

ESTHER

CHAPTER 1A (Addition A)

In the 2nd year of the reign of King¹ Xerxes² the Great, on the 1st day of the month of Adar Nisan, (which is Dystros Xanthicus),³ Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, saw a dream. **2** This human was a Judean dwelling in the city of Susa, a great human who was serving at the court of the king,⁴ **3** but was one of the captivity, whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, took-captive out of Jerusalem⁵ with Jeconiah, the king of Judah.

4 And this was his dream:

And behold: Voices⁶ and a cry of a tumult, thunders and a quaking, and a disturbance on the earth. **5** And behold: Two great⁷ dragons preceded, both ready to be wrestling. And a great⁸ voice came from them, **6** and everything was troubled at their voice⁹ and every nation was made-ready to go into a war, with the result to war¹⁰ against a nation of righteous persons.¹¹

7 And behold: It was a testimony to all the peoples. A day of darkness and gloom, tribulation and constraint, evil-treatment and great disturbance upon the earth.¹² **8** And all of a righteous race was disturbed, while being-filled-with-fear of the evil things to come upon them, and were made-ready to perish.¹³ And they¹⁴ cried to God.¹⁵ **9** But from¹⁶ the voice of their cry, there came, as it were, a great river, much water from a small spring. **10** Light, and¹⁷ the sun arose; and the lowly persons¹⁸ were raised-high and they devoured¹⁹ the glorious ones.

11 And when Mordecai was woke-up from his sleep, he, having saw this dream and what God has taken-counsel to do,²⁰ and he was holding it²¹ in his heart, and was wanting, in every way, until the night, to recognize its meaning.²²

12 And its interpretation would become clear to him on the day which²³ Mordecai rested²⁴ at the king's²⁵ court with Bigthan and Teresh,²⁶ the two eunuchs of the king, the ones who were guarding the court.²⁷ **13** And He both heard their rationalizations and searched-out their plans,²⁸ and he learned that they were preparing to lay their hands on²⁹ King Xerxes to kill him. So after thinking about it, he informed the king about them. **14** And the king probed the two eunuchs and found Mordecai's words to be true. And after they³⁰ confessed, they were led-away to be executed. **15** And the king wrote these things in the accounts for memory,

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

² [all instances of this name] MT / AT "Assueros" / LXX, Eth, Josephus, Midrash, Jospipon "Artaxerxes" / LXX(Luc), Vul "Asuerus"

³ [1A:1] LXX / AT add

⁴ [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)

⁵ [1A:3] AT omit "from Jerusalem"

⁶ [1A:4] AT "A voice" / OL omit "And behold!"

⁷ [1A:5] AT omit "great"

⁸ [1A:5] AT omit "great"

⁹ [1A:6] AT "at the sound of their cry"

¹⁰ [1A:6] AT moves "every nation prepared to war" (omitting "for a war") after the line ending with "upon the earth"

¹¹ [1A:6] AT omit "against a nation of righteous men"

¹² [1A:7] AT "...and gloom and chaos of war!"

¹³ [1A:8] AT omit "all of a righteous...perish." / OL has only "prepared 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."

¹⁴ [1A:8] AT "we"

¹⁵ [1A:8] AT "to the Lord"

¹⁶ [1A:9] AT "and because of"

¹⁷ [1A:10] AT omit "and"

¹⁸ [1A:10] AT "the rivers"

¹⁹ [1A:10] AT "swallowed"

²⁰ [1A:11] AT "he pondered what the dream meant and what the Mighty One was preparing to do"

²¹ [1A:11] AT "and his dream was hidden"

²² [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.

²³ [1A:12] LXX / AT add

²⁴ [1A:12] LXX (lit. "kept-calm") / AT "napped"

²⁵ [1A:12] LXX / AT add

²⁶ [1A:12] Emendation based on MT / LXX "Gabatha and Tharra" / AT "Astaos and Theudeus"

²⁷ [1A:12] LXX / AT omit "the ones who were guarding the court"

²⁸ literally "worries"

²⁹ [1A:13] AT "he overheard their words and their schemes as they were plotting to assault"

³⁰ [1A:14] AT "when the eunuchs"

and Mordecai wrote about these things in the accounts³¹ so that these things would be remembered.³² **16** And the king enjoined Mordecai to be doing service in the court of the king and to be conspicuously guarding every door.³³ And he gave gifts to him concerning these things.³⁴

17 And Haman, son of Hammedatha an Agagite,³⁵ was glorious before the face of the king. And he sought to do evil to Mordecai and all³⁶ his people in behalf of what he had said to the king concerning³⁷ the two eunuchs of the king,³⁸ because they had been executed.³⁹ ⁴⁰

CHAPTER 1B

And it came to pass after these accounts, during the reign of Xerxes (this was the Xerxes who ruled over 127 provinces from Hodu to Cush),⁴¹ **2** in those days⁴² while he⁴³ was occupying the royal throne in the stronghold⁴⁴ of Susa, **3** in the 3rd year of his reign,⁴⁵ he presided over a feast⁴⁶ for all his officers and ministers: the officers of the Persian and Median aristocracy, the nobles, and the governors of the provinces. And after these things,⁴⁷ **4** For as many as 180 days, he displayed the glorious riches of his kingdom and the resplendent wealth of his royal estate.⁴⁸

5 And at the end of these days of the marriage,⁴⁹ the king gave a seven⁵⁰ day long feast in the garden court of the royal palace for all the people, from great to small,⁵¹ who were in the stronghold⁵² of Susa. **6** There were white cotton draperies and violet hangings,⁵³ held by cords of crimson byssus from gold and silver rings on marble pillars and other stones.⁵⁴ Gold and silver couches were on the pavement, which was of porphyry, and marble, and mother-of-pearl, and colored stones.⁵⁵ And there were gossamer throws in many colors, embroidered with encircled roses.⁵⁶ **7** And liquor was served in golden and silver cups (each vessel differing from the other),⁶⁰ and a miniature cup made of ruby was on display that was worth 30,000 talents,⁶¹ and the royal wine flowed in abundance, as befitted the king's munificence.⁶² **8** And by ordinance of the king, the drinking was unstinted,⁶³ for he had instructed all the stewards of his household⁶⁴ to comply with the good pleasure of every human.⁶⁵ He also sent throughout the country, and proclaimed to the people that they might give up their work and rest and celebrate for many days in honor of his reign.⁶⁶

9 Queen Vashti also gave a feast for the women inside the royal house of King Xerxes.⁶⁷

10 On the seventh day, when the king's heart⁶⁸ was merry with wine, he instructed Mehuman,⁶⁹ Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carkas,⁷⁰ the seven eunuchs who attended King Xerxes,⁷¹ **11** to bring Queen Vashti⁷² into

³¹ [1A:15] AT "And Mordecai was written about in the book of the king"

³² [1A:15] LXX / AT add

³³ [1A:16] LXX / AT add

³⁴ [1A:16] AT / LXX "And he rewarded him for his actions."

³⁵ [1A:16] LXX (lit. "Bugaeaan" which always translates from Hebrew "Agagite") / AT "Makedonian"

³⁶ [1A:17] LXX / AT add

³⁷ [1A:17] LXX / AT add

³⁸ [1A:17] LXX / AT omit "of the king"

³⁹ [1A:17] LXX / AT, Vul add

⁴⁰ All sections in alternate font designate portions that are not present in the Masoretic Hebrew text, but are found in both Greek translations (AT & LXX). These sections are also present in Josephus, with an exception of the Mordecai dream sequences (Additions A & F).

⁴¹ [1B:1] MT, AT, OL, Josephus / LXX omit "to Cush"

⁴² [1B:1] MT, LXX / AT omit "in those days"

⁴³ [1B:1] MT / LXX "King Xerxes" / AT "Xerxes"

⁴⁴ [1B:2] MT, OL / LXX "city"

⁴⁵ [1B:3] MT, LXX / AT omit "in the 3rd year of his reign"

⁴⁶ [1B:3] MT, LXX / AT "wine party"

⁴⁷ [1B:5] MT, AT / LXX add

⁴⁸ [1B:5] MT, LXX / AT "displayed the wealth of the king's glory and the honor which he boasted"

⁴⁹ [1B:5] MT / LXX add "of the marriage" / AT add "of the deliverance"

⁵⁰ [1B:5] MT, AT, Josephus / LXX "six"

⁵¹ [1B:5] MT, AT / LXX omit "from great to small"

⁵² [1B:5] MT / LXX, AT "city" / Josephus omit altogether

⁵³ [1B:5] MT, AT, Josephus / LXX omit "of Susa"

⁵⁴ [1B:6] MT / LXX "It had been decorated with draperies of fine linen, and cotton hangings" / AT "And there were linen and cotton draperies, with lavender and scarlet embroidered in flowers"

⁵⁵ [1B:6] MT, AT, Luc / LXX add

⁵⁶ [1B:6] MT / LXX add / AT instead add "and gilded with gold" / Luc instead add "and gilded"

⁵⁷ [1B:6] MT, LXX / AT omit "and silver"

⁵⁸ [1B:6] MT / LXX "pavement, which was of emerald, mother-of-pearl, and marble" / AT "pavement, which was of emerald"

⁵⁹ [1B:6] MT / LXX add / AT only add "and encircled with roses"

⁶⁰ [1B:7] MT / LXX "The cups were made of gold and silver" / AT "And each of the golden cups were different"

⁶¹ [1B:7] MT, AT / LXX add

⁶² [1B:7] MT / LXX "and the wine was abundant and sweet, which the king himself drank" / AT "and the wine was royal, which the king drinks."

⁶³ [1B:8] MT, AT / LXX "stinted"

⁶⁴ [1B:7] MT / LXX, AT, Josephus omit "of his household"

⁶⁵ [1B:7] MT, AT / LXX "of he and his humans" // Josephus 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."

⁶⁶ [1B:8] Josephus add

⁶⁷ [1B:7] MT, LXX / AT "inside the royal palace of the king" / Josephus "inside her palace"

⁶⁸ [1B:10] MT / LXX "when he" / AT "when the king"

⁶⁹ [1B:10] MT / LXX "Haman" (supported by Targum)

⁷⁰ [1B:10] LXX "Bazan, Tharra, Barazi, Zatholha, Abataza, Tharaba"

⁷¹ [1B:10] MT, LXX (supported by Josephus) / AT "he instructed his servants"

⁷² [1B:11] MT, AT / LXX "bring the queen"

the king's presence wearing the royal crown,¹ in order that he might display her beauty to the peoples and the chiefs,² for she was lovely to behold.³ **12** But Queen⁴ Vashti⁵ refused to come at the king's word issued by the hand⁶ of the eunuchs. Therefore, the king's⁷ wrath flared up, and he burned with fury.

13 Then he consulted with the wise men⁸ versed in the law,⁹ because the king's business was conducted in general consultation with lawyers and jurists.¹⁰ **14** And he summoned Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memucan,¹¹ the seven¹² Persian and Median chiefs who were in the king's personal service and held first rank in the kingdom,¹³ **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?"¹⁴

16 And in the presence of the king and of the chiefs, Memucan¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ **17** For the queen's conduct will become known to all the women, *and* they will look with disdain upon their husbands when it is reported,¹⁷ 'King Xerxes commanded that Queen Vashti be brought into his presence, but she would not come!'¹⁸ **18** Yes, this very day, the Persian and Median ladies who hear of the queen's conduct will rebel against¹⁹ all the royal chiefs, with corresponding disdain and wrath.²⁰ **19** If it please the king and is acceptable to his thinking,²¹ let an irrevocable²² royal word be issued by him and inscribed among the laws of the Persians and Medes,²³ forbidding Vashti²⁴ to come into the presence of King Xerxes²⁵ 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 kingdom,²⁶ vast as it is,²⁷ all the women shall honor their husbands, from the greatest to the least."²⁸

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.²⁹ And so it was decided to send Vashti away, and to give her high position to another woman.³⁰ **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,³¹ to the effect that every man should be ruler in his own home,³² and speak according to the language of his *own* people.³³

CHAPTER 2

After this, when King Xerxes' wrath³⁴ had cooled, he no longer³⁵ thought over what Vashti had done and what had been decreed against her.³⁶

¹ [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"

² [1B:11] MT / LXX "that he might display her to the chiefs, and her beauty to the nations" / AT "before his army"

³ [1B:11] MT / LXX omit "to behold" / AT omit "for she was lovely to behold"

⁴ [1A:12] MT, LXX / AT omit "Queen" / Josephus has only "she"

⁵ [1B:12] Josephus add here "", in observance of the laws of the Persians, which forbid their women to be seen by strangers"

⁶ [1B:12] MT, AT / LXX, Josephus omit "the hand of"

⁷ [1B:12] MT, LXX (similar) / AT "Now when the news reached the king that Vashti denied his will, his"

⁸ [1B:13] MT, AT / LXX "with his friends"

⁹ [1B:13] Emendation / MT "times"

¹⁰ [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.'"

¹¹ [1B:14] LXX "summoned Arkesaeus, and Sarsathaeus, and Malisear" / AT (see below)

¹² [1B:14] MT / LXX, Luc omit "seven" / AT (see below)

¹³ [1B:14] MT / LXX "And...Maeadean officials who were close to the king and seated first by the king, came to him." / AT "And the Parsean and Maeadean officials, and those who see the face of the king, and those seated among royalty came to him."

¹⁴ [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."

¹⁵ [1B:16] MT / LXX, some Josephus "Mouchaios" / AT "Bougai" / other Josephus "Amouchai"

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

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

¹⁸ [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"

¹⁹ [1B:18] Emendation / MT "will tell"

²⁰ [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 husbands." / AT omit altogether

²¹ [1B:19] MT, LXX / AT add

²² [1B:19] MT, LXX / AT omit "irrevocable"

²³ [1B:19] MT, LXX / AT "and inscribed to all the lands and to all the nations"

²⁴ [1B:19] MT, AT / LXX "the queen"

²⁵ [1B:19] MT / LXX "forbidding...of him" / AT "making it know that Vashti rejected the word of the king."

²⁶ [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."

²⁷ [1B:20] MT / LXX, AT omit "vast as it is"

²⁸ [1B:20] MT / LXX, AT "from the poor to the rich."

²⁹ [1B:21] MT, LXX / AT "with the king's heart, and he acted readily on this advice."

³⁰ [1B:21] Josephus add

³¹ [1B:22] MT / LXX "sent word throughout all his kingdom, to every provinces, according to its own language"

³² [1B:22] MT / LXX "that men might be feared in their own homes"

³³ [1B:22] MT / LXX omit "and speak according to the language of his *own* people"

³⁴ [2:1] MT (supported by AT) / LXX "when the king's wrath"

³⁵ [2:1] MT / LXX add

2 Then the king's boys, his ministers, suggested, "Let beautiful chaste³⁷ young virgins 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 chaste³⁸ young virgins to the harem in the stronghold³⁹ of Susa. And let them be entrusted⁴⁰ Under the care of the royal eunuch Hegai,⁴¹ custodian of the women, let cosmetics and other attendance⁴² be given them. **4** Then the girl⁴³ who pleases the king shall be queen in place of Vashti."

This suggestion pleased the king, and he acted accordingly.⁴⁴

5 In the stronghold of Susa,⁴⁵ there was a certain human, a Judean named Mordecai, son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjamite. **6** He had been exiled from Jerusalem along with the captives who had been deported with Jeconiah, king of Judah,⁴⁶ whom Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babel, had deported.

7 And he was foster father to his cousin Hadassah the daughter of Abihail, that is, Esther,⁴⁷ for she had lost both father and mother.⁴⁸ The girl⁴⁹ was beautifully formed and lovely to behold.⁵⁰ On the death of her father and mother, Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter.⁵¹

8 So it came to pass, when the king's order and decree had been obeyed and⁵² many girls had been brought together to the stronghold⁵³ of Susa under the care of Hegai, that⁵⁴ Esther was also brought in to the royal palace under the care of⁵⁵ Hegai,⁵⁶ custodian of the women. **9** The girl pleased him and won his personal favor and compassion.⁵⁷ So he promptly furnished her with cosmetics and provisions. Then picking out seven maids for her from the royal⁵⁸ palace, he transferred both her and her maids to the best place in the harem.⁵⁹

10 Esther did not reveal her nationality or family, for Mordecai had commanded her not to do so. **11** Day by day Mordecai would walk about in front of the court of the harem, to learn how Esther was faring and what was to become of her.

12 Each girl, before going in turn to visit King Xerxes,⁶⁰ was required to complete the twelve months' of preparation that had been decreed for the women⁶¹ who were 400 in number.⁶² Of this period of beautifying treatment, six months were spent being anointed⁶³ with oil of myrrh, and the other six months with perfumes and cosmetics for the women. **13** Then, when the girl was to visit the king, she was allowed to take with her from the harem to the royal palace whatever she chose. **14** She would go in the evening and return in the morning to a second harem under the care of the royal eunuch Shaashgaz,⁶⁴ custodian of the concubines.⁶⁵ She could not return to the king unless he was pleased with her and⁶⁶ had her summoned by name.

15 As for Esther, daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai (who had adopted her as his own daughter)⁶⁷ when her turn came to visit the king, she did not ask for anything but what the royal eunuch Hegai,⁶⁸ custodian of the women, suggested. Yet she won the admiration of all who saw her.⁶⁹ **16** And Esther was led to King Xerxes in his palace in the 10th month, Tebeth,⁷⁰ in the 7th year of his

³⁶ [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."

³⁷ [2:2] MT, AT / LXX add (AT reads "Let us seek beautiful young virgins" & omit "for the king")

³⁸ [2:3] MT / LXX add

³⁹ [2:3] MT / LXX "city"

⁴⁰ [2:3] MT / LXX (supported by AT) add

⁴¹ [2:3] MT / AT "Gogaiois" / LXX omit altogether

⁴² [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 Gogaiois the eunuch, the custodian of the women."

⁴³ [2:4] MT, AT / LXX "woman"

⁴⁴ [2:4] MT, LXX / AT replaced "This suggestion...accordingly" with "And they readily acted accordingly."

⁴⁵ [2:5] MT, LXX, AT / Josephus "In Babel"

⁴⁶ [2:6] MT / LXX omit "along with...king of Judah" / AT omit "He had been...deported."

⁴⁷ [2:7] MT / LXX "to the daughter of Abihail, and her name was Esther" (LXX always translates "Abihail" to "Ameinadab", and OL always translates to "Abiel") / all other versions, except for the Vulgate omit the name "Hadassah"

⁴⁸ [2:7] AT replaces "was foster...mother" with "And he was faithfully bringing up Esther, a daughter of the brother of his father."

⁴⁹ [2:7] MT, LXX / AT "child"

⁵⁰ [2:7] MT, AT / LXX omit "and lovely to behold"

⁵¹ [2:7] LXX "he disciplined her as his own woman" / AT omit "On the death of her...own (daughter)." / Josephus would understand her to be his niece

⁵² [2:8] MT / LXX "when the king's order was heard"

⁵³ [2:8] MT / LXX "city"

⁵⁴ [2:8] AT replaces "So it came...Hegai, that" with only "And"

⁵⁵ [2:8] MT, AT / LXX omit "the royal palace under the care of"

⁵⁶ [2:8] MT, LXX / AT "Bougai"

⁵⁷ [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."

⁵⁸ [2:9] MT / LXX omit "royal"

⁵⁹ [2:9] MT / LXX "he provided well for her and her maids in the harem." / AT replaces "So he promptly...harem" with "So he promptly took charge of her; and beyond the seven young women, he granted his own attendants to her."

⁶⁰ [2:12] MT / LXX "visit the king"

⁶¹ [2:12] MT / LXX omit "that had been decreed for the women"

⁶² [2:12] Josephus add

⁶³ [2:12] MT / LXX add

⁶⁴ [2:14] MT / LXX "Hegai"

⁶⁵ [2:14] MT / LXX "women"

⁶⁶ [2:14] MT / LXX omit "was pleased with her and"

⁶⁷ [2:15] LXX / MT add

⁶⁸ [2:15] MT, Vul / LXX, OL, Eth omit "Hegai"

⁶⁹ [2:10-15] MT, LXX / AT omit "Esther did not reveal...who saw her."

⁷⁰ [2:16] MT / LXX, Josephus "in the 12th month, Adar"

reign.¹ When evening came, she was led in, and was dismissed in the morning.² **17** The king passionately desired Esther more than all other women, and of all the virgins she won his favor and benevolence.³ So he placed the royal diadem on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti.⁴ **18** Then the king gave a great feast in honor of Esther to all his officials and ministers for seven days,⁵ granting a holiday to all the provinces⁶ and bestowing gifts with royal bounty.⁷

19 From the time the virgins had been brought together, and while Mordecai was passing his time at the king's gate,⁸ **20** Esther had not revealed her family or her nationality,⁹ 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.^{10 11}

21 And during the time that Mordecai spent at the king's gate,¹² Bigthan and Teresh,¹³ two of the royal eunuchs who guarded the entrance,¹⁴ had plotted in anger to lay hands on King Xerxes. **22** When the plot became known¹⁵ to Mordecai, he told Queen¹⁶ Esther, who in turn informed the king for Mordecai.¹⁷ **23** So the matter was investigated and verified, and both of them were hanged on a gibbet.¹⁸ And this was written in the annals for the king's use in commendation of Mordecai's loyalty.¹⁹

CHAPTER 3 (includes Addition B)

After these events, it came to pass that²⁰ King Xerxes promoted Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite,²¹ to high rank, seating him above all his fellow officials.²² **2** All the king's servants who were at the royal gate²³ would kneel and bow down to Haman,²⁴ 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.²⁵

3 Then the king's servants who were at the royal gate²⁶ said to Mordecai, "Mordecai,²⁷ Why do you disobey the king's order and refuse to bow down before Haman?"²⁸

4 When they had reminded him²⁹ day after day and he would not listen to them, they informed Haman, to see whether Mordecai's explanation was acceptable,³⁰ since he had told them that he was a Judean.³¹ **5** When Haman observed that Mordecai would not kneel and bow down to him, he was provoked to jealousy and³² he was filled with anger. Since Haman was provoked, and all his rage was stirred up, he turned red, driving him from his sight.³³ **6** Moreover, he thought it was not enough to lay hands on Mordecai alone. Since they had told

¹ [2:16] AT "And when Esther was led in to the king, she was very pleasing to him."

² [2:16] MT, LXX / AT add

³ [2:17] MT / LXX omit "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"

⁴ [2:17] MT / LXX, AT omit "and made her queen in place of Vashti"

⁵ [2:18] MT / LXX "the king gave a banquet to all his friends and great men for seven days, and he celebrated the marriage 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"

⁶ [2:18] MT / LXX "granting a holiday to those under his rule" / AT "granting a holiday to all the provinces"

⁷ [2:18] MT / LXX, AT omit "and bestowing gifts with royal bounty"

⁸ [2:19] MT / LXX "But Mordecai served in the king's court." (omitting "From...together") / Josephus "Then her uncle moved from Babel to Susa in Perisa 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."

⁹ [2:20] MT / LXX omit "or nationality"

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

¹¹ [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."

¹² [2:21] MT / LXX "And because Mordecai had been promoted"

¹³ [2:21] MT, LXX(S-corrector), Josephus / most LXX omit "Bigthan and Teresh"

¹⁴ [2:21] MT / LXX "who were the king's chief bodyguards"

¹⁵ [2:22] Josephus add "but Barnabazos, the servant of one of these eunuchs, who was a Judean by race, discover their plot and revealed it to Mordecai"

¹⁶ [2:22] MT / LXX omit "Queen"

¹⁷ [2:22] MT / LXX "who in turn informed the king the details of the plot"

¹⁸ [2:23] MT / LXX "So the king interrogated the two eunuchs and hanged them."

¹⁹ [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

²⁰ [3:1] MT / LXX, AT add

²¹ [3:1] MT / LXX, AT "the Bugean" / Luc "the Makedonian" / Josephus (supported by Targum) "who was a descent of Amalek"

²² [3:1] MT / LXX, AT "all his friends"

²³ [3:2] MT / LXX "All those in the court" / Luc "All" / Josephus "The foreigners and Persians"

²⁴ [3:2] MT, LXX(similar) / AT "would bend over and bow down on the ground before him." / Josephus "bow down before him"

²⁵ [3:2] MT, LXX / AT add

²⁶ [3:3] MT / LXX "Then those in the king's palace" / AT "Then the king's servants"

²⁷ [3:3] MT, AT / LXX add

²⁸ [3:3] MT, LXX / AT add

²⁹ [3:4] MT(qere) / other MT "While they were reminding him"

³⁰ [3:4] MT / LXX "informed Haman that Mordecai had resisted the commands of the king"

³¹ [3:4] AT replaces "When they had...Judean" with "So he told them that he was a Judean. And they informed Haman about him."

³² [3:4] MT, LXX(similar) / AT "When Haman heard, he was provoked to jealousy, and"

³³ [3:6] MT, LXX / AT add

Haman of Mordecai's nationality,³⁴ he sought to destroy all the Judeans, Mordecai's people, throughout the realm of King Xerxes.³⁵

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,³⁶ and³⁷ the lot fell on the 13th day³⁸ of the 12th month,³⁹ Adar.

8 Then with a malicious heart Haman⁴⁰ kept speaking evil to the king about Israel, and⁴¹ said to King Xerxes, "Dispersed among the nations throughout the provinces of your kingdom, there is a certain people living apart,⁴² a people of war and insubordinate,⁴³ 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.⁴⁴ **9** If it please the king and this judgment is good in his heart,⁴⁵ let a decree be issued to destroy them,⁴⁶ and I will deliver to the procurators⁴⁷ 10,000⁴⁸ silver talents for deposit in the royal treasury in order that the kingdom might be rid of this plague and have peace."⁴⁹

10 And the king removed the signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman,⁵⁰ son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Judeans.⁵¹ **11** "Keep the silver," the king said to Haman,⁵² "but as for this people, do with them whatever you please."⁵³

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 in⁵⁴ the name of King Xerxes and sealed with the royal signet ring.⁵⁵ **13** And letters were sent by couriers to all the royal provinces,⁵⁶ that all the Judeans, young and old, including women and children, should be killed, destroyed, wiped out⁵⁷ in one day, the 13th day⁵⁸ of the 12th month, Adar, and that their goods should be seized as spoil.

14 Now this is a written-copy of the letter:⁵⁹

Great King Xerxes⁶⁰ writes to the chiefs and district-chiefs⁶¹ of the 127 provinces⁶² from Hodu as far as Cush, and the district-chiefs who have been subjected to them,⁶³ as follows:

15 After I came to be a prefect over many nations and to hold-might-over all *the* inhabited earth, I was made-to-wish not to lift myself up with the audacity of the authority, but to perpetually deal gently with mildness; to appoint for the *persons* who have been subjected to me, a lifestyle which is surgeless through every *situation*, affording both: my⁶⁴ kingdom to be more tame⁶⁵ and traversable up till its limits, and, also, to rejuvenate for myself the peace which is being yearned-for by all humans.

³⁴ [3:6] MT / LXX, AT omit "Moreover...nationality"

³⁵ [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."

³⁶ [3:7] MT / LXX add / Vul add instead "the nation of the Judeans should be destroyed"

³⁷ [3:7] LXX / MT, Vul "until"

³⁸ [3:7] AT / LXX "14th"

³⁹ [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 "n the 1st month...Adar."

⁴⁰ [3:8] MT / LXX, AT "he"

⁴¹ [3:8] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴² [3:8] MT / LXX, AT(?) omit "living apart"

⁴³ [3:8] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴⁴ [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."

⁴⁵ [3:9] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴⁶ [3:9] MT, LXX / AT "let his nation be given to me for destruction"

⁴⁷ [3:9] MT / LXX, AT omit "to the procurators"

⁴⁸ [3:9] Josephus "40,000"

⁴⁹ [3:9] Josephus add

⁵⁰ [3:10] MT, AT / LXX "And the king removed his signet ring and put it into the hands of Haman"

⁵¹ [3:10] MT / LXX "Haman to seal what had been written against the Judeans." / AT omit "son of...Judeans"

⁵² [3:11] MT, LXX / AT "to him"

⁵³ [3:11] MT (lit. "the people also, to do with them whatever you please") / LXX, AT "but treat the nation as you please."

⁵⁴ [3:11] MT / LXX "province from Hodu to Cush, to 127 provinces, and to the rulers of the nations in their own language in"

⁵⁵ [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."

⁵⁶ [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."]

⁵⁷ [3:13] MT / LXX "that the race of Judeans should be effaced"

⁵⁸ [3:13] MT / LXX omit "the 13th day"

⁵⁹ [3:14] AT "And he subjoined the following letter"

⁶⁰ [3:13] emendation based elsewhere on LXX's mistranslation / manuscript "Artxerxes"

⁶¹ [3:14] LXX, Josephus / AT add

⁶² [3:14] likely Hebrew original (see Esther1B:1) / LXX "countries"

⁶³ [3:14] AT omit "and the district-chiefs who have been subjected to them"

⁶⁴ literally "the"

⁶⁵ [3:15] many "quiet"

16 But after I enquired of my counselors as to how this would be accomplished,¹ Haman, who excels² among us in sound-mindedness, and who has been shown-off in his unchanging goodwill and firm faithfulness, and who has gained³ for himself *the* second prerogative in the kingdom, 17 exhibited us that, 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 its laws, is withstanding against every other nation as well as on the other, continuously disregarding the edicts of kings, so that a collective-government which has been blamelessly guided by us is not able to be being set-down.⁴

18 Therefore, we have taken-note that this most-singular nation, which is continually being set into a *state of leading itself* against every human, is introducing strange and divergent laws, and is ill-willed toward our affairs,⁵ completing the worst evil things, so that a stability of the kingdom is not being obtained.⁶ 19 Therefore, we have ordered that one and all of all of the individuals who have been signified to you* in the things which have been written by Haman (the *one* who has been assigned over the *state* affairs and is a second father to us), *will*, along-with their women and children, to utterly perish by the sabers of their enemies, without any pity or sparing,⁷ on the 13th day⁸ of the 12th month, that is the month of Adar which is Dystros, of the current year;⁹ 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* also now full-of-ill-will) may, in a single day, forcibly¹⁰ come-down together into the Netherworld, that they may, through *this end*, be affording our affairs to be well-constituted and undisturbed into the future time.¹¹

But whoever shall hide the Judean race will be without a place to live, not only among humans but also among birds, and he shall be consumed by holy fire, and his possessions shall revert to the State. Farewell!¹²

21 Now¹³ 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.¹⁴ 22 Now¹⁵ The couriers set out, hastened by the king's word, and the decree was given in the stronghold of Susa.¹⁶ And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa¹⁷ was thrown into confusion.¹⁸

CHAPTER 4A

When Mordecai learned all that was happening, he tore his garments, put on sackcloth and ashes, and walked through the square of the city crying out loudly and bitterly.¹⁹ An innocent people is condemned to death!²⁰ 2 And he even came as far as the royal gate and stood there,²¹ for no one clothed in sackcloth and ashes²² was allowed to enter the royal gate.²³ 3 Likewise in each of the provinces, wherever the king's legal enactment reached,²⁴ the Judeans went into deep

¹ literally "led"

² [3:16] AT "who has excelled"

³ literally "borne-away"

⁴ [3:17] AT "so that the kingdom can never attain stability"

⁵ [3:18] AT "commands"

⁶ [3:19] AT "so that we may never be established in the sole-rule directed by us"

⁷ literally "without all pity and sparing"

⁸ [3:19] Emendation / LXX, AT, Josephus "14th day"

⁹ [3:19] AT omit "of the current year"

¹⁰ [3:20] AT omit "forcibly"

¹¹ [3:20] ("future" is literally "afterward") / AT "at last be stable and never again furnish us with affairs for concern."

¹² [3:20] LXX, AT / OL add

¹³ [3:21] MT / LXX add

¹⁴ [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]

¹⁵ [3:22] MT / LXX add

¹⁶ [3:22] MT / LXX "The matter proceeded quickly even to Susa." [see below for AT]

¹⁷ [3:22] MT / LXX omit "of Susa" [see below for AT]

¹⁸ [3:21-22] This entire paragraph in the AT is condensed to "And in Susa this decree was posted."

¹⁹ [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 Susa 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..."

²⁰ [4A:1] MT, AT / LXX, Josephus add

²¹ [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"

²² [4A:2] MT, AT / LXX add

²³ [4A:2] MT / LXX "the courtyard" / AT "the royal precincts"

²⁴ [4A:3] MT / LXX "provinces, where the letters were posted"

mourning, with fasting, weeping, and lament;²⁵ they all slept on sackcloth and ashes.

4 And Esther's²⁶ maids and eunuchs came and told her. Overwhelmed with anguish upon hearing what had happened,²⁷ she sent garments for Mordecai to put on, so that he might take off his sackcloth; but he refused.²⁸ 5 Esther then summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs whom he had placed at her service,²⁹ and commanded him to find out what Mordecai's action meant and the reason for it.³⁰ 6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the public square in front of the royal gate.³¹ 7 And Mordecai told him everything that had happened, as well as the exact amount of silver.³² Haman had promised to pay to the royal³³ treasury for the slaughter of the Judeans. 8 He also gave him a copy of the written decree³⁴ which had been promulgated in Susa 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.³⁵

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,³⁶ and speak to the king about us. Save us from death."

So Hathach returned to Esther and told her everything³⁷ Mordecai had said.³⁸

10 Then Esther replied to Hathach and gave him this message for Mordecai,³⁹ 11 "All the servants of the king and the people of his provinces know that any man⁴⁰ or woman who⁴¹ goes to the king in the inner court⁴² without being summoned, suffers the automatic penalty of death,⁴³ unless the king extends to him the golden scepter, thus sparing his life.⁴⁴ Now as for me, I have not been summoned to the king⁴⁵ for thirty days. And how can I go without being summoned?"⁴⁶

12 All of⁴⁷ Esther's words were reported by Hathach⁴⁸ to Mordecai. 13 Then Mordecai had this reply brought to Esther,⁴⁹ "Do not think in your soul⁵⁰ that because you are in the king's palace, that you alone of all the Judeans will escape.⁵¹ 14 Even if you remain silent at a time like this, relief and deliverance will come to the Judeans from another source;⁵² but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have obtained the royal dignity⁵³ for such a time as this?"

15 Then Esther sent this response back to Mordecai,⁵⁴ 16 "Go and assemble all the Judeans who are in Susa;⁵⁵ fast on my behalf, all of you, not eating or drinking, night or day, for three days.⁵⁶ And I, along with my maids will also fast in the same way. Prepared in this manner,⁵⁷ I will go to the king, contrary to the law.⁵⁸ If I perish, I perish!"⁵⁹

²⁵ [4A:3] MT / LXX omit "with fasting, weeping, and lament" / AT omit "Likewise in each....sackcloth and ashes."

²⁶ [4A:3] MT, (supported by AT) / LXX "So the queen's"

²⁷ [4A:4] MT / LXX add

²⁸ [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."

²⁹ [4A:4] MT / LXX "Hathach, her eunuch who was placed at her service" / Josephus "Hathach, who happened to be nearby"

³⁰ [4A:5] MT / LXX "and sent him so she might learn the truth from Mordecai."

³¹ [4A:5-6] MT / LXX omit "So Hathach went out...royal gate" / AT omit "Esther then summoned...royal gate"

³² [4A:7] MT / LXX, OL "as well as the 10,000 talents"

³³ [4A:7] MT / LXX omit "royal"

³⁴ [4A:7] MT / LXX omit "of the written decree"

³⁵ [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.'"

³⁶ [4A:8] LXX / AT "upon God"

³⁷ [4A:9] LXX, Vul / MT omit "everything" / AT "So he made known to her the tribulation of Israel"

³⁸ [4A:9] MT / LXX "So Hathach returned and told her everything" / AT "So he made known to her the tribulation of Israel"

³⁹ [4A:10] MT / LXX "And Esther replied to Hathach, 'Go to Mordecai, and say' / AT "And she sent to him saying as follows"

⁴⁰ literally "human"

⁴¹ [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"

⁴² [4A:11] MT, LXX / AT omit "in the inner court"

⁴³ [4A:11] MT / LXX "there is no deliverance for him." / AT "will be subject to death."

⁴⁴ [4A:11] MT, LXX / AT omit "thus sparing his life"

⁴⁵ [4A:11] MT, LXX / AT "to him"

⁴⁶ [4A:11] MT, LXX / AT, OL, Vul add

⁴⁷ [4A:9] LXX, Vul / MT omit "All of"

⁴⁸ [4A:13] MT / LXX, Vul add / AT omit "All of Esther's....to Mordecai"

⁴⁹ [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"

⁵⁰ [4:13] MT / LXX "May you not speak to yourself"

⁵¹ [4A:13] MT / LXX "Do not imagine that you alone of all the Judeans in the kingdom will escape." / AT omit altogether

⁵² [4A:14] AT "If you ignore your nation and do not help them, God will be their help and salvation"

⁵³ [4A:14] MT / LXX, AT "have been made queen"

⁵⁴ [4A:15] MT / LXX "Then Esther sent the messenger that came to her back to Mordecai, saying" / AT "Then the queen set, saying"

⁵⁵ [4A:16] Josephus "Go to Susa, and assemble all the Judeans who are there."

⁵⁶ [4A:16] MT, LXX / AT "Propose a service and earnestly beg God."

⁵⁷ [4A:16] MT / LXX (incorrectly) "Then prepared"

⁵⁸ [4A:16] MT, LXX / AT "the king uninvited"

⁵⁹ [4A:16] MT / LXX "even if I must perish." / AT "even if it is necessary that I perish."

17 So Mordecai went away and did exactly as Esther had commanded.¹

CHAPTER 4B (Addition C)

And recalling all of the works *which the Lord had done*,² he besought the Lord, and said, **2** “O Lord Lord, King of all, everything is in your authority,³ and there is no one able to oppose⁴ you when you want to save the house of Israel. **3** Because you made the heavens and the earth and every marvelous thing under the heavens. **4** You are the Lord⁵ of all, and there is no one who can array against you, Lord.⁶ **5** You know all things and the people of Israel. You recognize, O Lord, that it was not in outrage nor in arrogance⁷ nor in love-of-glory that I acted in this way, by refusing to bow-down to the arrogant⁸ Haman. **6** I would have gladly kissed *the soles of his feet* for *the salvation*⁹ of Israel. **7** Instead, I acted as I did so as not to place *the glory of a human* above that of God.¹⁰ And I will not bow-down to anyone but you, my Lord. And it is not in arrogance that I am acting in this manner.¹¹

8 “And now, Lord, the God, the King, the God of¹² Abraham, spare your people, because *our enemies* are planning our ruin¹³ and are desiring to slay and abolishing the inheritance which was yours from *the beginning*. **9** Do not disregard your portion, which you redeemed for yourself¹⁴ out of *the land of Egypt*. **10** Hear my¹⁵ request, and be generous to your portion¹⁶ and turn our mourning into joy:¹⁷ in this way, we shall live to sing praise to your name, O Lord.¹⁸ And do not silence those who praise¹⁹ you.”

11 All Israel also cried out with all their strength, because death was staring them in the face.²⁰

12 And Queen Esther, seized with mortal anguish, likewise took refuge with the Lord. **13** She took off her glorious robes²¹ and every sign of her magnificence, and she put on robes of²² distress and mourning. And in place of her grand ointments, she covered her head with ashes and dung. She humbled her body severely, and all of her festive ornamentation was put aside, *and her hair* was wholly disheveled.²³

14 Then she pleaded with *the Lord God of Israel*,²⁴ and said, “My Lord, our King, you alone are God.²⁵ Help me, who am alone²⁶ and have no helper but you, **15** because I am taking danger into my *own* hand. **16** From my birth, I always heard among my father’s tribe²⁷ that you, O Lord, chose²⁸ Israel from among all the nations, and our fathers from among all their ancestors, appointing Israel over them²⁹ as a perpetual inheritance, and that you fulfilled all your promises to them; you provided them with as much as they asked for.³⁰

17 “And now,³¹ we have sinned in your sight, and you have delivered us into the hands of our enemies, **18** because³² we glorified their gods. You are righteous, O Lord! **19** And now, they are not satisfied with our bitter

slavery; instead, they placed their hands on the hands of their idols³³ **20** in order to abolish the limitation which you have pronounced, and³⁴ to eliminate your inheritance, and to close *the* mouths of those who praise you, and to extinguish *the* glory of your house and your sacrificial-altar; **21** and to open *the* mouths of nations³⁵ to acclaim their worthless *gods*, and to marvel at an earthly king for an age. **22** O Lord, do not relinquish your scepter to those that are nought.³⁶ And do not let them ridicule³⁷ over our fall, instead³⁸ turn their own counsel against them, but make an example of *the man* who instigated this evil³⁹ against us.

23 “Be mindful of us,⁴⁰ O Lord. But manifest yourself to us⁴¹ in the time of our distress, and give me courage,⁴² King of the gods and Chief of every dominion. **24** In the presence of the lion,⁴⁴ put persuasive speech into my mouth and give favor to my speech;⁴⁵ and turn⁴⁶ his heart to hate the *one* who is warring against us, so that he and those who are in league with him may come to their end. **25** But save us by your mighty⁴⁷ hand, and help me, who am alone and have no one except you, O Lord.⁴⁸

“You know all things. **26** And you recognize that I hate *the* glory of lawless *men*, and abhor *the* bed of uncircumcised *men* or of any foreigner. **27** You recognize, O Lord,⁴⁹ that I am under constraint, that I⁵⁰ abhor the sign of grandeur which rests upon my head on days when I appear in public; I abhor it like a menstrual cloth, and do not wear it on days of rest.⁵¹ **28** And I, your slave-woman, never ate at a table of Haman,⁵² and I have not graced the banquet of a king, nor drunk wine of libations. **29** And from the day I was brought here till now,⁵³ your slave-woman has had no joy except in you, O Lord, God of Abraham.⁵⁴ **30** O God, who is stronger than all,⁵⁵ hear *the* voice of those in despair. And save us from *the* hand of wicked *men*, and deliver me, Lord, from the grip of my fear.⁵⁶

CHAPTER 5 (includes Addition D)

And on the third day, when she had ceased praying, Esther⁵⁷ undressed of her serving robes and washed her body with water and applied cosmetics,⁵⁸ and clothed herself with her glory.⁵⁹ **2** And having become splendidly arrayed, after calling on the all-seeing⁶⁰ God and savior, she took the two maids with 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 it⁶¹ was lovely, but her heart was constrained with the fear⁶² of the Lord, in the terror of death, because death was before her eyes.⁶³

6 And she passed through all⁶⁴ the doors till she stood in the inner courtyard, looking toward the royal house,⁶⁵ while the king⁶⁶ was seated on the throne of his kingdom in the audience chamber, facing the palace doorway.⁶⁷ And he was clothed in full robes of splendor, and covered with gold and very-expensive stones, so that he made her extremely fearful.⁶⁸ He saw Queen

¹ [4A:16] MT, LXX / AT “So Mordecai did so.”

² [4B:1] LXX / AT “Recalling what he [the Lord] had done”

³ [4B:2] LXX / AT “Master of everything, by whose power all things exist”

⁴ [4B:2] LXX / AT “resist”

⁵ [4B:4] LXX / AT “Master”

⁶ [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 no one who can resist you, Lord.”

⁷ [4B:5] LXX / AT omit “or arrogance”

⁸ [4B:5] LXX / AT “uncircumcised”

⁹ [4B:6] LXX / AT “sake”

¹⁰ [4B:7] LXX / AT “honor of anyone above your glory, Master”

¹¹ [4B:7] LXX / AT “but you, the True One. And I will not do it even under duress.”

¹² [4B:8] LXX / many LXX “Lord, O King of” / AT, Vul “Lord, who made a covenant with”

¹³ [4B:8] LXX / AT “enemies advanced to ruin us”

¹⁴ [4B:9] LXX / AT omit “for yourself”

¹⁵ [4B:10] LXX / AT “our”

¹⁶ [4B:10] LXX / AT “inheritance”

¹⁷ [4B:10] AT / LXX “feasting”

¹⁸ [4B:10] LXX / AT “to you”

¹⁹ [4B:10] LXX / AT “who sing praise”

²⁰ [4B:11] LXX / AT omit “All Israel...in the face.”

²¹ [4B:13] Origen “ornamentation”

²² [4B:13] LXX / AT omit “robes of”

²³ [4B:13] AT “aside, and clothed her lovely hair with humility”

²⁴ [4B:14] LXX / AT omit “God of Israel” / OL omit “Then she pleaded...Israel”

²⁵ [4B:14] LXX / AT “saying, “Lord, King, you are my only ally” / OL “saying, “The God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.”

²⁶ [4B:14] LXX / AT “insignificant”

²⁷ [4B:15] LXX / AT “book”

²⁸ [4B:16] LXX / AT “redeemed”

²⁹ [4B:16] LXX / AT add

³⁰ [4B:16] LXX / AT “fulfilled what you said to them; you...for.”

³¹ [4B:17] LXX / AT omit “And now”

³² [4B:18] LXX / AT “if”

³³ [4B:19] LXX, AT / Vul “but they attribute the strength of their own hands to the power of their idols”

³⁴ [4B:20] LXX / AT omit “and”

³⁵ [4B:21] LXX / AT “enemies”

³⁶ [4B:22] LXX / AT “to the enemies hating you”

³⁷ [4B:22] LXX / AT “delight”

³⁸ [4B:22] LXX / AT omit “instead”

³⁹ [4B:23] LXX / AT add

⁴⁰ [4B:23] LXX / AT “Appear to us”

⁴¹ [4B:23] LXX / AT add

⁴² [4B:23] LXX / AT “and do not crush us.”

⁴³ [4B:17-23] LXX / AT omit “King of the gods and Ruler of every dominion” / Josephus, OL omit “But now we have sinned...dominion.”

⁴⁴ [4B:24] LXX / AT “king”

⁴⁵ [4B:24] LXX / AT add “and give favor to my speech” / OL add “and make me most attractive before him”

⁴⁶ [4B:24] LXX / AT “change”

⁴⁷ [4B:25] LXX / AT add

⁴⁸ [4B:25] LXX / AT omit “who am alone...O Lord.” And has only “because”

⁴⁹ [4B:27] LXX / AT add

⁵⁰ [4B:27-27] LXX(A) omit “abhor the bed...that I” by scribal error

⁵¹ [4B:27] OL omit “when I appear in public...private.” / AT add “and I do not wear it except” before “on days” & omit “and do not wear it in private”

⁵² [4B:28] LXX / AT “at their tables”

⁵³ [4B:29] LXX / AT omit “till now”

⁵⁴ [4B:29] LXX / AT “you, Master” / OL omit “God of Abraham”

⁵⁵ [4B:30] LXX / AT “And now, you who are strong over all”

⁵⁶ [4B:30] LXX / AT “wicked. Take me, Lord, from the grip of my fear.”

⁵⁷ [5:1] MT, AT / LXX “she”

⁵⁸ [5:1] OL add

⁵⁹ [5:1] LXX, AT, OL / MT “put on royalty”

⁶⁰ [5:1] LXX / AT “knowing”

⁶¹ [5:1] LXX / AT omit “was as joyous as it”

⁶² [5:1] LXX, (OL), Josephus / AT omit “with the fear”

⁶³ [5:1] OL add “constrained and fearing the Lord...eyes.”

⁶⁴ [5:1] most LXX / LXX(A), AT omit “all”

⁶⁵ [5:1] MT / LXX, AT “stood before the king.” / OL “entered the inner hall”

⁶⁶ [5:1] MT, AT / LXX “while he” / OL “and King Ahasuerus”

⁶⁷ [5:1] MT / LXX, AT, OL omit “in the audience chamber, facing the palace doorway”

⁶⁸ [5:1] OL “And he was dressed in purple and precious stones and had a gold scepter in his hand.”

Esther standing in the courtyard.¹ **7** And raising his countenance, ablaze like a bull² with glory, he, in *the* height 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?"³ and the queen collapsed,⁴ and changed her color as she fainted, stooping over the head of the maid in front of her.

8 And God of the Judeans and the Lord of all creatures⁵ changed the spirit of the king and turned his anger⁶ to meekness, and she obtained favor in his sight.⁷ And in distress, he sprang from his throne, and took her in his arms until she recovered, and he comforted her with reassuring words, and spoke to her,⁸ **9** "What is it, Esther? I am your brother. Take courage! **10** You shall not die due to this general ordinance⁹ of ours. **11** Come near! The threat is not against you. Look, the scepter is in your hand."¹⁰

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.¹¹ And he embraced her and spoke, "Speak to me."

13 And she said to him, "My lord,¹² I saw you as a messenger of a god, and my heart was troubled from fear of your glory.¹³ **14** Because you are marvelous, my lord, and your countenance is full of favor."¹⁴

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

17 And the king said to her, "What is it, Queen¹⁶ Esther? And what is your request? Even if it is half of the kingdom, it shall be granted to you."¹⁷

18 And Esther said, "Today is my special day. Therefore,¹⁸ if it pleases the king, let the king and your friend¹⁹ Haman come today²⁰ to a banquet which I have prepared for him."

19 And the king said, "Have Haman make haste, that he²¹ may fulfill the wish of Esther." So the king and Haman went to the banquet which Esther had prepared,²² a sumptuous meal.²³

20 And during the drinking of the wine,²⁴ the king said to Esther, "Queen Esther,²⁵ 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."²⁶

21 And Esther²⁷ said, "This is my petition and request: if I have found favor in the sight of the king²⁸ and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request,²⁹ let the king and Haman come tomorrow to a banquet which I shall prepare for them; and tomorrow³⁰ I will do as the king has asked."³¹

So the king said, "Do as you want."³²

22 And that day, Haman went out from the king, very³³ happy and with a merry heart. But when Haman saw Mordecai the Judean³⁴ at the royal gate,³⁵ and that he did not rise, nor trembled in his presence, he was infuriated with Mordecai. **23** But Haman restrained himself and³⁶ went into his own house; and he called and brought³⁷ his friends³⁸ and his wife Zeresh. **24** And Haman³⁹

¹ [5:2] MT / LXX, AT, OL omit "He saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard"

² [5:2] LXX / AT, OL "features ablaze like a bull" / Josephus (error) "features uncovered"

³ [5:2] OL add

⁴ [5:2] LXX / AT "the queen was fearful"

⁵ [5:2] OL add

⁶ [5:2] LXX / AT add

⁷ [5:2] MT / LXX, AT omit "and she obtained favor in his sight"

⁸ [5:2] LXX / AT omit "until she recovered" & "with reassuring words and spoke to her"

⁹ [5:2] LXX / AT "act"

¹⁰ [5:2] LXX / Vul "Come near and touch the scepter." / AT "And the threat does not apply to you. See, the scepter is in your hand" / OL (supported by Josephus) "See, the scepter is in your hand."

¹¹ [5:2] MT / LXX, AT "scepter and placed it on her neck."

¹² [5:2] LXX / AT omit "My lord"

¹³ [5:2] LXX / AT "my heart melted from the majesty of your rage."

¹⁴ [5:2] LXX / AT omit "Because you are marvelous...favor."

¹⁵ [5:2] LXX / AT "And upon her face was a measure of sweat."

¹⁶ [5:3] MT / LXX, AT omit "Queen" / LXX, AT also omit "to her"

¹⁷ [5:3] MT, LXX / AT "Esther? Tell me, and I will do it for you, up to half the kingdom."

¹⁸ [5:3] MT / LXX add / AT also add, but has "Today" instead of "Tomorrow"

¹⁹ [5:4] MT, LXX / AT, OL add

²⁰ [5:3] MT, LXX / AT "tomorrow"

²¹ [5:5] MT / LXX, AT "we"

²² [5:5] MT, AT / LXX "had spoken about"

²³ [5:5] MT, LXX / AT add

²⁴ [5:6] MT, LXX / AT omit "During the drinking of the wine"

²⁵ [5:6] MT / LXX add "Queen Esther" / AT add "Queen"

²⁶ [5:6] MT, AT, Josephus / LXX omit "And what is your request...even if it be half the kingdom"

²⁷ [5:7] MT, AT / LXX "she"

²⁸ [5:8] MT, LXX / AT "favor before you, O King"

²⁹ [5:8] MT, AT / LXX omit "and if it pleases...my request"

³⁰ [5:8] LXX / MT omit "tomorrow" by scribal error

³¹ [5:8] MT / LXX "I will do these same things" / AT "I will do likewise"

³² [5:8] MT, LXX / AT add

³³ [5:9] MT / LXX add

³⁴ [5:9] MT / LXX add

³⁵ [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."

³⁶ [5:10] MT / LXX, AT omit "restrained himself and"

³⁷ [5:10] MT / LXX "and he called" / AT "and he gathered together"

³⁸ [5:10] MT, LXX / AT "sons"

³⁹ [5:11] MT / LXX "he"

recounted to them the glory of his riches, and the large number of his sons, and everything with which he king had promoted him⁴⁰ and how *the king* had placed him above the officials and royal servants.⁴¹

24 And Haman said, "Yes, Queen Esther⁴² invited no one to the banquet she has prepared⁴³ with the king, except for me;⁴⁴ and I have been invited by her again tomorrow, together with the king.⁴⁵ **25** But none of this satisfies me as long as I continue to see⁴⁶ Mordecai the Judean sitting at the king's gate.⁴⁷ And he does not bow down to me."⁴⁸

26 And his wife Zeresh and all his friends⁴⁹ 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,⁵⁰ Have a gibbet,⁵¹ 50⁵² cubits in height, be made for you and be set up.⁵³ And in the morning speak to the king, and have them hang Mordecai on it.⁵⁴ Then go to the banquet with the king in good cheer."

And this *suggestion* pleased Haman, and he had the gibbet erected.⁵⁵

CHAPTER 6

But On that night, the king was unable to sleep and he stayed awake.⁵⁶ 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 read⁵⁷ to him.⁵⁸ **2** And the passage was found in which Mordecai reported Bigthan and Teresh,⁵⁹ two of the king's eunuchs who guarded the entrance, for seeking to lay hands on King Xerxes.⁶⁰ 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."⁶¹

3 And the king said to his servants,⁶² "What glory or favor was done⁶³ to Mordecai the savior⁶⁴ for this?"⁶⁵

And the king's boys, his ministers, said, "Nothing was done for him."⁶⁶

4 But while the king was inquiring about Mordecai's goodwill, behold, Haman was in the court!⁶⁷

And the king said, "Who is in the court?"⁶⁸

And it was Haman.⁶⁹ Now Haman had entered⁷⁰ the outer court of the king's house⁷¹ before the usual hour⁷² 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."⁷³

And the king said, "Let him come in."⁷⁴

6 So Haman entered, and the king said to him,⁷⁵ "Knowing that you are the only friend loyal to me, I beg you to advise me¹ What should be done for the man whom the king delights to honor?"²

⁴⁰ [5:11] MT / LXX "riches that the king had bestowed on him"

⁴¹ [5:11] MT / LXX "had made him to take precedence and be leader of the kingdom." / AT omit "And to them...royal servants."

⁴² [5:12] MT / LXX (supported by AT) "the queen"

⁴³ [5:12] MT / LXX (supported by AT) omit "she has prepared"

⁴⁴ [5:12] AT ". And he boasted saying, "The queen invited no one on her special day, except for the king and me alone."

⁴⁵ [5:12] MT / LXX, AT omit "together with the king"

⁴⁶ [5:13] MT, LXX / AT "Yet this alone distresses me: whenever I see"

⁴⁷ [5:13] MT / LXX "Judean in the court." / AT "Judean in the royal court."

⁴⁸ [5:13] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴⁹ [5:14] MT, LXX / AT omit "and all his friends"

⁵⁰ [5:14] MT, LXX / AT add

⁵¹ literally "wood" (and also in all other occurrences of this word"

⁵² [5:26] some Josephus "60"

⁵³ [5:14] MT / LXX "be made for you" / AT "be made for you and be set up"

⁵⁴ [5:14] MT, LXX / AT "And hang him on the gibbet. And in the morning, you shall ask the king about him."

⁵⁵ [5:14] MT, LXX / AT "This pleased Haman, and he did so."

⁵⁶ [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"]

⁵⁷ [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"

⁵⁸ [6:1] LXX, AT / MT "to the king"

⁵⁹ [6:1] MT / LXX, AT omit "Bigthan and Teresh"

⁶⁰ [6:2] MT, LXX / AT omit "who guarded the entrance...King Xerxes"

⁶¹ [6:2] MT, LXX / AT, OL add

⁶² [6:3] MT, LXX / AT add

⁶³ [6:3] MT, LXX / AT "What glory or favor should we do"

⁶⁴ [6:3] MT, LXX / AT add

⁶⁵ [6:3] MT, AT / LXX omit "for this"

⁶⁶ [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."

⁶⁷ [6:4] MT, AT / LXX add

⁶⁸ [6:4] MT, LXX / AT "is outside"

⁶⁹ [6:4] MT, LXX / AT add

⁷⁰ [6:4] MT, LXX / AT "had come early"

⁷¹ [6:4] MT / LXX, AT omit "the outer court of the king's house"

⁷² [6:5] MT, LXX / Luc, Josephus add

⁷³ [6:5] MT, LXX / AT omit "he had raised...in the court."

⁷⁴ [6:5] MT / LXX "Call him.?" / AT "And the king said to bring him in."

⁷⁵ [6:6] MT, AT ["he" instead of "Haman"] / LXX "And the king said to Haman"

Now Haman said in his heart,³ “Whom would the king delight to honor more than me?” **7** So he said to the king,⁴ “For the man whom the king delights to honor: **8** there should be brought⁵ the royal⁶ robe and a gold necklace⁷ which the king has worn,⁸ and the royal⁹ horse on which the king rode when the royal crown was placed on his head.¹⁰ **9** And the robe and the horse¹¹ should be consigned to one of the king’s most-noble officials,¹² who must clothe the man the king delights to honor;¹³ and have him ride on the horse through a plaza of the city, and cry out before him, saying,¹⁴ ‘This is what is done for the man who esteems the king,¹⁵ whom the king delights to honor!’”

10 Then the king said to Haman, “Make haste! Take the robe and horse as you have proposed,¹⁶ and do this for Mordecai the Judean, who is sitting at the king’s gate.¹⁷ And do not omit anything you proposed.”¹⁸

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.¹⁹

11 So 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 sackcloth!”

And Mordecai was troubled, like one who is dying; and in distress he took off the sackcloth, 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 Haman²⁰ brought him on horseback through a plaza of the city,²¹ and cried out before him, saying,²² ‘This is what is done for the man who esteems the king,²³ whom the king delights to honor!’”

12 Then Mordecai returned to the king’s gate,²⁴ and Haman hurried²⁵ into his house grieving and with his head covered. **13** And when he told his wife Zeresh and all his friends²⁶ everything which had happened to him, his advisers²⁷ and his wife Zeresh said to him,²⁸ “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,²⁹ for a living god is with him.”³⁰

14 While they were still speaking with him, the king’s eunuchs³¹ arrived and hurried Haman³² off to the banquet which Esther had prepared.³³ And because of this, he was cheered up. And when he had traveled the distance, he reclined with them on time.³⁴

CHAPTER 7

So the king and Haman went to the banquet³⁵ with Queen Esther.³⁶ **2** Again, on this second day, during the drinking of the wine,³⁷ the king said to Esther, “What

¹ [6:6] MT, LXX, AT / Josephus add

² [6:6] MT / LXX “man whom I wish to honor” / AT “man who esteems the king, whom the king wishes to honor.”

³ [6:6] MT / LXX “Haman thought within himself” / AT “Haman reasoned, saying”

⁴ [6:7] MT / LXX “So he replied to the king” / AT “So Haman replied”

⁵ [6:8] MT, AT / LXX “honor, let the king’s servants bring”

⁶ [6:8] MT, AT / LXX “linen”

⁷ [6:8] MT, AT, LXX / Josephus add

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

⁹ [6:8] MT, LXX / AT add

¹⁰ [6:8] MT / LXX, AT “which the king rides” (omitting “when the...his head”)

¹¹ [6:9] MT / LXX “And it” / AT “And these things”

¹² [6:9] MT / LXX, AT “friends”

¹³ [6:9] MT, LXX / AT omit “the king wishes to honor”

¹⁴ [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”

¹⁵ [6:9] MT, LXX / AT add

¹⁶ [6:10] MT, AT / LXX replaces “Make haste!...proposed” with “You have spoken well.”

¹⁷ [6:10] MT / LXX “who serves in the court” / AT “who is sitting at the gate” /

¹⁸ [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.”

¹⁹ [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”

²⁰ [6:11] MT, LXX / AT add “showing reverence...And Haman” (supported by Josephus)

²¹ [6:11] MT / AT “And Haman led the horse outside”

²² [6:11] MT, AT / LXX add

²³ [6:10] MT, LXX / AT add

²⁴ [6:12] MT / LXX “to the court” / AT “to his home”

²⁵ [6:12] MT / LXX, AT omit “hurried”

²⁶ [6:13] MT / LXX omit “all” / AT omit “and all his friends”

²⁷ [6:13] MT, AT / LXX “friends”

²⁸ [6:13] MT, LXX / AT omit “to him”

²⁹ [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”

³⁰ [6:13] MT, Vul / LXX, AT, OL, Eth, Coptic, Josephus add

³¹ [6:14] MT, LXX / AT “, someone” / Josephus “, Esther’s eunuchs”

³² [6:14] MT, LXX / AT “him”

³³ [6:14] MT, LXX / AT omit “had prepared”

³⁴ [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.”

³⁵ [7:1] MT / LXX “went in to drink” / AT omit “So the king...Queen Esther.”

³⁶ [7:1] MT / LXX “with the queen”

³⁷ [7:2] MT, LXX / AT “As the drinking advanced”

is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted to you. And what is your request? It shall be honored³⁸ for you,³⁹ 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.⁴⁰ Then Queen Esther⁴¹ answered and⁴² said, “If I have found favor with you, O king, and if it pleases your majesty,⁴³ I ask that my soul⁴⁴ be given to me at my petition and my people⁴⁵ at my request. **4** For my people and I have been delivered to destruction, slaughter, and extinction.⁴⁶ If we were to be merely sold into slavery, I would remain silent;⁴⁷ but as it is, the enemy will be unable to compensate for the harm done to the king.”⁴⁸

5 Then King Xerxes became angry and said to Queen Esther,⁴⁹ “Who and where⁵⁰ is the man who has dared to do this?”⁵¹

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 So Esther was emboldened and⁵² replied, “The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman.”⁵³

At this, Haman was seized with dread of the king and queen.⁵⁴ **7** The king rose-up from the banquet in anger and went into the palace garden,⁵⁵ but Haman stayed to beg Queen Esther for his soul,⁵⁶ since he saw that the king had decided on his doom.⁵⁷

8 When the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall,⁵⁸ Haman had thrown himself on the couch on which Esther was reclining; and the king exclaimed,⁵⁹ “A crime against my kingdom is not enough for you.”⁶⁰ Will he⁶¹ also violate the queen⁶² while she is with me in my own house!⁶³ Let Haman be led away, and do not let him live!⁶⁴ Scarcely had the king spoken when the face of Haman was covered over.⁶⁵

9 Harbona,⁶⁶ one of the eunuchs who attended the king,⁶⁷ said, “Look, at the house of Haman stands⁶⁸ a gibbet 50⁶⁹ cubits high. Haman prepared it for Mordecai,⁷⁰ who gave the report that benefited the king. Therefore, lord, order that he himself be hanged upon it.”⁷¹

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.⁷²

CHAPTER 8 (includes Addition E)

That same day, King Xerxes gave the house of Haman, enemy of the Judeans, to Queen Esther,¹ and Mordecai was admitted to the king’s presence, for Esther had

³⁸ [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?”

³⁹ [7:2] LXX, OL / MT omit “for you”

⁴⁰ [7:2] MT, LXX / AT add

⁴¹ [7:3] MT / LXX “Then she” / AT “Then Esther”

⁴² [7:3] MT, LXX / AT omit “answered and”

⁴³ [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”

⁴⁴ [7:3] MT, LXX / AT “people”

⁴⁵ [7:3] MT, LXX / AT “nation”

⁴⁶ [7:4] MT / LXX “delivered to destruction, plunder, and slavery.” / AT “delivered into slavery, and their young children for plunder.”

⁴⁷ [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.”

⁴⁸ [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”

⁴⁹ [7:5] MT / LXX “Then the king said” / AT “Then the king became angry and said”

⁵⁰ [7:5] MT / LXX, AT omit “and where”

⁵¹ [7:5] MT, LXX / AT “dared to humiliate the sign of my rule, so as to disregard fear of you”

⁵² [7:5-6] MT, LXX / AT add “When the queen...was emboldened and”

⁵³ [7:6] MT / LXX omit “and enemy” / AT “, The liar is this wicked Haman, your friend.”

⁵⁴ [7:6] MT, LXX / AT omit “At this...and queen”

⁵⁵ [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.”

⁵⁶ [7:7] MT / LXX omit “Esther for his soul”

⁵⁷ [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.”

⁵⁸ [7:8] MT / LXX omit “palace” & “to the banquet hall” / AT omit “from the palace garden” & “hall”

⁵⁹ [7:8] MT / LXX “Haman...couch, entreating the queen, and the king said” / AT “he saw this and said”

⁶⁰ [7:8] MT, LXX / AT add / Josephus instead add “O basest of all men”

⁶¹ [7:8] MT / LXX, AT “you”

⁶² [7:8] MT “the queen” / LXX, AT “my wife”

⁶³ [7:8] MT, LXX / AT “in my presence”

⁶⁴ [7:8] MT, LXX / AT add

⁶⁵ [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”

⁶⁶ [7:9] MT / LXX “Bouathan” / AT “Agathas” / Josephus “Sabuchadas”

⁶⁷ [7:9] MT, LXX / AT “one of his servants”

⁶⁸ [7:9] MT, LXX / AT “Look, in his courtyard is”

⁶⁹ [7:9] some Josephus “60”

⁷⁰ [7:9] MT / LXX “Haman prepared this gibbet for Mordecai” / AT “Haman cut it down to hang Mordecai”

⁷¹ [7:10] MT, LXX / AT add

⁷² [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.”

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.²

3 In another audience with the king, Esther³ fell at his feet and tearfully⁴ implored him to revoke the harm done by Haman the Agagite,⁵ and the plan he had devised⁶ 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,⁷ let a document be issued to revoke the letters which that schemer Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite,⁸ wrote for the destruction of the Judeans in all the royal provinces." **6** For how can I witness the evil that is to befall my people,⁹ and how can I behold¹¹ the destruction of my race?"

7 Then King Xerxes said to Queen Esther¹² and to Mordecai the Judean,¹³ "Now that I have given Esther the house of Haman,¹⁴ and they¹⁵ have hanged him on the gibbet with all his house¹⁶ because he attacked the Judeans, what do you still seek?¹⁷ **8** you in turn may write in the king's¹⁸ name what you see fit concerning the Judeans¹⁹ and seal the letter with the royal²⁰ 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,²¹ the royal scribes were summoned. Exactly as Mordecai dictated,²² they wrote to the Judeans and to the satraps, governors, and officials of the 127 provinces from Hodu to Cush: 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.²³ **10** These letters, which he wrote in the name of King Xerxes²⁴ and sealed with the royal²⁵ signet ring, were sent by mounted couriers riding thoroughbred royal steeds.²⁶

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 spoil²⁷ **12** throughout the provinces of King Xerxes,²⁸ on a single day, the 13th *day*²⁹ of the 12th month, Adar.³⁰

13 The following is a copy of the letter:³¹

King Xerxes the Great to the governors of the provinces in the 127 satrapies from Hodu to Cush, and to those responsible for our interests: Greetings!

14 Many have become the more ambitious the more they were showered with honors through the bountiful generosity of their patrons. **15** Not only do they seek to do harm to our subjects, but incapable of bearing such greatness, they even begin plotting against their own benefactors. **16** Not only do

they drive out³² gratitude from among men, but with the arrogant boastfulness of those to whom goodness has no meaning, they suppose³³ they will escape the vindictive judgment of the all-seeing God.³⁴

17 Often, too, the fair speech of friends entrusted with the administration of affairs has induced many placed in authority to become accomplices³⁵ in the shedding of innocent blood, and has involved them in irreparable calamities **18** by deceiving with malicious slander the sincere good will of rulers.

19 This can be verified in the ancient records that have been handed down to us,³⁶ but more fully when one considers the wicked deeds perpetrated in your midst by the pestilential influence³⁷ of those undeserving³⁸ of authority. **20** We must provide for the future, so as³⁹ to render the kingdom undisturbed and peaceful for all men,⁴⁰ **21** taking no⁴¹ advantage of changing conditions⁴² and deciding, always with equitable treatment,⁴³ matters coming to our attention.

22 For instance, Haman, son of Hammedatha, an Agagite⁴⁴ in spirit and race,⁴⁵ certainly not of Persian blood,⁴⁶ and very different from us in generosity, was hospitably received by us.⁴⁷ **23** He so far fully⁴⁸ enjoyed the goodwill that we have toward all peoples that he was proclaimed 'father of the king,' before whom everyone was to bow down; he attained the rank second to the royal throne.⁴⁹ **24** But, unequal to this dignity, he strove to deprive us of kingdom and of our breath; **25** and by weaving intricate webs of deceit, he demanded the destruction of Mordecai, our savior and constant benefactor,⁵⁰ and of Esther, our blameless royal consort,⁵¹ together with their whole race. **26** For by such measures he hoped to catch us defenseless in alienation⁵² and to transfer the rule of the Persians to the Agagites.⁵³ **27** But⁵⁴ we find that the Judeans, who were doomed to extinction⁵⁵ by this chief-criminal, are not evildoers, but rather are governed by most righteous laws **28** and are even the children of the Most High, the living God of majesty,⁵⁶ who has maintained the kingdom in a flourishing condition for us and for our ancestors.⁵⁷

29 You will do well, then, to ignore the letters previously sent by Haman, son of Hammedatha,⁵⁸ **30** for he who composed it has been hanged, together with his entire household,⁵⁹ before the gates of Susa. This is how God, who always governs everything, has swiftly brought upon him the punishment which he deserved.⁶⁰

31 You shall exhibit a copy of this letter publicly⁶¹ in every place, to certify that the Judeans may follow their own laws,⁶² **32** and that you may help⁶³ them on the day set for their ruin, And

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

² [8:2] MT / LXX "charge of everything of Haman's"

³ [8:3] MT / LXX "she"

⁴ [8:3] MT / LXX omit "tearfully"

⁵ [8:3] MT / LXX omit "the Agagite"

⁶ [8:5] MT / LXX "and all that he had done"

⁷ [8:5] MT / LXX "If it pleases you, and if I have found favor"

⁸ [8:5] MT / LXX "which Haman"

⁹ [8:5] MT / LXX "Judeans in your kingdom"

¹⁰ [8:5] MT / LXX "witness the affliction of my people"

¹¹ [8:6] MT / LXX "survive"

¹² [8:6] MT / LXX omit "Xerxes" & "Queen"

¹³ [8:7] MT, Vul / LXX, AT, OL omit "and to Mordecai the Judean"

¹⁴ [8:7] MT / LXX "given you everything belonging to Haman"

¹⁵ [8:7] MT / LXX "I"

¹⁶ [8:7] MT, LXX / OL add (erroneously)

¹⁷ [8:7] MT / LXX add (and begins the sentence with "If" instead of "Now that")

¹⁸ [8:7] MT / LXX "in my name"

¹⁹ [8:7] MT / LXX omit "concerning the Judeans"

²⁰ [8:7] MT / LXX "with my"

²¹ [8:9] MT / LXX "of the 1st month, Nisan, of the same year"

²² [8:9] MT / LXX omit "Exactly as Mordecai dictated"

²³ [8:9] MT / LXX omit "and to the Judeans in their own script and language"

²⁴ [8:10] MT / LXX "They were written by the king"

²⁵ [8:10] MT / LXX omit "royal"

²⁶ [8:10] MT / LXX "and they sent the letters by couriers"

²⁷ [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"

²⁸ [8:12] MT / LXX "throughout the kingdom of Xerxes"

²⁹ [8:12] OL "14th"

³⁰ [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 Susa, 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."

³¹ [8:13] LXX / AT "So he wrote the following letter:"

³² [8:16] LXX / AT "they take away"

³³ [8:16] LXX / AT "imagine"

³⁴ [8:16] LXX / AT "of the righteous all-ruling Judge"

³⁵ [8:17] LXX / AT "Often to, after having been placed in authority with friends entrusted with the administration of affairs have made them liable"

³⁶ [8:19] AT / LXX "that we have received"

³⁷ [8:19] LXX / AT "by the cruelty"

³⁸ [8:19] LXX / AT omit "undeserving"

³⁹ [8:20] LXX / AT "future, and to"

⁴⁰ [8:20] LXX / AT "nations"

⁴¹ [8:21] LXX / AT, OL, Vul, Coptic add

⁴² [8:21] LXX(B), OL, Vul, Coptic / AT "of slanderers"

⁴³ [8:21] LXX / AT "conditions and fairly treating"

⁴⁴ [8:22] Emendation (LXX always translates "Agagite" to "Makedonian") / LXX "a Makedonian" / Josephus "an Amalekite"

⁴⁵ [8:22] LXX, Vul / AT "the Agagite" (lit. "the Bougai") / Vul add "in spirit and race"

⁴⁶ [8:22] LXX / AT "thinking"

⁴⁷ [8:22] LXX / AT omit "was hospitably received by us"

⁴⁸ [8:23] LXX / AT add

⁴⁹ [8:23] LXX / AT "thrones"

⁵⁰ [8:25] LXX / AT "our constant savior"

⁵¹ [8:25] LXX / AT "Esther, his blameless partner"

⁵² [8:26] LXX / AT, OL add

⁵³ [8:26] Emendation (LXX always translates "Agagite" to "Makedonian") / LXX "to the Makedonians" / Josephus "to others"

⁵⁴ [8:27] LXX / AT "Therefore"

⁵⁵ [8:27] LXX / AT "you"

⁵⁶ [8:28] LXX / AT "and are even children of the one, true God" / Josephus "and are attached to the God"

⁵⁷ [8:28] LXX / AT "condition for us until now."

⁵⁸ [8:29] LXX / AT omit "son of Hammedatha"

⁵⁹ [8:30] LXX / AT omit "together with his entire household"

⁶⁰ [8:30] LXX / AT "Thus the judge, who always sees everything, gave him the deserved punishment"

⁶¹ [8:31] LXX / AT replaces "So let a copy of this letter be exhibited"

⁶² [8:31] LXX(A), AT, OL, Josephus / other LXX "customs"

⁶³ [8:32] LXX / AT "strengthen"

it has been decided by the Judeans throughout the kingdom to observe the 13th day of the 12th month, Adar,¹ to defend themselves against those who attack them, and to also hold a feast on the 15th. **33** For God, the ruler of all, has turned that day for them from one of destruction of the chosen race into one of joy.² **34** Therefore, you too must celebrate this memorable day among your designated feasts with all rejoicing.³ **35** so that both now and⁴ in the future it may be, for us and⁵ for loyal⁶ Persians, a celebration of victory,⁷ and for those who plot against us,⁸ a reminder of destruction.

36 Every city and province, without exception,⁹ that does not observe this decree shall be ruthlessly destroyed with spear and fire, so that it will not be left merely untrodden by men, but even shunned by beasts and flying-creatures for all time.¹⁰

37 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.¹¹ **38** Couriers mounted on royal steeds sped forth in haste at the king's order,¹² and the decree was also promulgated in the stronghold of Susa.¹³

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 Susa, and his household has been dispatched. For this man wished to kill us on the thirteenth of the month, that is, Adar.¹⁴

39 And Mordecai left the king's presence¹⁵ clothed in a royal robe of violet and of white cotton,¹⁶ with a large crown of gold¹⁷ and a cloak¹⁸ of crimson byssus. And the city of Susa rejoiced and was glad.¹⁹ **40** And there was splendor and merriment for the Judeans, exultation and triumph.²⁰ **41** In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king's order arrived,²¹ there was merriment and exultation, banqueting and feasting for the Judeans.²² And many of the peoples of the land were circumcised and became Judeans,²³ for they were seized with a fear of the Judeans.²⁴

CHAPTER 9

When the day arrived on which the order decreed by the king was to be carried out, the 13th day²⁵ 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 their enemies. **2** The Judeans mustered in their cities throughout the provinces of King Xerxes to attack those who sought to do them harm, and no one could withstand them, but all peoples were seized with a fear of

them.²⁶ **3** Moreover, all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, governors, and royal procurators supported²⁷ the Judeans from fear of Mordecai; **4** for Mordecai was powerful in the royal palace, and the report was spreading through all the provinces that he was continually growing in power.²⁸

5 The Judeans struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them; they did to their enemies as they pleased.²⁹ **6** In the stronghold³⁰ of Susa, the Judeans killed and destroyed³¹ 500³² men. **7** They also killed Parshandatha,³³ Dalphon,³⁴ Aspatha, **8** Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,³⁵ **9** Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha,³⁶ **10** the ten sons of Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite,³⁷ the foe of the Judeans. However, they did not engage³⁸ in plundering.

11 On the same day, when the number of those killed in the stronghold of Susa³⁹ was reported to the king, **12** the king said to Queen⁴⁰ Esther, "In the stronghold⁴¹ of Susa the Judeans have killed and destroyed⁴² 500 men, as well as the ten sons of Haman.⁴³ 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."⁴⁴

13 So Esther said to the king,⁴⁵ "If it pleases your majesty,⁴⁶ let the Judeans in Susa⁴⁷ be permitted again tomorrow to act according to today's decree, and let⁴⁸ the ten sons of Haman be hanged on gibbets."⁴⁹

14 So the king gave an order to this effect, and the decree was published in Susa. So the ten sons of Haman were hanged on gibbets.⁵⁰ **15** And the Judeans in Susa mustered again, on the 14th of the month of Adar, and killed 300 men in Susa.⁵¹ However, they did not engage in plundering.

16 The other Judeans, who dwelt in the royal provinces, also mustered and stood up for their soul,⁵² and obtained rest from their enemies.⁵³ **17** On the 13th day of the month of Adar,⁵⁴ they killed 75,000⁵⁵ of their foes,⁵⁶ but they did not engage in plundering. On the 14th of the month they rested, and made it a day of feasting⁵⁷ and rejoicing. **18** (The Judeans in the city of⁵⁸ Susa, however, mustered on the 13th and 14th of the month. But on the 15th they rested, and made it a day of⁵⁹ feasting⁶⁰ and rejoicing.) **19** That is why the rural Judeans, who dwell in villages,⁶¹ celebrate the 14th of the month of Adar as a day of rejoicing and feasting, a holiday on which they send gifts of food to one another.⁶² But those living in the metropolitan centers also celebrate the 15th of Adar with joy, sending out gifts to the poor.⁶³

20 Mordecai recorded these events and sent letters⁶⁴ to all the Judeans, both near and far, in all the provinces of King Xerxes. **21** He ordered them to celebrate every year both⁶⁵ the 14th and the 15th of the month of Adar¹ **22** as the days on

²⁶ [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

²⁷ [9:3] MT / LXX, AT "esteemed"

²⁸ [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 Susa, it turned out that Haman was referred to by name, and so were the opponents throughout the whole kingdom."

²⁹ [9:5] MT / LXX omit "The Judeans struck...pleased."

³⁰ [9:6] MT / LXX "the city of" / AT omit altogether

³¹ [9:6] MT / LXX, AT omit "and destroyed"

³² [9:6] MT, LXX, Josephus / AT "700"

³³ [9:7] MT, LXX(A) similar / LXX(B) "Parshan and Nestain"

³⁴ [9:17] MT, LXX "Dalphon" / AT "and his brother"

³⁵ [9:8] MT "Porathai, Adalia, Aridatha" / LXX "Poradatha, Barea, Sarbacha" / AT "Gagapordathia"

³⁶ [9:9] MT "Paramashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha" / LXX "Marmasima, Ruphaeus, Arsaeus, and Zabuthaeus" / AT "Marmasima and Izathouth"

³⁷ [9:10] MT / LXX, AT add (lit. "the Bougai" which is always the LXX equivalent of "Agagite")

³⁸ [9:10] MT / LXX, AT "they engaged"

³⁹ [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 Susa") / other Josephus omit "in the city" entirely

⁴⁰ [9:12] MT / LXX, AT omit "Queen"

⁴¹ [9:12] MT / LXX "city"

⁴² [9:12] MT / LXX omit "and destroyed"

⁴³ [9:12] MT / LXX omit "as well...Haman" / AT omit "In the...Haman"

⁴⁴ [9:12] MT / LXX "Now what more do you ask? It shall be yours." / AT omit altogether

⁴⁵ [9:13] MT, AT / LXX add

⁴⁶ [9:13] MT / LXX, AT omit "If it pleases your majesty"

⁴⁷ [9:13] MT / LXX, AT omit "in Susa"

⁴⁸ [9:13] MT / LXX "to act likewise, so that" & omit "on gibbets"

⁴⁹ [9:13] AT "So Esther said to the king, 'Let the Judeans destroy whomever they wish, and to plunder!'"

⁵⁰ [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."

⁵¹ [9:15] MT / LXX omit "in Susa"

⁵² [9:15] MT / LXX "and helped one another"

⁵³ [9:14-15] AT replaces "So the king gave an order...enemies" with only "And he consented."

⁵⁴ [9:16] MT, LXX / AT omit "On the 13th day of the month of Adar"

⁵⁵ [9:16] MT, Syr, Josephus, Vul / LXX "15,000" / Luc "70,100"

⁵⁶ [9:16] MT / LXX "of them" / AT "men"

⁵⁷ [9:17] LXX "pleasure"

⁵⁸ [9:18] MT / LXX add

⁵⁹ [9:18] MT / LXX "mustered also on the 14th and did not rest. They also celebrated the fifteenth with"

⁶⁰ [9:18] MT / LXX "pleasure"

⁶¹ [9:19] MT / LXX "who are scattered in every land outside"

⁶² [9:6-19] OL omit "They also killed Parshandatha...another." / AT omit "but they...plundering. On...one another."

⁶³ [9:19] MT / LXX add

⁶⁴ [9:20] MT / LXX, AT "events in a book and sent it"

⁶⁵ [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"

¹ [8:32] LXX / AT "the 14th day of the month, which is Adar"

² [8:33] LXX / AT "For in those days the Almighty provided them with deliverance and rejoicing."

³ [8:34] AT, Josephus / LXX add

⁴ [8:35] LXX / AT replaces "so that both now and" with "And now"

⁵ [8:35] most LXX / some LXX "for you and" / AT omit altogether

⁶ [8:35] LXX / AT "obedient"

⁷ [8:35] LXX / AT omit "a celebration of victory"

⁸ [8:35] LXX / AT "them"

⁹ [8:36] LXX / AT omit "without exception"

¹⁰ [8:36] LXX(A), AT omit "but even" & "for all time"

¹¹ [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."

¹² [8:38] MT / LXX "Horsemen sped forth in haste to perform the king's order"

¹³ [8:38] MT / LXX "decree was also posted in Susa" / AT replaces "A copy...of Susa" with "And a public notice containing these things was also posted in Susa."

¹⁴ [8:38] MT, LXX / AT add

¹⁵ [8:39] MT / LXX, AT omit "the king's presence"

¹⁶ [8:39] MT / LXX, AT omit "of violet and of white cotton"

¹⁷ [8:39] MT / LXX, Josephus omit "large" / AT omit "a large crown of gold"

¹⁸ [8:39] MT / LXX, AT "diadem" / Josephus "necklace" (and omit "of crimson byssus")

¹⁹ [8:39] MT / LXX, AT "And when the people in Susa saw him, they rejoiced."

²⁰ [8:40] MT / LXX "And there was splendor and merriment for the Judeans" / AT "And there was splendor, drinking and feasting for the Judeans."

²¹ [8:41] MT / LXX "wherever the ordinance was posted, wherever the proclamation was made"

²² [8:41] MT, LXX(similar) / AT omit "In each...feasting for the Judeans."

²³ [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"

²⁴ [8:41] MT / LXX "for fear of the Judeans" / AT "for they feared them"

²⁵ [9:1] MT, LXX, AT, some Josephus / some Josephus "14th day"

which the Judeans obtained rest from their enemies and as the month (which was Adar)² which was turned for them from sorrow into joy, and from mourning into festivity. They were to observe these days with feasting³ and gladness,⁴ sending food to one another⁵ and gifts to the poor and orphans and widows.⁶ **23** So the Judeans took upon themselves for the future this observance which they instituted at the written direction of Mordecai.⁷

24 Haman, son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the foe of all the Judeans,⁸ had planned to destroy them⁹ and had cast the pur (or 'lot') for the time of their defeat and destruction.¹⁰ **25** Yet, when she¹¹ went before the king, the king ordered in writing that the wicked plan Haman had devised¹² against the Judeans should instead be turned against Haman and that he and his sons should be hanged on gibbets.¹³ **26** And so these days have been named 'Purim' after the word 'pur'.¹⁴

This was how, due to everything that was contained in this letter, and due to what they had witnessed and experienced¹⁵ in this affair, **27** the Judeans established and took upon themselves,¹⁶ 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.¹⁷ **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 authority¹⁸ this second¹⁹ 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, which²⁰ 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.²¹ **32** The command of Esther confirmed these prescriptions for Purim and was recorded in the book.²²

CHAPTER 10 (includes Addition F)

Now King Xerxes laid tribute²³ on the land and on the islands of the sea.²⁴ **2** And all the acts of his strength and manliness, as well as a detailed account of the greatness of Mordecai,²⁵ whom the king promoted, are recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia.²⁶ **3** For the Judean²⁷ Mordecai was second *in rank* to King Xerxes, and he was a great man in the kingdom and²⁸ 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.²⁹

4 And Mordecai spoke, "These *things* came from God. For I remember for myself about the dream which I saw about the accounts of these *very things*, for not even a *single* account from them has failed.³⁰ And he said,

5 "There was the small spring which became a river, and a light and a sun, and much water. The river is Esther, whom the king married and who *was* made a queen.³¹ But the two dragons are myself and Haman. **6** But the nations *are* those who³² congregated-together to cause the name of³³ the Judeans to perish. But the light and the sun is the revelation of God which appeared to the Judeans; this is the judgment.³⁴ But the nation, my nation, is Israel, the ones who cried out to God and were saved.

7 "And the Lord saved his people and rescued us out of all these evil *things*.³⁵ And God made the signs and the portents, the *great portents*,³⁶ such as have not come-to-pass in the nations. **8** This is why³⁷ he made two lots: one for the people of God, and one for all³⁸ the nations. And these two lots came into an hour³⁹ and a season, and into a day of a judgment before the face of God and⁴⁰ in all the nations. **9** And his people were remembered by God and he made 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 truly with a congregation and joy and gladness before the face of God, they will *celebrate* these days on the 14th and the 15th⁴¹ of the month Adar throughout *all the generations* into the age in his people Israel."

LATE POSTSCRIPT

In the 4th year of the reign of Ptolemaios and Kleopatra, Dositheos (who declared *that* he is a priest and Levite), and his son Ptolemaios, brought-in the exhibited letter of Purim, *and* were declaring *that* it was *genuine* and *that* Lysimachos son of Ptolemaios, the *one* in Jerusalem, has interpreted it.⁴²

¹ [9:21] MT, LXX / AT omit "of the month of Adar"

² [9:22] MT / LXX add

³ [9:22] MT / LXX "observe these holidays of marriage"

⁴ [9:22] AT omit "as the days on which....and gladness"

⁵ [9:22] MT / LXX "to their friends"

⁶ [9:22] OL add

⁷ [9:23] MT / LXX "So the Judeans accepted just what Mordecai had written to them."

⁸ [9:24] MT / LXX omit "the foe of all the Judeans"

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

¹⁰ [9:24] MT / LXX "and had made a decree and had cast the lot to destroy them"

¹¹ [9:25] MT, Vul, Sur, Tar / LXX "he" (see below for full variant)

¹² [9:25] LXX "and how he went before the king, telling *him* to hang Mordecai, but all the calamities he had devised"

¹³ [9:24-25] MT / AT omit "So the Judeans...hanged on gibbets." / LXX omit "on gibbets" / OL omit "Haman, son of Hammedatha...gibbets."

¹⁴ [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."

¹⁵ [9:26] MT / LXX "had suffered"

¹⁶ [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."

¹⁷ [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)

¹⁸ [9:29] MT / LXX "wrote everything they had done, and to confirm"

¹⁹ [9:29] MT / LXX, Syr omit "second"

²⁰ [9:30] MT / LXX omit "And he sent documents...Purim which" (possibly by scribal error)

²¹ [9:31] MT / LXX "race concerning their health and their plan."

²² [9:32] MT / LXX "And Esther established the matter by ordinance forever, and it was written for a memorial."

²³ [10:1] MT / LXX, AT "The king wrote"

²⁴ [10:1] MT / LXX "tribute, both on the land and the sea"

²⁵ [10:1] MT / LXX omit "as well as a detailed account of the greatness of Mordecai"

²⁶ [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."

²⁷ [10:3] MT / LXX, AT omit "The Judean"

²⁸ [10:3] MT / LXX, AT add

²⁹ [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."

³⁰ [10:4] LXX (lit. "passed-by") / AT "God." For he remembered the dream that he saw. And it was fulfilled. And he said,"

³¹ [10:5] LXX / AT, OL "The tiny spring is Esther."

³² [10:6] LXX / AT, OL "Haman. The river is the nations that"

³³ [10:6] LXX / AT, OL omit "the name of"

³⁴ [10:6] LXX / AT, OL add

³⁵ [10:7] LXX / AT omit "But the nation...all these evil *things*."

³⁶ [10:7] LXX / AT omit "these great *portents*"

³⁷ [10:8] LXX / AT "And"

³⁸ [10:8] LXX / AT omit "all"

³⁹ [10:8] LXX / AT "in hours"

⁴⁰ [10:8] LXX / AT "day of the lordship of the everlasting one"

⁴¹ [10:9] most LXX, AT / one LXX omit "and the 15th"

⁴² [10:10] LXX / all but one AT understandably omit "In the 4th...interpreted it."