

ESTHER

CHAPTER 1A¹

{ {In the 2nd year while King² Xerxes³ the Great was being-king, in the 1st day of the month of Adar⁴ Nisan, (which is Dystros Xanthikos).⁵ Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, from out of the tribe of Benjamin, saw a dream. 2 He was a Judean human dwelling in the city Shushan, a great human who was serving in the court of the king.⁶ 3 But he was one from out of the captivity, whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, captured out of Jerusalem⁷ with Jeconiah, the king of Judah.

4 And this was his dream:

And behold: Voices⁸ and a cry of turmoil, thunders and a quaking, and a disturbance on the earth. 5 And behold: There were two great⁹ dragons which were ready. Both came-forward to be wrestling. And a great¹⁰ voice came-to-be from them, 6 and everything was troubled at their voice¹¹ and every nation was made-ready to go into a war, so-as for them to war¹² against a nation of righteous persons.¹³

7 And behold: It was a testimony to all the peoples.¹⁴ A day of darkness and gloom, tribulation and constriction, evil-treating and great disturbance on the earth.¹⁵ 8 And all of a righteous race was disturbed, filling themselves with-fear of the evil things to come upon themselves, and they were made-ready to be-lost.¹⁶ And they¹⁷ cried toward God.¹⁸ 9 But from¹⁹ the voice of²⁰ their cry, there came-to-be, as-it-were, a great river, much water from a small spring. 10 Light, and²¹ the sun arose; and the lowly persons²² were raised-high and they devoured²³ the glorious ones.

11 And after Mordecai was completely-arisen from his sleep,²⁴ the man who had seen this dream and what God has taken-counsel to do,²⁵ he was holding it²⁶ in his heart, and he was wanting, in every rationalization,²⁷ till the night, to recognize its meaning.²⁸

12 And its interpretation would become clear to him on the day which²⁹ Mordecai became-tranquil in the king's³⁰ court with Bigthan and Teresh,³¹ the two eunuchs of the king, the ones who were guarding the court.³² 13 And He both heard their rationalizations and searched-out their worries, and he learned that they were³³ making-ready to throw their hands on³⁴ Xerxes the king to kill him. And after thinking about it,³⁴ he indicated this to the king about them. 14 And the king probed-out the two eunuchs and he found Mordecai's words to be true.³⁵ And after they³⁶ confessed, they were led-away to be executed. 15 And the king

wrote these accounts down into remembrance, and Mordecai wrote about these accounts³⁷ in order that these things might be remembered.³⁸ 16 And the king commanded Mordecai to be doing-service in the court of the king and to be conspicuously guarding every door.³⁹ And he gave gifts to him concerning these things.⁴⁰

17 And Haman, son of Hammedatha an Agagite,⁴¹ was glorious before-the-face of the king. And he sought to do-evil to Mordecai and all⁴² his people in-behalf of what he had said to the king concerning⁴³ the two eunuchs of the king.⁴⁴ because they had been executed. } }⁴⁵

CHAPTER 1B

And it came-to-be after these accounts,⁴⁶ in the days of Xerxes (this was the Xerxes who was-king over 127 provinces from Hodu and as-far-as Chush),⁴⁷ 2 in these days,⁴⁸ as the king Xerxes⁴⁹ was on the throne of his kingship which is⁵⁰ in Shushan the castle,⁵¹ 3 in year three of his being-king,⁵² he made a drinking-party⁵³ for all his chiefs and servants: the officers of the force⁵⁴ of Persia⁵⁵ and Madai, the nobles and chiefs of the provinces who were before his face.⁵⁶ 4 For many days,⁵⁷ 180 days, he showed⁵⁸ the riches of the glory⁵⁹ of his kingship⁶⁰ and the esteem of the boast of his greatness.⁶¹

5 And in the completion⁶² of these days of the marriage,⁶³ the king made a drinking-party lasting seven⁶⁴ days in the court of the orchard of the palace of the king for all⁶⁵ the people, the ones who were found in Shushan⁶⁶ the castle,⁶⁷ from great until small.⁶⁸ 6 There was a pale-drapery made of Karpasian-flax and violet-thread which was being held by⁶⁹ cords of white-fabric and purple on rollers⁷⁰ of gold and⁷¹ of silver and on⁷² pillars of alabaster⁷³ and of stone.⁷⁴ There were couches⁷⁵ of gold and of silver⁷⁶ on fitted-stone-pavement which was made of [porphyry],⁷⁷ of alabaster, of mother-of-pearl, and of [border-stone].⁷⁸ And there were diaphanous bed-spreads, which were variously covered-with-flowers,⁷⁹ with roses having been embroidered⁸⁰ in-a-circle.⁸¹

7 And the giving-of-drink was served in utensils of gold and of silver (and utensils were differing from utensils),⁸² and a small-cup-of-charcoal was lying-before them which was worth⁸³ 30,000 talents,⁸⁴ and the wine of the kingship was much according-to the king's hand.⁸⁵ 8 And the drinking-bout was according-to

³⁷ [1A:15] AT "And Mordecai was written about in the book of the king"

³⁸ [1A:15] LXX / AT add

³⁹ [1A:16] LXX / AT add

⁴⁰ [1A:16] LXX / AT "And assigned to him for these things"

⁴¹ [1A:16] LXX lit. "Bugaeon" which always translates from Hebrew "Agagite" / AT "Makedonian"

⁴² [1A:17] LXX / AT add

⁴³ [1A:17] LXX / AT add

⁴⁴ [1A:17] LXX / AT omit "of the king"

⁴⁵ [1A:17] LXX / AT, Vul add

⁴⁶ [1B:1] MT, Vul / LXX add

⁴⁷ [1B:1] MT, AT, OL, Vul, Josephus / LXX omit "to Chush"

⁴⁸ [1B:1] MT, LXX / AT omit "in those days"

⁴⁹ [1B:1] MT, LXX / AT omit "the king"

⁵⁰ [1B:1] MT / LXX "was enthroned"

⁵¹ [1B:2] MT, OL / LXX, Vul "city"

⁵² [1B:3] MT, LXX / AT omit "in year three of his being-king"

⁵³ [1B:3] MT / LXX "reception" / AT "wine party"

⁵⁴ literally "durability"

⁵⁵ literally "Paras"

⁵⁶ literally "in his faces" // MT (AT?) / LXX "to the friends, and to the remaining nations, and to glorious ones of Persians and Madai, and to the chiefs of the satrapies. And after these things"

⁵⁷ [1B:3] MT / LXX omit "many days"

⁵⁸ literally "in his showing"

⁵⁹ [1B:4] MT, AT, Vul / LXX omit "of the glory"

⁶⁰ [1B:4] MT / LXX, Vul "of his kingdom" / AT "of the king"

⁶¹ [1B:5] MT / LXX "and the glory of the gladness of his riches" / AT "and the honor which he boasted"

⁶² literally "filling"

⁶³ [1B:5] MT, Vul / LXX add "of the marriage" / AT add "of the deliverance"

⁶⁴ [1B:5] MT, AT, Josephus, Vul / LXX "six"

⁶⁵ [1B:5] MT, Vul / LXX omit "all"

⁶⁶ [1B:5] MT, AT, Josephus, Vul / LXX omit "Shushan"

⁶⁷ [1B:5] MT / LXX, AT "city" / Josephus, Vul omit altogether

⁶⁸ [1B:5] MT, AT, Vul / LXX omit "from great until small"

⁶⁹ [1B:5] MT / LXX "(6) having been adorned with things of-byssus and of-Karpasian-flax which were stretched on" / AT "(6) "And there were draperies of-byssus and of-Karpasian-Flax, with lavender and scarlet embroidered in flowers"

⁷⁰ [1B:6] MT / LXX "cubes"

⁷¹ [1B:6] MT, AT, Luc / LXX add

⁷² [1B:6] MT / LXX add

⁷³ [1B:6] MT / LXX "Persian"

⁷⁴ [1B:6] MT / LXX add / AT instead add "and gilded with gold" / Luc instead add "and gilded"

⁷⁵ literally "places-to-stretch-out"

⁷⁶ [1B:6] MT, LXX / AT omit "and of silver"

⁷⁷ [1B:6] meaning of Hebrew is uncertain / LXX, Vul "emerald"

⁷⁸ [1B:6] MT (meaning of Hebrew for "border-stone" not entirely certain) / LXX "made of emerald of stone and of a mollusk, and of Parian stone" / AT "made of emerald"

⁷⁹ literally "thoroughly-flowered"

⁸⁰ more literally "scattered"

⁸¹ [1B:6] MT / LXX add / AT only add "and roses having been embroidered in-a-circle"

⁸² [1B:7] MT / LXX "Cups which were golden and silver" / AT "And each of the golden cups were different"

⁸³ literally "from"

⁸⁴ [1B:7] MT, AT / LXX add

⁸⁵ [1B:7] MT / LXX "and the wine was much and sweet, which the king himself was drinking" / AT "and the wine was royal, which the king drinks."

¹ This chapter is extant in Greek (and Latin from Greek) translations of a Hebrew original; all of the segments (with an exception of Mordecai's dream and its interpretation are also used by Josephus)

² [1A:1] LXX(B), OL / others omit "king"

³ [all instances of this name] MT lit. "Achashveros" (which is Xerxes) / AT "Assueros" / LXX, Eth, Josephus, Midrash, Jospipon "Artaxerxes" / LXX(Luc), Vul "Asuerus"

⁴ [1A:1] LXX / AT "of the month of Adar"

⁵ [1A:1] LXX / AT add

⁶ [1A:2] AT, OL omit "He was a Judean...court of the king" (other details from this verse are omitted in AT, but have been supplied from both the LXX and Hebrew text of 2:5-6)

⁷ [1A:3] AT omit "from Jerusalem"

⁸ [1A:4] AT "A voice" / OL omit "And behold!"

⁹ [1A:5] AT omit "great"

¹⁰ [1A:5] AT omit "great"

¹¹ [1A:6] AT "at the sound of their cry"

¹² [1A:6] AT moves "every nation was made-ready to go into a war" (omitting "into a war") after the line ending with "on the earth"

¹³ [1A:6] AT omit "against a nation of righteous persons"

¹⁴ [1A:7] AT add

¹⁵ [1A:7] AT "...and gloom and chaos of war!"

¹⁶ [1A:8] AT omit "all of a righteous...perish." / OL has only "made-ready for war. And they waged a great war between them and tried to subdue on another. And the people assembled themselves on the dark and evil day, and there was great confusion among the inhabitants of the earth. And they feared defeat."

¹⁷ [1A:8] AT "we"

¹⁸ [1A:8] AT "toward the Lord"

¹⁹ [1A:9] AT "And because of"

²⁰ [1A:9] AT add

²¹ [1A:10] AT omit "and"

²² [1A:10] AT "the rivers"

²³ [1A:10] AT "swallowed"

²⁴ [1A:11] LXX / AT add

²⁵ [1A:11] AT "", he pondered what the dream meant and what the Mighty One was preparing to do"

²⁶ [1A:11] AT "and his dream was hidden"

²⁷ or "account"

²⁸ [1A:11] (lit. "account") / OL "And Mordecai, who had seen the dream, stood up and said, "What does God intend to do?" And this vision was kept in his heart until it was revealed." & omit verses 12-17.

²⁹ [1A:12] LXX / AT add

³⁰ [1A:12] LXX / AT add

³¹ [1A:12] Emendation based on MT / LXX "Gabatha and Tharra" / AT "Astaos and Theudeus"

³² [1A:12] LXX / AT omit "the ones who were guarding the court"

³³ [1A:13] AT "he overheard their words and their schemes as they were plotting to assault"

³⁴ [1A:13] LXX / AT add

³⁵ [1A:14] LXX / AT add

³⁶ [1A:14] AT "after the eunuchs"

the decree, nothing-was compelling *them to drink*;¹ this-is-why the king appointed² every captain of *his house*³ to do *things* according-to *the pleasure*⁴ of each man.⁵ *He also sent throughout the country, and proclaimed to the people, in order that they might give up their work and rest and celebrate for many days in honor of his reign.*⁶

9 Vashti the queen also made a drinking-party for women *inside*⁷ the house of the kingship which belonged to the king Xerxes.⁸

10 On the seventh day,⁹ as the king's heart¹⁰ was merry¹¹ with wine, he said for Mehuman,¹² Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carkas,¹³ the seven eunuchs, the *ones who attended before the face** of the king Xerxes,¹⁴ 11 to bring Vashti¹⁵ the queen *before the king's face** in the royal crown,¹⁶ in order that he might display her beauty to the peoples and the chiefs,¹⁷ for she was lovely to behold.¹⁸ 12 But Queen Vashti¹⁹ refused to come at the king's word issued by the hand of²⁰ the eunuchs. Therefore, the king's²¹ wrath flared up, and he burned with fury.

13 Then he consulted with the wise men²² versed in the law,²³ because the king's business was conducted in general consultation with lawyers and jurists.²⁴ 14 And he summoned Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memucan,²⁵ the seven²⁶ Persian and Median chiefs who were in the king's personal service and held first rank in the kingdom,²⁷ 15 and said to them, "According to the law, what is to be done with Queen Vashti for disobeying the word of King Xerxes issued by the hand of the eunuchs?"²⁸

16 And in the presence of the king and of the chiefs, Memucan²⁹ said, "Queen Vashti has not wronged the king alone, but all the chiefs of *the Persians and Medes* and the peoples throughout all the provinces of King Xerxes,³⁰ 17 because the queen's conduct will become known to all the women *with the result* for them to be caused to despise upon their masters when it is reported,³¹ 'King Xerxes commanded that Queen Vashti be brought into his presence, but she would not come!'³² 18 And this very day, the Persian and Median ladies who hear of the queen's conduct will rebel against³³ all the royal chiefs, with corresponding disdain and wrath.³⁴ 19 If it please the king *and is acceptable to his thinking*,³⁵ let an irrevocable³⁶ royal word be issued by him and inscribed among the laws of the Persians and Medes,³⁷ forbidding Vashti³⁸ to come into the presence of King

¹ [1B:8] MT / LXX "And this drinking-party became not according to any law which was previously-laid-down" / AT "And this drinking-party became according to a law"

² literally "found" (as in "laid a foundation")

³ [1B:7] LXX, AT, Vul, Joe / MT add

⁴ [1B:7] MT / LXX "will" / Joe "judgment in satisfying his pleasures"

⁵ MT, AT / literally "of man and man" / LXX "of he and of the humans" // Joe reads here "...of the king, his servants were not to force them to drink by bringing them wine continually, but to permit each of the banqueters to use his own judgment in satisfying his pleasures."

⁶ [1B:8] Joe add

⁷ [1B:9] MT / LXX actually add "in"

⁸ [1B:7] MT, LXX / AT "inside the royal palace of the king" / Josephus "inside her palace"

⁹ literally "the day, the seventh day"

¹⁰ [1B:10] MT / LXX "when he" / AT "when the king"

¹¹ literally "good"

¹² [1B:10] MT / LXX "Haman" (supported by Targum)

¹³ [1B:10] LXX "Bazan, Tharra, Barazi, Zatholha, Abataza, Tharaba"

¹⁴ [1B:10] MT, LXX (supported by Josephus) / AT "he instructed his servants"

¹⁵ [1B:11] MT, AT / LXX omit "Vashti"

¹⁶ [1B:11] MT / LXX "to bring the queen to him, to enthrone her, and to place the crown on her" / AT "to bring Queen Vashti into the assembled banquet, wearing her royal crown"

¹⁷ [1B:11] MT / LXX "that he might display her to the chiefs, and her beauty to the nations" / AT "before his army"

¹⁸ [1B:11] MT / LXX omit "to behold" / AT omit "for she was lovely to behold"

¹⁹ [1B:12] MT, LXX / AT "But Vashti" / Joe also add, ", in observance of the laws of the Persians, which forbid their women to be seen by strangers"

²⁰ [1B:12] MT, AT / LXX, Josephus omit "the hand of"

²¹ [1B:12] MT, (LXX similar) / AT "Now when the news reached the king that Vashti denied his will, his"

²² [1B:13] MT, AT / LXX "with his friends"

²³ [1B:13] Emendation / MT "times"

²⁴ [1B:13] MT / AT "Then...versed in the law and justice what to do with the queen, because she had been unwilling to do the will of the king." / LXX "Then he said to his friends, 'This is how Vashti spoke. Therefore give your ruling and judgment on this.'"

²⁵ [1B:14] LXX "summoned Arkesaeus, and Sarsathaeus, and Maliseas" / AT (see below)

²⁶ [1B:14] MT / LXX, Luc omit "seven" / AT (see below)

²⁷ [1B:14] MT / LXX "And...Maeon officials who were close to the king and seated first by the king, came to him." / AT "And the Parsean and Maeon officials, and those who see the face of the king, and those seated among royalty came to him."

²⁸ [1B:15] MT / LXX ", and they reported to him, according to the law, what must be done with Queen Vashti for disobeying the things issued by the king through the eunuchs."

²⁹ [1B:16] MT / LXX, some Josephus "Mouchaios" / AT "Bougai" / other Josephus "Amouchai"

³⁰ [1B:16] MT / LXX "chiefs and leaders of the king" / AT "chiefs of the Persians and Medians and to all the populace"

³¹ [1B:17] MT / LXX omit "because the queen's...reported" and instead has "(For he had reported to them the queen's words and how she had defied the king.)"

³² [1B:17] MT / AT omit "For the queen's...not come!" and instead has "because she ignored the ordinance of the king" / LXX omit "King Xerxes...not come!" and instead has "Therefore, just as she defied King Xerxes"

³³ [1B:18] Emendation / MT "will tell"

³⁴ [1B:18] MT / LXX (supported by Josephus) "This very day, the ladies of the royal officials of Persians and Medians who hear what was said by her to the king, will, in the same way, dare to dishonor their men." / AT omit altogether

³⁵ [1B:19] MT, LXX / AT add

³⁶ [1B:19] MT, LXX / AT omit "irrevocable"

³⁷ [1B:19] MT, LXX / AT "and inscribed to all the lands and to all the nations"

³⁸ [1B:19] MT, AT / LXX "the queen"

Xerxes³⁹ and authorizing the king to give her royal dignity to one more worthy than she. 20 And when the decree which the king will issue is published throughout all his kingdom⁴⁰ (for it is great),⁴¹ all the women shall honor their masters,⁴² from the greatest to the least.⁴³

21 And this proposal was pleasing in the eyes of the king and the chiefs, and the king acted according to the word of Memucan.⁴⁴ And so it was decided to send Vashti away, and to give her high position to another woman.⁴⁵ 22 And the king sent letters to all the royal provinces, to each province in its own script and to each people in its own language,⁴⁶ to the effect that every man should be ruler in his own house,⁴⁷ and speak according to the tongue of his own people.⁴⁸

CHAPTER 2

After these words, when King Xerxes' wrath⁴⁹ had cooled, he *no longer*⁵⁰ thought over what Vashti had done and what had been decreed against her.⁵¹

2 And the king's boys, his ministers, said, "Let beautiful *chaste*⁵² young-women *who are unmarried-women* be sought for the king. 3 And let the king appoint commissaries in all the provinces of his realm to bring together all the beautiful *chaste*⁵³ young-women *who are unmarried-women* to the women's house in the stronghold⁵⁴ of Shushan. And let them be entrusted⁵⁵ Under the hand of the royal eunuch Hegai,⁵⁶ keeper of the women, let cosmetics *and other attendance*⁵⁷ be given them. 4 Then the young-woman⁵⁸ who pleases the king shall be queen in place of Vashti."

This suggestion pleased the king, and he acted accordingly.⁵⁹

5 And⁶⁰ In Shushan⁶¹ the castle, *there came-to-be* a man, a Judean, and his name was Mordecai, son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a man *who was* a Benjamite,⁶² 6 who was exiled from Jerusalem along with the exiles who were exiled with Jeconiah, king of Judah,⁶³ whom Nebuchadnezzar, *the king of Babel*, exile.

7 And he came-to-be supporting Hadassah, *daughter of Abihai*⁶⁴ (she is Esther, his uncle's daughter), because *there* was no father and mother for her. ⁶⁵ And the young-woman⁶⁶ was beautifully formed and lovely to behold.⁶⁷ And at⁶⁸ the death of her father and mother,⁶⁹ Mordecai took her for his own daughter.⁷⁰

8 And it came-to-be, when the king's order and decree had been obeyed⁷¹ many young-women had been brought together to the stronghold⁷² of Shushan under the care of Hegai, that⁷³ Esther was also brought in to the royal palace under the care of⁷⁴ Hegai,⁷⁵ keeper of the women. 9 And the young-woman pleased him and won his *personal favor and compassion*.⁷⁶ So he promptly furnished her with cosmetics and provisions. Then picking out seven of the

³⁹ [1B:19] MT / LXX "forbidding...of him" / AT "making it know that Vashti rejected the word of the king."

⁴⁰ [1B:20] MT, LXX(similar) / AT "Thus, let it be seen that she is obeying the voice of the king, and he will do good for all the kingdoms."

⁴¹ [1B:20] MT / LXX, AT omit "for it is great"

⁴² [1B:20] MT / LXX "men" / Vul "marriage-partners"

⁴³ [1B:20] MT / LXX, AT "from the poor to the rich."

⁴⁴ [1B:21] MT, LXX / AT "with the king's heart, and he acted readily on this advice."

⁴⁵ [1B:21] Josephus add

⁴⁶ [1B:22] MT / LXX "sent word throughout all his kingdom, to every provinces, according to its own language"

⁴⁷ [1B:22] MT / LXX "that men might be feared in their own houses"

⁴⁸ [1B:22] MT / LXX omit "and speak according to the language of his own people"

⁴⁹ [2:1] MT (supported by AT) / LXX "when the king's wrath"

⁵⁰ [2:1] MT / LXX add

⁵¹ [2:1] MT / LXX "had said, and how he condemned her." / AT replaces "After this...her." with "And so the tradition was established that told about Vashti and what she had done to King Xerxes."

⁵² [2:2] MT, AT / LXX add (AT reads "Let us seek beautiful young virgins" & omit "for the king")

⁵³ [2:3] MT / LXX add

⁵⁴ [2:3] MT / LXX "city"

⁵⁵ [2:3] MT / LXX (supported by AT) add

⁵⁶ [2:3] MT / AT "Gogaios" / LXX omit altogether

⁵⁷ [2:7] MT / LXX add / AT replaced "And let the king...given them." with "And let them be given to be placed under the charge of Gogaios the eunuch, the custodian of the women."

⁵⁸ [2:4] MT, AT / LXX "woman"

⁵⁹ [2:4] MT, LXX / AT replaced "This suggestion...accordingly" with "And they readily acted accordingly."

⁶⁰ [2:5] MT, Vul / LXX add

⁶¹ [2:5] MT, LXX, AT / Josephus "Babel"

⁶² [2:5] MT / LXX "Kish, out of a tribe of Benjamin" / Vul "Kish, of the stock of Benjamin"

⁶³ [2:6] MT / LXX omit "along with...king of Judah" / AT omit "He had been...deported."

⁶⁴ [2:7] MT / LXX ""

⁶⁵ [2:7] MT / LXX "And this man had a brought-up girl, daughter of Abihai, his father's brother, and her name was Esther." (LXX always translates "Abihai" to "Ameinadab", and OL always translates to "Abiel") / AT "And he was faithfully bringing up Esther, daughter of the brother of his father." / all other versions, except for the Vulgate omit the name "Hadassah"

⁶⁶ [2:7] MT / LXX "little-maiden" / AT "child"

⁶⁷ [2:7] MT, AT / LXX omit "and lovely to behold"

⁶⁸ literally "in"

⁶⁹ [2:7] MT / LXX "her parents"

⁷⁰ [2:7] LXX "he disciplined her for his own woman" / AT omit "On the death of her...own (daughter)."

⁷¹ Josephus would understand her to be his niece

⁷² [2:8] MT / LXX "when the king's order was heard"

⁷³ [2:8] MT / LXX "city"

⁷⁴ [2:8] AT replaces "So it came...Hegai, that" with only "And"

⁷⁵ [2:8] MT, AT / LXX omit "the royal palace under the care of"

⁷⁶ [2:8] MT, LXX / AT "Bougai"

⁷⁷ [2:9] MT, LXX / AT "women, saw the girl, and that she was more pleasing to him than all the women. And Esther won his personal favor and compassion."

young-women for her from the royal¹ palace, he transferred both her and her young-women to the best place in the women's house.²

10 Esther did not reveal her nationality or family, for Mordecai had commanded her not to do so. 11 And during every day, Mordecai would walk about in front of the court of the women's house, to learn how Esther was faring and what was to become of her.

12 One young-woman after³ another young-woman, before going in turn to visit King Xerxes,⁴ was required to complete the twelve months of preparation according to the law of the women⁵ who were 400 in number.⁶ Of this period of beautifying treatment, six months were spent being anointed⁷ with oil of myrrh, and the other six months with perfumes and cosmetics for the women. 13 And, when the young-woman was to visit the king, she was allowed to take with her from the women's house to the royal palace all that she was saying that she was wanting to be given to her. 14 She would go in the evening and return in the morning to the women's second house under the hand of the royal eunuch Shaashgaz,⁸ keeper of the concubines.⁹ She could not come anymore to the king unless the king was pleased with her and¹⁰ she was called by name.

15 As for Esther, daughter of Abihail, uncle of Mordecai (who had adopted her as his own daughter)¹¹ when her turn came to visit the king, she did not ask for anything but what the royal eunuch Hegai,¹² keeper of the women, said. And Esther won the admiration of all who saw her.¹³ 16 And Esther was led to King Xerxes in his palace in the 10th month, Tebeth,¹⁴ in the 7th year of his reign.¹⁵ When evening came, she was led in, and was dismissed in the morning.¹⁶ 17 And the king passionately desired Esther more than all the other women, and of all the unmarried-women she won his favor and benevolence.¹⁷ And he placed the royal diadem on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti.¹⁸ 18 Then the king gave a great drinking-party, the drinking-party of Esther, to all his officials and ministers for seven days,¹⁹ granting a holiday to all the provinces²⁰ and bestowing gifts with royal bounty.²¹

19 From the time unmarried-women had been brought together, and while Mordecai was passing his time at the king's gate,²² 20 Esther had not revealed her family or her nationality,²³ because Mordecai had told her not to; and Esther continued to follow Mordecai's instructions to fear God and to do his commandments, just as she had when she was being brought up by him. And she did not exchange her way of life.²⁴ 25

21 And during the time that Mordecai spent at the king's gate,²⁶ Bigthan and Teresh,²⁷ two of the royal eunuchs who guarded the entrance,²⁸ had plotted in anger to lay hands on King Xerxes. 22 When the plot became known²⁹ to Mordecai, he told Queen³⁰ Esther, who in turn informed the king for Mordecai.³¹ 23 So the matter was investigated and verified, and both of them were hanged on

¹ [2:9] MT / LXX omit "royal"

² [2:9] MT / LXX "he provided well for her and her maids in the women's-place." / AT replaces "So he promptly...house of the women" with "So he promptly took charge of her; and beyond the seven young women, he granted his own attendants to her."

³ literally "and"

⁴ [2:12] MT / LXX "visit the king"

⁵ [2:12] MT / LXX omit "according to the law of the women"

⁶ [2:12] Josephus add

⁷ [2:12] MT / LXX add

⁸ [2:14] MT / LXX "Hegai"

⁹ [2:14] MT / LXX "women"

¹⁰ [2:14] MT / LXX omit "was pleased with her and"

¹¹ [2:15] LXX / MT add

¹² [2:15] MT, Vul / LXX, OL, Eth omit "Hegai"

¹³ [2:10-15] MT, LXX / AT omit "Esther did not reveal...who saw her."

¹⁴ [2:16] MT / LXX, Josephus "in the 12th month, Adar"

¹⁵ [2:16] AT "And when Esther was led in to the king, she was very pleasing to him."

¹⁶ [2:16] MT, LXX / AT add

¹⁷ [2:17] MT / LXX omit "all the other women and of" & "and benevolence" / AT "And as the king considered all the virgins, Esther was shown to be the most splendid. And she found his personal favor and compassion"

¹⁸ [2:17] MT / LXX, AT omit "and made her queen in place of Vashti"

¹⁹ [2:18] MT / LXX "the king gave a banquet to all his friends and great men for seven days, and he celebrated the marriages of Esther" / AT "the king held a splendid wedding feast for Esther" / Josephus "he...banquet to the Persians [some add "and the Medes"] and the chief men of the nations for a whole month in honor of his marriage"

²⁰ [2:18] MT / LXX "granting a holiday to those under his rule" / AT "granting a holiday to all the provinces"

²¹ [2:18] MT / LXX, AT omit "and bestowing gifts with royal bounty"

²² [2:19] MT / LXX "But Mordecai served in the king's court." (omitting "From...together") / Josephus "Then her uncle moved from Babel to Shushan in Persia and dwelt there. Every day he passed his time at the palace, inquiring about the girl and how she fared; for he loved her as his own daughter."

²³ [2:20] MT / LXX omit "or her nationality"

²⁴ [2:10] LXX add "to fear God...commandments" & "And she did not...of life."

²⁵ [2:20] Josephus add an explanation here "Now the king had made a law that no one of his people should approach him whenever he sat on the throne, unless the man was summoned. And around his throne stood men with axes, ready to punish anyone who approached the throne without being summoned. However, the king himself, as he sat, held a golden scepter which he extended to anyone whom he wished to save who approached without being summoned; and whoever touched this was out of danger."

²⁶ [2:21] MT / LXX "And because Mordecai had been promoted"

²⁷ [2:21] MT, LXX(S-corrector), Josephus / most LXX omit "Bigthan and Teresh"

²⁸ [2:21] MT / LXX "who were the king's chief bodyguards"

²⁹ [2:22] Josephus add "but Barnabazos, the servant of one of these eunuchs, who was a Judean by race, discovered their plot and revealed it to Mordecai"

³⁰ [2:22] MT / LXX omit "Queen"

³¹ [2:22] MT / LXX "who in turn informed the king the details of the plot"

a gibbet.³² And this was written in the annals for the king's use in commendation of Mordecai's loyalty.³³

CHAPTER 3

After these events, it came to pass that³⁴ King Xerxes promoted Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite,³⁵ to high rank, seating him above all his fellow officials.³⁶ 2 All the king's servants who were at the royal gate³⁷ would kneel and bow down to Haman,³⁸ for that is what the king had ordered in his regard. Mordecai, however, would not kneel and bow down to him. And the king's servants saw that Mordecai was not bowing down before Haman.³⁹

3 Then the king's servants who were at the royal gate⁴⁰ said to Mordecai, "Mordecai,⁴¹ Why do you disobey the king's order and refuse to bow down before Haman?"⁴²

4 When they had reminded him⁴³ day after day and he would not listen to them, they informed Haman, to see whether Mordecai's explanation was acceptable,⁴⁴ since he had told them that he was a Judean.⁴⁵ 5 When Haman observed that Mordecai would not kneel and bow down to him, he was provoked to jealousy and⁴⁶ he was filled with anger. Since Haman was provoked, and all his rage was stirred up, he turned red, driving him from his sight.⁴⁷ 6 Moreover, he thought it was not enough to lay hands on Mordecai alone. Since they had told Haman of Mordecai's nationality,⁴⁸ he sought to destroy all the Judeans, Mordecai's people, throughout the realm of King Xerxes.⁴⁹

7 In the 1st month, Nisan, in the 12th year of King Xerxes, the pur (that is, the lot), was cast in Haman's presence to determine the day and the month for the destruction of Mordecai's people on a single day,⁵⁰ and⁵¹ the lot fell on the 13th day⁵² of the 12th month,⁵³ Adar.

8 And with a malicious heart Haman⁵⁴ kept speaking evil to the king about Israel, and⁵⁵ said to King Xerxes, "Dispersed among the nations throughout the provinces of your kingdom, there is a certain people living apart,⁵⁶ a people of war and insubordinate,⁵⁷ with laws differing from those of every other people. They do not obey the laws of the king, though they are known among all nations because they are evil, and so it is not proper for the king to tolerate them.⁵⁸ 9 If it please the king and this judgment is good in his heart,⁵⁹ let a decree be issued to destroy them,⁶⁰ and I will deliver to the procurators⁶¹ 10,000⁶² silver talents for deposit in the royal treasury in order that the kingdom might be rid of this blow and have peace."⁶³

10 And the king removed the signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman,⁶⁴ son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Judeans.⁶⁵ 11 "Keep the silver," the king said to Haman,⁶⁶ "but as for this people, do with them whatever you please."⁶⁷

³² [2:23] MT / LXX "So the king interrogated the two eunuchs and hanged them."

³³ [2:19-23] MT / LXX "And the king ordered an entry to be made as a memorial in the royal archive in commendation of Mordecai's loyalty." AT omit verses 19-23

³⁴ [3:1] MT / LXX, AT add

³⁵ [3:1] MT / LXX, AT "the Bugaeon" / Luc "the Makedonian" / Josephus (supported by Targum) "who was a descent of Amalek"

³⁶ [3:1] MT / LXX, AT "all his friends"

³⁷ [3:2] MT / LXX "All those in the court" / Luc "All" / Josephus "The foreigners and Persians"

³⁸ [3:2] MT, LXX(similar) / AT "would bend over and bow down on the ground before him." / Josephus "bow down before him"

³⁹ [3:2] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴⁰ [3:3] MT / LXX "Then those in the king's palace" / AT "Then the king's servants"

⁴¹ [3:3] MT, AT / LXX add

⁴² [3:3] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴³ [3:4] MT(qere) / other MT "While they were reminding him"

⁴⁴ [3:4] MT / LXX "informed Haman that Mordecai had resisted the commands of the king"

⁴⁵ [3:4] AT replaces "When they had...Judean" with "So he told them that he was a Judean. And they informed Haman about him."

⁴⁶ [3:4] MT, LXX(similar) / AT "When Haman heard, he was provoked to jealousy, and"

⁴⁷ [3:6] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴⁸ [3:6] MT / LXX, AT omit "Moreover...nationality"

⁴⁹ [3:6] MT / LXX "he planned to destroy all the Judeans under the ruler of Xerxes" / AT "he sought to destroy Mordecai and all his people on a single day."

⁵⁰ [3:7] MT / LXX add / Vul add instead "the nation of the Judeans should be destroyed"

⁵¹ [3:7] LXX / MT, Vul "until"

⁵² [3:7] AT / LXX "14th"

⁵³ [3:7] Vul / LXX omit "12th" / MT omit "and the lot fell on the 13th day of the 12th month" by scribal error / AT omit "in the 1st month...Adar."

⁵⁴ [3:8] MT / LXX, AT "he"

⁵⁵ [3:8] MT, LXX / AT add

⁵⁶ [3:8] MT / LXX, AT(?) omit "living apart"

⁵⁷ [3:8] MT, LXX / AT add

⁵⁸ [3:8] MT, LXX / AT "differing from your laws, O King. They do not pay heed though they are known among all nations, because they are evil, and they set aside your commands to undermine your glory."

⁵⁹ [3:9] MT, LXX / AT add

⁶⁰ [3:9] MT, LXX / AT "let his nation be given to me for destruction"

⁶¹ [3:9] MT / LXX, AT omit "to the procurators"

⁶² [3:9] Josephus "40,000"

⁶³ [3:9] Josephus add

⁶⁴ [3:10] MT, AT / LXX "And the king removed his signet ring and put it into the hands of Haman"

⁶⁵ [3:10] MT / LXX "Haman to seal what had been written against the Judeans." / AT omit "son of...Judeans"

⁶⁶ [3:11] MT, LXX / AT "to him"

⁶⁷ [3:11] MT (lit. "the people also, to do with them whatever you please") / LXX, AT "but treat the nation as you please."

12 So the royal scribes were summoned; and, on the 13th day of the 1st month, they wrote, at the dictation of Haman, an order to the royal satraps, the governors of every province, and the officials of every people, to each province in its own script and to each people in its own language. It was written in the name of King Xerxes and sealed with the royal signet ring.² 13 And letters were sent by couriers to all the royal provinces,³ that all the Judeans, from young even to elderly, children and women, should be killed, destroyed, wiped out⁴ in one day, the 13th day⁵ of the 12th month, Adar, and that their goods should be seized as spoil.

14⁶ {{But this-here is the written-copy of the letter:⁷

Great King Xerxes⁸ writes these-here *things* to the chiefs and district-chiefs⁹ of the 127 provinces¹⁰ from ⁹Hodu as-far-as¹¹ °Chush, and to *any* district-chiefs *who* have been subjected to them:¹²

15 After I became-prefect of many nations and after I held-might-over all *the* inhabited *earth*, I was made-willing (*while* not lifting myself up with the boldness of the authority, but also gently leading *things* forth-to-completion perpetually with mildness) to appoint¹³ for the *persons who* have been subjected to me, lifestyles *which* are surges through every *situation*, *which* will afford for myself both: my¹⁴ kingdom to be tame¹⁵ and traversable as-far-as¹⁶ its limits, as-well-as to rejuvenate for myself the peace *which* is being yearned-for by all the humans.

16 But after I enquired of my counselors *as to* how this would be accomplished,¹⁷ Haman (*who* makes-a-difference¹⁸ in our presence with *his* sound-mindedness, and *who* has been shown-off in his¹⁹ goodwill without-altering and firm faithfulness, and *who* has gained²⁰ for himself *the* second prerogative of the kingdom), 17 exhibited to us that, having been mingled-up in all the tribes throughout the inhabited *earth*, *there* is a certain people full-of-ill-will, *which*, on the one hand, by-means-of its²¹ laws, is opposed against²² every nation as-well-as on the other, continuously disregarding²³ the orders of the kings with-the-result²⁴ for the collective-government *which* has been blamelessly guided by us to not be being set-down.²⁵

18 Therefore, we, having taken-hold-of this-here most-singular nation (*which*, being set into a *state* of leading *itself* against every human throughout every *situation*, by transposing²⁶ a course²⁷ of laws *which* is-estranged and by having ill-will toward our affairs,²⁸ *thereby* completely-finishing the worst evil-*things* and the *act* not to be obtaining stability²⁹ for the kingdom),³⁰ 19 have, therefore, ordered for one and all of all the *individuals who* have been signified to you* in the *things* having been written by Haman (the *one who* has been assigned over the *state* affairs and *is* a second father to us), along with *their* women and children, to lose *their lives* root-and-all by the sabers of *their* enemies, without any pity or sparing,³¹ on the 13th day³² of the 12th month, that is the month of Adar which is Dystros, of the current year;³³ in order to eliminate all the Judeans and to take their children as

plunder, 20 so-that after these *people* (*who* have long-ago and *are* now full-of-ill-will), in one day, forcibly³⁴ come-down together into the Netherworld, they might, through *this* end, be affording a stable³⁵ and undisturbed *condition* to our affairs into the future time.³⁶

But whoever will hide the Judean race will be without a place to live, not only among humans but also among birds, and he will be consumed by holy fire, and his possessions will revert to the State. Farewell!}}³⁷

21(14) Now³⁸ A written-copy of the writing to be given *as* a law in every province and province was published to all the peoples, that they might be prepared for that day.³⁹ 22(15) Now⁴⁰ The couriers set out, hastened by the king's word, and the decree was given in the stronghold of Shushan.⁴¹ And the king and Haman sat down to drink,⁴² but the city of Shushan⁴³ was thrown into confusion.⁴⁴

CHAPTER 4A

When Mordecai learned all that was happening, he tore his garments, put on a sack and ash, and he walked through the square of the city crying out loudly and bitterly.⁴⁵ "An innocent people is condemned to death!"⁴⁶ 2 And he even came as far as the royal gate and stood *there*,⁴⁷ for no one clothed in a sack and ash⁴⁸ was allowed to enter the royal gate.⁴⁹ 3 Likewise in each of the provinces, wherever the king's legal enactment reached,⁵⁰ the Judeans went into deep mourning, with fasting, weeping, and lament;⁵¹ they all slept on a sack and ash.

4 And Esther's⁵² young-women and eunuchs came and told her. Overwhelmed with anguish upon hearing what had happened,⁵³ she sent garments for Mordecai to put on, so that he might take off his sack; but he refused.⁵⁴ 5 Esther then summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs whom he had placed at her service,⁵⁵ and commanded him to find out what Mordecai's action meant and the reason for it.⁵⁶ 6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the public square in front of the royal gate.⁵⁷ 7 And Mordecai told him everything that had happened, as well as the exact amount of silver⁵⁸ Haman had promised to pay to the royal⁵⁹ treasury which had been promulgated in Shushan for their destruction, to show and explain to Esther. He was to instruct her to go to the king; she was to plead and intercede with him in behalf of her people.⁶¹

9 "Remember the days of your lowly estate," Mordecai had him say, "when you were supported by my hand; because Haman, who is second in command has spoken to the king, and has sentenced us to death. Therefore, Call upon the Lord,⁶² and speak to the king about us. Save us from death."

So Hathach returned to Esther and told her everything⁶³ Mordecai had said.⁶⁴

³⁴ [3:20] AT omit "forcibly"

³⁵ literally "good-standing"

³⁶ [3:20] lit. "future" is literally "afterward" / AT "at last be stable and never again furnish us with affairs for concern."

³⁷ [3:20] LXX, AT / OL add

³⁸ [3:21] MT / LXX add

³⁹ [3:21] MT / LXX "Written-copies of the letters were being published throughout a country, and it was ordered for all the nations to be ready for that day." [see below for AT]

⁴⁰ [3:22] MT / LXX add

⁴¹ [3:22] MT / LXX "The matter proceeded quickly even to Shushan." [see below for AT]

⁴² [3:22] MT / LXX "Haman were quaffing" / Joe "Haman were at sumptuous-entertainments and drinking-parties"

⁴³ [3:22] MT / LXX omit "of Shushan" [see below for AT]

⁴⁴ [3:21-22] This entire paragraph in the AT is condensed to "And in Shushan this decree was posted."

⁴⁵ [4A:1] MT, LXX (adding "the square of"), supported by Josephus (omit "and bitterly") / AT "Now Mordecai learned all that was happening, and the city of Shushan was in turmoil because of what had taken place. For throughout the whole city, there was great and bitter sorrow for all the Judeans. Now Mordecai went to his home, folded up his clothes, and put on sackcloth. After he had sprinkled ashes on himself..."

⁴⁶ [4A:1] MT, AT / LXX, Josephus add

⁴⁷ [4A:2] MT / LXX "And he came to the royal gate and stood there" / AT "he went out as far as the outer courtyard and stood there"

⁴⁸ [4A:2] MT, AT / LXX add

⁴⁹ [4A:2] MT / LXX "the courtyard" / AT "the royal precincts"

⁵⁰ [4A:3] MT / LXX "provinces, where the letters were posted"

⁵¹ [4A:3] MT / LXX omit "with fasting, weeping, and lament" / AT omit "Likewise in each....sackcloth and ashes."

⁵² [4A:3] MT, (supported by AT) / LXX "So the queen's"

⁵³ [4A:4] MT / LXX add

⁵⁴ [4A:4] MT, LXX similar (see above for variants) / AT "So he called a eunuch and sent him to Esther. And the queen said, 'Take off his sackcloth and bring him in.' But he did not want to."

⁵⁵ [4A:4] MT / LXX "Hathach, her eunuch who was placed at her service" / Josephus "Hathach, who happened to be nearby"

⁵⁶ [4A:5] MT / LXX "and sent him so she might learn the truth from Mordecai."

⁵⁷ [4A:5-6] MT / LXX omit "So Hathach went out...royal gate" / AT omit "Esther then summoned...royal gate"

⁵⁸ [4A:7] MT / LXX, OL "as well as the 10,000 talents"

⁵⁹ [4A:7] MT / LXX omit "royal"

⁶⁰ [4A:7] MT / LXX omit "of the written decree"

⁶¹ [4A:7] MT, LXX (similar) / AT replaces "and Mordecai told him...her people" with "Instead he said, 'Thus you will say to her, 'Do not turn away from going to the king and flattering his person for the sake of me and my people.'"

⁶² [4A:8] LXX / AT "upon God"

⁶³ [4A:9] LXX, Vul / MT omit "everything" / AT "So he made known to her the tribulation of Israel"

⁶⁴ [4A:9] MT / LXX "So Hathach returned and told her everything" / AT "So he made known to her the tribulation of Israel"

¹ [3:11] MT / LXX "province from Hodu to Chush, to 127 provinces, and to the rulers of the nations in their own language in"

² [3:12] MT, LXX(similar, see above for variants) / AT replaces "So the royal scribes...signet ring" with "Write to all the lands, and seal it with the king's signet ring. For there is none who will reject the seal." So Haman went to his gods to learn the day of their death and cast lots for the 13th day of month of Adar Nisan to murder all the Judeans, from male to female, and to take their young children as plunder."

³ [3:13] MT / LXX "Letters...couriers throughout Xerxes' kingdom" / AT "And he hurried and delivered it into the hands of swift horsemen." [AT omit "that all...seized as spoil."]

⁴ [3:13] MT / LXX "that the race of Judeans should be effaced"

⁵ [3:13] MT / LXX omit "the 13th day"

⁶ Verses 14-20 are extant in a Greek translation of a Hebrew original

⁷ [3:14] AT "And he subjoined the following letter"

⁸ [3:13] emendation based elsewhere on LXX's mistranslation / manuscript "Artxerxes"

⁹ [3:14] LXX, Josephus / AT add

¹⁰ [3:14] likely Hebrew original (see Esther1B:1) / LXX "countries"

¹¹ literally "till"

¹² [3:14] AT omit "and the district-chiefs who have been subjected to them"

¹³ literally "stand-down"

¹⁴ literally "the"

¹⁵ [3:15] many "quiet"

¹⁶ literally "until"

¹⁷ literally "led onto its limit"

¹⁸ [3:16] AT "who has made-a-difference"

¹⁹ literally "the"

²⁰ literally "brought-away"

²¹ literally "the"

²² literally "toward"

²³ literally "sending-by"

²⁴ literally "into"

²⁵ [3:17] AT "for the kingdom to never attain stability"

²⁶ literally "alternating"

²⁷ literally "spending"

²⁸ [3:18] AT "commands"

²⁹ literally "good-standing"

³⁰ [3:19] AT "and that we may never be established in the sole-rule directed by us"

³¹ literally "without all pity and sparing"

³² [3:19] Emendation / LXX, AT, Josephus "14th day"

³³ [3:19] lit. "of the year standing-in place" / AT omit

10 Then Esther replied to Hathach and gave him this message for Mordecai,¹ 11 “All the servants of the king and the people of his provinces know that every man and woman who² goes to the king in the inner court³ without being summoned, suffers the automatic penalty of death,⁴ unless the king extends to him the golden scepter, thus sparing his life.⁵ Now as for me, I have not been summoned to the king⁶ for thirty days. And how can I go without being summoned?”⁷

12 All of⁸ Esther’s words were reported by Hathach⁹ to Mordecai. 13 Then Mordecai had this reply brought to Esther,¹⁰ “Do not think in your soul¹¹ that because you are in the king’s palace, that you alone of all the Judeans will escape.¹² 14 Even if you remain silent at a time like this, relief and deliverance will come to the Judeans from another source,¹³ but you and your father’s house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have obtained the royal dignity¹⁴ for such a time as this?”¹⁵

15 Then Esther sent this response back to Mordecai,¹⁵ 16 “Go and assemble all the Judeans who are in Shushan,¹⁶ fast on my behalf, all of you, not eating or drinking, night or day, for three days.¹⁷ And I, along with my young-women will also fast in the same way. Prepared in this manner,¹⁸ I will go to the king, contrary to the law.¹⁹ If I perish, I perish!”²⁰

17 And Mordecai went away and did exactly as Esther had commanded.²¹

CHAPTER 4B²²

And remembering all the works of the Lord,²³ he beseeched the Lord, and he spoke, 2 “O Lord Lord, King who is having-might-over all-things, because all the world is in your authority,²⁴ and the man who is being-of-a-contra-ry-opinion is not able to go against you when you are wanting²⁵ to save the house of²⁶ Israel 3 Because you made the heavens²⁷ and the earth and everything being marveled-at in the region under the heavens. 4 And you are the Lord²⁸ of all-things, and there is not one who will array themselves against you, the Lord.²⁹ 5 You know all-things and the people of Israel.³⁰ You have come-to-know, O Lord, that, not in outrage, not-even in arrogance,³¹ not-even in fondness-of-glory, did I do this: the act not to be bowing-down-to the arrogant³² Haman. 6 Because I was thinking-it-well to be kissing³³ the soles of his feet for³⁴ the salvation³⁵ of Israel. 7 Instead, I did these things, in order that I might not put any glory of a human up-above any glory of a god.³⁶ And I will not bow-down to no-one except you, my Lord. And I will not do these things in arrogance.³⁷

8 “And now, Lord, the God, the King, the God of³⁸ Abraham, spare your people, because our enemies are looking-onto us in-regards-to our destruction,³⁹ and they desired to cause-to-be-lost and they are abolishing⁴⁰ the inheritance

which was yours since the beginning.⁴¹ 9 May you not overlook your portion, which you redeemed for yourself⁴² out of the land⁴³ of Egypt. 10 Favorably-hear my⁴⁴ beseeching, and be-propitious to your lot,⁴⁵ and turn our mourning into joy,⁴⁶ in order that, while we are living, we might be hymning your name, O Lord.⁴⁷ And may you not cause-to-disappear any mouth of those who are praising⁴⁸ you.”

11 And all Israel shouted-out from out of all their strength,⁴⁹ because their death was in their eyes.⁵⁰

12 And Esther the queen fled-for-refuge⁵¹ onto the Lord, having been overtaken⁵² in her agony⁵³ of death. 13 And after she picked the robes⁵⁴ of her glory off of herself and every sign of her magnificence, she dressed herself with robes of⁵⁵ distress⁵⁶ and mourning. And in-place of the arrogant sweeteners, she filled-up her head full of ash and excrements. And she humbled her body exceedingly. And she filled-up every spot⁵⁷ of any ornamentation of leaping-for-joy of hers full of her tangled hairs.⁵⁸

14 And she was beseeching the Lord God of Israel,⁵⁹ and she said, “My Lord, you alone are our king.⁶⁰ Help me, the one who is alone⁶¹ and not having any helper except for you, 15 because this danger of mine is in my own hand.⁶² 16 From my birth,⁶³ I was hearing in the tribe⁶⁴ of my father,⁶⁵ that you, O Lord, got⁶⁶ Israel from out of all the nations, and our fathers out of all their ancestors, appointing Israel over them⁶⁷ into a perpetual inheritance, and that you did as-much-as you uttered to them; you provided them with as-much-as they asked for.⁶⁸

17 “And now,⁶⁹ we sinned before your face, and you delivered us into the hands of our enemies, 18 in-requit-for⁷⁰ which we glorified their gods. You are righteous, O Lord! 19 And now, they were not sufficed with our bitterness of slavery.⁷¹ Instead, they placed their hands on the hands of their idols⁷² 20 in order to lift-out the ordination of your mouth,⁷³ and⁷⁴ to make-disappear an inheritance of yours, and to block-up the mouths of those who are praising you, and to extinguish the glory of a house of yours and of a sacrificial-altar of yours, 21 and to open-up the mouths of nations⁷⁵ into speaking about some vain excellence, and to be made-to-marvel-at a king of-flesh into an age. 22 O Lord, may you not deliver a scepter of yours to the ones who are fought.⁷⁶ And do not let them ridicule⁷⁷ us in our falling, instead⁷⁸ turn their own counsel against them. But make-a-public-show-of the man who began this evil⁷⁹ against us.

23 “Be caused-to-remember us,⁸⁰ O Lord. Be made-known to us⁸¹ in this season of this tribulation of ours. And encourage me,⁸² O King of the gods and who is being mighty-over every principality.⁸³ 24 Before-the-face of the lion,⁸⁴ give a well-rhythmed account into my mouth, and give favor to my account;⁸⁵ and transfer⁸⁶ his heart into hatred for¹ the one who is warring against us, resulting-

¹ [4A:10] MT / LXX “And Esther replied to Hathach, “Go to Mordecai, and say” / AT “And she sent to him saying as follows”

² [4A:11] MT / LXX “All the nations of the empire know that any man or woman who” / AT “You know as well as anyone, that whoever”

³ [4A:11] MT, LXX / AT omit “in the inner court”

⁴ [4A:11] MT / LXX “, there is no deliverance for him.” / AT “, will be subject to death.”

⁵ [4A:11] MT, LXX / AT omit “thus sparing his life”

⁶ [4A:11] MT, LXX / AT “to him”

⁷ [4A:11] MT, LXX / AT, OL, Vul add

⁸ [4A:9] LXX, Vul / MT omit “All of”

⁹ [4A:13] MT / LXX, Vul add / AT omit “All of Esther’s...to Mordecai”

¹⁰ [4A:13] MT / LXX “Then Mordecai said to Hathach, ‘Go, and say to her, “Esther”’ / AT “Then Mordecai sent to her, and said to her”

¹¹ [4A:13] MT / LXX “May you not speak to yourself”

¹² [4A:13] MT / LXX “Do not imagine that you alone of all the Judeans in the kingdom will escape.” / AT omit altogether

¹³ [4A:14] AT “If you ignore your nation and do not help them, God will be their help and salvation”

¹⁴ [4A:14] MT / LXX, AT “have been made queen”

¹⁵ [4A:15] MT / LXX “Then Esther sent the messenger that came to her back to Mordecai, saying” / AT “Then the queen set, saying”

¹⁶ [4A:16] Josephus “Go to Shushan, and assemble all the Judeans who are there.”

¹⁷ [4A:16] MT, LXX / AT “, “Propose a service and earnestly beg God.”

¹⁸ [4A:16] MT / LXX (incorrectly) “Then prepared”

¹⁹ [4A:16] MT, LXX / AT “the king uninvited”

²⁰ [4A:16] MT / LXX “even if I must perish.” / AT “even if it is necessary that I perish.”

²¹ [4A:16] MT, LXX / AT “And Mordecai did so.”

²² This chapter is extant in a Greek translation of a Hebrew original

²³ [4B:1] LXX / AT “Remembering what he [the Lord] had done”

²⁴ [4B:2] LXX (lit...in authority of yours) / AT “Master of all-things, by whose power all-things exist”

²⁵ literally “you in the act for you to be wanting”

²⁶ [4B:2] LXX / AT add

²⁷ emendation from conjectural original Hebrew / Gk “heaven”

²⁸ [4B:4] LXX / AT “Master”

²⁹ [4B:1-4] OL “Mordecai tore his clothes and spread out sackcloth and fell on his face to the earth, and so did the elders of the people, from morning until evening. And they said, “Blessed are you, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob!” / AT omit “and there is not one who will array themselves against you, the Lord.”

³⁰ [4B:2] LXX / AT add

³¹ [4B:5] LXX / AT omit “or arrogance”

³² [4B:5] LXX / AT “uncircumcised”

³³ may also be translated “having-fondness-for”

³⁴ literally “of feet of his toward”

³⁵ [4B:6] LXX / AT “sake”

³⁶ [4B:7] LXX / AT “honor of anyone above your glory, Master”

³⁷ [4B:7] LXX / AT “except you, the True One. And I will not do it even under duress.”

³⁸ [4B:8] LXX / many LXX “Lord, O King of” / AT, Vul “Lord, who made a covenant with”

³⁹ [4B:8] LXX / AT “enemies advanced to ruin us”

⁴⁰ [4B:8] LXX / AT add

⁴¹ literally “the inheritance of ours out of the beginning”

⁴² [4B:9] LXX / AT omit “for yourself”

⁴³ literally “earth”

⁴⁴ [4B:10] LXX / AT “our”

⁴⁵ [4B:10] LXX / AT “inheritance”

⁴⁶ [4B:10] AT / LXX “sumptuous-entertainment”

⁴⁷ [4B:10] LXX / AT “hymning you”

⁴⁸ [4B:10] LXX / AT “are singing praise”

⁴⁹ literally “of strength of theirs”

⁵⁰ literally “because death of them was in eyes of them” / AT omit “And all Israel...eyes.”

⁵¹ literally “fled-down-under”

⁵² literally “taken-down”

⁵³ literally means “contest”

⁵⁴ [4B:13] Origen “ornamentation”

⁵⁵ [4B:13] LXX / AT omit “robes of”

⁵⁶ literally “constriction”

⁵⁷ literally “place”

⁵⁸ [4B:13] LXX (lit. “full of turned hairs of her”) / AT “and she dressed her lovely hair with humility”

⁵⁹ [4B:14] LXX / AT omit “God of Israel” / OL omit “And she was...Israel”

⁶⁰ [4B:14] LXX / AT “said, “Lord, King, you alone are my helper” / OL “said, “The God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.”

⁶¹ [4B:14] LXX / AT “insignificant”

⁶² literally “in a hand of me”

⁶³ literally “Out of a birth of mine”

⁶⁴ [4B:15] LXX / AT “book”

⁶⁵ literally “in a tribe of a father of me”

⁶⁶ [4B:16] LXX / AT “redeemed”

⁶⁷ [4B:16] LXX / AT add

⁶⁸ [4B:16] LXX / AT “fulfilled what you uttered to them; you...for.”

⁶⁹ [4B:17] LXX / AT omit “And now”

⁷⁰ [4B:18] LXX / AT “if”

⁷¹ literally “made-adequate in bitterness of slavery of us”

⁷² [4B:19] LXX, AT / Vul “but they attribute the strength of their own hands to the power of their idols”

⁷³ literally “of a mouth of you”

⁷⁴ [4B:20] LXX / AT omit “and”

⁷⁵ [4B:21] LXX / AT “enemies”

⁷⁶ [4B:22] LXX / AT “to the enemies hating you”

⁷⁷ [4B:22] LXX / AT “delight”

⁷⁸ [4B:22] LXX / AT omit “instead”

⁷⁹ [4B:23] LXX / AT add

⁸⁰ [4B:23] LXX / AT “Appear to us”

⁸¹ [4B:23] LXX / AT add

⁸² [4B:23] LXX / AT “and do not crush us.”

⁸³ [4B:17-23] LXX / AT omit “O King of the gods...principality” / Josephus, OL omit “And now we sinned...principality.”

⁸⁴ [4B:24] LXX / AT “king”

⁸⁵ [4B:24] LXX / AT add “and give favor to my account” / OL add “and make me most attractive before him”

⁸⁶ [4B:24] LXX / AT “change”

in² *the* complete-finish of him and of the *ones who are* being-of-one-mind with him. **25** But rescue us in your mighty hand,³ and help me, the *one who is* alone and not having *anyone* except for you, *O Lord*.⁴

“You have knowledge of all-things. **26** And you have come-to-know, that I hate *the* glory of lawless *men*, and abhor *the* bed of uncircumcised *men* or of any foreigner. **27** You recognize, *O Lord*,⁵ that I am under constraint, that I⁶ am abhorring the sign of my arrogance which is on my head in *any* days of *any* extravagant-appearance of mine. I am abhorring it as a rag of menstruation, and I am not bearing it in *any* days of tranquility of mine.⁷ **28** And your slave-woman, did not eat at a table of Haman,⁸ and I did not glorify *any* drinking of *any* king, nor-even did I drink wine of libations. **29** And from *the* day in which I was thrown-into-a-different-position of *life*⁹ until now,¹⁰ your slave-woman was not gladdened except on-the-basis-of you, *O Lord*, the god of Abraham.¹¹ **30** The god, the *one who* is being-strong against all-*persons*,¹² listen-to *the* voice of *those* having become-hopeless. And rescue us out of *the* hand of the *ones who are* acting-wickedly. And rescue me, *O Lord*, out of the grip of my fear.”¹³

CHAPTER 5

And on the third day, when she had ceased praying, Esther¹⁴ undressed of her serving robes and washed her body with water and applied cosmetics,¹⁵ and clothed herself with her glory.¹⁶ **2** And having become splendidly *arrayed*, after calling on the all-seeing¹⁷ God and savior, she took the two maids alongside *her* **3** and, indeed on the one she leaned gently for support, **4** while the other followed her, bearing her train. **5** And she was flushed with *the* prime of her beauty, and her countenance was as cheerful as it¹⁸ was lovely, but her heart was constrained with the fear¹⁹ of the Lord, in the terror of death, because death was before her eyes.²⁰

6 And she passed through all²¹ the doors till she stood in the inner courtyard, looking toward the royal house,²² while the king²³ was seated on the throne of his kingdom in the audience chamber, facing the palace doorway.²⁴ And he was clothed in full robes of splendor, and covered with gold and very-expensive stones, so that he made her extremely fearful.²⁵ He saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard.²⁶ **7** And after he lifted his face, he, having been set-afire like a bull²⁷ with glory, in the summit of fury, looked at *her*. And he considered killing her. But he was uncertain. And calling out, he said, “Who dares to enter unsummoned into the court?”²⁸ And the queen fell,²⁹ and she changed³⁰ her complexion in *her* faintness,³¹ and she stooped-down upon the head of the maid who³² was going-before *her*.

8 And God of the Judeans and the Lord of all creatures³³ changed³⁴ the spirit of the king and changed his anger³⁵ into meekness, and she obtained favor in his sight.³⁶ And after he agonized, he jumped-up from his throne, and took her up upon his arms until she stood-firmly.³⁷ And he was exhorting her with peaceful words, and spoke to her,³⁸ **9** “What is it, Esther? **I** am your brother. Be being-encouraged! **10** You may never die, because our ordinance³⁹ is common to

everyone. **11** Come to *me*! The threat is not against you.⁴⁰ Look, the scepter is in your hand.”⁴¹

12 And the king extended toward her the golden scepter which was in his hand. And Esther drew close, and touched the top of the scepter.⁴² And he embraced her and spoke, “Speak to me.”

13 And she said to him, “My lord,⁴³ I saw you as a messenger of a god, and my heart was troubled from fear of your glory.⁴⁴ **14** Because you are marvelous, my lord, and your countenance is full of favor.”⁴⁵

15 But as she was discussing this, she fainted and fell.⁴⁶ **16** And the king became troubled, and all his servants tried to comfort her.

17 And the king said to her, “What is it, Queen⁴⁷ Esther? And what is your request? Even if it is half of the kingdom, it shall be granted to you.”⁴⁸

18 And Esther said, “Today is my special day. Therefore,⁴⁹ if it pleases the king, let the king and your friend⁵⁰ Haman come today⁵¹ to a drinking-party⁵² which I have prepared for him.”

19 And the king said, “Have Haman make haste, that he⁵³ may fulfill the wish of Esther.” So the king and Haman went to the drinking-party⁵⁴ which Esther had prepared,⁵⁵ a sumptuous meal.⁵⁶

20 And during *the* drinking-party of the wine,⁵⁷ the king said to Esther, “Queen Esther,⁵⁸ What is your petition? For it shall be granted. And what is your request? It shall be honored, even if it is half of the kingdom.”⁵⁹

21 And Esther⁶⁰ said, “This is my petition and request: if I have found favor in the sight of the king⁶¹ and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request,⁶² let the king and Haman come tomorrow to a drinking-party which I shall prepare for them; and tomorrow⁶³ I will do as the king has asked.”⁶⁴

And the king said, “Do as you want.”⁶⁵

22 And that day, Haman went out from the king, very⁶⁶ happy and with a merry heart. But when Haman saw Mordecai the Judean⁶⁷ at the royal gate,⁶⁸ and that he did not rise, nor trembled in his presence, he was infuriated with Mordecai. **23** And Haman restrained himself, and⁶⁹ he went into his own house; and he called and brought⁷⁰ his friends⁷¹ and his woman Zeresh. **24** And Haman⁷² recounted to them the glory of his riches, and the large number of his sons, and everything with which the king had promoted him⁷³ and how *the king* had placed him above the officials and royal servants.⁷⁴

25 And Haman said, “Yes, Queen Esther⁷⁵ invited no one to the drinking-party she has prepared⁷⁶ with the king, except for me;⁷⁷ and I have been invited by her again tomorrow, together with the king.⁷⁸ **26** But none of this satisfies me as long as I continue to see⁷⁹ Mordecai the Judean sitting at the king’s gate. And he does not bow down to me.”⁸⁰

⁴⁰ [5:2] LXX, OL, Vul, Joe / AT add

⁴¹ [5:2] LXX / Vul “Touch the scepter.” / AT, OL, Joe “See, the scepter is in your hand.”

⁴² [5:2] MT / LXX, AT “scepter and placed it on her neck.”

⁴³ [5:2] LXX / AT omit “My lord”

⁴⁴ [5:2] LXX / AT “my heart melted from the majesty of your rage.”

⁴⁵ [5:2] LXX / AT omit “Because you are marvelous...favor.”

⁴⁶ [5:2] LXX / AT “And upon her face was a measure of sweat.”

⁴⁷ [5:3] MT / LXX, AT omit “Queen” / LXX, AT also omit “to her”

⁴⁸ [5:3] MT, LXX / AT “Esther? Tell me, and I will do it for you, up to half the kingdom.”

⁴⁹ [5:3] MT / LXX add / AT also add, but has “Today” instead of “Tomorrow”

⁵⁰ [5:4] MT, LXX / AT, OL add

⁵¹ [5:3] MT, LXX / AT “tomorrow”

⁵² [5:4] MT / LXX “reception”

⁵³ [5:5] MT / LXX, AT “we”

⁵⁴ [5:5] MT / LXX “reception”

⁵⁵ [5:5] MT, AT / LXX “had spoken about”

⁵⁶ [5:5] MT, LXX / AT add

⁵⁷ [5:6] MT / LXX omit “of the wine” / AT omit “During *the* drinking-party of the wine”

⁵⁸ [5:6] MT / LXX add “Queen Esther” / AT add “Queen”

⁵⁹ [5:6] MT, AT, Josephus / LXX omit “And what is your request...even if it be half the kingdom”

⁶⁰ [5:7] MT, AT / LXX “she”

⁶¹ [5:8] MT, LXX / AT “favor before you, O King”

⁶² [5:8] MT, AT / LXX omit “and if it pleases...my request”

⁶³ [5:8] LXX / MT omit “tomorrow” by scribal error

⁶⁴ [5:8] MT / LXX “I will do these same things” / AT “I will do likewise”

⁶⁵ [5:8] MT, LXX / AT add

⁶⁶ [5:9] MT / LXX add

⁶⁷ [5:9] MT / LXX add

⁶⁸ [5:9] MT / LXX “the courtyard” and omit “did not rise...no fear of him” / AT replaces “But when Haman...against Mordecai” with “And it was likewise reported to Haman, and he marveled. And the king departed and retired.”

⁶⁹ [5:10] MT / LXX, AT omit “restrained himself and”

⁷⁰ [5:10] MT / LXX “and he called” / AT “and he gathered together”

⁷¹ [5:10] MT, LXX / AT “sons”

⁷² [5:11] MT / LXX “he”

⁷³ [5:11] MT / LXX “riches that the king had bestowed on him”

⁷⁴ [5:11] MT / LXX “had made him to take precedence and be leader of the kingdom.” / AT omit “And to them...royal servants.”

⁷⁵ [5:12] MT / LXX (supported by AT) “the queen”

⁷⁶ [5:12] MT / LXX (supported by AT) omit “she has prepared”

⁷⁷ [5:12] AT “... And he boasted saying, “The queen invited no one on her special day, except for the king and me alone.”

⁷⁸ [5:12] MT / LXX, AT omit “together with the king”

⁷⁹ [5:13] MT, LXX / AT “Yet this alone distresses me: whenever I see”

⁸⁰ [5:13] MT / LXX “Judean in the court.” / AT “Judean in the royal court.”

⁸¹ [5:13] MT, LXX / AT add

¹ literally “of”

² literally “into”

³ [4B:25] LXX (lit. “in a hand of you”) / AT “in a mighty hand of you”

⁴ [4B:25] LXX / AT omit “the one who is alone...Lord.” And has only “because”

⁵ [4B:27] LXX / AT add

⁶ [4B:27-27] LXX(A) omit “abhor the bed...that I” by scribal error

⁷ [4B:27] OL omit “of any extravagant...tranquility of mine.” / AT add “and I do not bear it except” before

“in days” & omit “and I am not bearing it in any days of tranquility of mine”

⁸ [4B:28] LXX / AT “at their tables”

⁹ literally “day of a throw-into-a-different-position of me”

¹⁰ [4B:29] LXX / AT omit “until now”

¹¹ [4B:29] LXX / AT “you, Master” / OL omit “God of Abraham”

¹² [4B:30] LXX / AT “And now, you who are strong over all”

¹³ [4B:30] LXX / AT “wicked. Take me, O Lord, out of the grip of my fear.”

¹⁴ [5:1] MT, AT / LXX “she”

¹⁵ [5:1] OL add

¹⁶ [5:1] LXX, AT, OL / MT “put on royalty”

¹⁷ [5:1] LXX / AT “knowing”

¹⁸ [5:1] LXX / AT omit “was as joyous as it”

¹⁹ [5:1] LXX, (OL), Josephus / AT omit “with the fear”

²⁰ [5:1] OL add “constrained and fearing the Lord...eyes.”

²¹ [5:1] most LXX / LXX(A), AT omit “all”

²² [5:1] MT / LXX, AT “stood before the king.” / OL “entered the inner hall”

²³ [5:1] MT, AT / LXX “while he” / OL “and King Ahasuerus”

²⁴ [5:1] MT / LXX, AT, OL omit “in the audience chamber, facing the palace doorway”

²⁵ [5:1] OL “And he was dressed in purple and precious stones and had a gold scepter in his hand.”

²⁶ [5:2] MT / LXX, AT, OL omit “He saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard”

²⁷ [5:2] LXX / AT, OL “face having been set-afire like a bull” / Josephus (error) “face uncovered”

²⁸ [5:2] OL add

²⁹ [5:2] LXX / AT “the queen was fearful”

³⁰ literally “throw-into-a-different-position”

³¹ literally “releasing-out”

³² literally “the one who”

³³ [5:2] OL add

³⁴ literally “throw-into-a-different-position”

³⁵ [5:2] LXX / AT add

³⁶ [5:2] MT / LXX, AT omit “and she obtained favor in his sight”

³⁷ literally “until who (fem) stood-down”

³⁸ [5:2] LXX / AT omit “until she recovered” & “with reassuring words and spoke to her”

³⁹ [5:2] LXX / AT “act”

26 And his woman Zeresh and all his friends¹ said to him, “He is from the race of the Judeans. Since the king has allowed you to destroy the Judeans, and the gods have given you a day of destruction to take revenge upon them.”² Have a gibbet,³ 50⁴ cubits in height, be made for you and be set up.⁵ And in the morning speak to the king, and have them hang Mordecai on it.⁶ Then go to the drinking-party with the king in good cheer.”

And this *suggestion* pleased Haman, and he had the gibbet erected.⁷

CHAPTER 6

But On that night, the king was unable to sleep and he stayed awake.⁸ So, because he did not want to waste his wakeful hours in idleness, but to use them for something of importance to his kingdom, he asked that the book of the records of the chronicles be brought in. And these were read⁹ to him.¹⁰ **2** And the passage was found in which Mordecai reported Bighan and Teresh,¹¹ two of the king’s eunuchs who guarded the entrance, for seeking to lay hands on King Xerxes.¹² And the king thought seriously on that matter, saying, “Mordecai is a loyal man for protecting my life, since he has kept me alive until now, and I am sitting on my throne today, and I have done nothing for him. I have not acted righteously.”¹³

3 And the king said to his servants,¹⁴ “What glory or favor was done¹⁵ to Mordecai the savior¹⁶ for this?”¹⁷

And the king’s boys, his ministers, said, “Nothing was done for him.”¹⁸

4 But while the king was inquiring about Mordecai’s goodwill, behold, Haman was in the court!¹⁹

And the king said, “Who is in the court?”²⁰

And it was Haman.²¹ Now Haman had entered²² the outer court of the king’s house²³ before the usual hour²⁴ to tell the king that Mordecai should be hanged on the gibbet which he had prepared for him.

5 And the king’s ministers said him, “Look! Haman is standing in the court.”²⁵

And the king said, “Let him come in.”²⁶

6 And Haman entered, and the king said to him,²⁷ “Knowing that you are the only friend loyal to me, I beg you to advise me.”²⁸ What should be done for the man whom the king delights to honor?²⁹

Now Haman said in his heart,³⁰ “Whom would the king delight to honor more than me?” **7** And he said to the king,³¹ “For the man whom the king delights to honor: **8** there should be brought³² the royal³³ robe and a gold necklace³⁴ which the king has worn,³⁵ and the royal³⁶ horse on which the king rode when the royal crown was placed on his head.³⁷ **9** And the robe and the horse³⁸ should be given into the hand of a man from among³⁹ the king’s chiefs,⁴⁰ who must clothe the man

the king delights to honor;⁴¹ and have him ride on the horse through a plaza of the city, and cry out before him, saying,⁴² ‘This is what is done for the man who esteems the king,⁴³ whom the king delights to honor!’”

10 Then the king said to Haman, “Make haste! Take the robe and horse as you have proposed,⁴⁴ and do this for Mordecai the Judean, who is sitting at the king’s gate.⁴⁵ And do not omit anything you proposed.”⁴⁶

Now when Haman realized that it was not he himself who would be honored, but that it was Mordecai, his heart was utterly broken, and his spirit became feeble.⁴⁷

11 And Haman took the robe and horse, showing reverence to Mordecai, even on the very same day on which he intended to impale him. And he said to Mordecai, “Take off the sack!”

And Mordecai was troubled, like one who is dying; and in distress he took off the sack, and Haman clothed Mordecai with the splendid garments. And Mordecai thought he saw a sign, and his heart was toward the Lord; and he was speechless. And Haman hastened to put him on horseback, and Haman⁴⁸ brought him on horseback through a plaza of the city,⁴⁹ and cried out before him, saying,⁵⁰ “This is what is done for the man who esteems the king,⁵¹ whom the king delights to honor!”

12 Then Mordecai returned to the king’s gate,⁵² and Haman hurried⁵³ into his house grieving and with his head covered. **13** And when he told his woman Zeresh and all his friends⁵⁴ everything which had happened to him, his advisers⁵⁵ and his wife Zeresh said to him,⁵⁶ “If Mordecai, before whom you are beginning to fall, is of the seed of the Judeans, you will not be able to prevail against him, but will surely fall before him,⁵⁷ for a living god is with him.”⁵⁸

14 While they were still speaking with him, the king’s eunuchs⁵⁹ arrived and hurried Haman⁶⁰ off to the drinking-party which Esther had prepared.⁶¹ And because of this, he was cheered up. And when he had traveled the distance, he reclined with them on time.⁶²

CHAPTER 7

So the king and Haman went to the banquet⁶³ with Queen Esther.⁶⁴ **2** Again, on this second day, during the drinking-party of the wine,⁶⁵ the king said to Esther, “What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted to you. And what is your request? It shall be honored⁶⁶ for you,⁶⁷ even if it is half the kingdom.”

3 Esther struggled with her reply, because the adversary was before her eyes. And God gave her courage as she called upon him.⁶⁸ Then Queen Esther⁶⁹ answered and⁷⁰ said, “If I have found favor with you, O king, and if it pleases your majesty,⁷¹ I ask that my soul⁷² be given to me at my petition and my people⁷³ at my request. **4** For my people and I have been delivered to destruction, slaughter, and extinction.⁷⁴ If we were to be merely sold into slavery, I would

¹ [5:14] MT, LXX / AT omit “and all his friends”

² [5:14] MT, LXX / AT add

³ literally “wood” (and also in all other occurrences of this word”

⁴ [5:26] some Josephus “60”

⁵ [5:14] MT / LXX “be made for you” / AT “be made for you and be set up”

⁶ [5:14] MT, LXX / AT “And hang him on the gibbet. And in the morning, you shall ask the king about him.”

⁷ [5:14] MT, LXX / AT “This pleased Haman, and he did so.”

⁸ [6:1] MT, Vul / LXX, AT, OL(?), Josephus “But the Lord [AT “Mighty One”] made the king unable to sleep” [AT add “and he stayed awake”]

⁹ [6:1] MT / LXX “So he asked his teacher to bring in the written daily annals, and they were read to him” / AT “So the readers were called, and the court record was read to him” / Josephus “So, because... kingdom, he asked that the records of the kings who were before him, and those of his own deeds be brought in; and read them to him. While he had brought them and was reading them”

¹⁰ [6:1] LXX, AT / MT “to the king”

¹¹ [6:1] MT / LXX, AT omit “Bighan and Teresh”

¹² [6:2] MT, LXX / AT omit “who guarded the entrance... King Xerxes”

¹³ [6:2] MT, LXX / AT, OL add

¹⁴ [6:3] MT, LXX / AT add

¹⁵ [6:3] MT, LXX / AT “What glory or favor should we do”

¹⁶ [6:3] MT, LXX / AT add

¹⁷ [6:3] MT, AT / LXX omit “for this”

¹⁸ [6:3] MT, LXX / AT replaces “The king’s attendants... for him” with “And after they thought about it, the youths were envious of him, for fear of Haman lay in their bowels. And the king understood. And morning came.”

¹⁹ [6:4] MT, AT / LXX add

²⁰ [6:4] MT, LXX / AT “is outside”

²¹ [6:4] MT, LXX / AT add

²² [6:4] MT, LXX / AT “had come early”

²³ [6:4] MT / LXX, AT omit “the outer court of the king’s house”

²⁴ [6:5] MT, LXX / Luc, Josephus add

²⁵ [6:5] MT, LXX / AT omit “he had raised... in the court.”

²⁶ [6:5] MT / LXX “Call him.” / AT “And the king said to bring him in.”

²⁷ [6:6] MT, AT [“he” instead of “Haman”] / LXX “And the king said to Haman”

²⁸ [6:6] MT, LXX, AT / Josephus add

²⁹ [6:6] MT / LXX “man whom I wish to honor” / AT “man who esteems the king, whom the king wishes to honor.”

³⁰ [6:6] MT / LXX “Haman thought within himself” / AT “Haman reasoned, saying”

³¹ [6:7] MT / LXX “So he replied to the king” / AT “So Haman replied”

³² [6:8] MT, AT / LXX “honor, let the king’s servants bring”

³³ [6:8] MT, AT / LXX “linen”

³⁴ [6:8] MT, AT, LXX / Josephus add

³⁵ [6:8] MT / LXX “which the king wears” / AT omit altogether

³⁶ [6:8] MT, LXX / AT add

³⁷ [6:8] MT / LXX, AT “which the king rides” (omitting “when the... his head”)

³⁸ [6:9] MT / LXX “And it” / AT “And these things”

³⁹ [6:9] MT / LXX “And given it to one of”

⁴⁰ [6:9] MT / LXX, AT “friends”

⁴¹ [6:9] MT, LXX / AT omit “the king wishes to honor”

⁴² [6:9] MT / LXX “horse, and cry out through the public square of the city, saying” / AT “horse, and go around the city before him, crying out”

⁴³ [6:9] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴⁴ [6:10] MT, AT / LXX replaces “Make haste!...proposed” with “You have spoken well.”

⁴⁵ [6:10] MT / LXX “who serves in the court” / AT “who is sitting at the gate” /

⁴⁶ [6:10] MT / LXX “And do not omit a single word of what you have spoken.” / AT “And do not let your word be transgressed.”

⁴⁷ [6:10] MT, LXX / AT add / Josephus instead add “Now when Haman heard these words, which were contrary to all his expectations, he was oppressed (variant “confused”) in spirit and stricken with helplessness”

⁴⁸ [6:11] MT, LXX / AT add “showing reverence... And Haman” (supported by Josephus)

⁴⁹ [6:11] MT / AT “And Haman led the horse outside”

⁵⁰ [6:11] MT, AT / LXX add

⁵¹ [6:10] MT, LXX / AT add

⁵² [6:12] MT / LXX “to the court” / AT “to his home”

⁵³ [6:12] MT / LXX, AT omit “hurried”

⁵⁴ [6:13] MT / LXX omit “all” / AT omit “and all his friends”

⁵⁵ [6:13] MT, AT / LXX “friends”

⁵⁶ [6:13] MT, LXX / AT omit “to him”

⁵⁷ [6:13] MT / LXX “are beginning to be humiliated, you will fall when you fall, and you will never be able to withstand him” / AT “Ever since you spoke evil about him, evil things have been coming to you; be quiet”

⁵⁸ [6:13] MT, Vul / LXX, AT, OL, Eth, Coptic, Josephus add

⁵⁹ [6:14] MT, LXX / AT “, someone” / Josephus “, Esther’s eunuchs”

⁶⁰ [6:14] MT, LXX / AT “him”

⁶¹ [6:14] MT, LXX / AT omit “had prepared”

⁶² [6:14] MT, LXX / AT add / Josephus add here “But Harbona, one of the eunuchs, seeing the gibbet which had been set up at Haman’s house and prepared for Mordecai, inquired of one of the servants for whom they had made this ready. And, learning that it was for the queen’s uncle, he, for the time being, held his peace.”

⁶³ [7:1] MT / LXX “went in to drink” / AT omit “So the king... Queen Esther.”

⁶⁴ [7:1] MT / LXX “with the queen”

⁶⁵ [7:2] MT / LXX omit “of the wine” / AT “As the drinking-party advanced”

⁶⁶ [7:2] MT / LXX “What is it, Queen Esther? What is your petition, and what is your request? It shall be done” / AT “What is the danger? And what is your petition?”

⁶⁷ [7:2] LXX, OL / MT omit “for you”

⁶⁸ [7:2] MT, LXX / AT add

⁶⁹ [7:3] MT / LXX “Then she” / AT “Then Esther”

⁷⁰ [7:3] MT, LXX / AT omit “answered and”

⁷¹ [7:3] MT / LXX “If I have found favor with the king” / AT “If it pleases the king, and the decision is good in his heart”

⁷² [7:3] MT, LXX / AT “people”

⁷³ [7:3] MT, LXX / AT “nation”

⁷⁴ [7:4] MT / LXX “delivered to destruction, plunder, and slavery.” / AT “delivered into slavery, and their young children for plunder.”

remain silent;¹ but as it is, the enemy will be unable to compensate for the harm done to the king.²

5 Then King Xerxes became angry and said to Queen Esther,³ “Who and where⁴ is the man who has dared to do this?”⁵

But when the queen saw that it seemed terribly offensive to the king, and that he hated evil, she said, “Do not be angry, my lord! For it is enough that I have found your conciliation. Enjoy your meal, O King, and tomorrow I will do according to your word.”

But the king urged her to tell him who was so arrogant to do this. And he promised with an oath to do for her whatever she wished.

6 And Esther was emboldened and⁶ said, “A man *who is* an adversary and enemy is this bad Haman.⁷

At this, Haman was seized with dread of the king and queen.⁸ 7 The king rose-up from *the drinking-party of the wine*⁹ in anger and went into the palace garden,¹⁰ but Haman stayed to beg Queen Esther for his soul,¹¹ since he saw that the king had decided on his doom.¹²

8 When the king returned from the palace garden to *the drinking-party of the wine*,¹³ Haman had thrown himself on the couch on which Esther was reclining; and the king exclaimed,¹⁴ “A crime against my kingdom is not enough for you!¹⁵ Will he¹⁶ also violate the queen¹⁷ while she is with me in my own house!¹⁸ Let Haman be led away, and do not let him live!”¹⁹ Scarcely had the king spoken when the face of Haman was covered over.²⁰

9 Harbona,²¹ one of the eunuchs who attended the king,²² said, “Look, at the house of Haman stands²³ a gibbet 50²⁴ cubits high. Haman prepared it for Mordecai,²⁵ who gave the report that benefited the king. Therefore, lord, order that he himself be hanged upon it.”²⁶

And the king answered, “Hang him on it.”

10 So they hanged Haman on the gibbet which he had made ready for Mordecai, and king’s anger was appeased.²⁷

CHAPTER 8

That same day, King Xerxes gave the house of Haman, enemy of the Judeans, to Queen Esther;²⁸ and Mordecai was admitted to the king’s presence, for Esther had revealed his relationship to her. 2 The king removed his signet ring from Haman, and transferred it into the keeping of Mordecai; and Esther put Mordecai in charge of the house of Haman.²⁹

3 In another audience with the king, Esther³⁰ fell at his feet and tearfully³¹ implored him to revoke the harm done by Haman the Agagite,³² and the plan he had devised³³ against the Judeans. 4 The king stretched forth the golden scepter to Esther. So she rose. And standing in his presence, 5 Esther said, “If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and it seems proper before the king, and if I am pleasing in his eyes,³⁴ let a document be issued to revoke the letters which that schemer Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite,³⁵ wrote for the

destruction of the Judeans in all the royal provinces.³⁶ 6 For how can I witness the evil that is to befall my people,³⁷ and how can I behold³⁸ the destruction of my race?”

7 Then King Xerxes said to Queen Esther³⁹ and to Mordecai the Judean,⁴⁰ “Now that I have given Esther the house of Haman,⁴¹ and they⁴² have hanged him on the gibbet with all his house⁴³ because he attacked the Judeans, what do you still seek?⁴⁴ 8 You in turn may write in the king’s⁴⁵ name what you see fit concerning the Judeans⁴⁶ and seal the letter with the royal⁴⁷ signet ring. For whatever is written in the king’s name and sealed with the royal signet ring cannot be revoked.”

9 At that time, on the 23rd day of the 3rd month, Sivan of the same year,⁴⁸ the royal scribes were summoned. Exactly as Mordecai dictated,⁴⁹ they wrote to the Judeans and to the satraps, governors, and officials of the 127 provinces from Hodu to Chush: to each province in its own script and to each people in its own language, and to the Judeans in their own script and language.⁵⁰ 10 These letters, which he wrote in the name of King Xerxes⁵¹ and sealed with the royal⁵² signet ring, were sent by mounted couriers riding thoroughbred royal steeds.⁵³

11 In these letters, the king authorized the Judeans in each and every city to group together and to stand *up* for their souls, and to kill, destroy, wipe out, along with their women and children, every armed group of any nation or province which should attack them, and to seize their goods as spoil⁵⁴ 12 throughout the provinces of King Xerxes,⁵⁵ on a single day, the 13th *day*⁵⁶ of the 12th month, Adar.⁵⁷

13⁵⁸ *{}The things having been written-below is a written-copy of the letter of these⁵⁹ things.*⁶⁰

Great King Xerxes to the chiefs of the provinces⁶¹ in the 127 satrapies from ^oHodu as-far-as⁶² ^oChush, and to the *ones who* being-minded for **our interests**: Be rejoicing!⁶³

14 Many *individuals, while* more-frequently being honored with the largest⁶⁴ kindness *from the ones who* are doing-good-works, *have* become⁶⁵ greater minded. 15 And not only are they seeking to be doing-evil to the *ones* having been subjected to us, they, not being able to be bearing such⁶⁶ satiety, are setting-their-hands-upon their own good-workers to be *machinating plots against them*. 16 And they, not only picking-away-from-both-sides⁶⁷ the thanksgiving *from* among⁶⁸ the humans, *but* instead even been lifted-up-by-means-of the vaults of their unacquaintedness-with-goodness, are supposing⁶⁹ that they will flee for themselves out-of the rightful-punishment of a god *who is* perpetually viewing all the *things*.⁷⁰

¹ [7:4] MT, Eth, LXX similar / AT “...slavery, and their young children for plunder. But I did not want to tell you, lest I trouble my lord.”

² [7:4] MT / LXX “for the slanderer is not worthy of the court of the king.” / AT “For the man who did evil against us has changed his manner.” / Targ “for the oppressor is not of value and profit to the damage of the king” / Josephus “that would be an endurable evil”

³ [7:5] MT / LXX “Then the king said” / AT “Then the king became angry and said”

⁴ [7:5] MT / LXX, AT omit “and where”

⁵ [7:5] MT, LXX / AT “dared to humiliate the sign of my rule, so as to disregard fear of you”

⁶ [7:5-6] MT, LXX / AT add “When the queen...was emboldened and”

⁷ [7:6] MT / LXX omit “and enemy” / AT “, The liar is this wicked Haman, your Friend.”

⁸ [7:6] MT, LXX / AT omit “At this...and queen”

⁹ [7:7] MT / LXX “rose-up-out of the drinking-together”

¹⁰ [7:7] MT (supported by Josephus) / LXX omit “in anger” & “palace” / AT “The king, becoming angry and filled with rage, jumped up and was pacing around.”

¹¹ [7:7] MT / LXX omit “Esther for his soul”

¹² [7:7] MT / LXX “but Haman entreated the queen, since he saw himself in deep trouble.” / AT “and Haman was terrified and prostrated himself at the feet of Queen Esther, who still reclined on her couch.”

¹³ [7:8] MT / LXX omit “palace” & “to the drinking-party of the wine” / AT omit “from the palace garden” & “of wine”

¹⁴ [7:8] MT / LXX “Haman...couch, entreating the queen, and the king said” / AT “he saw this and said”

¹⁵ [7:8] MT, LXX / AT add / Josephus instead add “O basest of all men”

¹⁶ [7:8] MT / LXX, AT “you”

¹⁷ [7:8] MT / LXX, AT “woman”

¹⁸ [7:8] MT, LXX / AT “in my presence”

¹⁹ [7:8] MT, LXX / AT add

²⁰ [7:8] MT / LXX “When Haman heard this, he covered over his face.” / AT “And so he was led away.” / Targum “was covered over with shame”

²¹ [7:9] MT / LXX “Bougathan” / AT “Agathas” / Josephus “Sabuchadas”

²² [7:9] MT, LXX / AT “one of his servants”

²³ [7:9] MT, LXX / AT “Look, in his courtyard is”

²⁴ [7:9] some Josephus “60”

²⁵ [7:9] MT / LXX “Haman prepared this gibbet for Mordecai” / AT “Haman cut it down to hang Mordecai”

²⁶ [7:10] MT, LXX / AT add

²⁷ [7:10] MT, LXX / AT replaces “So they...appeared” with “And the king removed the signet ring from his hand, and his life was sealed with it.”

²⁸ [8:1] MT / LXX “have all the belongings of Haman the slanderer to Esther”

²⁹ [8:2] MT / LXX “charge of everything of Haman’s”

³⁰ [8:3] MT / LXX “she”

³¹ [8:3] MT / LXX omit “tearfully”

³² [8:3] MT / LXX omit “the Agagite”

³³ [8:5] MT / LXX “and all that he had done”

³⁴ [8:5] MT / LXX “If it pleases you, and if I have found favor”

³⁵ [8:5] MT / LXX “which Haman”

³⁶ [8:5] MT / LXX “Judeans in your kingdom”

³⁷ [8:5] MT / LXX “witness the affliction of my people”

³⁸ [8:6] MT / LXX “survive”

³⁹ [8:6] MT / LXX omit “Xerxes” & “Queen”

⁴⁰ [8:7] MT, Vul / LXX, AT, OL omit “and to Mordecai the Judean”

⁴¹ [8:7] MT / LXX “given you everything belonging to Haman”

⁴² [8:7] MT / LXX “I”

⁴³ [8:7] MT, LXX / OL add (erroneously)

⁴⁴ [8:7] MT / LXX add (and begins the sentence with “If” instead of “Now that”)

⁴⁵ [8:7] MT / LXX “in my name”

⁴⁶ [8:7] MT / LXX omit “concerning the Judeans”

⁴⁷ [8:7] MT / LXX “with my”

⁴⁸ [8:9] MT / LXX “of the 1st month, Nisan, of the same year”

⁴⁹ [8:9] MT / LXX omit “Exactly as Mordecai dictated”

⁵⁰ [8:9] MT / LXX omit “and to the Judeans in their own script and language”

⁵¹ [8:10] MT / LXX “They were written by the king”

⁵² [8:10] MT / LXX omit “royal”

⁵³ [8:10] MT / LXX “, and they sent the letters by couriers”

⁵⁴ [8:11] MT / LXX replaces “In these letters...spoil” with “In these, he ordered them to live in accordance with their own laws in every city, both to help each other, and to deal with their enemies, and those who attacked them, as they pleased”

⁵⁵ [8:12] MT / LXX “throughout the kingdom of Xerxes”

⁵⁶ [8:12] OL “14th”

⁵⁷ [8:1-12] AT replaces “That same day...Adar” with “And the king said to Esther, ‘He even planned to hang Mordecai, who saved me from the hand of the eunuchs? Did he not know that Esther is of his race?’ So the king called Mordecai and granted him all that belonged to Haman. And he said to him, ‘What do you want? I will do it for you.’ And Mordecai said, ‘That you revoke Haman’s letter.’ So the king entrusted him with the affairs of the kingdom. Then Esther said to the king on the following day, ‘Allow me to punish my enemies with bloodshed.’ So Queen Esther also appealed to the king against Haman’s children, that they too should die with their father. And the king said, ‘Let it be done.’ So she struck the enemies in great numbers. And in Shushan, the king made an agreement with the queen to kill men; and he said, ‘Behold, I give them to you to hang.’ And so it was done.”

⁵⁸ Verses 13-36 are extant in a Greek translation of a Hebrew original

⁵⁹ literally “which”

⁶⁰ [8:13] LXX / AT “So he wrote the following letter:”

⁶¹ Emendation based on likely Hebrew original / LXX “countries”

⁶² literally “till”

⁶³ literally “: to be rejoicing”

⁶⁴ literally “most”

⁶⁵ literally “became”

⁶⁶ literally “the”

⁶⁷ [8:16] LXX / AT “they take away”

⁶⁸ literally “out of”

⁶⁹ [8:16] LXX (lit. “taking-from-below” (as in “taking up an idea”)) / AT “imagining”

⁷⁰ [8:16] LXX / AT “of the righteous all-ruling Judge”

17 But often, even *concerning* many of the *ones* having been assigned on-the-basis-of authority: *the* consolation of the friends *who were* being entrusted to be handling the affairs, *a consolation, which* after it appointed *them* to be accomplices of guiltless blood, clothed *them* with irreparable events, 18 *friends who* used-fallacious-rationalizations by-means-of the lying fallacious-rationalization of their evil-custom to *deceive* the unmixed good-resolve of the *ones who* have-might-over *them*.

19 But it is permissible to be observing¹ *this*, not so-much *from* out of the older histories *which were* delivered to us,² inasmuch-as it is alongside *your** very feet for *you** to be *observing this* by seeking-out the *things which* have unsacredly been completely-finished by-means-of the pestilential-influence³ of the *ones who are* holding-power over unworthy-things.⁴ 20 And it is permissible to be paying-attention to⁵ the-things *which follow* after these *events*, with-the-result *that* we will⁶ afford for ourselves the undisturbed *state* for the kingdom to all humans⁷ with peace, 21 *not*⁸ making-use-of the changing-conditions,⁹ but discerning (always with a gentler encounter)¹⁰ the-things coming under our¹¹ sight.

22 For *whereas*, Haman *son* of Hammedatha (an Agagite,¹² *who in* the truths was foreign of the blood¹³ of the Persians and having set **our** kindness far¹⁴ at-a-distance *from himself*) *who* was welcomed-as-a-stranger by us,¹⁵ 23 obtained the philanthropy which we have toward every nation to such-an-extent¹⁶ so-as for him to be being publicly-acclaimed a father of ours and *who was* being bowed-down-to by all-*persons, and for him* to be continuing¹⁷ to the second face of the royal throne.¹⁸ 24 But not bearing the arrogance, he made-business to deprive us of the government and of the spirit, 25 he, *who*, by-means-of heavily-braided fallacious-rationalizations of methods, requested for himself in-regard to the perdition of Mordecai, **our** savior and good-worker¹⁹ throughout everything, and of Esther, the blameless communer of the kingdom,²⁰ along with the nation of these *individuals*. 26 For through these manners, he was made-to-imagine, after he got us deserted in *alienation*,²¹ that he would transfer²² the prevailing²³ of the Persians into the Agagites.²⁴ 27 But²⁵ **we** find that the Judeans (*who* had been delivered into an elimination²⁶ by this²⁷ thrice-reprobate) are²⁸ not evil-workers, but *are* acting-as-citizens by-means-of most-righteous laws 28 but are²⁹ *even* sons of the Highest Greatest Living God,³⁰ the *one who is* guiding the kingdom for³¹ both us and our ancestors³² in the most-beautiful disposition.

29 Therefore, *you** *who will* not use for yourselves the documents *previously which* were commissioned by Haman *son* of Hammedatha,³³ will do beautifully, 30 due to the *fact* that he *who* worked-out these *things* has been crucified³⁴ along with his³⁵ entire-house³⁶ near³⁷ the gates of Shushan, after the God *who is* being-

mighty-over all the-things quickly³⁸ gave-back³⁹ to him the judgment *which* was considered-worthy.

31 But *do so* after *you** set-forth⁴⁰ the written-copy of this letter in every place with outspokenness,⁴¹ so-as⁴² for the Judeans to be making-use-of their own lawful *decrees*,⁴³ and *for you** to be co-strengthening them.⁴⁴ 32 so-that they might be repelling from themselves the *individuals who are* laying themselves upon⁴⁵ them in a season of tribulation, And it has been decided by the Judeans throughout the kingdom to observe⁴⁶ the 13th day of the 12th month, Adar,⁴⁷ in the very day,⁴⁸ and to also hold a festival on the 15th 49 33 For the God *who is* holding-power over all-things made it a *time* of gladness for⁵⁰ them instead of a ruin of the elect race.⁵¹ 34 And therefore, **you***, in **your*** surnamed festivals, be leading a famous day with all sumptuous-entertainment,⁵² 35 so-that even now and⁵³ after these-things, salvation⁵⁴ might be to us and⁵⁵ to the Persians *who are* showing-goodwill,⁵⁶ but a remembrance of the perdition to the *ones who are* plotting-against us.⁵⁷

36 But every city or country all-together,⁵⁸ whichever *one* might not do according-to these-things, will be completely-consumed by-means-of spear and fire with anger. It will be appointed⁵⁹ impassable not only impassable to humans *but* instead even inimical to beasts and to flying-creatures into the all time.}}⁶⁰

37(13) A copy of the letter to be promulgated as law in each and every province was published among all the peoples, so that all the Judeans might be prepared on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.⁶¹ 38(14) Couriers mounted on royal steeds sped forth in haste at the king's order,⁶² and the decree was also promulgated in the stronghold of Shushan.⁶³

So Mordecai sent out letters and sealed them with the king's signet ring, instructing his people to each remain in their own land and celebrate a feast to God. And the letter which Mordecai sent contained the following things:

Haman sent letters to you containing the following:

Hasten quickly to send the disobedient nation of the Judeans to me for destruction.

But I, Mordecai, inform you that the one who did this has been hung at the gates of Shushan, and his household has been dispatched. For this man wished to kill us on the thirteenth of the month, that is, Adar.⁶⁴

39(15) And Mordecai left the king's presence⁶⁵ clothed in a royal robe of violet and of white cotton,⁶⁶ with a large crown of gold⁶⁷ and a cloak⁶⁸ of white-fabric and purple. And the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.⁶⁹ 40(16) And there was splendor and merriment for the Judeans, exultation and triumph.⁷⁰ 41(17) In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king's order

¹ usually translated "watching-out"

² [8:19] AT / LXX "which we delivered"

³ [8:19] LXX / AT "by the cruelty"

⁴ [8:19] LXX / AT omit "over unworthy-things"

⁵ literally "into"

⁶ [8:20] LXX (lit. "into we will") / AT "and to"

⁷ [8:20] LXX / AT "nations"

⁸ [8:21] LXX / AT, OL, Vul, Coptic add

⁹ [8:21] LXX(B), OL, Vul, Cop (lit. "of the things being-thrown-into-different-positions") / AT "of slanderers"

¹⁰ [8:21] LXX (lit. "meeting") / AT "but fairly treating"

¹¹ literally "the"

¹² [8:22] Emendation (LXX always translates "Agagite" to "Makedonian") / LXX "a Makedonian" / Josephus

"an Amalekite" / AT "The Bougai"

¹³ [8:22] LXX / AT "thinking"

¹⁴ literally "much"

¹⁵ [8:22] LXX / AT omit "was welcomed-as-a-stranger by us"

¹⁶ literally "onto so-much"

¹⁷ literally "finishing-through"

¹⁸ [8:23] LXX / AT "thrones"

¹⁹ [8:25] LXX / AT omit "and good-worker"

²⁰ [8:25] LXX / AT "him"

²¹ [8:26] LXX / AT, OL add

²² literally "to led-in-another-direction"

²³ literally "the being-mighty-over"

²⁴ [8:26] Emendation (LXX always translates "Agagite" to "Makedonian") / LXX "to the Makedonians" / Josephus "to others"

²⁵ [8:27] LXX / AT "Therefore"

²⁶ [8:27] LXX (lit. "disappearing") / AT "you"

²⁷ literally "the"

²⁸ literally "being"

²⁹ literally "being"

³⁰ [8:28] LXX / AT "but are even sons of the one, true God" / Josephus "but are attached to the God"

³¹ literally "to"

³² [8:28] LXX / AT "condition to us until now."

³³ [8:29] LXX / AT omit "son of Hammedatha"

³⁴ literally "the fact for him who worked-out these things to have been crucified"

³⁵ literally "the"

³⁶ [8:30] LXX / AT omit "along with the entire-house"

³⁷ literally "toward"

³⁸ literally ("quickly") "through quickness"

³⁹ [8:30] LXX / AT "after the judge, who always sees everything, gave-back"

⁴⁰ literally "put-out"

⁴¹ [8:31] LXX / AT replaces "And let the written-copy of this letter be exhibited in every place"

⁴² literally "if-at-any-time"

⁴³ [8:31] LXX(A), AT, OL, Josephus / other LXX "customs"

⁴⁴ [8:33] literally "to be growing-strong-together with them" / AT "to be strengthening them"

⁴⁵ literally "to"

⁴⁶ [8:32] LXX / AT add

⁴⁷ [8:32] LXX / AT "the 14th day of the month, which is Adar"

⁴⁸ [8:32] LXX / AT omit "in the very day"

⁴⁹ [8:32] LXX / AT add

⁵⁰ literally "to"

⁵¹ [8:33] LXX / AT "For in those days the one who is holding-power over all-things provided them with deliverance and rejoicing."

⁵² [8:34] AT, Josephus / LXX add

⁵³ [8:35] LXX ("so-that even now and") / AT "And now"

⁵⁴ [8:35] LXX / AT omit "salvation"

⁵⁵ [8:35] most LXX / some LXX "to you*" and" / AT omit altogether

⁵⁶ [8:35] LXX / AT "to the obedient Persians"

⁵⁷ [8:35] LXX / AT "them"

⁵⁸ LXX literally ("all-together") "the all-wholly" / AT omit

⁵⁹ literally "stood-down"

⁶⁰ [8:36] LXX(A), AT omit "instead even" & "into the all time"

⁶¹ [8:37] MT / LXX "Now, let copies be posted conspicuously in all the kingdom, so that all the Judeans might be prepared on that day to fight against their enemies."

⁶² [8:38] MT / LXX "Horsemen sped forth in haste to perform the king's order"

⁶³ [8:38] MT / LXX "decree was also posted in Shushan" / AT replaces "A copy...of Shushan" with "And a public notice containing these things was also posted in Shushan."

⁶⁴ [8:38] MT, LXX / AT add

⁶⁵ [8:39] MT / LXX, AT omit "the king's presence"

⁶⁶ [8:39] MT / LXX, AT omit "of violet and of white cotton"

⁶⁷ [8:39] MT / LXX, Josephus omit "large" / AT omit "a large crown of gold"

⁶⁸ [8:39] MT / LXX, AT "diadem" / Josephus "necklace" (and omit "of crimson byssus")

⁶⁹ [8:39] MT / LXX, AT "And when the people in Shushan saw him, they rejoiced."

⁷⁰ [8:40] MT / LXX "And there was splendor and merriment for the Judeans" / AT "And there was splendor, drinking and feasting for the Judeans."

arrived,¹ there was merriment and exultation, a drinking-party and a good day for the Judeans.² And many of the peoples of the land were circumcised and became Judeans,³ for they were seized with a fear of the Judeans.⁴

CHAPTER 9

When the day arrived on which the order decreed by the king was to be carried out, the 13th day⁵ of the 12th month, Adar, on which the enemies of the Judeans had expected to become masters of them, the situation was reversed: the Judeans became masters of those *who were* hating them. **2** And the Judeans mustered in their cities throughout the provinces of King Xerxes to attack those who sought to do them harm, and not a man could withstand them, but all peoples were seized with a fear of them.⁶ **3** And all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, governors, and royal procurators supported⁷ the Judeans from fear of Mordecai; **4** for the man Mordecai was powerful in the royal palace, and the report was spreading through all the provinces that he was continually growing in power.⁸

5 The Judeans struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them; and they did to those *who were* hating them as they pleased.⁹ **6** In the stronghold¹⁰ of Shushan, the Judeans killed and destroyed¹¹ 500¹² men. **7** They also killed Parshandatha,¹³ Dalphon,¹⁴ Aspatha, **8** Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,¹⁵ **9** Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha,¹⁶ **10** the ten sons of Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite,¹⁷ the foe of the Judeans. However, they did not engage¹⁸ in plundering.

11 On the same day, when the number of those killed in the stronghold of Shushan¹⁹ was reported to the king, **12** the king said to Queen²⁰ Esther, "In the stronghold²¹ of Shushan the Judeans have killed and destroyed²² 500 men, as well as the ten sons of Haman.²³ What must they have done in the other royal provinces! Now what is your petition? It shall be granted to you. And what further request do you have? It shall be honored."²⁴

13 So Esther said to the king,²⁵ "If it pleases your majesty,²⁶ let the Judeans in Shushan²⁷ be permitted again tomorrow to act according to today's decree, and let²⁸ the ten sons of Haman be hanged on gibbets."²⁹

14 So the king gave an order to this effect, and the decree was published in Shushan. So the ten sons of Haman were hanged on gibbets.³⁰ **15** And the Judeans in Shushan mustered again, on the 14th of the month of Adar, and killed 300 men in Shushan.³¹ However, they did not engage in plundering.

16 And the rest of the Judeans, who dwelt in the royal provinces, also mustered and stood up for their soul,³² and obtained rest from their enemies.³³ **17** On the 13th day of the month of Adar,³⁴ they killed 75,000³⁵ of those *who were* hating them,³⁶ but they did not engage in plundering. On the 14th of the month they rested, and made it a day of a drinking-party³⁷ and of rejoicing. **18** (The

Judeans in the city of³⁸ Shushan, however, mustered on the 13th and 14th of the month. But on the 15th they rested, and made it a day of³⁹ a drinking-party⁴⁰ and rejoicing.) **19** That is why the rural Judeans, who dwell in villages,⁴¹ celebrate the 14th of the month of Adar as a day of rejoicing and a drinking-party,⁴² a holiday on which they send gifts of food, *each* man to his companion.⁴³ **But those living in the metropolitan centers also celebrate the 15th of Adar with joy, sending out gifts to the poor.**⁴⁴

20 Mordecai recorded these events and sent letters⁴⁵ to all the Judeans, both near and far, in all the provinces of King Xerxes. **21** He ordered them to celebrate every year both⁴⁶ the 14th and the 15th of the month of Adar⁴⁷ **22** as the days on which the Judeans obtained rest from their enemies and as the month (*which was Adar*)⁴⁸ which was turned for them from sorrow into joy, and from mourning into a good day. They were to observe these days with a drinking-party⁴⁹ and gladness,⁵⁰ sending food, *each* man to his companion,⁵¹ and gifts to the poor and orphans and widows.⁵² **23** So the Judeans took upon themselves for the future this observance which they instituted at the written direction of Mordecai.⁵³

24 Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the foe of all the Judeans,⁵⁴ had planned to destroy them⁵⁵ and had cast the pur (or 'lot') for the time of their defeat and destruction.⁵⁶ **25** Yet, when she⁵⁷ went before the king, the king ordered in writing that the wicked plan Haman had devised⁵⁸ against the Judeans should instead be turned against Haman and that he and his sons should be hanged on gibbets.⁵⁹ **26** And so these days have been named 'Purim' after the word 'pur'.⁶⁰

This was how, due to everything that was contained in this letter, and due to what they had witnessed and experienced⁶¹ in this affair, **27** the Judeans established and took upon themselves,⁶² their descendants, and everyone who should join them, the inviolable obligation of celebrating these two days every year in the manner prescribed by this letter, and at the time appointed.⁶³ **28** These days were to be commemorated and kept in every generation, by every clan, in every province, and in every city. These days of Purim were never to fall into disuse among the Judeans, nor into oblivion among their descendants.

29 Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, along with Mordecai the Judean, wrote to confirm with full authority⁶⁴ this second⁶⁵ letter about Purim. **30** And he sent documents concerning peace and security to all the Judeans in the 127 provinces of Xerxes' kingdom. **31** This was how these days of Purim were established, for their appointed time, which⁶⁶ Mordecai the Judean and Queen Esther had designated for the Judeans, just as they had previously enjoined upon their souls and upon their seed the duty of fasting and supplication.⁶⁷ **32** The command of Esther confirmed these prescriptions for Purim and was recorded in the book.⁶⁸

CHAPTER 10

Now King Xerxes laid tribute⁶⁹ on the land and on the islands of the sea.¹ **2** And all the acts of his strength and manliness, as well as a detailed account of the

¹ [8:41] MT / LXX "wherever the ordinance was posted, wherever the proclamation was made"

² [8:41] MT, LXX(similar) / AT omit "In each...Judeans."

³ [8:41] MT / LXX, OL "And many of the nations were circumcised and became Judeans" / AT "And many of the Judeans were circumcised" / Targum "...were converted" / Josephus "...were circumcised"

⁴ [8:41] MT / LXX "for fear of the Judeans" / AT "for they feared them"

⁵ [9:1] MT, LXX, AT, some Josephus / some Josephus "14th day"

⁶ [9:1-2] MT / LXX replaces "When the day...fear of them" with "For the letters written by the king arrived, on the 13th day of the 12th month, which is Adar. In that day, the enemies of the Judeans perished, for no one resisted due to fear of them." / AT omit altogether

⁷ [9:3] MT / LXX, AT "esteemed"

⁸ [9:3] MT "for Mordecai...power." / LXX "For it turned out that the king's ordinance was referred to by name throughout all the king." / AT "And in Shushan, it turned out that Haman was referred to by name, and so were the opponents throughout the whole kingdom."

⁹ [9:5] MT / LXX omit "The Judeans struck...pleased."

¹⁰ [9:6] MT / LXX "the city of" / AT omit altogether

¹¹ [9:6] MT / LXX, AT omit "and destroyed"

¹² [9:6] MT, LXX, Josephus / AT "700"

¹³ [9:7] MT, LXX(A) similar / LXX(B) "Parshan and Nestain"

¹⁴ [9:7] MT, LXX "Dalphon" / AT "and his brother"

¹⁵ [9:8] MT "Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha" / LXX "Poradatha, Barea, Sarbacha" / AT "Gagapordathia"

¹⁶ [9:9] MT "Paramashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vejezatha" / LXX "Marmasima, Rupthaeus, Arsaeus, and Zabuthaeus" / AT "Marmasima and Izathouth"

¹⁷ [9:10] MT / LXX, AT add (lit. "the Bougai" which is always the LXX equivalent of "Agagite")

¹⁸ [9:10] MT / LXX, AT "they engaged"

¹⁹ [9:11] MT / LXX omit "the stronghold of" / AT omit "On the same day...to the king." / some Josephus have "in the city" (instead of "in the stronghold of Shushan") / other Josephus omit "in the city" entirely

²⁰ [9:12] MT / LXX, AT omit "Queen"

²¹ [9:12] MT / LXX "city"

²² [9:12] MT / LXX omit "and destroyed"

²³ [9:12] MT / LXX omit "as well...Haman" / AT omit "In the...Haman"

²⁴ [9:12] MT / LXX "Now what more do you ask? It shall be yours." / AT omit altogether

²⁵ [9:13] MT, AT / LXX add

²⁶ [9:13] MT / LXX, AT omit "If it pleases your majesty"

²⁷ [9:13] MT / LXX, AT omit "in Shushan"

²⁸ [9:13] MT / LXX "to act likewise, so that" & omit "on gibbets"

²⁹ [9:13] AT "So Esther said to the king, 'Let the Judeans destroy whomever they wish, and to plunder!'"

³⁰ [9:14] MT "So the king..." / three Hebrew, Syr add "on gibbets" / LXX reads "So he permitted it to be done, and handed over the bodies of Haman's sons to the Judeans of the city to be hanged."

³¹ [9:15] MT / LXX omit "in Shushan"

³² [9:15] MT / LXX "and helped one another"

³³ [9:14-15] AT replaces "So the king gave an order...enemies" with only "And he consented."

³⁴ [9:16] MT, LXX / AT omit "On the 13th day of the month of Adar"

³⁵ [9:16] MT, Syr, Josephus, Vul / LXX "15,000" / Luc "70,100"

³⁶ [9:16] MT / LXX "of them" / AT "men"

³⁷ [9:17] LXX "pleasure"

³⁸ [9:18] MT / LXX add

³⁹ [9:18] MT / LXX "mustered also on the 14th and did not rest. They also celebrated the fifteenth with"

⁴⁰ [9:18] MT / LXX "joy"

⁴¹ [9:19] MT / LXX "who are scattered in every land outside"

⁴² [9:19] MT / LXX "gladness"

⁴³ [9:6-19] OL omit "They also killed Parshandatha...companion." / AT omit "but they...plundering."

On...one companion."

⁴⁴ [9:19] MT / LXX add

⁴⁵ [9:20] MT / LXX, AT "events in a book and sent it"

⁴⁶ [9:21] MT / LXX "to celebrate these joyful days, and to keep" / AT "to keep these days for hymns and

rejoicing in the place of pain and grief"

⁴⁷ [9:21] MT, LXX / AT omit "of the month of Adar"

⁴⁸ [9:22] MT / LXX add

⁴⁹ [9:22] MT / LXX "days of marriages and of gladness"

⁵⁰ [9:22] AT omit "as the days on which...and gladness"

⁵¹ [9:22] MT / LXX "food to their friends"

⁵² [9:22] OL add

⁵³ [9:23] MT / LXX "So the Judeans accepted just what Mordecai had written to them."

⁵⁴ [9:24] MT / LXX omit "the foe of all the Judeans"

⁵⁵ [9:24] MT / LXX "had warred against them"

⁵⁶ [9:24] MT / LXX "and had made a decree and had cast the lot to destroy them"

⁵⁷ [9:25] MT, Vul, Sur, Tar / LXX "he" (see below for full variant)

⁵⁸ [9:25] LXX "and how he went before the king, telling him to hang Mordecai, but all the calamities he had devised"

⁵⁹ [9:24-25] MT / AT omit "So the Judeans...hanged on gibbets." / LXX omit "on gibbets" / OL omit

"Haman, son of Hammedatha...gibbets."

⁶⁰ [9:26] MT / LXX "named Purim, because of the lots (because in their language they are called pur) / AT

"named Purim, because of the lots that fell on these days as a memorial."

⁶¹ [9:26] MT / LXX "had suffered"

⁶² [9:27] MT "the Judeans established and took upon themselves" / LXX "he [Mordecai] established it, and the

Judeans took upon themselves" / AT "and they welcomed them."

⁶³ [9:23-27] MT / LXX "joined them, and surely not to do otherwise." OL omit "Haman, son of

Hammedath...the time appointed." / AT omit "Thus, because of all...this affair" & "their

descendants...recorded in the book." (end of chapter)

⁶⁴ [9:29] MT / LXX "wrote everything they had done, and to confirm"

⁶⁵ [9:29] MT / LXX, Syr omit "second"

⁶⁶ [9:30] MT / LXX omit "And he sent documents...Purim which" (possibly by scribal error)

⁶⁷ [9:31] MT / LXX "race concerning their health and their plan."

⁶⁸ [9:32] MT / LXX "And Esther established the matter by ordinance forever, and it was written for a

memorial."

⁶⁹ [10:1] MT / LXX, AT "The king wrote"

greatness of Mordecai,² whom the king promoted, are recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia.³ **3** For the Judean⁴ Mordecai was second *in rank* to King Xerxes, and he was a great man in the kingdom and⁵ in high standing among the Judeans, and was regarded with favor by his many brothers, as the promoter of his people's welfare and the herald of peace for his whole race.⁶

4⁷ {{And Mordecai spoke, "These *things* came-to-be from God. For I was caused-to-remember about the dream which I saw about the accounts of these *very things*. For not-even a *single* account from them has failed.⁸

5 "There was the small spring which became a river, and a light and a sun, and much water. Esther is the river, whom the king married and made a queen.⁹ But the two dragons are myself and Haman. **6** But the nations *are* the *ones who*¹⁰ were congregated-together-to-one-spot to cause the name of¹¹ the Judeans to be-lost. But the light and the sun is the revelation of God which appeared to the Judeans; this is the judgment.¹² But the nation, the *one which is* mine, is Israel, the *ones who* cried out to God and were saved.

7 "And *the* Lord saved his people. And *the* Lord rescued us out of all these evil *things*.¹³ And God made the signs and the portents, the great *ones*,¹⁴ which have not come-to-be in the nations. **8** Due to this,¹⁵ he made two lots: one for the people of God, and one for all¹⁶ the nations. And these two lots came into an hour¹⁷ and a season, and into a day of a judgment before-the-face of God and¹⁸ in all the nations. **9** And God was caused-to-remember his people, and he pronounced his inheritance righteous. And all the people cried out in a loud voice and said, 'Blessed are you, Lord, who remembers the covenants made with our fathers! Let it be!' And in *the* month of Adar, on the 14th and the 15th¹⁹ of this very month, these days will be to them *times spent* with a congregation and joy and gladness before-the-face of God throughout *all* generations into the age among²⁰ his people Israel."}}

LATE POSTSCRIPT²¹

In²² the 4th year of Ptolemaios *who was* being-king and of Kleopatra, Dōsitheos (who declared²³ *himself* to be a priest and Levite), and his son Ptolemaios, brought-in the letter of the Purim *which was* being laid-before *them*, which they were declaring²⁴ to be *genuine* and that Lusimachos *son* of Ptolemaios (of the *Ptolemaios* in Jerusalem) had interpreted²⁵ *it*.²⁶

¹ [10:1] MT / LXX "tribute, both on the land and the sea"

² [10:1] MT / LXX omit "as well as a detailed account of the greatness of Mordecai"

³ [10:1-2] MT / LXX "The king recorded during his rule over both land and sea, both his strength and bravery, both the wealth and the glory of his kingdom; note that they have been recorded in the book of the kings of the Persians and the Medes as a memorial." / AT "The king recorded the dues of the land and sea and his strength, both the riches and glory of his kingdom. And Mordecai extolled him and wrote in the books of the Persians and the Medes as a memorial."

⁴ [10:3] MT / LXX, AT omit "The Judean"

⁵ [10:3] MT / LXX, AT add

⁶ [10:3] MT / (starting after "kingdom and") LXX "and extolled by the Judeans. And being loved, he spent his life for his whole nation." / AT "and loved by all the Judeans. He led them and bestowed glory on his whole nation."

⁷ Verses 4-9 are extant in a Greek translation of a Hebrew original

⁸ [10:4] LXX (lit. "them passed-by") / AT "God." For he was caused-to-remember the dream which he saw. And it was fulfilled. And he said,"

⁹ [10:5] LXX / AT, OL "The small spring is Esther."

¹⁰ [10:6] LXX / AT, OL "Haman. The river is the nations which"

¹¹ [10:6] LXX / AT, OL omit "the name of"

¹² [10:6] LXX / AT, OL add

¹³ [10:7] LXX / AT omit "But the nation...all these evil *things*."

¹⁴ [10:7] LXX / AT omit "the great *ones*"

¹⁵ [10:8] LXX / AT "And"

¹⁶ [10:8] LXX / AT omit "all"

¹⁷ [10:8] LXX / AT "into hours"

¹⁸ [10:8] LXX / AT "day of the lordship of the everlasting one"

¹⁹ [10:9] most LXX, AT / one LXX omit "and the 15th"

²⁰ literally "in"

²¹ This postscript is not present in the Hebrew version.

²² literally "Of"

²³ may also be translated "who was declaring"

²⁴ may also be translated "They declared"

²⁵ literally "to be and for Lusimachos....Jerusalem to have interpreted"

²⁶ [10:10] LXX / all but one AT understandably omit the entire postscript.