gate. Do not neglect anything that you have
suggested."

11 So Haman took the robe and the horse,
arrayed Mordecai, and paraded him through the
city square, crying out before him, "This is what
is done for the man whom the king is delighted
to honor!"

12 Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate.
But Haman rushed home, with his head covered
in grief.

13 Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his
friends everything that had happened. His
advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, "Since
Mordecai, before whom your downfall has
begun, is Jewish, you will not prevail against
him—for surely you will fall before him."

14 While they were still speaking with Haman,
the king's eunuchs arrived and rushed him to
the banquet that Esther had prepared.

7

1 So the king and Haman went to dine with
Esther the queen,

2 and as they drank their wine on that second
day, the king asked once more, “Queen Esther,
what is your petition? It will be given to you.
What is your request? Even up to half the
kingdom, it will be fulfilled.”
3 Queen Esther replied, “If I have found favor
in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king,
grant me my life as my petition, and the lives of
my people as my request.
4 For my people and I have been sold out to
destruction, death, and annihilation. If we had
merely been sold as male and female slaves, I
would have remained silent, because no such
distress would justify burdening the king.”
5 Then King Ahasuerus spoke up and asked
Queen Esther, “Who is this, and where is the one
who would devise* such a scheme?”
6 Esther replied, “The adversary and enemy is
this wicked man—Haman!”
And Haman stood in terror before the king
and queen.
7 In his fury, the king arose from drinking his
wine and went to the palace garden, while
Haman stayed behind to beg Queen Esther for
his life, for he realized that the king was
planning a terrible fate for him.
8 Just as the king returned from the palace
garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling
on the couch where Esther was reclining. The
king exclaimed, “Would he actually assault the
queen while I am in the palace?”

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* **7:5 7:5** Hebrew *whose heart has filled him to do*

As soon as the words had left the king's
mouth, they covered Haman's face.
9 Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs
attending the king, said: "There is a stake fifty
cubits high† at Haman's house. He had it built
for Mordecai, who gave the report that saved
the king."
"Impale him on it!" declared the king.
10 So they impaled Haman on the stake he had
prepared for Mordecai. Then the fury of the
king subsided.

8

1 That same day King Ahasuerus awarded
Queen Esther the estate of Haman, the enemy of
the Jews. And Mordecai entered the king's
presence because Esther had revealed his
relation to her.
2 The king removed the signet ring he had
recovered from Haman and presented it to
Mordecai. And Esther appointed Mordecai over
the estate of Haman.
3 And once again, Esther addressed the king.
She fell at his feet weeping and begged him to
revoke the evil scheme of Haman the Agagite,
which he had devised against the Jews.
4 The king extended the gold scepter toward
Esther, and she arose and stood before the king.
5 "If it pleases the king," she said, "and if I have
found favor in his sight, and the matter seems
proper to the king, and I am pleasing in his

† **7:9 7:9** *50 cubits* is approximately 75 feet or 22.9 meters high.

sight, may an order be written to revoke the
letters that the scheming Haman son of
Hammedatha, the Agagite, wrote to destroy the
Jews in all the king's provinces.
6 For how could I bear to see the disaster that
would befall my people? How could I bear to see
the destruction of my kindred?"

7 So King Ahasuerus said to Esther the Queen
and Mordecai the Jew, "Behold, I have given
Haman's estate to Esther, and he was impaled on
the stake because he attacked the Jews.
8 Now you may write in the king's name as
you please regarding the Jews, and seal it with
the royal signet ring. For a decree that is written
in the name of the king and sealed with the
royal signet ring cannot be revoked."

9 At once the royal scribes were summoned,
and on the twenty-third day of the third month
(the month of Sivan*), they recorded all of
Mordecai's orders to the Jews and to the satraps,
governors, and princes of the 127 provinces
from India to Cush†—writing to each province in
its own script, to every people in their own
language, and to the Jews in their own script
and language.

10 Mordecai wrote in the name of King
Ahasuerus and sealed it with the royal signet
ring. He sent the documents by mounted

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* **8:9 8:9** *Sivan* is the third month of the Hebrew lunar calendar, usually occurring within the months of May and June. † **8:9 8:9** That is, to the upper Nile region

couriers riding on swift horses bred from the royal mares.

11 By these letters the king permitted the Jews in each and every city the right to assemble and defend themselves, to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province hostile to them, including women and children, and to plunder their possessions.

12 The single day appointed throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus was the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar.‡

13 A copy of the text of the edict was to be issued in every province and published to all the people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

14 The couriers rode out in haste on their royal horses, pressed on by the command of the king. And the edict was also issued in the citadel of Susa.

15 Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal garments of blue and white, with a large gold crown and a purple robe of fine linen. And the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced.

16 For the Jews it was a time of light and gladness, of joy and honor.

17 In every province and every city, wherever the king's edict and decree reached, there was joy and gladness among the Jews, with feasting and celebrating. And many of the people of the

‡ **8:12 8:12** *Adar* is the twelfth month of the Hebrew lunar calendar, usually occurring within the months of February and March.

land themselves became Jews, because the fear of the Jews had fallen upon them.

9

1 On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar,* the king's command and edict were to be executed. On this day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, but their plan was overturned and the Jews overpowered those who hated them.
2 In each of the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the Jews assembled in their cities to attack those who sought to harm them. No man could withstand them, because the fear of them had fallen upon all peoples.
3 And all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and the king's administrators helped the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen upon them.
4 For Mordecai exercised great power in the palace, and his fame spread throughout the provinces as he became more and more powerful.
5 The Jews put all their enemies to the sword, killing and destroying them, and they did as they pleased to those who hated them.
6 In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men,
7 including Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

* **9:1 9:1** *Adar* is the twelfth month of the Hebrew lunar calendar, usually occurring within the months of February and March; also in verses 15, 17, 19, and 21.

8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,
9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha.
10 They killed these ten sons of Haman son of
Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, but they
did not lay a hand on the plunder.
11 On that day the number of those killed in
the citadel of Susa was reported to the king,
12 who said to Queen Esther, "In the citadel of
Susa the Jews have killed and destroyed five
hundred men, including Haman's ten sons.
What have they done in the rest of the royal
provinces? Now what is your petition? It will be
given to you. And what further do you request?
It will be fulfilled."
13 Esther replied, "If it pleases the king, may
the Jews in Susa also have tomorrow to carry
out today's edict, and may the bodies of Haman's
ten sons be impaled on the stake."
14 So the king commanded that this be done.
An edict was issued in Susa, and they impaled
the ten sons of Haman.
15 On the fourteenth day of the month of Adar,
the Jews in Susa came together again and put to
death three hundred men there, but they did not
lay a hand on the plunder.
16 The rest of the Jews in the royal provinces
also assembled to defend themselves and rid
themselves of their enemies. They killed 75,000
who hated them, but they did not lay a hand on
the plunder.
17 This was done on the thirteenth day of the
month of Adar, and on the fourteenth day they
rested, making it a day of feasting and joy.

18 The Jews in Susa, however, had assembled
on the thirteenth and the fourteenth days of the
month. So they rested on the fifteenth day,
making it a day of feasting and joy.
19 This is why the rural Jews, who live in the
villages, observe the fourteenth day of the
month of Adar as a day of joy and feasting. It is
a holiday for sending gifts to one another.

20 Mordecai recorded these events and sent
letters to all the Jews in all the provinces of King
Ahasuerus, both near and far,
21 to establish among them an annual
celebration on the fourteenth and fifteenth days
of the month of Adar
22 as the days on which the Jews gained rest
from their enemies and the month in which
their sorrow turned to joy and their mourning
into a holiday. He wrote that these were to be
days of feasting and joy, of sending gifts to one
another and to the poor.

23 So the Jews agreed to continue the custom
they had started, as Mordecai had written to
them.
24 For Haman son of Hammedatha, the
Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted
against the Jews to destroy them and had cast
the Pur (that is, the lot) to crush and destroy
them.
25 But when it came before the king, he
commanded by letter that the wicked scheme
which Haman had devised against the Jews
should come back upon his own head, and that
he and his sons should be impaled on the stake.

26 Therefore these days are called Purim, from
the word Pur.
Because of all the instructions in this letter,
and because of all they had seen and
experienced,
27 the Jews bound themselves to establish the
custom that they and their descendants and all
who join them should not fail to celebrate these
two days at the appointed time each and every
year, according to their regulation.
28 These days should be remembered and
celebrated by every generation, family,
province, and city, so that these days of Purim
should not fail to be observed among the Jews,
nor should the memory of them fade from their
descendants.
29 So Queen Esther daughter of Abihail, along
with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority
to confirm this second letter concerning Purim.
30 And Mordecai sent letters with words of
peace and truth to all the Jews in the 127
provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus,
31 in order to confirm these days of Purim at
their appointed time, just as Mordecai the Jew
and Queen Esther had established them and had
committed themselves and their descendants to
the times of fasting and lamentation.
32 So Esther's decree confirmed these
regulations about Purim, which were written
into the record.

10

1 Now King Ahasuerus imposed tribute
throughout the land, even to its farthest shores.

2 And all of Mordecai's powerful and
magnificent accomplishments, together with the
full account of the greatness to which the king
had raised him, are they not written in the Book
of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and
Persia?
3 For Mordecai the Jew was second only to
King Ahasuerus, preeminent among the Jews
and highly favored by his many kinsmen,
seeking the good of his people and speaking
peace to all his countrymen.

Masoretic English Tanakh

The Tanakh (Law, Prophets, and Writings) of the Holy Bible in English, conformed to the Masoretic Text.

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Language: English

Dialect: American

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2026-11-06

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 6 Nov 2026 from source files dated 6 Nov 2026
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