

ESTHER

¹ In the days of king Ahasuerus, that reigned from India unto Ethiopia, upon an hundred and seven and twenty provinces,

² when he sat in the seat of his realm, the city of Susa was the beginning of his realm.

³ And in the third year of his empire, he made a great feast to all his princes, and to *all his children, or servants*, to the strongest men of Persia, and to the noble men of Media, and to the prefects, *or chief men*, of provinces, before himself,

⁴ to show the riches of the glory of his realm, and the greatness, and boast of his power in much time, that is, an hundred and eighty days, *this feast lasted*.

⁵ And when the days of the feast were ended, the emperor called to his *next* feast all the people that was found in *the city of Susa*, from the most unto the least; and he commanded this feast to be made ready by seven days in the porch of an orchard and of a wood, that was set about with the king's ornament and with his hand, *or works*.

⁶ And tents of the colour of the air, and of gold, and of jacinth, were held up with cords of bis, and of purple, and they hanged on each side, the which *tents* were set-in [*or in-set*]*with* circles of ivory, and they were underset with pillars of marble; also there were ordained seats, at the manner of beds, of gold and of silver, upon

the pavement arrayed with smaragdus and with *other* diverse and precious stones; the which pavement painture made fair by wonderful diversity.

⁷ And they, that were called to meat, drank in golden cups, and meats were borne in *to them* with one and other vessels; also plenteous wine, and full good was set *forth before them*, as it was worthy to the great doing, of the king.

⁸ And there was no man that constrained them to drink that would not drink; but so the king had ordained, making sovereigns of his princes to all boards, that each man should take that, that he would.

⁹ Also Vashti, the queen, made a feast of women in the palace, where king Ahasuerus was wont to dwell.

¹⁰ Therefore in the seventh day, when the king was gladder *than before*, and *when* he was hot of wine after full much drinking, he commanded to Mehuman, and to Biztha, and to Harbona, and to Bigtha, and to Zethar, and to Abagtha, and to Carcas, seven honest and chaste servants, the which served in his sight,

¹¹ that they should bring in before the king the queen Vashti, with a diadem set upon her head, to show her fairness to all the peoples and princes; for she was full fair.

¹² And she forsook, and despised to come at the commandment of the king, which he had sent by the honest and chaste servants. Wherefore the king was angry, and kindled with full great vengeance;

13 and he asked the wise men, which by the king's custom were ever with him, and he did all things by the counsel of them, that knew the law and the rights of greatest men;

14 forsooth the first and the next were Carshena, and Shethar, Admatha, and Tarshish, and Meres, and Marsena, and Memucan, seven dukes of Persia and of Media, that saw the face of the king, and were wont to sit the first after him;

15 *the king asked them*, to what sentence the queen Vashti should be subject, that would not do the com-mandment of king Ahasuerus, which he had sent by the honest and chaste servants.

16 And Memucan answered, in audi-ence of the king and of the princes, The queen Vashti hath not only despised the king, but all the princes and peoples, that be in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus.

17 For the word of the queen shall go out to all women, that they *also* despise their husbands, and say, King Ahasuerus commanded, that the queen Vashti should have come to him, and she would not.

18 And by this ensample all the wives of the princes of Persia and of Media shall despise the behests of their husbands; wherefore the indignation of the king is just.

19 If it pleaseth to thee, a command-ment go out from thy face, and be written by the laws of Persia and of Media, which it is unleaveful to be passed *by*, that Vashti enter [*in*] no more to the

king, but another woman, which is better than she, take her realm.

²⁰ And be this *behest* published into all the empire of thy provinces, which is full large, that all wives, both of greater men and of less, give honour to their husbands.

²¹ [*And*] His counsel pleased the king and the princes, and the king did by the counsel of Memucan;

²² and he sent out letters by all the provinces of his realm, as each folk might hear and read, in diverse languages and letters, that husbands be princes and greater men in their houses; and that this thing be published by all peoples.

CHAPTER 2

¹ Therefore when these things were done, after that the indignation of king Ahasuerus was assuaged, he bethought of Vashti, and what things she had done, and what things she had suffered.

² And *then* the servants and the ministers of the king said to him, Fair damsels and virgins, be sought to the king;

³ and be there men sent forth, which should behold by all provinces damsels *who be* fair and virgins; and bring they them to the city of Susa, and betake they *them* into the house of women, under the keeping of Hegai, the honest servant and chaste, the which is the sovereign and keeper of the king's women; and take those damsels ornaments of women, and other things needful to their uses.

⁴ And whichever damsel among all *them* pleaseth *most* the eyes of the king, reign she for Vashti. And this word pleased the king; and he commanded to be done so, as they counselled.

⁵ And a man, a Jew, was in the city of Susa, Mordecai by name, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, of the generation of Benjamin;

⁶ that was translated *or borne over* from Jerusalem in that time, in which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had translated Jeconiah, king of Judah;

⁷ the which *Mordecai* was the nourisher of Hadassah, the daughter of his brother, which *daughter* was called Esther by another name, and she had lost both father and mother; *and she was* full fair, and seemly of face; and when her father and mother were dead, Mordecai took her to him, and he made her his daughter.

⁸ And when the commandment of the king was oft published, and by his behest many fair virgins were brought to Susa, and were betaken to Hegai, the honest servant and chaste, also Esther among other damsels was betaken to him, that she should be kept in the number of *those* women.

⁹ And she pleased him, and found grace in his sight, so that he hastened *to take to her* the ornaments of women, and he betook to Esther her parts *of all things needful to her*, and seven *of* the fairest damsels of the king's house; and Hegai adorned and arrayed both her and *those* damsels following her feet.

10 And Esther would not show to Hegai her people, neither her country; for Mordecai had commanded her, that in all manner she should be still of this thing.

11 And Mordecai walked each day before the porch of the door, in which the chosen virgins were kept, and he did the care of the health of Esther, and would know, what befel to her.

12 And when the time of all the damsels by order was come, that they should go in to the king, and when all things were fulfilled that pertained to women's attire, the twelfth month was turned; so only that they were anointed with the oil of myrrh by six months, and by another six months they used some pigments and sweet-smelling ointments.

13 And they entered to the king, and whatever thing pertaining to their ornaments they asked for, they took *it with them*; and they were arrayed as it pleased to them, and *then* they passed forth from the chamber of women to the king's bed.

14 And she that had entered in the eventide, went out in the morrowtide; and from thence they were led forth into the second houses, that were under the hand of Shaashgaz, honest servant and chaste, that was governor of the king's concubines; and she had not power to go again more to the king, no but the king would *or desired her*, and had commanded her to come by name.

15 And when the time was turned about by order, the day nighed, wherein Esther, the daughter of Abihail, the brother of Mordecai, the

which Esther Mordecai had taken to him, and made her his daughter, ought to enter to the king; and she asked not for women's ornaments, but whatever things Hegai, the honest servant and chaste, and keeper of the virgins, would, he gave these things to Esther to *her* ornament; for she was full shapely, and of fairness that may not lightly be believed, and she was seen gracious and amiable to the eyes of all men.

16 Therefore she was led to the bed of king Ahasuerus, in the tenth month, which is called Tebeth, in the seventh year of his realm.

17 And the king loved Esther more fervently than all women, and she had grace and mercy before him over all *other* women; and he setted the diadem, *or crown*, of the realm on her head, and made her to reign in the stead of Vashti.

18 And he commanded a full worshipful feast to be made ready to all his princes and servants, for the joining together and the weddings of Esther; and he gave rest, *that is, releasing of tribute*, to all provinces, and gave gifts, after the worshipful *or honourable* doing of a prince.

19 And when virgins were sought also the second time, and were gathered together, Mordecai dwelled at the gate of the king.

20 And Esther had not yet showed her country and her people, by the behest of Mordecai; for why whatever thing he commanded, Esther kept, and she did so then all things, as she was wont in that time, in which he nourished her *as* a little child.

²¹ Then in that time, wherein Mordecai dwelled at the gate of the king, Bigthana and Teresh, two servants of the king, were wroth *against the king*, that were porters, and sat in the first threshold of the palace; and they would rise against the king, and slay him.

²² Which thing was not hid from Mordecai, and anon Mordecai told *this* to the queen Esther, and she *told it* to the king, in the name of Mordecai, that had told that thing to her.

²³ And it was sought, and it was found *sooth*, and either of them was hanged in a gibbet; and this was commanded *to be written* in [*the*] stories, and it was betaken to the books of [*the*] years, before the king.

CHAPTER 3

¹ After these things king Ahasuerus enhanced Haman, the son of Hamme-datha, that was of the kindred of Agag, and *the king* set his throne above all the princes that he had.

² And all the servants of the king, that served in the gates of the palace, kneeled, and worshipped *or honoured* Haman; for so the emperor had commanded to them; *but* Mordecai alone bowed not his knees *to him*, neither worshipped him.

³ And the servants of the king, that sat above at the gates of the palace, said to Mordecai, Why keepest thou not the commandments of the king, *but doest* otherwise than other men?

⁴ And when they said full oft *to him* these things, and he would not hear *them*, they told to Haman, for they coveted to know, whether he

continued in the sentence *that he had showed to them*; for he had said to them, that he was a Jew.

⁵ And when Haman had heard this thing, and had proved by experience, that Mordecai bowed not his knee to him, neither worshipped him, he was full wroth,

⁶ and Haman areckoned *it* for nought to set [*or put*] his hands upon Mordecai alone, *to kill him*; for he had heard, that Mordecai was of the folk of Jews, and the more rather he would destroy all the nation of Jews, which were in the realm of Ahasuerus.

⁷ In the first month, whose name is Nisan, *that is, April*, in the twelfth year of the realm of Ahasuerus, lot was cast into a vessel, the which *lot* is said in Hebrew *pur*, before Haman, *to know* in what day and in what month the folk of Jews ought to be slain; and *by the lot* the twelfth month went out, that is called Adar, *that is, March*.

⁸ And *then* Haman said to king Ahasuerus, A people is scattered by all the provinces of thy realm, and *it* is separated from itself, and *this people* useth new laws and ceremonies, and furthermore also it despiseth the behests of the king; and thou knowest best, that it speedeth not to thy realm, that it increase in malice by license.

⁹ If it please thee, deem *and com-mand* thou that this people perish, and I shall pay ten thousand talents *of silver* to the keepers of thy treasure.

¹⁰ Therefore the king took from his hand the ring which he used, and he gave it to Haman, the son of Hamme-datha, of the kindred of Agag, the enemy of Jews.

11 And the king said to Haman, The silver, which thou promisedest, be thine; do thou of the people that, that pleaseth thee.

12 And *then* the scribes, *or* writers, of the king were called in the first month of Nisan, *that is, April*, in the thirteenth day of the same month; and it was written, as Haman had commanded, to all the princes of the king, and to doomsmen of diverse provinces and of folks, that for diversity of language, each folk might read *these letters* and hear *them*, in the name of king Ahasuerus.

13 And letters, asealed with the ring of the king, were sent by the couriers of the king to all his provinces, that they should slay, and do away, *or destroy*, all Jews, from a child to an eld [*or old*] man, little children and women, in one day, that is, in the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, that is called Adar, *or March*; and that they should take away the goods of the Jews.

14 And the sentence of the letters was this, written in a few words, that all provinces should know, and make them ready, to the foresaid day.

15 And the couriers, that were sent forth, hasted to [*ful*] fill the command-ment of the king; and anon the behest *of the king* was hanged up in *the city of Susa*, while the king and Haman made a feast, and all the Jews wept, that were in that city.

CHAPTER 4

1 And when Mordecai had heard these things, he rent his clothes, and he was clothed in a sackcloth, and he sprinkled ashes upon his head,

and he cried with great voice in the street of the midst of the city, and showed the bitterness of his soul,

² and he went with this yelling unto the gates of the palace; for it was not leaveful *for* a man clothed with a sackcloth to enter into the hall of the king.

³ Also in all provinces, cities, and places, to which the cruel sentence of the king was come, there was great wailing, fasting, and weeping, and yelling with the Jews, and many Jews used a sackcloth and ashes for their bed.

⁴ And the damsels, and the honest servants and chaste of Esther entered in, and told *this thing* to Esther; which thing she heard, and was astonished; and she sent a cloth *to Mordecai*, that when the sackcloth was taken away, he should clothe him therein; the which cloth he would not take.

⁵ And after that, Hatach, the honest servant and chaste, was called, whom the king had given *as* a minister or servant to her, and she commanded, that he should go to Mordecai, and learn of him, why he did this thing.

⁶ And Hatach went forth, and he came to Mordecai standing in the street of the city, before the gate of the palace;

⁷ and he showed to Hatach all things that had befallen, how Haman had promised to bring silver into the treasures [*or treasuries*] of the king, for the death of the Jews.

⁸ Also Mordecai gave to Hatach the copy of the *king's* behest, that hanged in Susa, to show to the

queen, and to admonish her for to enter to the king, and to beseech him for her people.

⁹ And Hatach went again, and told to Esther all things, which Mordecai had said.

¹⁰ And she answered to Hatach, and said, that he should say to Mordecai,

¹¹ All the servants of the king, and all the provinces which be under his lord-ship, know, that whether man either woman, not called *of the king*, entereth into the inner hall of the king, he shall be slain anon without any tarrying, but if in hap the king hold forth to him the golden rod for a token of mercy, and that he may live so; therefore how may I enter to the king, that am not called to him now by thirty days?

¹² And when Mordecai had heard this thing,

¹³ he sent again to Esther, and said, Guess thou not, that thou shalt deliver only thy life, for thou art in the house of the king, before all Jews;

¹⁴ for if thou art still now, the Jews shall be delivered by another way, and thou and the house of thy father shall perish; and who knoweth, whether therefore thou camest to the realm, that thou shouldst be made ready in such a time *to help*?

¹⁵ And again Esther sent these words to Mordecai, *saying*,

¹⁶ Go thou, and gather together all the Jews, which thou findest in Susa, and pray ye for me; eat ye not, *that is, fast ye*, neither drink ye, in three days and three nights, and I with mine handmaidens shall fast in like manner; and then I not called, shall enter in to the king, and I shall

do against the law, and I shall betake me to death and to peril.

¹⁷ Therefore Mordecai went, and did all things, that Esther had com-manded to him.

CHAPTER 5

¹ Forsooth in the third day, Esther was clothed in royal clothes, and she stood in the porch of the king's house, that was withinforth over against the king's hall; and the king sat upon his throne, in the consistory of his palace, against the door of the house.

² And when he had seen Esther, the queen, standing *there*, she pleased his eyes, and he held forth against her the golden rod, that he held in his hand; and she nighed, and kissed the highness of his rod.

³ And the king said to her, Esther, the queen, what wilt thou? what is thine asking? Yea, though thou ask the half part of my realm, it shall be given to thee.

⁴ And she answered, If it pleaseth the king, I beseech, that thou come to me today, and Haman with thee, to the feast, that I have made ready.

⁵ And anon the king said, Call ye anon Haman, that he obey to the will of Esther. And then the king and Haman came to the feast, which the queen had made ready to them.

⁶ And the king said to Esther, after that he had drunk wine plenteously, What thing askest thou *of me*, that it be given to thee, and for what thing askest thou? Yea, though thou ask the half part of my realm, thou shalt get *it*.

⁷ To whom Esther answered, My asking and [*my*] prayers be these.

⁸ If I have found grace in the sight of the king, and if it pleaseth the king, that he give to me that thing, that I ask, and that he fulfill mine asking, the king and Haman come *they tomorrow* to the feast, that I have made ready to them; and tomorrow, I shall open my will to the king.

⁹ Therefore Haman went out glad and swift in that day. And when he had seen Mordecai sitting before the gates of the palace, and not only to have not risen up to him, but soothly neither moved from the place of his sitting, he was full wroth;

¹⁰ and Haman feigned him as not wroth *therefore*, and turned again in to his house, and he called together his friends, and Zeresh, his wife;

¹¹ and he told to them the greatness of his riches, and the company of *his* children, and with how great glory the king had enhanced him above all his princes and servants.

¹² And he said after these things, Also the queen Esther called none other man with the king to the feast, except me, with whom I shall eat also tomorrow with the king.

¹³ And though I have all these things, I guess that I have nothing, as long as I see Mordecai, the Jew, sitting before the king's gates.

¹⁴ And Zeresh, his wife, and his friends answered to him, Command thou an high beam, *or a gallows tree*, to be made ready, having fifty cubits of height; and speak thou *tomorrow* early to the king, *and ask of him*, that Mordecai be

hanged thereon; and so thou shalt go glad with the king to the *queen's* feast. And the counsel of *them* pleased him, and he commanded an high cross, *that is a gibbet*, to be made ready.

CHAPTER 6

¹ The king led that night without sleep, and he commanded the stories and the books of years of former times to be brought to him. And when those *books* were read in his presence,

² men came to the place, where it was written, how Mordecai had told of the treasons of Bigthana and Teresh, honest servants, coveting to strangle king Ahasuerus.

³ And when the king had heard this, he said, What honour and meed got Mordecai for this faithfulness? And his servants and ministers said to him, Utterly he took no meed.

⁴ And anon the king said, Who is in the hall? Soothly Haman had entered into the inner hall of the king's house, to make suggestion to the king, that he should command Mordecai to be hanged on the gibbet, which was made ready to him.

⁵ And the servants of *the king* said to *him*, Haman standeth in the hall. And the king said, Enter he in.

⁶ And when Haman was come in, the king said to him, What oweth to be done to the man, whom the king desireth to honour? And Haman thought in his heart, and he guessed, that the king was about to honour no other man but himself, *Haman*;

7 and he answered, The man, whom the king coveteth to honour,

8 oweth to be clothed in the king's clothes, and to be set [*or put*] on the horse which is of the king's saddle, and to take the king's diadem, *that is, his crown*, upon his head;

9 and the first, *or chief*, of the princes and of the strong men of the king, he hold his horse, *leading him*, and go *he* by the streets of the city, and cry *he*, and say, Thus he shall be honoured, whom the king will honour.

10 And *then* the king said to Haman, Haste thou *thee*, and when the king's clothing, and his horse, is taken *to thee*, do thou, as thou hast spoken, to Mordecai, the Jew, that sitteth before the gates of the palace; and be thou ware, that thou leave not out, *or undone*, anything of these, which thou hast *now* spoken.

11 And *then* Haman took the king's cloth, and his palfrey, and he went *forth*, and cried before Mordecai, clothed *in the king's clothing*, *leading him* in the *chief* street of the city, and set upon his palfrey, He is worthy *of* this honour, whomever the king will honour.

12 And *after this* Mordecai turned again to the gate of the palace, and Haman hasted to go into his house, mourning, and with his head covered.

13 And he told to Zeresh, his wife, and to his friends all things that had befallen to him. To whom the wise men, which he had in counsel, and his wife, answered, If Mordecai, before whom thou hast begun to fall, is of the seed of

Jews, thou shalt not be able to against-stand him, but thou shalt fall in his sight.

¹⁴ Yet while they spake *these things*, the honest servants and chaste of the king came *after Haman*, and they compelled him to go anon to the feast, which the queen had made ready.

CHAPTER 7

¹ Therefore the king and Haman entered to the feast, and to drink with the queen.

² And the king said *also* to Esther in the second day, after that he was hot of the wine, Esther, what is thine asking *of me*, that it be given to thee, and what wilt thou be done? Yea, though thou ask the half part of my realm, thou shalt have it.

³ To whom she answered, O! king, if I have found grace in thine eyes, and if it pleaseth thee, give thou my life to me, for which I pray *thee now*, and *also the life* of my people, for the which I beseech *thee*.

⁴ For I and my people be given, that we be defouled, and strangled, and that we perish; O! why not had we *rather* been sold into servants and servantesses, for that evil might have been suffered, and I, wailing, should have been still; but now our enemy is *present*, whose cruelty turneth against the king.

⁵ And king Ahasuerus answered, and said, Who is this, and of what power, that he be hardy to do such things?

⁶ And Esther said, Our worst adversary and enemy is this Haman. The which thing *when*

he heard, he was astonished anon, and he was not sufficient to bear the semblance, *or the indignation*, of the king and of the queen.

⁷ And the king rose up wroth, and from the place of the feast he entered into a garden beset about with trees. And Haman rose up for to pray Esther, the queen, for his life; for he understood evil made ready of the king to him.

⁸ And when the king turned again from the garden, and had entered into the place of the feast, he found that Haman had fallen down upon the bed, wherein Esther lay. And the king said, Also he will oppress the queen, while I am present, in mine house. And the word was not yet gone out of the king's mouth, and anon men covered the face of Haman.

⁹ And Harbona, one of the honest servants and chaste, that stood in the service of the king, said, Lo! a tree having fifty cubits of height standeth in the house of Haman, which he had made ready to Mordecai, that spake for the king, *and made known his traitors*. To whom the king said, Hang ye Haman in that tree.

¹⁰ Therefore Haman was hanged in the gibbet, which he had made ready to Mordecai, and the ire of the king rested.

CHAPTER 8

¹ In that day king Ahasuerus gave to Esther, the queen, the house of Haman, enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai entered in before the face of the king; for Esther acknowledged to him, that he was her father's brother.

² Therefore the king took the ring, which he had commanded to be received from Haman, and he gave *it* to Mordecai. And Esther ordained Mordecai *to be sovereign* over her household.

³ And Esther was not appeased with these things, and felled down to the feet of the king, and wept, and spake to him, and prayed, that he should command the malice of Haman of *the kindred of Agag*, and his worst casts, which he had thought out against the Jews, to be made void.

⁴ And the king by custom held forth the golden rod of the king with his hand, by which the token of his mercy was showed. And *then* Esther rose up, and stood before the king,

⁵ and said, If it pleaseth the king, and if I have found grace before his eyes, and if my prayer is not seen to be contrary to him, I beseech, that the eld [*or old*] letters of Haman, the traitor, and enemy of Jews, by which he had commanded them to perish in all the provinces of the king, be amended by new letters;

⁶ for how shall I be able to suffer the death, and the slaying, of my people?

⁷ And king Ahasuerus answered to Esther, the queen, and to Mordecai, the Jew, *and said*, I have granted the house of Haman to Esther, the queen, and I commanded him to be hanged on the cross, for-thy that he was hardy to set [*or put*] hand against the Jews.

⁸ Therefore write ye to [*the*] Jews, as it pleaseth to you, by the name of the king, and aseal ye the letters with my ring. For this was the custom,

that no man durst against-say the letters, that were sent in the king's name, and were sealed with his ring.

⁹ And when the arrayers *of the king's letters*, and his writers, were called; it was *then* the time of the third month, that is called Sivan, *that is, June*, in the three and twentieth day of the month; letters were written, as Mordecai would, to *[the]* Jews, and to *[the]* princes, and to procurators, and to judges, that were sovereigns over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces, from India unto Ethiopia, *they were written* to that province and to that province, to that people and to that people, by their languages and *by their* letters, and to the Jews, that they might read and hear *them*.

¹⁰ And those letters, that were sent in the name of the king, were asealed with his ring, and were sent forth by his messengers, the which ran about by all provinces, and they came with *[the]* new messages before that the eld *[or old]* letters were *executed*.

¹¹ To whom the king commanded, that they should call together the Jews, and command them to be gathered together by all cities, and that they should stand *together* for their lives; and that they should slay, and do away, all their enemies, with their wives, and *with their* children, and with all their households.

¹² And one day of vengeance, that is, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month of Adar, *that is, March*, was ordained by all provinces.

13 And the short sentence of the epistle was this, that it were made known in all lands and peoples, that were subject to the empire of king Ahasuerus, that the Jews be ready *that day* to take vengeance of their enemies.

14 And the messengers went out, before-bearing swift messages; and this *same* behest of the king hanged in *the city of Susa*.

15 And Mordecai went out of the *king's* palace and of the king's sight, and he shined in the king's clothes, that is, *clothes the colour* of jacinth, and colour of the air; and he bare a golden crown on his head, and was clothed with a mantle of silk and of purple; and all the city fully joyed, and was glad.

16 Certainly *then* a new light seemed to rise up to the Jews, *and joy, and honour, and dancing*

17 *was* at all peoples, *and cities*, and at all provinces, whither ever the commandments of the king came, *among them was* a wonderful joy, *and meats, and feasts, and an holy day*, in so much, that many of another folk and sect were joined to the religion and ceremonies of them; for the great dread of the name of Jews had assailed all them.

CHAPTER 9

1 Therefore in the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which we said now before to be called Adar, when slaying was made ready to all the Jews *by Haman*, and their enemies setted treason to their blood, on the contrary, the Jews *now*

began to be the higher *part*, and to avenge them of their adversaries.

² And the Jews were gathered together by all cities, castles [*or burg towns*], and places, to stretch forth hand against their enemies and pursuers; and no man was hardy to against-stand *them*, for the dread of their greatness had pierced all peoples.

³ For why both the judges, dukes, and procurators of provinces, and each dignity, that were sovereigns of all places and works, enhanced the Jews, for the dread of Mordecai *was upon them*,

⁴ whom they knew to be *a prince of the king's* palace, and to be able to do full much; and the fame of his name increased each day, and flew by the mouths of all men.

⁵ Therefore the Jews smote their enemies with great vengeance, and killed them, and yielded to their enemies that, that they had made ready to do to them,

⁶ in so much, that also in *the city of* Susa the Jews killed five hundred men, without the ten sons of Haman of *the kindred of* Agag, the enemy of Jews, of the which *sons* these be the names;

⁷ Parshandatha, Dalphon, and As-patha,

⁸ and Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha,

⁹ and Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha.

¹⁰ And when the Jews had slain the sons of Haman, they would not touch the preys of the chattels, [*or substance*], of them.

¹¹ And anon the number of them, that were slain in *the city of* Susa, was told to the king.

12 And he said to the queen, The Jews have slain five hundred men in the city of Susa, and the ten sons of Haman; how great slaying guessest thou, that they haunt in all provinces? what askest thou more? and what wilt thou, that I command to be done?

13 To whom Esther answered, If it pleaseth the king, power be given to the Jews, that as they have done today in Susa, so do they also tomorrow, and that the *bodies of the* ten sons of Haman be hanged up in gibbets.

14 And the king commanded, that it should be done so; and anon the behest *of the king* hanged in Susa, and the *bodies of the* ten sons of Haman were hanged up.

15 Therefore when the Jews were gathered together, in the fourteenth day of the month [*of*] Adar, *or March*, three hundred men were slain in Susa, and the Jews took not away the chattel of those men.

16 But also by all the provinces, that were subject to the lordship of the king, Jews stood for their lives, when their enemies and pursuers were slain, in so much, that five and seventy thousand of slain men were filled, and no man touched anything of the chattels of them.

17 Certainly the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, *or March*, was the day of slaying with all *them*, and in the fourteenth day they ceased to slay; and that *day* they ordained to be solemn, so that therein in each time afterward, they should give attention to meats, *yea*, to joy, and to feasts.

¹⁸ And those *Jews*, that used, or haunted, the slaying in the city of Susa, lived in slaying in the thirteenth and fourteenth days of the same month. But in the fifteenth day they ceased to slay; and therefore they ordained the same day *to be solemn of feasts and of gladness*.

¹⁹ And these *Jews*, that dwelled in burg towns not walled, and in villages, deemed the fourteen day of the month [*of*] Adar *to be solemn of feasts, and of joy, so that they be joyful therein, and send, each to other, parts of their feasts, and of their meats*.

²⁰ And Mordecai wrote all these things, and he sent *all* these things written by letters to the *Jews*, that dwelled in all the provinces of the king, as well to *Jews* dwelling nigh as far, [*or both in nigh set and afar*],

²¹ that they should receive *and hold* for *their* feast days the fourteenth and the fifteenth days of the month [*of*] Adar, and ever[*more*] when the year turneth again, to hallow *these days* with solemn honour;

²² for in those days the *Jews* avenged themselves of their enemies, and *then* their mourning and their sorrow were turned into gladness and joy; and *therefore* these days should be days of feasts, and of gladness, and that they should send, each to other, parts of meats, and give little gifts to poor men.

²³ And the *Jews* received into a solemn custom all *those* things, which they began to do in that time, and which things Mordecai had commanded by letters to be done.

24 For Haman, the son of Hamme-datha, of the kindred of Agag, the enemy and adversary of Jews, thought evil against them, to slay them, and to do *them* away, and he cast pur, *that is to say in our language, lot, to do it.*

25 And after this Esther entered in to the king, and besought, that the enforcings *or endeavours* of Haman should be made void by the letters of the king, and that the evil, which he had thought against the Jews, should turn again into his head. Forsooth they hanged on the cross both him and his sons.

26 And from that time these days were called Purim, that is, of lots, for pur, that is, lot, was sent, *or cast*, into a vessel; and the Jews received upon themselves, and upon their seed, and upon all men that would be coupled to their religion, all things that were done, and be contained in the volume of the epistle, that is, of this book,

27 and which things they suffered, and which things were changed after-ward, so that it be not leaveful to any man to pass these *two* days without solemnity, which days the scripture witnesseth, and certain times ask, while the years come continually one after another.

28 These be the days, which never any forgetting shall do away, but by all generations all the provinces, that be in all the world, shall hallow *them*; neither there is any city, in which the days of Purim, that is, of lots, shall not be kept of *[the]* Jews, and of the generation of them, which is bound to these ceremonies.

²⁹ And Esther, the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai, the Jew, wrote also the second epistle, that this solemn day should be hallowed afterward with all busyness.

³⁰ And they sent *their letter* to those Jews, that dwelled in an hundred and seven and twenty provinces of king Ahasuerus, that they should have peace, and receive the truth,

³¹ and *that they should* keep the days of lots, and hallow *them* with joy in their time, as Mordecai and Esther had ordained; and they received the *rules for the* fastings, and the *solemn* cries, and the days of lots, to be kept of themselves and of their seed,

³² *and they received* all things that be contained in the story of this book, that is called Esther.

CHAPTER 10

¹ Forsooth king Ahasuerus made tributary each land, and all the isles of the sea;

² whose strength and empire and his dignity and highness, by which he enhanced Mordecai, be written in the books of *the kings of* Media and of Persia;

³ and how Mordecai of the kin of the Jews was the second from king Ahasuerus, and *was* great with Jews, and acceptable to the people of his brethren, and he sought good things to his people, and spake those things, that pertained to the peace of his seed.

Here endeth the text of Hebrew. I have set openly with full faith those things, that be had in Hebrew; but I found these things that follow

(verses 10:4—16:24, omitted here, see *Wycliffe's Apocrypha for the Additions to Esther*), written in the common translation, that be contained in the language and letters of the Greeks.

Wycliffe's Bible with Modern Spelling English: Wycliffe's Bible Modern Spelling (with Deuterocanon)

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Language: English

Dialect: Archaic

Translation by: Terry Noble

Wycliffe's Bible with Modern Spelling, was made in response to requests from readers who wanted my Wycliffe's Old and New Testaments and Apocrypha in one volume. Printing limitations dictated the number of pages available to me and the letter size. In my previous books, Wycliffe's Bible, Wycliffe's Old Testament, Vols. 1 amp 2, Wycliffe's New Testament, and Wycliffe's Apocrypha, I have tens of thousands of rewritten verses, presented in parentheses "()", to provide help in comprehending the 14th century Middle English vocabulary and grammar. In this present volume, with space at a premium, those "helps" had to be eliminated, to make room for the text of the Apocrypha.

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