

**GOD HAS BIG
PLANS FOR YOU,
ESTHER**

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JANNA ARNDT**



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS

EUGENE, OREGON

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GOD HAS BIG PLANS FOR YOU, ESTHER

Copyright © 2011 by Precept Ministries International

Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97402

www.harvesthousepublishers.com

ISBN 978-0-7369-2596-9 (Softcover)

ISBN 978-0-7369-4127-3 (eBook)

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Printed in the United States of America

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 /ML-NI/ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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A Bible Study You Can Do!

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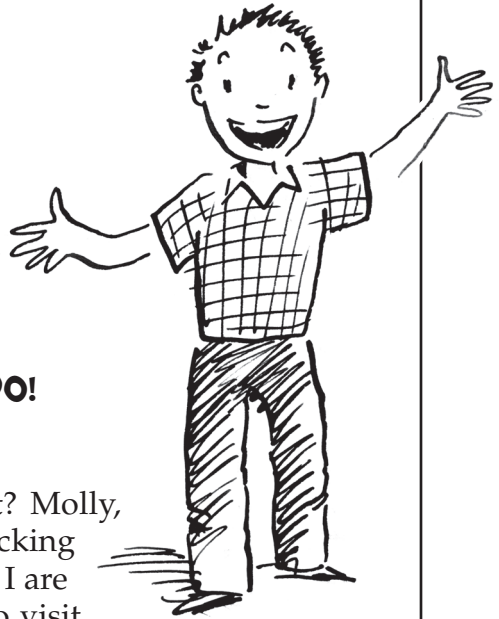
DISCOVERING GOD'S PLAN—

A BIBLE STUDY YOU CAN DO!

Hey, guys! Guess what? Molly, Sam (the great face-licking detective beagle), and I are headed to Washington, D.C., to visit our Uncle Matt and meet the president of the United States of America. By the way, my name is Max. Can you believe we are going to meet the president? Not only will we meet the president and learn about the United States government while we tour the nation's capital, but we'll also study the life of a young lady in the Bible whom God used to change the course of her nation. Her story is found in the book of Esther, a fascinating historical book in the Bible that shows us what happened to God's chosen people during the time of the Medes and the Persians.

As we arrive in Washington, D.C., we're going to study the most important book in history—the Bible—to find out WHO the main characters are in Esther. WHY did God put these people in the palace at this time in history? WHAT is happening? WHAT plot is uncovered? WHO will live? WHO will die? WHAT is God's purpose and plan?

You'll get the answers to all these questions by going straight to God's Word, the Bible, the source of all truth, and asking God's Spirit to lead and guide you.



You also have this book, which is an inductive Bible study. *Inductive* means you go straight to the Bible *yourself* to investigate what the book of Esther shows you about a young orphan girl God puts in a palace to bring about His plan for His people and an entire nation. In inductive Bible study you discover for yourself what the Bible says and means.

Aren't you excited? Grab your Bible and get ready for an *incredible* adventure as you discover God's perfect plan to rescue and restore His people!

THINGS YOU'LL NEED

NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE
(UPDATED EDITION)–
PREFERABLY THE NEW INDUCTIVE
STUDY BIBLE (HAVE YOU
GOTTEN YOURS YET?)

PEN OR PENCIL

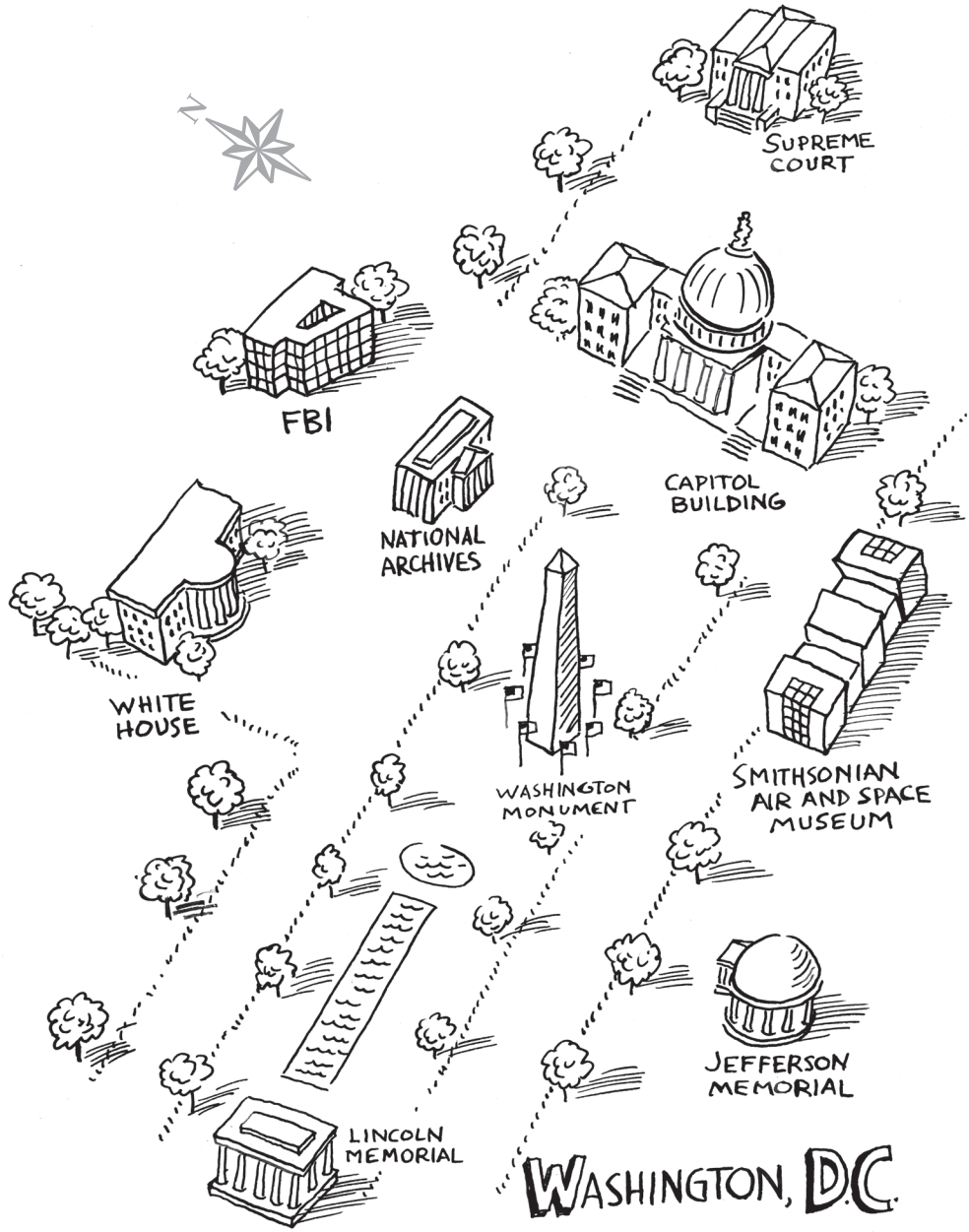
COLORED PENCILS

INDEX CARDS

A DICTIONARY

THIS WORKBOOK





SUPREME COURT

FBI

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

CAPITOL BUILDING

WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON MONUMENT

SMITHSONIAN AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM

JEFFERSON MEMORIAL

LINCOLN MEMORIAL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

1



ESTHER 1

“We are so glad you’re here! Molly and I are excited to have you with us on our new adventure in Washington, D.C., with our Uncle Matt. Do you remember Uncle Matt from our special mission in the Discover 4 Yourself Bible study *God, What’s Your Name?* Uncle Matt is a secret agent for the CIA, but this time his mission is to show us around our nation’s capital as we study the book of Esther to see how God uses His people to change the course of a nation.

“This is going to be so cool! Uncle Matt has also gotten us a very special invitation to meet the president of the United States so we can get a firsthand glimpse at being the leader of a nation.

“Are you ready to get started on this awesome adventure? Then grab the most important book in history—the Bible—and let’s find out WHO the main characters are in Esther as we make our first stop in D.C.”



RESEARCH

“Hi, kids!” Uncle Matt hugged Max and Molly as Sam watched for the perfect moment to jump up and give Uncle Matt a good face-licking. “Uh, you got me, Sam! I should have known better than to take my eyes off you even for a moment.”

“Hey, he’s a better secret agent than you!” Max teased, as Molly and Uncle Matt laughed and Sam wagged his tail.

“We’re here,” Uncle Matt announced as he led the kids into the National Archives building. “The National Archives is the nation’s record keeper. It is where the United States keeps all the documents and materials that record important events in American history. This is also where copies of the Charters of Freedom are kept.”

“What are the Charters of Freedom, Uncle Matt?” Molly asked.

“The Charters of Freedom are three very important documents in American history concerning the founding of our country,” Uncle Matt replied.

“Oh, I bet I know what those three documents are,” Max said, jumping into the conversation. “The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.”

“You’re right, Max,” Uncle Matt answered. “Before we head into the rotunda to get a close-up look at these important documents, let’s go into the research room to start our investigation of Esther. Now that we’re here, WHAT is the first thing we need to do before we get started?”

“Pray!” Max and Molly said at the same time. Sam barked in agreement.

“That’s right!” Uncle Matt smiled at their answer. “Bible study should always begin with prayer. We need to ask God to help us understand what the Bible says and to direct us by His Holy Spirit so we can make sure we understand His Word and handle it accurately. Let’s talk to God.”

All right! Now that we have prayed, let's get to work on our research. Did you know that Esther is a historical book in the Bible? Since you study history in school, you know that history is about people and events in the past.

Today we need to find the historical setting and the main characters in the book of Esther by using Observation Worksheets. Observation Worksheets have the Bible text printed out for us so we can study the book of Esther.

To discover the setting and characters of Esther, we need to ask the 5 W's and an H. What are the 5 W's and an H? They are the WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY, and HOW questions.

1. Since this book is a historical book, asking WHO is very important. Asking WHO helps you find out:

WHO are the main characters?



WHO is involved?

WHO said this or did that?

2. WHAT helps you understand:

WHAT are the main events taking place?

WHAT is God telling you?

3. WHEN tells us about time. We mark it with a green clock  or a green circle like this: . WHEN tells us:

WHEN did this event happen or WHEN is it going to happen?

WHEN is so very important in history. It helps us follow the order of events.

4. In any historical event, WHERE is very important. WHERE helps you learn:

WHERE did something happen?

WHERE did the people go?

WHERE was something said?

When we discover a "WHERE," we double-underline the "WHERE" in green.

5. Looking at history, WHY asks questions like:

WHY did this event happen?

WHY did the people say that?

WHY did they go there?

6. HOW lets you figure out things like:



HOW did something happen?

HOW did the people react to what happened?

Now that you know what the 5W's and an H are, turn to page 160. Read Esther 1:1-9 on your Observation Worksheet. Then ask those 5 W's and an H questions.

Esther 1:1 WHEN does Esther take place?

In the days of _____.

Draw a green clock  or a green circle  over this time phrase in Esther 1:1 on page 160.

Esther 1:1-9 WHO are the main characters?

King _____ and Queen _____

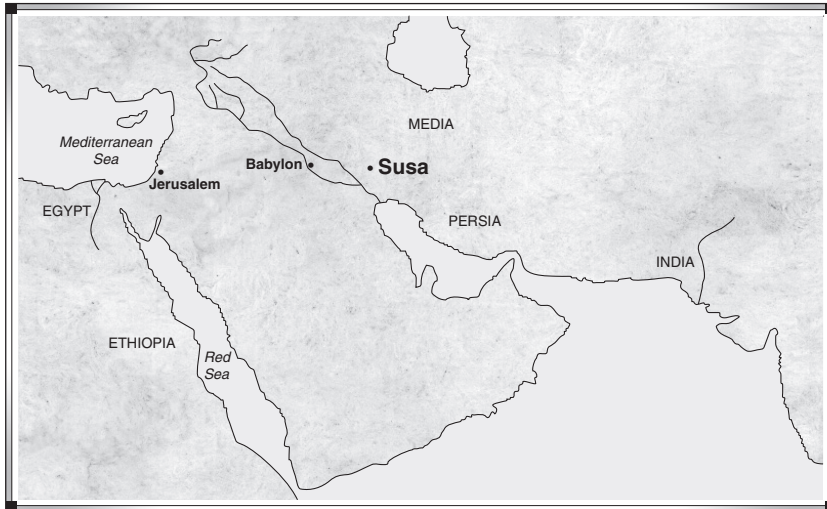
Esther 1:1 WHERE did Ahasuerus rule?

From _____ to _____ over
_____ provinces

Esther 1:2 WHERE was Ahasuerus's royal throne?

At the _____ in _____

Double-underline the WHERE in Esther 1:1-2 in green on page 160. Then look at the following map and double-underline the location of Ahasuerus's royal throne.



Esther 1:3 WHEN in Ahasuerus's reign is this happening?

In the _____ year of his reign

Draw a green clock ⌚ or a green circle ○ over this time phrase on page 160.

Esther 1:3 WHAT kingdom is ruling at this time in history?

The kingdom of P _ _ _ _ a and M _ _ _ _ a

Great work! You have done some awesome research! You just discovered the setting for the book of Esther. You went straight to God's Word, the Book of truth, and saw that Esther takes place during the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. You also saw that it is the third year of the reign of a king named Ahasuerus, and that he has a wife named Queen Vashti. Tomorrow, as you

You did it! We are so proud of you! Now head to the rotunda and take a look at the Charters of Freedom that established the United States.



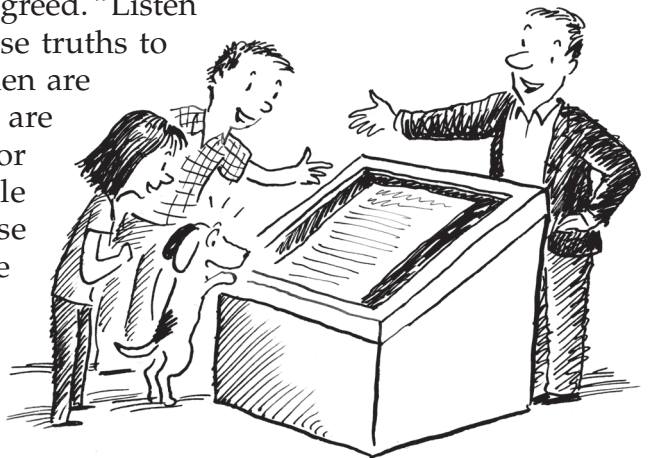
A LOOK AT THE KING

“Wow! This is incredible!” Max exclaimed. “I can’t believe we are standing in the National Archives building looking at the Declaration of Independence. Can you believe we are looking at the document that announced the independence of the United States of America from Great Britain on July 4, 1776?”

“It’s amazing,” Molly agreed. “Listen to this part: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.’”

“Did you know that sentence has been called one of the best-known sentences in the English language?” Uncle Matt asked. “The Declaration of Independence was written to secure the people’s rights and to state that when a government doesn’t honor those rights, then it is the right of the people to alter the government or get it abolished for their safety.”

“That’s so cool to see how our Founding Fathers wanted to make sure the government worked for the people,” Molly added.



“You’re right, Molly!” responded Uncle Matt. “Now that we’ve seen the Declaration of Independence, let’s head back into the research room to find out what is happening in Esther by reading the Bible!”

Yesterday we discovered two main characters: a king named Ahasuerus and a queen named Vashti. Today we need to get the details on one of our main characters. One way we can uncover clues about main characters is to color-code their names in a special way in the Bible so we can get a clearer look at them. Today we are going to read all of Esther 1 and color every place we see the name *Ahasuerus* orange. When you color *Ahasuerus*, you will also need to color any other words that mean the same thing, such as pronouns and synonyms. What are pronouns?

Pronouns

Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns. A noun is a person, place, or thing. A pronoun stands in for a noun. Look at the two sentences below. Watch how the pronoun *he* is substituted for Max’s name in the second sentence.

“Max can’t wait to meet the president of the United States. *He* hopes the president will invite him into the Oval Office.”

The word *he* is a pronoun because it takes the place of Max’s name in the second sentence. *He* is another word we use to refer to Max.

Watch for these pronouns when you are marking people’s names:

I	you	he	she
me	yours	him	her
mine		his	hers
we	it		
our	its		
they	them		

Now take a look at the next box to learn about synonyms.

Synonyms

Synonyms are different words that mean the same thing. In Esther 1, *king* is another word for *Ahasuerus* and *queen* is another word for *Vashti*. That's a synonym. It says the same thing but with a different word.

Now that you know what pronouns and synonyms are, turn to your Observation Worksheets on page 160. Read Esther 1 and color every reference to Ahasuerus in a special way, just like this:

Ahasuerus (King Ahasuerus, king) (color it orange)

All right! Now that we have marked our Observation Worksheet, let's find out WHAT we can learn about King Ahasuerus from each of these verses. Look at every place where you marked a reference to King Ahasuerus by coloring it orange on your Observation Worksheet. Make a list of everything you learned about him.

My List on King Ahasuerus

Esther 1:1 King Ahasuerus reigned from _____
to _____ over _____ provinces.

Esther 1:2 King Ahasuerus's royal throne was at the
_____ in _____.

Esther 1:3 In the _____ year of Ahasuerus's
_____, he gave a _____ for

all his _____ and _____, the
 _____ of Persia and Media,
 the _____ and the _____ of his
 provinces.

Esther 1:4 King Ahasuerus displayed the _____
 of his _____ and the _____
 of his great _____ for _____ days.

Esther 1:5 King Ahasuerus gave another _____
 that lasted _____ days for all the _____ who
 were present at the citadel in _____ in the
 _____ of the _____ of the king's
 _____.

Esther 1:8 The king gave _____ to each
 official of his household that he should do accord-
 ing to the desires of each person.

Esther 1:10-11 King Ahasuerus was _____
 with wine and commanded the seven eunuchs
 to bring _____ before him to
 display her _____ to the _____
 and the _____.

Esther 1:12 The king became very _____ and
 his _____ burned within him.

Esther 1:13-15 King Ahasuerus spoke to the _____ men about what to do with Queen Vashti since she did not obey.

Esther 1:17 King Ahasuerus _____ Queen _____ to be _____ in to his _____.

Esther 1:20 The king will make his _____ heard throughout his _____.

Esther 1:21 King Ahasuerus was p _ _ _ _ ed with the word and did as Memucan proposed.

Fantastic! Just look at all we learned about this king! King Ahasuerus is the king over a great empire, the kingdom of Persia and Media. He is a very wealthy king, who gives two different banquets, according to Esther 1. Historians think King Ahasuerus gave these banquets and invited his army officers so they could plan his invasion of Greece.

We also see that King Ahasuerus loves beautiful things and takes great pride in what he has. He wants all the people to see the riches and splendor that belong to him. And King Ahasuerus is also a king who gets very angry when Queen Vashti, his beautiful wife, refuses to come to his banquet.

Uh-oh! WHAT will this angry king do? We'll find out as we continue to do our research. Don't forget to practice your memory verse. Say it out loud three times in a row, three times today!



RESEARCH ON THE QUEEN

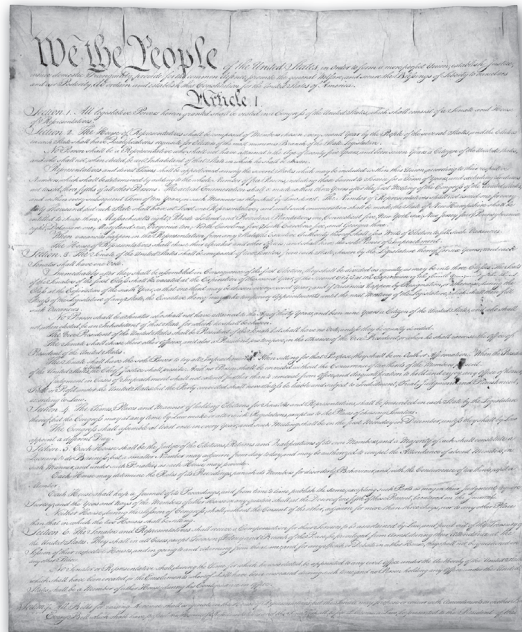
"I just love working in the National Archives building, Uncle Matt," Molly said as they headed back into the research room.

"Yeah," Max added. "It's pretty cool doing our research in here with all these pieces of American history around us. We can look at the Constitution of the United States and think about how the Founding Fathers of our nation wrote the Constitution because they wanted to form a government that did not allow one person to have too much authority or control. They saw how bad that could be while they were under the rule of the British king."

Uncle Matt asked Molly, "What is the Constitution?"

"The Constitution is a set of rules for us to live by, that also provides a separation of powers so that one person won't have too much control. That's why there are three separate branches of our government."

"That's right, Molly," Uncle Matt agreed. "Each branch of the United States government works together to make our country run smoothly and to make sure the rights of Americans are protected."



Max smiled. "That's called checks and balances. One branch of the government can use its power to check the powers of the other two branches to keep the power balanced among all three branches."

"You've got it, Max. Okay, Molly, what are the three branches of government?"

"The legislative, executive, and judicial."

"Great work, kids!"

Okay, you guys, now that we have taken a look at our Constitution, we need to get back to our research in Esther to find out more about what is happening in the times of the Medes and Persians. WHAT can we learn about the queen in Esther 1? Don't forget to talk to your King before you get started!

All right! Now that you have prayed, turn to your Observation Worksheet on page 160. Read Esther 1 and mark every reference to Vashti in a special way, just like we have:

Vashti (Queen Vashti, queen) (color it green)

Don't forget to mark the pronouns!

Awesome! Now let's see what we can learn about Queen Vashti. Look at every place where you colored a reference to Queen Vashti green in Esther 1 and make a list of what you discovered about her.

My List on Queen Vashti

Esther 1:9 Queen Vashti gave a _____ for the _____ in the palace.

Esther 1:11 Queen Vashti was commanded to come before the _____ with her royal _____ to display her _____ to the _____

and the _____. Queen Vashti was _____.

Esther 1:12 Queen Vashti _____ to _____ at the king's command.

Esther 1:15 Queen Vashti did not _____ the _____ of King Ahasuerus.

Esther 1:16 Queen Vashti w _____ ed the _____ and all the _____ and all the _____ who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.

Esther 1:17 Queen Vashti's _____ will become known to all the _____. She was _____ by King Ahasuerus to be brought into his presence but she did not _____.

Amazing! Can you believe Queen Vashti refused to honor the king and come into his presence? She didn't obey the king's command.

How about you? How do you respond to those in authority over you? Do you obey your parents like the Bible says you should in Ephesians 6:1-3?

___ Yes ___ No ___ Sometimes

Do you obey those in authority over you like it says to in Romans 13:1?

___ Yes ___ No ___ Sometimes

How do you talk to your parents and teachers? Do you speak to them with respect? Or does your tone of voice show disrespect, anger, or impatience? Write down how you treat your parents and teachers when they correct you or ask you to do something.

Vashti is a queen. She is a leader and role model for the people in her country.

Esther 1:17 Looking at Queen Vashti's behavior and example, WHAT is the concern about how the other women in that country will treat their husbands?

According to Esther 1:17, WHAT kind of leader is Queen Vashti to the women in her kingdom?

Think about what you have learned today. Are you a good example to your brothers or sisters? _____

How about to your friends and the other kids at school? _____

How about to your teachers? _____

Write out a way you can be a good example to people—to show them by the way you behave that Jesus lives in you.

Way to go! Don't forget to practice your memory verse. Be a good role model for the kids who are watching you!

**DAY
FOUR**

A ROYAL INVITATION

"Okay, guys," Uncle Matt said as they walked inside the building, "today's our last day at the archives, so let's take a look at the last of the three documents of the Charters of Freedom—the Bill of Rights."

Holding Sam, Max walked up to the Bill of Rights to take a closer look. "When the Constitution was written, some people didn't want to approve the document because it didn't have a list of rights that belonged to the people."



“Good,” Uncle Matt said and smiled. “So how did they make a way to add a list of rights for the people, Molly?”

“By making an amendment process. An amendment is a change that can be added to the Constitution or it can change an older part of the Constitution. The new government held meetings, and Congress proposed a list of rights for the people. And in 1791, ten of those changes were agreed to by the states and added to the Constitution.”

“Those changes,” Max added, “are called the Bill of Rights, and they were written to protect the people’s rights, including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, the right to assemble peaceably, and many others.”

“Great work, you two. It’s important to understand these three historical documents because they give us our freedom as Americans.

“Let’s take a moment to thank God for these freedoms He has given us as a nation and ask for His help as we continue our study on the book of Esther. Today we’re going to find out WHAT the main event is in Esther 1.”

All right! Now that we’ve talked to God, let’s continue our research by marking key words. What are *key words*? Key words are words that pop up more than once. They are called key words because they help unlock the meaning of the chapter or book that you are studying and give you clues about what is most important in a passage of Scripture.

Key Words

- ✓ Key words are usually used over and over again. (That’s because God doesn’t want you to miss the point.)
- ✓ Key words are important.
- ✓ Key words are used by the writer for a reason.

Once you discover a key word, you need to mark it in a special way using a special color or symbol so you can immediately spot it in Scripture.

You may also want to make a bookmark for these key words so that you can see them at a glance as you mark them on your Observation Worksheets.



To make a key-word bookmark, get an index card or a piece of paper and write on it the key words, as well as how you are going to mark them on your Observation Worksheets.

Now turn to page 160. Read Esther 1 and mark the following key words on your Observation Worksheet:

banquet (circle it in brown)

angry (color it red)

edict (royal edict) (box it in purple)

Don't forget to mark the pronouns! And mark anything that tells you **WHERE** by double-underlining the **WHERE** in green. Mark anything that tells you **WHEN** by drawing a green clock  or green circle like this: .

WHAT is the main event in Esther 1? Read Esther 1:3, 5, and 9. WHAT key word shows us the main event that is happening in these verses? _____

HOW many banquets are there in Esther 1? _____

Banquet #1

Esther 1:3 WHO gives the first banquet?

Esther 1:3 WHOM did the king invite?

His _____ and _____,

the _____

of Persia and Media, the _____ and the
_____ of his provinces

Esther 1:4 HOW long did this banquet last?

Esther 1:4 WHAT happens at this banquet? WHAT
did the king display?

Banquet #2

Esther 1:5 WHO gives the second banquet?

Esther 1:5 HOW long did this banquet last?

Esther 1:5 WHO was invited to this banquet?

Esther 1:5 WHERE was this banquet held?

In the _____ of the _____ of the

Esther 1:6-8 WHAT is this banquet like?

There were _____ of fine _____

and _____, held by _____ of
fine _____ linen on _____
and _____, and _____
of _____ and _____ on a mosaic
pavement of _____,
_____ -of- _____ and _____
stones.

Drinks were served in _____ vessels of
various kinds, and the royal _____ was
plentiful according to the king's bounty.

The drinking was done according to the _____.

Esther 1:10-11 WHAT happens on the seventh day of
this banquet?

Banquet #3

Esther 1:9 WHO gives the third banquet?

Esther 1:9 WHO is invited to this banquet?

Esther 1:9 WHERE is this banquet held?

In the _____ which belonged to _____

Wow! You have just seen three incredible banquets. Tomorrow we will get the details on what happens when the king commands the queen to come to his banquet. Don't forget to practice your memory verse!



THE KING'S EDICT

"We love Washington, D.C., Uncle Matt," Max said as they ate lunch outside at the National Mall. "Look at all we have learned so far just from visiting the National Archives."

Uncle Matt smiled. "Just wait, you two. There is some pretty great stuff coming up."

Sam barked as he jumped out of Max's lap and landed on Uncle Matt's lap.

"Yes, you too, Sam! I have something exciting for you too!"

Max and Molly laughed as Uncle Matt patted Sam and Sam wagged his tail.

"Let's finish up our lunch so we can get back to our study on Esther. We need to get the details on what happens at the king's second banquet when he asks the queen to come."

Talk to God. Then turn to page 160. Read Esther 1. Ask the 5 W's and an H questions to find out what happens next.

Esther 1:11 WHY did the king want the queen to come to his banquet?

To display her _____ to the people and the princes

Esther 1:12 HOW does Queen Vashti respond?

She _____ to come at the king's command.

Esther 1:12 HOW did the king respond?

The king became very _____ and his _____ burned within him.

Esther 1:13 WHOM did the king ask for help?

The _____

Esther 1:15 WHAT question was asked?

"According to the _____, what is to be _____ with Queen Vashti, because she did not _____ the _____ of King Ahasuerus?"

Esther 1:16 WHAT did Queen Vashti do?

She _____ the king, the princes, and all the people who lived in the provinces of King Ahasuerus.

Esther 1:17 HOW did Memucan believe the women of the kingdom would respond to the queen's conduct?

They would look with _____ on their husbands.

Esther 1:19 WHAT is the solution the wise men came up with?

“Let a _____ be issued by the king.”

Esther 1:19 WHAT did we learn about the laws of Persia and Media?

They cannot be _____.

Esther 1:19 WHAT is this royal edict?

That _____ may no longer come into the _____ of King Ahasuerus, and that her _____ will be given to another who is more _____ than she.

Esther 1:20 WHAT does Memucan say the king’s edict will cause the women to do when it is heard throughout the kingdom?

All women will give _____ to their _____.

Esther 1:21 HOW did the king respond?

He was _____ and _____ as Memucan proposed.

Esther 1:22 WHAT did the letters say that were sent to all the king’s provinces?

“That every _____ should be the _____ in his own _____ and the one who speaks in the language of his own people.”



Look at the word search. Find each word from the blanks in the questions on pages 30-31 and circle them. If a word is used more than once, you only have to find and circle it one time.

D	E	P	M	V	M	E	T	P	H	P	W
E	N	E	R	A	A	P	S	U	F	O	O
Q	N	A	S	E	M	S	S	i	D	S	R
N	H	T	M	E	S	B	H	E	W	i	T
O	E	T	T	M	A	E	S	T	T	T	H
R	H	N	A	N	O	A	N	C	i	i	Y
W	O	C	D	R	E	C	i	C	W	O	L
C	N	S	Q	L	W	D	O	N	E	N	A
L	O	i	P	B	E	A	U	T	Y	A	Y
W	R	R	E	P	E	A	L	E	D	M	O
Y	R	Q	N	A	D	E	S	U	F	E	R
W	O	B	E	Y	K	E	S	U	O	H	N

Are you surprised at the king's decision to remove Queen Vashti? **WHAT** will happen after the king banishes his queen? We'll find out as we discover two new people who are very important in this part of God's history.

Find a grown-up and say your memory verse out loud. Ask that person how you can be a good example to others.

Way to go! We are so proud of you!

OBSERVATION WORKSHEETS

ESTHER

Chapter 1

1 Now it took place in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces,

2 in those days as King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne which was at the citadel in Susa,

3 in the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his princes and attendants, the army officers of Persia and Media, the nobles and the princes of his provinces being in his presence.

4 And he displayed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor of his great majesty for many days, 180 days.

5 When these days were completed, the king gave a banquet lasting seven days for all the people who were present at the citadel in Susa, from the greatest to the least, in the court of the garden of the king's palace.

6 There were hangings of fine white and violet linen held by cords of fine purple linen on silver rings and marble columns, and couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl and precious stones.

7 Drinks were served in golden vessels of various kinds, and the royal wine was plentiful according to the king's bounty.

8 The drinking was done according to the law, there was no compulsion, for so the king had given orders to each official of his household that he should do according to the desires of each person.

9 Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the palace 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, Abagtha, Zethar and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus,

11 to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown in order to display her beauty to the people and the princes, for she was beautiful.

12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. Then the king became very angry and his wrath burned within him.

13 Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times—for it was the custom of the king so to speak before all who knew law and justice

14 and were close to him: Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media who had access to the king's presence and sat in the first place in the kingdom—

15 “According to law, what is to be done with Queen Vashti, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus delivered by the eunuchs?”

16 In the presence of the king and the princes, Memucan said, “Queen Vashti has wronged not only the king but also all the princes and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus.

17 “For the queen's conduct will become known to all the women causing them to look with contempt on their husbands by saying, ‘King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in to his presence, but she did not come.’

18 “This day the ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's conduct will speak in the same way to all the king's princes, and there will be plenty of contempt and anger.

19 “If it pleases the king, let a royal edict be issued by him and let it be written in the laws of Persia and Media so that it cannot be repealed, that Vashti may no longer come into the presence of King Ahasuerus, and let the king give her royal position to another who is more worthy than she.

20 “When the king's edict which he will make is heard throughout

all his kingdom, great as it is, then all women will give honor to their husbands, great and small.”

21 This word pleased the king and the princes, and the king did as Memucan proposed.

22 So he sent letters to all the king’s provinces, to each province according to its script and to every people according to their language, that every man should be the master in his own house and the one who speaks in the language of his own people.

Chapter 2

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

2 Then the king’s attendants, who served him, said, “Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king.

3 “Let the king appoint overseers in all the provinces of his kingdom that they may gather every beautiful young virgin to the citadel of Susa, to the harem, into the custody of Hegai, the king’s eunuch, who is in charge of the women; and let their cosmetics be given them.

4 “Then let the young lady who pleases the king be queen in place of Vashti.” And the matter pleased the king, and he did accordingly.

5 Now there was at the citadel in Susa a Jew whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite,

6 who had been taken into exile from Jerusalem with the captives who had been exiled with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had exiled.

7 He was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, his uncle’s daughter, for she had no father or mother. Now the young lady was beautiful of form and face, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

8 So it came about when the command and decree of the king were heard and many young ladies were gathered to the citadel of Susa into

the custody of Hegai, that Esther was taken to the king's palace into the custody of Hegai, who was in charge of the women.

9 Now the young lady pleased him and found favor with him. So he quickly provided her with her cosmetics and food, gave her seven choice maids from the king's palace and transferred her and her maids to the best place in the harem.

10 Esther did not make known her people or her kindred, for Mordecai had instructed her that she should not make them known.

11 Every day Mordecai walked back and forth in front of the court of the harem to learn how Esther was and how she fared.

12 Now when the turn of each young lady came to go in to King Ahasuerus, after the end of her twelve months under the regulations for the women—for the days of their beautification were completed as follows: six months with oil of myrrh and six months with spices and the cosmetics for women—

13 the young lady would go in to the king in this way: anything that she desired was given her to take with her from the harem to the king's palace.

14 In the evening she would go in and in the morning she would return to the second harem, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the concubines. She would not again go in to the king unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.

15 Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai who had taken her as his daughter, came to go in to the king, she did not request anything except what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the women, advised. And Esther found favor in the eyes of all who saw her.

16 So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus to his royal palace in the tenth month which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

17 The king loved Esther more than all the women, and she found favor and kindness with him more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

18 Then the king gave a great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his princes and his servants; he also made a holiday for the provinces and gave gifts according to the king's bounty.

19 When the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate.

20 Esther had not yet made known her kindred or her people, even as Mordecai had commanded her; for Esther did what Mordecai told her as she had done when under his care.

21 In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's officials from those who guarded the door, became angry and sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

22 But the plot became known to Mordecai and he told Queen Esther, and Esther informed the king in Mordecai's name.

23 Now when the plot was investigated and found to be so, they were both hanged on a gallows; and it was written in the Book of the Chronicles in the king's presence.

Chapter 3

1 After these events King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and established his authority over all the princes who were with him.

2 All the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman; for so the king had commanded concerning him. But Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage.

3 Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why are you transgressing the king's command?"

4 Now it was when they had spoken daily to him and he would not listen to them, that they told Haman to see whether Mordecai's reason would stand; for he had told them that he was a Jew.

5 When Haman saw that Mordecai neither bowed down nor paid homage to him, Haman was filled with rage.

6 But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had

told him who the people of Mordecai were; therefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

7 In the first month, which is the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, Pur, that is the lot, was cast before Haman from day to day and from month to month, until the twelfth month, that is the month Adar.

8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of all other people and they do not observe the king's laws, so it is not in the king's interest to let them remain.

9 "If it is pleasing to the king, let it be decreed that they be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who carry on the king's business, to put into the king's treasuries."

10 Then 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.

11 The king said to Haman, "The silver is yours, and the people also, to do with them as you please."

12 Then the king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and it was written just as Haman commanded to the king's satraps, to the governors who were over each province and to the princes of each people, each province according to its script, each people according to its language, being written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet ring.

13 Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces to destroy, to kill and to annihilate all the Jews, both young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to seize their possessions as plunder.

14 A copy of the edict to be issued as law in every province was published to all the peoples so that they should be ready for this day.

15 The couriers went out impelled by the king's command while the

decree was issued at the citadel in Susa; and while the king and Haman sat down to drink, the city of Susa was in confusion.

Chapter 4

1 When Mordecai learned all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city and wailed loudly and bitterly.

2 He went as far as the king's gate, for no one was to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth.

3 In each and every province where the command and decree of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing; and many lay on sackcloth and ashes.

4 Then Esther's maidens and her eunuchs came and told her, and the queen writhed in great anguish. And she sent garments to clothe Mordecai that he might remove his sackcloth from him, but he did not accept them.

5 Then Esther summoned Hathach from the king's eunuchs, whom the king had appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what this was and why it was.

6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai to the city square in front of the king's gate.

7 Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews.

8 He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict which had been issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show Esther and inform her, and to order her to go in to the king to implore his favor and to plead with him for her people.

9 Hathach came back and related Mordecai's words to Esther.

10 Then Esther spoke to Hathach and ordered him to reply to Mordecai:

11 "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that for any man or woman who comes to the king to the inner court

who is not summoned, he has but one law, that he be put to death, unless the king holds out to him the golden scepter so that he may live. And I have not been summoned to come to the king for these thirty days.”

12 They related Esther’s words to Mordecai.

13 Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “Do not imagine that you in the king’s palace can escape any more than all the Jews.

14 “For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?”

15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai,

16 “Go, assemble all the Jews who are found in Susa, and fast for me; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens also will fast in the same way. And thus I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.”

17 So Mordecai went away and did just as Esther had commanded him.

Chapter 5

1 Now it came about on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king’s palace in front of the king’s rooms, and the king was sitting on his royal throne in the throne room, opposite the entrance to the palace.

2 When the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, she obtained favor in his sight; and the king extended to Esther the golden scepter which was in his hand. So Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter.

3 Then the king said to her, “What is troubling you, Queen Esther? And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be given to you.”

4 Esther said, “If it pleases the king, may the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him.”

5 Then the king said, “Bring Haman quickly that we may do as Esther desires.” So the king and Haman came to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

6 As they drank their wine at the banquet, the king said to Esther, “What is your petition, for it shall be granted to you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done.”

7 So Esther replied, “My petition and my request is:

8 if I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and do what I request, may the king and Haman come to the banquet which I will prepare for them, and tomorrow I will do as the king says.”

9 Then Haman went out that day glad and pleased of heart; but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king’s gate and that he did not stand up or tremble before him, Haman was filled with anger against Mordecai.

10 Haman controlled himself, however, went to his house and sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh.

11 Then Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches, and the number of his sons, and every instance where the king had magnified him and how he had promoted him above the princes and servants of the king.

12 Haman also said, “Even Esther the queen let no one but me come with the king to the banquet which she had prepared; and tomorrow also I am invited by her with the king.

13 “Yet all of this does not satisfy me every time I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king’s gate.”

14 Then Zeresh his wife and all his friends said to him, “Have a gallows fifty cubits high made and in the morning ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on it; then go joyfully with the king to the banquet.” And the advice pleased Haman, so he had the gallows made.

Chapter 6

1 During that night the king could not sleep so he gave an order to

bring the book of records, the chronicles, and they were read before the king.

2 It was found written what Mordecai had reported concerning Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who were doorkeepers, that they had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

3 The king said, "What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" Then the king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him."

4 So the king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace in order to speak to the king about hanging Mordecai on the gallows which he had prepared for him.

5 The king's servants said to him, "Behold, Haman is standing in the court." And the king said, "Let him come in."

6 So Haman came in and the king said to him, "What is to be done for the man whom the king desires to honor?" And Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king desire to honor more than me?"

7 Then Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king desires to honor,

8 let them bring a royal robe which the king has worn, and the horse on which the king has ridden, and on whose head a royal crown has been placed;

9 and let the robe and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble princes and let them array the man whom the king desires to honor and lead him on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him, "Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor.""

10 Then the king said to Haman, "Take quickly the robes and the horse as you have said, and do so for Mordecai the Jew, who is sitting at the king's gate; do not fall short in anything of all that you have said."

11 So Haman took the robe and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus it shall be done to the man whom the king desires to honor."

12 Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman hurried home, mourning, with his head covered.

13 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, is of Jewish origin, you will not overcome him, but will surely fall before him."

14 While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hastily brought Haman to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

Chapter 7

1 Now the king and Haman came to drink wine with Esther the queen.

2 And the king said to Esther on the second day also as they drank their wine at the banquet, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to half of the kingdom it shall be done."

3 Then Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me as my petition, and my people as my request;

4 for we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed and to be annihilated. Now if we had only been sold as slaves, men and women, I would have remained silent, for the trouble would not be commensurate with the annoyance to the king."

5 Then King Ahasuerus asked Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would presume to do thus?"

6 Esther said, "A foe and an enemy is this wicked Haman!" Then Haman became terrified before the king and queen.

7 The king arose in his anger from drinking wine and went into the palace garden; but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that harm had been determined against him by the king.

8 Now when the king returned from the palace garden into the place where they were drinking wine, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, "Will he even assault the queen with

me in the house?" As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

9 Then Harbonah, one of the eunuchs who were before the king said, "Behold indeed, the gallows standing at Haman's house fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai who spoke good on behalf of the king!" And the king said, "Hang him on it."

10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the king's anger subsided.

Chapter 8

1 On that day King Ahasuerus gave the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther; and Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had disclosed what he was to her.

2 The king took off his signet ring which he had taken away from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

3 Then Esther spoke again to the king, fell at his feet, wept and implored him to avert the evil scheme of Haman the Agagite and his plot which he had devised against the Jews.

4 The king extended the golden scepter to Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king.

5 Then she said, "If it pleases the king and if I have found favor before him and the matter seems proper to the king and I am pleasing in his sight, let it be written to revoke 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.

6 "For how can I endure to see the calamity which will befall my people, and how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?"

7 So King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, "Behold, I have given the house of Haman to Esther, and him they have hanged on the gallows because he had stretched out his hands against the Jews.

8 “Now you write to the Jews as you see fit, in the king’s name, and seal it with the king’s signet ring; for a decree which is written in the name of the king and sealed with the king’s signet ring may not be revoked.”

9 So the king’s scribes were called at that time in the third month (that is, the month Sivan), on the twenty-third day; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded to the Jews, the satraps, the governors and the princes of the provinces which extended from India to Ethiopia, 127 provinces, to every province according to its script, and to every people according to their language as well as to the Jews according to their script and their language.

10 He wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, and sealed it with the king’s signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horses, riding on steeds sired by the royal stud.

11 In them the king granted the Jews who were in each and every city the right to assemble and to defend their lives, to destroy, to kill and to annihilate the entire army of any people or province which might attack them, including children and women, and to plunder their spoil,
12 on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar).

13 A copy of the edict to be issued as law in each and every province was published to all the peoples, so that the Jews would be ready for this day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

14 The couriers, hastened and impelled by the king’s command, went out, riding on the royal steeds; and the decree was given out at the citadel in Susa.

15 Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal robes of blue and white, with a large crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced.

16 For the Jews there was light and gladness and joy and honor.

17 In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king’s commandment and his decree arrived, there was gladness

and joy for the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.

Chapter 9

1 Now in the twelfth month (that is, the month Adar), on the thirteenth day when the king's command and edict were about to be executed, on the day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain the mastery over them, it was turned to the contrary so that the Jews themselves gained the mastery over those who hated them.

2 The Jews assembled in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who sought their harm; and no one could stand before them, for the dread of them had fallen on all the peoples.

3 Even all the princes of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and those who were doing the king's business assisted the Jews, because the dread of Mordecai had fallen on them.

4 Indeed, Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces; for the man Mordecai became greater and greater.

5 Thus the Jews struck all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying; and they did what they pleased to those who hated them.

6 At the citadel in Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men,

7 and Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

8 Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,

9 Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha,

10 the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Jews' enemy; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

11 On that day the number of those who were killed at the citadel in Susa was reported to the king.

12 The king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed and destroyed

five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman at the citadel in Susa. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is your petition? It shall even be granted you. And what is your further request? It shall also be done."

13 Then said Esther, "If it pleases the king, let tomorrow also be granted to the Jews who are in Susa to do according to the edict of today; and let Haman's ten sons be hanged on the gallows."

14 So the king commanded that it should be done so; and an edict was issued in Susa, and Haman's ten sons were hanged.

15 The Jews who were in Susa assembled also on the fourteenth day of the month Adar and killed three hundred men in Susa, but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

16 Now the rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces assembled, to defend their lives and rid themselves of their enemies, and kill 75,000 of those who hated them; but they did not lay their hands on the plunder.

17 This was done on the thirteenth day of the month Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

18 But the Jews who were in Susa assembled on the thirteenth and the fourteenth of the same month, and they rested on the fifteenth day and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

19 Therefore the Jews of the rural areas, who live in the rural towns, make the fourteenth day of the month Adar a holiday for rejoicing and feasting and sending portions of food to one another.

20 Then Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,

21 obliging them to celebrate the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same month, annually,

22 because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and it was a month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days

of feasting and rejoicing and sending portions of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

23 Thus the Jews undertook what they had started to do, and what Mordecai had written to them.

24 For Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the adversary of all the Jews, had schemed against the Jews to destroy them and had cast Pur, that is the lot, to disturb them and destroy them.

25 But when it came to the king's attention, he commanded by letter that his wicked scheme 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.

26 Therefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur. And because of the instructions in this letter, both what they had seen in this regard and what had happened to them,

27 the Jews established and made a custom for themselves and for their descendants and for all those who allied themselves with them, so that they would not fail to celebrate these two days according to their regulation and according to their appointed time annually.

28 So these days were to be remembered and celebrated throughout every generation, every family, every province and every city; and these days of Purim were not to fail from among the Jews, or their memory fade from their descendants.

29 Then Queen Esther, daughter of Abihail, with Mordecai the Jew, wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim.

30 He sent letters to all the Jews, to the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, namely, words of peace and truth,

31 to establish these days of Purim at their appointed times, just as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had established for them, and just as they had established for themselves and for their descendants with instructions for their times of fasting and their lamentations.

32 The command of Esther established these customs for Purim, and it was written in the book.

Chapter 10

1 Now King Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land and on the coastlands of the sea.

2 And all the accomplishments of his authority and strength, and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia?

3 For Mordecai the Jew was second only to King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews and in favor with his many kinsmen, one who sought the good of his people and one who spoke for the welfare of his whole nation.