

# Esther – World English Bible (WEB)

August 22, 2020

[1] Now it happened in the days of Ahasuerus (his is Ahasuerus who reigned from India even to Ethiopia, over one hundred twenty-seven provinces).

[2] These 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 to 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 shewn the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honor of his excellent majesty many days, even one hundred eighty days.

[5] When these days were fulfilled, the king made a feast to all the people who were present in Shushan the palace, both great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden over the king's palace.

[6] There were hangings off white [purple], [of] green, and [of] blue, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings on pillars of marble; the couches were of gold and silver, on a pavement of red, and white, and yellow, and black marble.

[7] They gave them drink in vessels of gold [the vessels being diverse one from another], and royal wine in abundance, according to the bounty of the king.

[8] The drinking was according to the law, none could 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 boast 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 Memucan, Bigthan, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethai, and Carcases, the seven chamberlains who ministered in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

[11] to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to show the peoples and the princes her beauty; for she was beautiful to look on.

[12] But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by the chamberlains: therefore was the king very angry, and his anger burned in him.

[13] Then the king said to the wise men, who knew the times, (for so was the king's manner toward all who knew law and judgment;

[14] and the next to him were Carsena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Mees, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who saw the king's face, and sat first in the kingdom);

[15] What shall we do to the queen Vashti according to law, because she has not done the bidding of the king Ahasuerus to the chamberlains?

[16] Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen has not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, inasmuch as she would have had the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.

[17] For this deed of the queen will come abroad to all the provinces, to make their husbands contemptible in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she didn't come.

[18] This day will the princesses of Persia and Media who have heard of the deed of the queen say [the like] to all the king's princes. So [will there arise] much contempt and wrath.

[19] If please the king, let there go forth a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it not be altered, that Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate to another who is better than she.

[20] When the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his kingdom (for it is great), all the wives will give to their husbands honor, both to great and small.

[21] The saying pleased the king and the princes: and the king did according to the word of Memucan.

[22] For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing of it, and to every people after their language; that every man should bear rule in his own house, and should speak according to the language of his people.

[23] And these things which the wrath of king Ahasuerus was pacified, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

[24] Then said the king's servants who ministered to him, Let there be beautiful young virgins sought for the king;

[25] and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, to the custody of Hegai the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their meats for purification be according to law.

[26] And when the king's servants who ministered to him, saw the king's decree, they pleased the king, and he did so.

[27] There was a certain Jew in Shushan the palace; whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjaminite,

[28] who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

[29] He brought up Hadassah, who is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maiden was fair and beautiful; and when her father and mother were cast, Mordecai took her for his own daughter.

[30] So it happened, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together to Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was taken into the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women.

[31] The maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he specially gave her things for her purification, with her portions, and the seven maidens who were meet to be given her out of the king's house; and he removed her and her maidens to the best place of the house of the women.

[32] Esther had not made known her people nor her relatives; for Mordecai had charged her that she should not make it known.

[33] Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what would become of her.

[34] Now when she [and] other maidens were come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after it had been done to her as prescribed for the women twelve months (for so were the days of her purification accomplished, [to wit], six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odors and with the things for the purifying of the women).

[35] Then in this wise came the maiden to the king, whatever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women to the king's house.

[36] In the evening she went, and on the next day she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Stachabaz, the king's chamberlain, who kept the concubines; she came in to the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and she were called by name.

[37] Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in to the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. Esther obtained favor in the sight of all those who looked at her.

[38] So Esther was taken to king Ahasuerus into his house royal in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

[39] The king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained favor and kindness in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown on her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

[40] Then the king made a great feast to all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the bounty of the king.

[41] When the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate.

[42] Esther had not yet made known her relatives nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did not the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

[43] In those days, while Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those who kept the threshold, were angry, and sought to lay hands on the king Ahasuerus.

[44] The thing became known to Mordecai, who shewen it to Esther the queen; and Esther told the king [of it] in Mordecai's name.

[45] When inquisition was made of the matter, and it was found to be so, they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

[46] After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the persons who were with him.

[47] All the king's servants, who were in the king's gate, bowed down, and did reverence to Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai didn't bow down, nor did him reverence.

[48] Then the king's servants, who were in the king's gate, said to Mordecai, Why disobey you the king's commandment?

[49] Now it came to pass, when they spoke daily to him, and he didn't listen to them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told those who he was a Jew.

[50] When Haman saw that Mordecai didn't bow down, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

[51] But he scorned the thought of laying hands on Mordecai alone; for they had made known to him the people of Mordecai; therefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

[52] In the first month, which 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], which is the month Adar.

[53] Haman said to king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; and their laws are diverse from those of every people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to allow them.

[54] If please the king, let it be written that they be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who have the charge of the [king's] business, to bring it into the king's treasuries.

[55] The king took his ring from his hand, and gave it to Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.

[56] The king said to Haman, The silver is given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you.

[57] Then were the king's scribes called in the first month, on the thirtieth day of it, and then was written according to all that Haman commanded to the king's satraps, and to the governors who were over every province, and to the princes of every people, to every province according to the writing of it, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and it was sealed with the king's ring.

[58] 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 on the thirteenth [day] of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar; and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

[59] A copy of the writing, that the decree should be given out in every province, was published to all the peoples, that they should be ready against that day.

[60] The posts went forth in haste by the king's commandment, and the decree was given out in Shushan the palace. The king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city of Shushan was perplexed.

[61] Now when Mordecai knew 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;

[62] and he came even before the king's gate; for none might enter within the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

[63] 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.

[64] Esther's maidens and her chamberlains came and told it her; and the queen was exceedingly grieved; and she sent clothing to clothe Mordecai, and to take his sackcloth from him; but he didn't receive it.

[65] Then called Esther for Hathach, one of the king's chamberlains, who had been appointed to attend on her, and charged him to go to Mordecai, to know what this was, and why it was.

[66] So Hathach went forth to Mordecai to the broad place of the city, which was before the king's gate.

[67] Mordecai told him of all that had happened to him, and the exact sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.

[68] Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given out in Shushan to destroy them, to show it to Esther, and to declare it to her, and to charge her that she should go to the king, to make supplication to him, and to make request before him, for her people.

[69] Hathach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

[70] Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a message to Mordecai [saying]:

[71] All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know that whoever, whether man or woman, shall come to the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law for him, that he be put to death, except those to whom the king shall hold out the golden scepter, that he may live; but I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days.

[72] They told to Mordecai Esther's words.

[73] Then Mordecai bade them return answer to Esther, Don't think to yourself that you shall escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

[74] For if you altogether hold your peace at this time, then will relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place: but you and your father's house will perish; and who knows whether you haven't come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

[75] Then Esther bade them return answer to Mordecai,

[76] Go, gather together all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast you for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; I also and my maidens will fast in like manner; and so will I go in to the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

[77] So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

[78] Now it happened on the third day, that Esther put on her royal clothing, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house; and the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, over against the entrance of the house.

[79] 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 scepter that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the scepter.

[80] Then said the king to her, What wilt you say, queen Esther? and what is your request? It shall be given you even to the half of the kingdom.

[81] Esther said, If it seem good to the king, let the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him.

[82] Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that it may be done as Esther has said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

[83] The king said to Esther at the banquet of wine, What is your petition? and it shall be granted you; and what is your request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

[84] Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request is:

[85] If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do tomorrow as the king has said.

[86] Then went Haman forth that day joyful and glad of heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he didn't stand up nor bow for him, he was filled with wrath against Mordecai.

[87] Nevertheless Haman refrained himself, and went home; and he sent and fetched his friends and Zeresh his wife.

[88] Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things in which the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

[89] Haman said moreover, Yes, Esther the queen did let me no man come in with the king to the banquet that she had prepared but myself, and tomorrow also am invited by her together with the king.

[90] Yet all this avails me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

[91] Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends to him, Let a gallows be made fifty cubits high, and in the morning speak you to the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go you in merry with the king to the banquet. The thing pleased Haman, and he caused the gallows to be made.

[92] On that night the king couldn't sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles, and they were read before the king.

[93] It was found written that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, of those who kept the threshold, who had sought to lay hands on the king Ahasuerus.

[94] The king said, What honor and dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this? Then the king's servants who ministered to him said, "Nothing has been done for him."

[95] The king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak to the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

[96] The king's servants said to him, Behold, Haman stands in the court. The king said, Let him come in.

[97] So Haman came in. The king said to him, What shall be done to the man whom the king delights to honor? Now Haman said in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honor more than to myself?

[98] Haman said to the king, For the man whom the king delights to honor,

[99] let royal clothing be brought which the king uses to wear, and the horse that the king rides on, and on the head of which a crown royal is set;

[100] and let the clothing and the horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man therewith whom the king delights to honor, and cause him to ride on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor.

[101] Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the clothing and the horse, as you have said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, who sits at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that you have spoken.

[102] Then took Haman the clothing and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and caused him to ride through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor.

[103] Mordecai came again to the king's gate: but Haman hurried to his house, mourning and having his head covered.

[104] Haman recounted to Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and Zeresh his wife said to him, If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, be of the seed of the Jews, you shall not prevail against him, but shall surely fall before him.

[105] While they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hurried to bring Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

[106] So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.

[107] The king said again to Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is your petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted you; and what is your request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

[108] Then Esther the queen answered, If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me, at my petition, and my people at my request.

[109] Let me and my people, and my goods, be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondswomen and bondmaids, I had held my peace, although the adversary could not have compensated for the king's damage.

[110] Then spoke the king Ahasuerus and said to Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that dared presume in his heart to do so?

[111] Esther said, An adversary and an enemy, even this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

[112] The king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine [and went] into the palace garden; and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

[113] Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen on the couch whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he even force the queen before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

[114] Then said Harbonah, one of the chamberlains who were before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman has made for Mordecai, who spoke good for the king, stands in the house of Haman. The king said, Hang him thereon.

[115] So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

[116] On that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman the Jews' enemy to Esther the queen. Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was to her.

[117] The king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

[118] Esther spoke yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and begged him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews.

[119] Then the king held out to Esther the golden scepter. So Esther arose, and stood before the king.

[120] She said, If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and if please his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the king's provinces:

[121] for how can I endure to see the evil that shall come to my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my relatives?

[122] Then the king Ahasuerus said to Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew, See, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged on the gallows, because he laid his hand on the Jews.

[123] Write you also to the Jews, as it pleases you, in the king's name, and seal with the king's ring; for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.

[124] Then were the king's scribes called at that time, in the third month Sivan, on the three and twentieth [day] of it, and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded to the Jews, and to the satraps, and the governors and princes of the provinces which are from India to Ethiopia, one hundred twenty-seven provinces, and to every province according to the writing of it, and to every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.

[125] He wrote the name of king Ahasuerus, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by post on horseback, riding on swift steeds that were used in the king's service, to all the provinces, both to the king's commandment, and the decree was given out in Shushan the palace.

[126] Mordecai rode both from the presence of the king in royal clothing of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a robe of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan shouted and was glad.

[127] The Jews had light and gladness, and joy and honor.

[128] In every province, and in every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had gladness and joy, a feast and a good day. Many from among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the fear of the Jews was fallen on them.

[129] Now in the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, 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 have the Jews slain, whereas it was turned the contrary, that the Jews had rule over those who hated them.

[130] The Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hands on such as sought their hurt, and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them was fallen on all the peoples.

[131] All the princes of the provinces, and the satraps, and the governors, and those who did the king's business, helped the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai was fallen on them.

[132] For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went forth throughout all the provinces, but the man Mordecai grew greater and greater.

[133] The Jews struck all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and with slaughter and destruction, and did what they would to those who hated them.

[134] In Shushan the palace the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.

[135] Parshandatha, and Dalpaim, and Aspatha,

[136] and Porath, and Adai, and Aridatha,

[137] and Parmastha, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vazratza,

[138] and ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy, killed them; but they didn't lay their hand on the spoil.

[139] On that day the number of those who were slain in Shushan the palace was brought before the king.

[140] The king said to Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman: what then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Is it your petition? and it shall be granted you: what is your request? and it shall be done for you.

[141] Then said Esther, If please the king, let it be granted to the Jews who are in the kingdom to do tomorrow also according to this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows.

[142] The king commanded it so to be done: and a decree was given out in Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

[143] 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 spoil.

[144] The other Jews who were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, and slew their enemies, and had rest from their enemies; and killed of the sword, and had seven seventy-five thousand, but they didn't lay their hand on the spoil.

[145] This was done on the thirtieth day of the month Adar, and on the fourteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

[146] But the Jews were in Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth [day] of it, and on the fourteenth of it; and on the fifteenth [day] of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.

[147] Therefore do the Jews of the villages, who dwell in the unwallied towns, make the fourteenth day of the month Adar [a day of] gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.

[148] Mordecai wrote these things, and sent them to the Jews who were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both near and far.

[149] He enjoins those who they should keep to the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly.

[150] In 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 their days of feasting and gladness, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the needy.

[151] The Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written to them;

[152] 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;

[153] but when [the matter] came before the king, he commanded by his 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.

[154] Therefore they called these days Purim, after the name of Pur. Therefore because of all the words of this letter, and of all that they had seen concerning this matter, and that which had come to them.