

ESTHER 9: 1 Now in the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the month, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, on the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to conquer them, (but it was turned out the opposite happened, that the Jews conquered those who hated them),

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On the thirteenth of the month Adar the Jews destroy their enemies, and the governors of the provinces assist them, Est 9:1-5. They slay five hundred in Shushan, and kill the ten sons of Haman, but take no spoil, Est 9:6-10. The king is informed of the slaughter in Shushan, Est 9:11. He desires to know what Esther requests farther; who begs that the Jews may be permitted to act on the following day as they had done on the preceding, and that Haman's sons may be hanged upon the gallows; which is granted; and they slay three hundred more in Shushan, and in the other provinces seventy-five thousand, Est 9:12-16. A recapitulation of what was done; and of the appointment of the feast of Purim to be observed through all their generations every year, Est 9:17-28. Esther writes to confirm this appointment, Est 9:29-32.

#### Verse 1

Now in the twelfth month - What a number of providences, and none of them apparently of an extraordinary nature, concurred to preserve a people so signally, and to all human appearance so inevitably, doomed to destruction! None are ever too low for God to lift up, or too high for God to cast down. Must not these heathens have observed that the uncontrollable hand of an Almighty Being had worked in behalf of the Jews? And must not this have had a powerful tendency to discredit the idolatry of the country?

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ESTHER 9: 2 the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the King Ahasuerus, to lay hands on those who wanted to harm them. No one could withstand them, because the fear of them had fallen on all the people.

ESTHER 9: 3 All the princes of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and those who did the king's business helped the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them.

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#### Verse 3

And all the rulers of the provinces - Mordecai being raised to the highest confidence of the king, and to have authority over the whole realm, these officers assisted the Jews, no doubt, with the troops under their command, to overthrow those who availed themselves of the former decree to molest the Jews. For it does not appear that the Jews slew any person who did not rise up to destroy them. See Est 9:5.

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ESTHER 9: 4 For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces; for the man Mordecai grew greater and greater.

ESTHER 9: 5 The Jews struck all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and with slaughter and destruction, and did what they wanted to those who hated them.

ESTHER 9: 6 In the citadel of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.

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Verse 6

And in Shushan - It is strange that in this city, where the king's mind must have been so well known, there should be found five hundred persons to rise up in hostility against those whom they knew the king befriended!

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ESTHER 9: 7 They killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

ESTHER 9: 8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,

ESTHER 9: 9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha,

ESTHER 9: 10 the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jew's enemy, but they didn't lay their hand on the plunder.

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Verse 10

The ten sons of Haman - Their names are given above. And it is remarked here, and in Est 9:16, where the account is given of the number slain in the provinces, that the Jews laid no hands on the spoil. They stood for their lives, and gave full proof that they sought their own personal safety, and not the property of their enemies, though the decree in their favor gave them authority to take the property of all those who were their adversaries, Est 8:11.

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ESTHER 9: 11 On that day, the number of those who were slain in the citadel of Susa was brought before the king.

ESTHER 9: 12 The king said to Esther the queen, "The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in the citadel of Susa, including the ten sons of Haman; what then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your petition? It shall be granted you. What is your further request? It shall be done."

ESTHER 9: 13 Then Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let it be granted to the Jews who are in Shushan to do tomorrow also according to this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows."

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Verse 13

Let Haman's ten sons be hanged - They had been slain the preceding day, and now she requests that they may be exposed on posts or gibbets, as a terror to those who sought the destruction of the Jews.

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ESTHER 9: 14 The king commanded this to be done. A decree was given out in Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

ESTHER 9: 15 The Jews who were in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and killed three hundred men in Shushan; but they didn't lay their hand on the plunder.

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Verse 15

And slew three hundred men - Esther had probably been informed by Mordecai that there were still many enemies of the Jews who sought their destruction, who had escaped the preceding day; and, therefore, begs that this second day be added to the former permission. This being accordingly granted, they found three hundred more, in all eight hundred. And thus Susa was purged of all their enemies.

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ESTHER 9: 16 The other Jews who were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, defended their lives, had rest from their enemies, and killed seventy-five thousand of those who hated them; but they didn't lay their hand on the plunder.

ESTHER 9: 17 This was done on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day of that month they rested and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

ESTHER 9: 18 But the Jews who were in Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth and on the fourteenth days of the month; and on the fifteenth day of that month, they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

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Verse 18

The Jews - assembled - on the thirteenth - and on the fourteenth - These two days they were employed in slaying their enemies; and they rested on the fifteenth.

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ESTHER 9: 19 Therefore the Jews of the villages, who live in the unwalled towns, make the fourteenth day of the month Adar a day of gladness and feasting, a good day, and a day of sending presents of food to one another.

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Verse 19

The Jews of the villages - They joined that to the preceding day, and made it a day of festivity, and of sending portions to each other; that is, the rich sent portions of the sacrifices slain on this occasion to the poor, that they also might be enabled to make the day a day of festivity; that as the sorrow was general, so also might the joy be.

It is worthy of remark that the ancient Itala or Ante-hieronymian version of this book omits the whole of these nineteen verses. Query, Were they originally in this book?

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ESTHER 9: 20 Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both near and far,

## Verse 20

Mordecai wrote these things - It has been supposed that thus far that part of the book of Esther, which was written by Mordecai extends: what follows to the end, was probably added either by Ezra, or the men of the Great Synagogue; though what is said here may refer only to the letters sent by Mordecai to the Jews of the provinces. From this to the end of the chapter is nothing else than a recapitulation of the chief heads of the preceding history, and an account of the appointment of an annual feast, called the feast of Purim, in commemoration of their providential deliverance from the malice of Haman.

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ESTHER 9: 21 to enjoin them that they should keep the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month Adar yearly,

ESTHER 9: 22 as the days in which the Jews had rest from their enemies, and the month which was turned to them from sorrow to gladness, and from mourning into a good day; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, and of sending presents of food to one another, and gifts to the needy.

ESTHER 9: 23 The Jews accepted the custom that they had begun, as Mordecai had written to them;

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## Verse 23

The Jews undertook to do as they had begun - They had already kept the fifteenth day, and some of them in the country the fourteenth also, as a day of rejoicing: Mordecai wrote to them to bind themselves and their successors, and all their proselytes, to celebrate this as an annual feast throughout all their generations; and this they undertook to do. And it has been observed among them, in all places of their dispersion, from that day to the present time, without any interruption.

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ESTHER 9: 24 because Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast "Pur", that is the lot, to consume them, and to destroy them;

ESTHER 9: 25 but when this became known to the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he had devised against the Jews, should return on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

ESTHER 9: 26 Therefore they called these days "Purim", from the word "Pur." Therefore because of all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and that which had come to them,

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## Verse 26

They called these days Purim - That is from pari, the lot; because, as we have seen, Haman cast lots to find what month, and what day of the month, would be the most favorable for the accomplishment of his bloody designs against the Jews. See on Est 3:7 (note).

And of that which they had seen - The first letter to which this second refers, must be that sent by Mordecai himself. See Est 9:20.

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ESTHER 9: 27 the Jews established, and imposed on themselves, and on their descendants, and on all those who joined themselves to them, so that it should not fail, that they would keep these two days according to what was written, and according to its appointed time, every year;

ESTHER 9: 28 and that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor their memory perish from their seed.

ESTHER 9: 29 Then Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority to confirm this second letter of Purim.

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#### Verse 29

Esther - wrote with all authority - Esther and Mordecai had the king's license so to do: and their own authority was great and extensive.

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ESTHER 9: 30 He sent letters to all the Jews, to the hundred twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, with words of peace and truth,

ESTHER 9: 31 to confirm these days of Purim in their appointed times, as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had decreed, and as they had imposed upon themselves and their descendants, in the matter of the fastings and their cry.

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#### Verse 31

As they had decreed for themselves and for their seed - There is no mention of their receiving the approbation of any high priest, nor of any authority beyond that of Mordecai and Esther; the king could not join in such a business, as he had nothing to do with the Jewish religion, that not being the religion of the country.

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ESTHER 9: 32 The commandment of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

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#### Verse 32

The decree of Esther confirmed these matters - It was received by the Jews universally with all respect, and they bound themselves to abide by it.

The Vulgate gives a strange turn to this verse: Et omnia quae libri hujus, qui vocatur Esther, historia continentur; "And all things which are contained in the history of this book, which is called Esther."

The Targum says, And by the word of Esther all these things relative to Purim were confirmed; and the roll was transcribed in this book. The Syriac is the same as the Hebrew, and the Septuagint in this place not very different.