

{17} Esther

King James 1769 Version

King James Paraphrase {Updated 11/21/14*}

Chapter 1

(1) Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, *over* an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:)

(2) *That* in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in Shushan the palace,

(3) In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, *being* before him:

(4) When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, *even* an hundred and fourscore days.

(5) And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;

(6) *Where were* white, green, and blue, *hangings*, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds *were of* gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble.

(7) And they gave *them* drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king.

Chapter 1

(1) Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus^a, (this is Ahasuerus who reigned, from India to Ethiopia; *over* an hundred and twenty-seven provinces:)

(2) *That* in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in the palace at Shushan^b,

(3) In the third year of his reign^{c*}, he made a feast for all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, *being* before him:

(4) When he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honor of his excellent majesty many days, *even* an hundred and eighty days.

(5) And when these days were expired, the king made a feast for all the people who were present in the palace at Shushan, both great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;

(6) *Where there were* white, green, and blue, *hangings*, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds *were of* gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble.

(7) And they gave *them* drink in cups of gold, (each cup being different from one another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king.

1:1a - during the reign of Ahasuerus (Cambyses) [Xerxes]-- Ahasuerus' reign began in 3596 A.H./C-446 B.C. seven years after Cyrus issued the decree to restore Jerusalem and ended the captivity of Judah. Many of the Jews remained in the Babylonian area and did not return to Israel. The Greeks under Alexander the Great conquered the Medio-Persian empire in 3711 A.H./C-331 B.C.

1:2b - palace at Shushan - one of three palaces [Babylon and Ecbatana were others] seems to be a primary palace of the Medes during the reigns of the Medes and the Persians. - see note on Neh. 1:1

1:3c - third year of Ahasuerus' reign - 3599 A.H./C-443 B.C. [ten years after the captivity of Judah had ended. See [Appendix G: World Time Line of Biblical History](#)

[*3599 A.H./C-443 B.C.]

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(8) And the drinking *was* according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

(9) Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women *in* the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.

(10) On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

(11) To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she *was* fair to look on.

(12) But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by *his* chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

(13) Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so *was* the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:

(14) And the next unto him *was* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, *and* Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, *and* which sat the first in the kingdom;)

(8) And the drinking *was* according to the law; without constraint: because the king had so appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

(9) Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women *in* the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.

(10) On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains {keeper of the king's women}^d who served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

(11) To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the royal crown, to show the people and the princes her beauty: because she *was* beautiful to look at.

(12) But the queen Vashti refused to come^e at the king's commandment by *his* chamberlains {keepers of the king's women}: therefore the king was very angry, and his anger burned inside of him.

(13) Then the king said to the wise men, who knew the times, (because this *was* the king's manner towards all who knew the law and judgment:

(14) And the next to him *was* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, *and* Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who served in the king's presence, *and* who sat first in the kingdom;)

1:10d - chamberlain - keeper of the king's women [wives, concubines, female servants]
- Esther 2:3, 14, 15

1:12e - the queen Vashti refused to come - there is some question as to whether the king actually wanted her to strip before his princes and officials. I am not completely convinced that this was the case, however, it is quite apparent that she did not want to be put on "display" in front of a group of men under the influence of alcohol.



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(19) And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.

(20) Esther had not *yet* shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

(21) In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

(22) And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told *it* unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king *thereof* in Mordecai's name.

(23) And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

Chapter 3

(1) After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that *were* with him.

(2) And all the king's servants, that *were* in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did *him* reverence.

(3) Then the king's servants, which *were* in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

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(19) And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate.

(20) Esther had not *yet* revealed her kindred nor her nationality; as Mordecai had charged her: because Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, as when she was brought up with him.

(21) In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains {keepers of the king's women} Bigthan and Teresh, of those who kept the door, were angry, and sought to lay hands on the king Ahasuerus.

(22) And the thing became known to Mordecai, who told *it* to Esther the queen; and Esther notified the king *of the matter* in Mordecai's name.

(23) And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

Chapter 3

(1) After these things king Ahasuerus promoted Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that *were* with him.

(2) And all the king's servants, who *were* in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman: because the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow, nor did *him* reverence.

(3) Then the king's servants, who *were* in the king's gate, asked Mordecai, Why do you not obey the king's commandment?

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(4) Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he *was* a Jew.

(5) And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

(6) And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that *were* throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, *even* the people of Mordecai.

(7) In the first month, that *is*, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that *is*, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, *to* the twelfth *month*, that *is*, the month Adar.

(8) And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws *are* diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it *is* not for the king's profit to suffer them.

(9) If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring *it* into the king's treasuries.

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(4) Now it came to pass, when they spoke daily to him, and he did not listen to them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: because he had told them that he *was* a Jew.

(5) And when Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow, nor did him reverence, then Haman was full of anger.

(6) And he hated and sought to lay hands on Mordecai alone; but because they had revealed to him the nationality of Mordecai: Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who *were* throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, *even* the people of Mordecai.

(7) In the first month, that *is*, the month Nisan {Nisan [Mar.-Apr.]}^a, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus^{b*}, they cast Pur^c, that *is*, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, *to* the twelfth *month*, that *is*, the month Adar {Adar [Feb.-Mar.]}^d.

(8) And Haman said to king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; and their laws *are* different from all people; neither do they keep the king's laws: therefore it *is* not for the king's profit to allow them *to live*.

(9) If it pleases the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents {756,000 lbs; 340,000 kg.} of silver to the hands of those who have the charge of the business, to bring *it* into the king's treasuries.

3:7a - Nisan {March-April} - the first month of the Jewish year

3:7b - the twelfth year of Ahasuerus [*3608 A.H./C-434 B.c.] - 19 years after the end of the captivity - also one year before the temple was completed in Jerusalem

3:7c - Pur {פּוּר} - lot [like dice only singular - one die]

3:7d - the twelfth month - Adar {February-March}

3:9e - a talent = 75.6 lbs; 34.3 kilograms - 10,000 talents would be about 756,000 pounds or 340,000 kilograms - see [Appendix J: Bible Weights and Measures](#)

[*3608 A.H./C-434 B.c.]

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(10) And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.

(11) And the king said unto Haman, The silver *is* given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

(12) Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that *were* over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and *to* every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

(13) And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, *even* upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and *to take* the spoil of them for a prey.

(14) The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.

(15) The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed.

(10) And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it to Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.

(11) And the king said to Haman, The silver *is* given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you.

(12) Then the king's scribes were called on the thirteenth day of the first month {Nisan [Mar.-Apr.]}, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded to the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that *were* over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to its writing, and *to* every people according to their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus it was written, and sealed with the king's ring.

(13) And the letters were sent by heralds into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, *even* upon the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month {Adar [Feb.-Mar.]}, which is the month Adar, and *to take* their spoil for a prey.

(14) The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published for all people, that they should be ready in preparation for that day.

(15) The heralds went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed.

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Chapter 4

(1) When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry;

(2) And came even before the king's gate: for none *might* enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

(3) And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

(4) So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told *it* her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: but he received *it* not.

(5) Then called Esther for Hatach, *one* of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it *was*, and why it *was*.

(6) So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which *was* before the king's gate.

(7) And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.

Chapter 4

(1) When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai tore his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry;

(2) And came before the king's gate: because no one *might* enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

(3) And in every province, wherever the king's commandment and his decree came, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

(4) So Esther's maids and her chamberlains {keepers of the king's women} came and told *it* to her. Then the queen was exceedingly grieved; and she sent clothes to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: but he would not receive *it*.

(5) Then Esther called for Hatach, *one* of the king's chamberlains {keepers of the king's women}, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it *was*, and why it *was*.

(6) So Hatach went forth to Mordecai to the street of the city, which *was* before the king's gate.

(7) And Mordecai told him of all that had happened to him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.

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(8) Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew *it* unto Esther, and to declare *it* unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

(9) And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

(10) Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;

(11) All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, *there is* one law of his to put *him* to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

(12) And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

(13) Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

(14) For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then* shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?

(15) Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*,

(8) Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to show *it* to Esther, and to declare *it* to her, and to charge her that she should go in to the king, to make request of him, and to make request before him for her people.

(9) And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

(10) Again Esther spoke to Hatach, and gave him commandment to Mordecai;

(11) All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, know, that whoever, whether man or woman, shall come to the king into the inner court, who is not called, *there is* one law of his to put *him* to death, except those to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days.

(12) And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

(13) Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Do not think to yourself that you shall escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

(14) Because if you altogether hold your peace at this time, *then* enlargement and deliverance shall arise to the Jews from another place; but you and your father's house shall be destroyed: and who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?

(15) Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*,

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(16) Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.
(17) So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

Chapter 5

(1) Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on *her* royal *apparel*, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.
(2) And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, *that* she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.
(3) Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what *is* thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.
(4) And Esther answered, If *it seem* good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.
(5) Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

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(16) Go, gather together all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I and my maidens will also likewise fast; and so I will go in to the king, which *is* not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.
(17) So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

Chapter 5

(1) Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on *her* royal clothes, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, opposite the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, opposite the gate of the house.
(2) And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, *that* she obtained favor in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that *was* in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.
(3) Then the king said to her, What do you desire, queen Esther? and what *is* your request? it shall be given to you even to the half of the kingdom.
(4) And Esther answered, If *it seems* good to the king, let the king and Haman come today to the banquet that I have prepared for him.
(5) Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther has said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.