

clemency.) I have resolved to settle the lives of my subjects in lasting tranquillity and to restore peace, making my kingdom open to travel throughout all its extent, to restore peace which all people desire.

³ When I consulted my counselors as to how this goal might be accomplished, Haman, who is outstanding among us because of his wisdom (*or, sound judgment*) and eminent for his unflinching devotion and steadfast loyalty and has therefore attained a rank second only to his majesty, the king ⁴ has brought to our attention that among all the nations in the world there is a certain hostile race that is scattered [*within the provinces*] that has laws that are opposed to those of all other nations and continually disregards the decrees of the king, so that the unification of the kingdom which is our purpose to accomplish, cannot be established.

⁵ We understand that these people and they alone constantly stand at variance with all people, perversely following strange customs of life and laws, and are hostile to our intent in government; doing all the harm they can so that they are continually upsetting the political stability.

⁶ Therefore we have decreed that those indicated to you in this letter ¹ of Haman, who is the 'charge d' affaires' and like a second father to us, that you will massacre all, including their wives and children, who are to be destroyed by the sword of their enemies, without any pity or mercy, on the fourteenth ² day of the twelfth month, Adar, of this current year ⁷ so that those who have caused hostility for such a long time may, in one day, meet a violent death, going to the nether world, ³ thus leaving our government completely stable (*or, secure*) and untroubled for the future.]] ⁴

[[END OF ADDITION B]]

F The edict of genocide 3:14 - 15

3 ¹⁴ The text of the document was to be issued as a law (*or, edict*) in every province and to be proclaimed to all the people so that they would be ready for that day.

¹⁵ The couriers hurried, by order of the king, and the decree was issued in Susa, the capital. The king and Haman then sat down for a feast, ⁵ but the city of Susa was dumbfounded (*or, confused*).

1 Literally: "writings."

2 Later the celebration was set for the 13th to the 15th of Adar. Apparently there was a problem in that in some areas a second day was used for reprisal. Cf. Esther 9:15 - 19.

3 LXX: "Hades."

4 The Greek is very elegant and quite flowery. Ahasuerus is presented here as an idealistic, reasonable, philosophical ruler.

5 Literally: "drink."

<CHAPTER 4>

III *Mordecai persuades Esther to intercede with the king* 4:1 - 17

A *Esther's ignorance and resistance* 4:1 - 11

1 *Mordecai's first response* 4:1 - 3

¹ When Mordecai discovered all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth ⁶ and ashes. ⁷ He went into the midst of the city, ⁸ wailing loudly and bitterly. ⁹ ² until he came to the entrance of the royal palace ¹⁰ which no one could enter wearing sackcloth. ¹¹ ³ (Also, in every province, wherever the king's order and edict reached, there was great mourning among the Jews along with fasting, weeping and wailing. Most of them lay ¹² in sackcloth and ashes.) ¹³

2 *Mordecai's challenge and Esther's resistance* 4:4 - 11

⁴ When Esther's maids and her eunuchs came and informed her, the queen was emotionally distraught. She sent garments for Mordecai to wear so he might take off his sackcloth, but he refused. ⁵ Then Esther summoned Hathach, ¹⁴ one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed [*by the king*] to serve her, and dispatched him to go to Mordecai and learn what was happening and what the reason might be. ¹⁵ ⁶ Hathach went out to Mordecai in the public square in front of the palace entrance. ⁷ Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and all the exact details, ¹⁶ and about a the sum of money Haman had offered in payment to the royal treasury ¹⁷ for the slaughter of the Jews. ⁸ Mordecai also gave him a written copy of the decree that was issued in Susa, for the destruction, asking that it be shown to Essther (along with the explanation of the writing). ¹⁸ Additionally, Hathach was to charge Esther to go to the king to plead with him on behalf of the Jews. ¹⁹ ⁹ Hathach returned to Esther, telling her what Mordecai had said. ¹⁰ Then Esther told Hathach to bring a message to Mordecai, saying: ²⁰ ¹¹ "All the king's courtiers ²¹ and the nationalities of the royal provinces know that if any person, male or female, enters into the inner chamber of the king without being summoned, there is but one law; all are alike and are to be put to death. ²² Only one to whom the

6 Literally: "hair cloth" which would be a course cloth made of goat hair or camel hair. Hebrew: 83

7 LXX: "sprinkled himself with ashes."

8 LXX: "ran through the streets of the city."

9 LXX: "shouting loudly; 'An innocent nation is being destroyed.'" These actions are traditional rites of mourning.

10 Literally: "the king's gate." LXX adds, "He stopped. He did not go in since..."

11 LXX adds: "and ashes."

12 LXX: "they spread (*or, scattered*) themselves."

13 Literally: "sackcloth with ashes was spread out for the many of them."

14 The name means "chamberlain."

15 Note the contrast of Mordecai's knowledge and Esther's ignorance. LXX: "Then Esther summoned Hachtatheus the eunuch who attended to her, and ordered him to get accurate information for her from Mordecai. So, Hachtatheus went out to Mordecai in the street of the city opposite the city gate."

16 Literally: "more distinct" or "clearly." ;9U95 Many scholars have this refer to clarifying the amount of Haman's bribe. The word, however, seems to refer to the facts of the events that had taken place so recently.

17 LXX: "Haman had promised to pay ten thousand talents into the royal treasury to bring about the destruction of the Jews."

18 Omitted by LXX.

19 LXX adds: "Remember," he said, "the days when you were an ordinary person (*Literally: the days of humble humiliation*) being brought up under my care -- for Haman, who stands next to the king (*or, is the prime minister*) has spoken against us and demands our death. ⁹ Call upon the Lord, then speak to the king on our behalf, and save us from death."

20 LXX: "she said to him, 'Go to him. Go to Mordecai and say...'"

21 Omitted by LXX.

22 LXX: "there is not for him salvation or deliverance." Herodotus reports that there was a proviso that individuals could request and audience. Esther no doubt feels at risk since her predecessor was deposed.

king extends his golden scepter²³ may live. Now: the king has not sent for me in the last thirty days."

B Esther accepts her providential role 4:12 - 13

12 When Mordecai was told what Esther had said, 13 Mordecai gave this answer to Esther. "Do you think that you will escape²⁴ more readily because you are in the king's palace than all the other Jews? 13 If you keep silent in this time of crisis -- relief and deliverance²⁵ will come to the Jews from another source (*or, place*),²⁶ but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows,²⁷ perhaps it is exactly for such a time of crisis as this that you have attained to this royal position."²⁸

C Esther agrees to help 4:15 - 17

15 "Go, assemble all the Jews who are to be found in Susa. Hold a fast on my behalf. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will observe the same fast as you. Then I will go to the king though it is contrary to the law, and if I am to perish I will perish."²⁹ 17 Mordecai went away and did everything Esther had ordered him.³⁰

[[ADDITION C]]

IV The prayer of Mordecai 13:8 - 18

13⁸ Then Mordecai³¹ prayed to the Lord, recalling all of the Lord's deeds, saying:

9 "O Lord, as the Lord you rule as king over all things
(*or, O Lord, you are the Almighty King*).

The entire universe is within your power.³²

No one can withstand you
when it is your will to rescue Israel.

10 You have created heaven and earth,
and all the marvelous things under heaven.³³

11 You are Lord of all!
There is no one who can resist you,
for you are the Lord!

12 "You know all things! You know, O Lord,
that it was not insolence and arrogance³⁴
or trying to impress people,
that caused me to refuse to bow down
to the arrogant Haman.

23 A symbol of authority.

24 LXX: "You will be saved."

25 LXX: "help and protection."

26 The Hebrew word *YH* is considered by the LXX and Targums to be a substitute for the name of God. This is as close to using the word God as one comes in the Hebrew version.

27 *YH* Mordecai suggests that if Esther fails, God will not fail.

28 LXX: "you were made queen." TAN: "to royal position." NRSV: "royal dignity."

29 *YH*, *YH* *YH*, *YH* LXX: "even is I must die." One senses the poignancy even when reading the Hebrew words.

30 LXX: "did what Esther told him to do."

31 In the LXX Mordecai's name is omitted. It reads: "He prayed."

32 Literally: "in your power everything is."

33 Literally: "every wonderful thing on the [earth] under heaven."

34 The Greek word is *υβρις* or "excessive pride" Cf. the English word "hubris."

13 I would have been willing to kiss the sole of his feet
for the welfare of Israel.

14 "But on the other hand, I did this
that I might not set human glory above God's glory,
and I will not do obeisance to anyone
other than you, who are my Lord;
and I will not do these things because of pride.

15 "Now, O Lord God and King, God of Abraham,
spare your people, for our enemy
is looking at us carefully
for an opportunity to annihilate us,
and they desire to destroy the inheritance
of those who have always belonged to you.

16 Do not abandon your people (*or, your portion*)
whom you have redeemed for yourself
out of the land of Egypt.

17 Hear my supplication
and have mercy on your inheritance;
turn our mourning into rejoicing;
that we may live and sing praise to our name, O Lord!
Do not obliterate the mouths of those who praise you!"

18 And all Israel prayed loudly for they were face to face with death. ³⁵

V Esther's prayer 14:1 - 18

14 ¹ Queen Esther was seized with deadly anxiety (*or, mortal anguish*) ³⁶ and sought refuge with the Lord. ² She removed her sumptuous robes ³⁷ and put on garments of distress and mourning. ³⁸ Instead of costly perfumes she covered her head with ashes and dung, ³⁹ and she utterly humbled her body, and every part that she loved to adorn she now covered with her disheveled hair. ⁴⁰

³ She prayed to the Lord, the God is Israel, saying:

"O my Lord, you alone are our king;
help me for I am alone
⁴ and have no helper but you. ⁴¹

⁵ "Ever since my early childhood

35 Literally: "their death [was] in their eyes." The Greek possibly is based on a Semitic text. An Aramaic parallel to Mordecai's prayer is found in the Vatican Library. The passage is no doubt an interpolation into an older form of the book.

36 Literally: "in the struggle (*or, battle*) of death."

37 Literally: "garments of glory."

38 Possibly following the Jewish custom of sackcloth.

39 An extreme practice of expressing humiliation.

40 Literally: "she filled every place of her glad adorning with the torn curls of her hair."

41 Literally: "if not you."

I heard in the clan of my father's family
that you, O Lord, selected Israel
out of all the nations
and our ancestors from among all their forebearers,
for an everlasting heritage (*or, inheritance*),
and that you did for them, all you promised
(*or, just as you promised*).

6 "But now we have sinned against you (*or, in your presence*)
and you have handed us over to our enemies
7 because we paid homage to their gods.
You are righteous, O Lord!
8 But now our enemies are not satisfied
that we are bitterly enslaved.⁴²
They have made a covenant with their idols,⁴³
9 to abolish the decree you, ourself, have made
and to obliterate your heritage,
to stop the mouths of those who praise you;
to extinguish the glory of your house
and the flame on your altar.

10 "Their intention is to open the mouths of the nations⁴⁴
for the praise of unreal (*or, worthless*) idols,
and to forever magnify an earthly king.
11 Do not yield your scepter⁴⁵ to what is non-existent,
and do not let them laugh (*or, jeer*) at our ruin!
Indeed, cause their plan to turn against them,
and make an example of him (*Haman*)
who instigated this against us.

12 "Remember us, O Lord!
reveal yourself in this time of our affliction!

"Grant me the courage, O king of all the gods,
ruler over every authority (*or, power*)!
13 Put persuasive words⁴⁶ in my mouth
when I face the lion.⁴⁷
Cause his attitude to be diverted to hatred for our enemy
so he (*Haman*) and all his accomplices

42 Literally: "the bitterness of slavery."

43 Literally: "they have put their hands on the hands of their idols."

44 I. e. the nations that oppose Judaism.

45 I. e. your sovereign power.

46 Literally: "rhythmic language." Some scholars translate this as "melodious language."

47 I.e. king Artaxerxes.

(*or, those who are like him*) will meet their end.
14 Rescue us by your power (*or, come to our rescue*),
and help me, for I am alone⁴⁸
and have no helper, O Lord, but you!

15 "You have knowledge of all things.
You know that I abhor the pomp of the wicked,⁴⁹
and the bed of a pagan stranger.
Any gentile is loathing to me..⁵⁰
16 You know what I am forced to do
(*or, the constraint on me*).
I abhor this symbol⁵¹ of my exalted position,
which is on my head on the days I appear in public.
I loath it like a menstrous (*or, filthy*) rag⁵²
and I do not wear it on the days when I am at leisure.

17 "Your servant (*or, slave*) has never dined at Haman's table
and I have not extolled the king's banquets
nor drunk the wine that was dedicated to his gods
(*or, the libation*),
18 nor has your servant (*or, slave*) found joy
since prior to the day⁵³ I was brought here until now,
except in you, O Lord, God of Abraham.

19 "O God, whose power prevails over all,
hear the voice of the desperate (*or, the helpless ones*)⁵⁴
and save us from the hands of the wicked,
and save me from my fear!"⁵⁵]]

[[END OF ADDITION C]]

[[ADDITION D]]

F Esther is received by the king 15:1 - 16

[[15₁ On the third day⁵⁶ when Esther had finished her praying, she took off her penitential

48 Literally: "I have no one but you."

49 Does this refer to her marriage situation?

50 Italian Common Language translation: "I do not approve of marriage to a non-Jew. Spanish Common Language translation: "I hate being the wife of a pagan and foreigner."

51 I.e. the crown or diadem.

52 TEV: "last month's rag." Cf. Leviticus 15:19 - 24.

53 Literally: "from day of my changing." OTL: "From the day my status changed until now your servant has not delighted in any but you, O Lord." The sense is: 1. Change of location. 2. Change of situation or condition.

54 I.e. the Jews as well as Esther.

55 These additions to the Book of Esther serve to make a theologically ambiguous story into a clear example of Divine power. Esther has been transformed in these additions into a woman of prayer, penitence and religious observance.

56 LXX: "In the day of the third." Scholars do not agree. 1. Did Esther pray for three days? 2. Did she pray and then wait for three days to see the king? French Common Language translation: "at the end of (*or, after*) three days."

garments in which she had worshipped,⁵⁷ and arrayed herself in regal attire. ² After invoking the aid of the all-seeing God and savior,⁵⁸ having become majestically adorned, Esther took two of her favorite maidservants with her. ³ She leaned gently on one (*or, One of her maidservants escorted her gently by the arm*) for support (*or, as a delicate woman*), ⁴ while the other followed, holding up her train.⁵⁹ ⁵ She glowed⁶⁰ with the perfection of her beauty, and her appearance was joyous, as if she were beloved, but her heart was in the grip of fear.⁶¹

⁶ After she had gone through all the portals, she stood in the presence of the king. He was seated on his throne, clothed in regal robes that were covered with gold and precious stones. He was most terrifying (*or, he was an awe inspiring sight*).

⁷ Looking up, resplendent as he was, he looked at her with intense anger. The queen staggered⁶² and turned pale and faint.⁶³ As she was fainting she laid her head on the shoulder of the maidservant who was in front of her.⁶⁴ ⁸ Then God changed the king's state of mind to gentleness and with intense anxiety he leaped up from his throne and took her in his arms until she recovered. He comforted her with soothing⁶⁵ words, and said to her, "What is the matter, Esther? I am your husband.⁶⁶ There is no need to be afraid! You will not die. The decree applies only to the general public. Come near."⁶⁷ ¹¹ Then he raised his golden scepter and touched her neck with it. ¹² He hugged her, and said, "Speak to me." ¹³ She responded, "My lord, I saw you, like an angel of God and my heart trembled with fear at your glorious appearance."⁶⁸ ¹⁴ You are awesome! My lord, your face is filled with kindness." ¹⁵ But while she was speaking she fainted and fell. ¹⁶ Then the king was agitated and all his courtiers tried to revive her.]]⁶⁹

[[END OF ADDITION D]]

<CHAPTER 5>

G Esther's first banquet invitation 5:1 - 8

¹ On the third day Esther donned her royal apparel⁷⁰ and stood⁷¹ in the inner courtyard of the king's palace, facing the royal audience chamber. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the inner palace area⁷² facing the palace entrance. ² As soon as the king caught sight of Queen Esther standing in the courtyard, she won his favor (*or, grace*)⁷³ and he extended his hand, holding the

57 I.e. garments of distress and mourning. Cf. 14:2.

58 The LXX is somewhat ambiguous in this verse. 1. God watches over and saves all people? 2. God watches over all and saves some? El Libro de Pueblo Dios: "God who watches over all people and saves them." "God the overseer and presence of all things."

59 By doing this she could walk 'like a queen', as a well bred woman might do in high society.

60 OTL: "blushed."

61 Literally: "shrunken with fear."

62 Literally: "fell."

63 Literally: "the color of her complexion changed in her faintness."

64 Literally: "as she bowed herself on the head of the maid that went before her."

65 Literally: "peaceful."

66 Literally: "brother."

67 The meaning of "come near" is obscure.

68 Literally: "and my heart was confused from fear of your glory."

69 In the LXX Addition D (i.e. this chapter) replaces verses 1 & 2 of chapter 5. The addition heightens the drama as one might expect in a romantic novel for it enhances the character of Esther by concentrating on the challenge that faces her.

70 The Talmud interprets this to mean the Holy Spirit and prophetic inspiration, which seems to be inaccurate.

71 Literally: "took her stand." Possibly "presented herself" conveys the Hebrew meaning best.

72 Literally: "inside the palace."

73 0% %!U1 She wins the king's favor just as she won his favor in the beauty contest: won by her mysterious charm. LXX

golden scepter toward Esther. Then she approached and touched the top of the scepter. ³ The king asked, "What is bothering you Queen ⁷⁴ Esther? What is your request? ⁷⁵ It will be granted you even up to one half of my empire." ⁴ Then Esther said, ⁷⁶ "If it pleases Your Majesty: let Your Majesty and Haman come to a banquet today ⁷⁷ that I have prepared (*or, organized*) for you. ⁵ The king replied, "Get Haman at once so we may comply with Esther's bidding." ⁷⁸ So the king and Haman ⁷⁹ came to the feast that Esther had prepared. ⁸⁰

⁶ While at the feast ⁸¹ the king said to Esther, "What is your wish? It will be granted! What is our request? ⁸² Even up to half of my empire -- it will be fulfilled." ⁷ Esther, however, said, "This is my wish and my request: ⁸ that if I have found favor in the sight of Your Majesty, and if it please Your Majesty to grant my petition ⁸³ and fulfill my request; let Your Majesty and Haman come to a banquet tomorrow ⁸⁴ and then I will do Your Majesty's bidding (*or, I will make my request*). ⁸⁵

Haman plans to have Mordecai hanged 5:9 - 14

⁵ That day Haman went out joyfully ⁸⁶ and light heartedly. but when Haman saw Mordecai at the royal palace gate and noticed that he did not rise nor even stir in Haman's presence, he was infuriated because of Mordecai. ⁸⁷ ¹⁰ Nonetheless Haman controlled his rage ⁸⁸ and went home. Then he assembled ⁸⁹ his friends and his wife Zeresh. ⁹⁰ ¹¹ Haman bragged to them about the greatness of his wealth, the number of his sons, ⁹¹ all the promotions with which the king had honored him, and that he had been advanced above all the other officials and courtiers. ⁹² ¹² Haman then added, "Queen Esther even invited no one to come to the feast with the king that she had prepared except me, ⁹³ and tomorrow she also has invited ⁹⁴ me together with the king. ¹³ But all this

and Old Latin interpret these words as being God who changed the attitude of the king.

74 "Queen" is omitted in LXX.

75 In the LXX two questions are asked: 1. What do you wish? 2. What is your request?

76 LXX: "Today is a special day for me, therefore if it is pleasing to the king let him come. Both he and Haman, to the dinner I have prepared for them."

77 The time when the feast is to be held is not hinted at in Hebrew.

78 Literally: "to do the word of Esther."

79 LXX: "they both went."

80 LXX: "spoken about."

81 Literally: "banquet of wine."

82 LXX has only one question: "What is it Queen Ester? It will be granted .. all that you ask."

83 Literally: "my request." The phrase is omitted in the LXX.

84 "Tomorrow" is omitted in Hebrew but is included in the LXX. LXX: "It will be like this feast."

85 Why did Esther make a request for a second banquet? 1. She may have wanted to be certain that the king had forgotten her earlier uninvited entry before making the request. 2. Possibly she delayed because the king had consumed too much wine. 3. To make Ahasuerus jealous of Haman (*This option has been preferred by many rabbis.*) 4. She lost her nerve.

Whatever the reason might be we see Esther has become the 'stage manager.'

86 w- w&)& These same Hebrew words are used in 1:10 when the King wants Vashti to attend the banquet.

87 The LXX version is shortened. "So Haman went out from the king, joyful and glad of heart. But when he saw Mordecai the Jew in the courtyard he was filled with anger." Note the noncompliance of Mordecai. Also that noncompliance brought about Vashti's downfall. 1:12 ff.

88 The Hebrew words express strength and emotion. They are omitted in the LXX.

89 Literally: "sent and brought." LXX: "summoned."

90 The name means "golden." LXX: "Zosara."

91 Literally: "multitude." Omitted by the LXX.

92 LXX: "had caused him to take precedence and bear chief rule in the kingdom."

93 Haman implies in the LXX that only he was invited to eat with Queen Esther.

94 Literally: "I am summoned."

is meaningless to me⁹⁵ as long as I see⁹⁶ that Jew, Mordecai, sitting at the palace gate!"⁹⁷ 14 Then his wife ZerEsh and all his friends said to him, "Have a gallows (*or, stake*) built in the morning: fifty cubits (*or, seventy five feet*) high, and tell the king to have Mordecai hanged (*or, impaled*)⁹⁸ on it. Then joyfully go to dinner with the king." This suggestion⁹⁹ pleased Haman, and he had the gallows (*or, stake*) built.

<CHAPTER 6>

h The unrewarded service 6:1 - 5

1 That night the king could not sleep¹⁰⁰ and he gave an order that a record book of memorable deeds (*or, the annals*) be brought¹⁰¹ and read in the presence¹⁰² of the king. 2 It was noted in the record¹⁰³ that Mordecai had informed¹⁰⁴ the king about the plot by Bigthana and Teresh,¹⁰⁵ two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold and who plotted the assassination of King Ahasuerus. 3 The king inquired, "What honor or promotion¹⁰⁶ has been conferred on Mordecai for this?" The king's courtiers who were in attendance responded, "Nothing has been done for him." 4 The king asked, "Who is in the antechamber?" Haman had just entered the antechamber of the royal palace to speak to the king about having Mordecai hanged (*or, impaled*) on the gallows (*or, stake*) he had prepared for him.¹⁰⁷ 5 The king's courtiers replied, "Haman¹⁰⁸ is standing in the antechamber." The king ordered: "Summon him!"¹⁰⁹

G Haman's humiliation 6:6 - 14

6 When Haman entered the king said to him, "What should be done for a man whom the king desires to honor?" Haman thought to himself,¹¹⁰ "Who would the king desire to honor more than me (*or, me, of course*)."¹¹¹ 7 So Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king delights to honor? (*or, the king's benefactor*)?"¹¹² 8 Let the royal robes be brought from the king's own wardrobe, and take a horse from the royal stable,¹¹³ having the royal crown (*or, crest*) on its head.¹¹⁴ 9 Let the robes and the horse be placed in charge of one of the king's most noble officials,¹¹⁵ and let him array the man whom the king desires to honor and then parade him on horseback through the open square of

95 In Hebrew these words are almost identical with his words in 3:8.

96 Literally: "at every time I see." LXX: "whenever I see."

97 What a fragile ego Haman has!

98 LXX: "speak to the king and let Mordecai be hanged from the gallows."

99 The Hebrew words are identical with those of 1:21.

100 Literally: "The king's sleep fled." LXX: "But the Lord removed sleep from the king that night." Old Latin & Targums: "it was God who took away his sleep."

101 Literally: "said to bring."

102 Vulgate: "they were being read." LXX: "to bring the letters and the register of daily events to be read to him."

103 LXX adds "and the letters."

104 LXX: "announced."

105 These are Hebrew versions of the names found in 2:21. These names are not mentioned in the LXX.

106 **98b** and %-&%# "honor and promotion." An example of hendiadys. The French Common Language translation: "recompense and honor."

107 In the LXX this sentence is in parentheses.

108 Hebrew begins with %1% "behold." LXX: τδου.

109 A single word in Hebrew.

110 Literally: "in his heart."

111 LXX: "if not me." Haman's insecurity and his egocentricity are the sources of his problem.

112 Grammatically this can be a question or a statement. If a question, Haman is thinking out loud.

113 The Hebrew seems to be saying that the horse must be one which is known by the public as one the king uses regularly and would normally be seen by the public as the king's horse.

114 Cf. Assyrian bas-relief pictures of horses wearing tall crown-like head ornaments. This last clause is not found in the LXX.

115 French Common Language translation: "One of your leading functionaries."

the city while proclaiming (*or, announcing*) before him:

"This is what is done for the man
whom the king chooses to honor." 117

12 Then the king said to Haman, "Quickly! Take the robes and the horse as you have said, and do this to Mordecai the Jew who sits at the king's gate. 116 Do not omit anything that you have proposed!" 117 11 So Haman took the robes and the horse, and he arrayed Mordecai and paraded him through the open square of the city, proclaiming:

"This is what is done for the man
whom the king chooses to honor." 118

12 Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate 119 whereas Haman hurried home in mourning, with his head covered. 13 Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends (*or, advisors*) everything that had befallen 120 him. His advisors 121 and his wife Zeresh said to him: "If Mordecai, before whom your downfall has begun, is of the Jewish race, 122 you will never recover the upper hand and will surely be ruined before him."

<CHAPTER 7>

H Haman's downfall 7:1 - 10

1 So the king and Haman came in to the feast 123 prepared by Queen 124 Esther. 2 On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again asked Esther, "What is your wish, Queen Esther? It will be granted you. And, what is your request? Even to the half of my empire -- it will be fulfilled! 125 3 Queen Esther replied, 126 "O king, if I have won your favor, 127 and if it please Your Majesty, let my life be granted me is my petition (*or, wish*), and that the lives of my people [*be spared*] is my request. (*or, My wish is that my life be granted me, and my desire is that the lives of my people be spared.*) 4 We have been sold 128 and my people and I are to be destroyed, massacred, and exterminated. 129 If we had only been sold as male and female [*slaves*], I would have kept silent; for our affliction 130 would not be worth troubling the king because of the loss." 131

116 Revised English Bible: "and do this for Mordecai the Jew, who is present at court."

117 OW\$ Literally: "Do not let fall one word of all you said." The wording in the Goetting LXX and Rahlfs editions of the LXX do not agree though the thought of both is in agreement.

118 The LXX seems more clear in describing Mordecai, mounted on the horse and Haman parading him through the city square.

119 LXX: "he returned to the courtyard."

120 LXX: "all the things that had come upon him." The Hebrew words are identical with the words in 4:7.

121 &b;,(The Hebrew word could mean "advisor, sage, shrewd man, astrologer, magician."

122 Literally: "of Jewish seed."

123 Literally: "drink."

124 Queen is omitted by the LXX.

125 LXX: "May it be yours even to half of my empire."

126 LXX: "And she answered and said,"

127 LXX: "If I have found favor with the king, let my soul..."

128 Hebrew: 9W/ This word is translated in Judges as "delivered up to enemies."

129 The words translated "destroyed" and "exterminated" are the same words used in 3:13.

130 διαβολος in Greek. 97 in Hebrew. Usually the thought is that of affliction. Recent scholarship would translate this as enemy or adversary. Some emend the Hebrew to read ..("little finger" The last clause of this verse is problematic.

131 LXX adds: "We and our children as male and female slaves. This has come to my knowledge. Our slanderer (*or, antagonist*) brings shame on the king's court." Note Esther's tact and strategy. "I and my people" Interestingly the king is deprived of Queen Vashti n 1:10 - 20 by the plan of one of his advisors. Now another advisor is about to again deprive him of a queen.