

A. Provinces of the King

¹Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus (this *was* the Ahasuerus who reigned over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India to Ethiopia),² in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which *was* in Shushan the citadel,

B. King and Princes Feast

³ *that* in the third year of his reign he made a feast for all his officials and servants—the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces *being* before him—⁴ when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the splendor of his excellent majesty for many days, one hundred and eighty days *in all*.

C. Great and Small Feast Together

⁵ And when these days were completed, the king made a feast lasting seven days for all the people who were present in Shushan the citadel, from great to small, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.

D. King's Court Is Beautiful For The People: They Can Willingly Drink

⁶ *There were* white and blue linen *curtains* fastened with cords of fine linen and purple on silver rods and marble pillars; *and the couches were* of gold and silver on a *mosaic* pavement of alabaster, turquoise, and white and black marble. ⁷ And they served drinks in golden vessels, each vessel being different from the other, with royal wine in abundance, according to the generosity of the king. ⁸ In accordance with the law, the drinking was not compulsory; for so the king had ordered all the officers of his household, that they should do according to each man's pleasure. ⁹ Queen Vashti also made a feast for the women *in* the royal palace which *belonged* to King Ahasuerus.

E. King With Merry Heart Commands 7 Eunuchs to Bring Vashti Into the Palace / Holy of Holies of the King

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

F. Vashti's Outward Beauty – But Rebellious Heart

¹¹ to bring Queen Vashti before the king, *wearing* her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she *was* beautiful to behold. ¹² But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command *brought* by *his* eunuchs;

E' King With Angry Heart Asked 7 Princes What To Do With Vashti

therefore the king was furious, and his anger burned within him.¹³ Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times (for this *was* the king's manner toward all who knew law and justice,¹⁴ those closest to him *being* Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who had access to the king's presence, *and* who ranked highest in the kingdom):¹⁵ “What *shall we* do to Queen Vashti, according to law, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus *brought to her* by the eunuchs?”

D' King's Court Was Despised By The Queen: Vashti Wronged The People & Will Be Replaced

¹⁶ And Memucan answered before the king and the princes: “Queen Vashti has not only wronged the king, but also all the princes, and all the people who *are* in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. ¹⁷ For the queen's behavior will become known to all women, so that they will despise their husbands in their eyes, when they report, ‘King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in before him, but she did not come.’ ¹⁸ This very day the *noble* ladies of Persia and Media will say to all the king's officials that they have heard of the behavior of the queen. Thus *there will be* excessive contempt and wrath. ¹⁹ If it pleases the king, let a royal decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it will not be altered, that Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she.

C' Great and Small Wives Honor Their Husbands

²⁰ When the king's decree which he will make is proclaimed throughout all his empire (for it is great), all wives will honor their husbands, both great and small.”

B' King and Princes Are Pleased

²¹ And the reply pleased the king and the princes, and the king did according to the word of Memucan.

A' Provinces of The King Receive Letters

²² Then he sent letters to all the king's provinces, to each province in its own script, and to every people in their own language, that each man should be master in his own house, and speak in the language of his own people.

A. King's Wrath Subsides From Vashti

¹ After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what had been decreed against her.

B. King Pleased That A Virgin Will Replace Vashti

² Then the king's servants who attended him said: "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king; ³ and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the citadel, into the women's quarters, under the custody of Hegai the king's eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given *them*. ⁴ Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This thing pleased the king, and he did so.

C. Esther's Heritage & Beauty (Date of Captivity: 597 B.C.)

⁵ In Shushan the citadel there was a certain Jew whose name *was* Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite. ⁶ *Kish* (who) had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been captured with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. ⁷ And *Mordecai* had brought up Hadassah, that *is*, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman *was* lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

D. Virgins Selected To Go Before The King (Hegai takes custody)

⁸ So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at Shushan the citadel, *under* the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women.

E. Extra Preparations Are Given To Esther

⁹ Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best *place* in the house of the women.

F. Esther Hides Her Identity

¹⁰ Esther had not revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal *it*. ¹¹ And every day Mordecai paced in front of the court of the women's quarters, to learn of Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.

E. Preparations Given To All The Virgins

¹² Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women.

D. Virgins Presented To The King (Shaashgaz takes custody)

¹³ Thus *prepared*, *each* young woman went to the king, and she was given whatever she desired to take with her from the women's quarters to the king's palace. ¹⁴ In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who kept the concubines. She would not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and called for her by name.

C. Esther's Heritage & Favor (Date of Queenship: 515 B.C.) 82 years since captivity

¹⁵ Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her. ¹⁶ So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which *is* the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

B. King Pleased For Esther To Replace Vashti

¹⁷ The king loved Esther more than all the *other* women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. ¹⁸ Then the king made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king.

A. King's Wrath Kindled Against Conspirators

¹⁹ When virgins were gathered together a second time, Mordecai sat within the king's gate. ²⁰ *Now* Esther had not revealed her family and her people, just as Mordecai had charged her, for Esther obeyed the command of Mordecai as when she was brought up by him. ²¹ In those days, while Mordecai sat within the king's gate, two of the king's eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, doorkeepers, became furious and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus. ²² So the matter became known to Mordecai, who told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name. ²³ And when an inquiry was made into the matter, it was confirmed, and both were hanged on a gallows; and it was written in the book of the chronicles in the presence of the king.

Esther 3

A. The King Promotes Haman's "Seat"

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 who *were* with him.

B. The King "Command" Is Transgressed By Mordecai

² And all the king's servants who were within the king's gate bowed and paid homage to Haman, for so the king had commanded concerning him.

But Mordecai would not bow or pay homage.

³ Then the king's servants who were within the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you transgress the king's command?"

C. 1. Haman's Wrath Escalates To Massacre All Jews

a. ⁴ Now it happened, when they spoke to him daily and he would not listen to them, that they told it to Haman,

b. to see whether Mordecai's words would stand; for Mordecai had told them that he was a Jew.

a' ⁵ When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow or pay him homage, Haman was filled with wrath.

b' ⁶ But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him of the people of Mordecai.

a" Instead, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus—the people of Mordecai.

2. Massacre Date Is Determined

⁷ In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that is, the lot), before Haman to determine the day and the month, until it fell on the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.

a. Haman hears of Mord. transgression

b. Mord. said he was Jew

a. Haman's wrath against Mord.

b. Mord. & Jews are in trouble

a. Haman's wrath to all Jews

1st mon. 12 year: they cast lots

12th mon. is time of massacre

D. Haman Speaks to the King

⁸ Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws. Therefore it is not fitting for the king to let them remain. ⁹ If it pleases the king, let a decree be written that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who do the work, to bring it into the king's treasuries."

E. King Gives His Ring To Haman: Enemy of Jews Receives the King's Authority

¹⁰ So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.

D' The King Speaks to Haman

¹¹ And the king said to Haman, "The money and the people *are* given to you, to do with them as seems good to you."

C. 1. Haman Wrath Written: Signed, Sealed, Delivered

a. ¹² Then the king's scribes were called on the thirteenth day of the first month,

b. and a decree was written according to all that Haman commanded—

c. to the king's satraps, to the governors who were over each province, to the officials of all people, to every province according to its script, and to every people in their language.

b' In the name of King Ahasuerus it was written, and sealed with the king's signet ring.

c' ¹³ And the letters were sent by couriers into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women,

a. Date of Written Decree: 13th Day 1st Mon.

b. Haman's orders are "written"

c. Recipients of the letter – (5 listed)

b' King's name is "written"; with his signet

c' Commands in the letter – (3 listed)

2. Massacre Date Is Determined

a. in one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar,

b. and to plunder their possessions.

a' ¹⁴ A copy of the document was to be issued as law in every province, being published for all people, that they should be ready for that day.

a. Date of Massacre: 13th Day 12th Mon.

b. Last command in the letter – (1 listed)

a' Date of Massacre: "Be Ready"

B' The King's "Command" Hastens Haman's Letter

¹⁵ The couriers went out, hastened by the king's command; and the decree was proclaimed in Shushan the citadel.

A' The King "Sat Down" and Drank With Haman

So the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Shushan was perplexed.

Esther 4

A. Mordecai Approaches The King's Gate: Weeping For Esther

- a. ¹ When Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. a. sackcloth
- b. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry. b. bitter cry
- c. ² He went as far as the front of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. c. king's gate
- b' ³ And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, b' mourning
- a' and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. a' sackcloth

B. Esther's Concern For Mordecai: *Why Are You Crying Mordecai?*

- a. ⁴ So Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her, and the queen was deeply distressed. a. message to Esther
- b. Then she sent garments to clothe Mordecai and take his sackcloth away from him, but he would not accept them. b. rejected garments
- c. ⁵ Then Esther called Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend her, c. calling of Hathach
- b' and she gave him a command concerning Mordecai, to learn what and why this was. b' question the rejection
- a' ⁶ So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square that was in front of the king's gate. a' messenger to Mordecai

C. Mordecai's Plea To Esther: *Plead For Your People!*

⁷ And Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews. ⁸ He also gave him a copy of the written decree for their destruction, which was given at Shushan, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her, and that he might command her to go in to the king to make supplication to him and plead before him for her people.

D. Mordecai's Message Reaches Esther

⁹ So Hathach returned and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

E. Esther Message To Mordecai: *I will die, unless the king holds out the golden scepter!*

¹⁰ Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: ¹¹ "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days."

D' Esther's Message Reaches Mordecai

¹² So they told Mordecai Esther's words.

C' Mordecai's Plea To Esther: *Do Not Remain Silent!*

¹³ And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews.

¹⁴ For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

B' Esther Request To Mordecai: *Pray For Me!*

¹⁵ Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶ "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

A' Mordecai Leaves The King's Gate: Praying For Esther

¹⁷ So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther commanded him.