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# Esther

## ESTHER 9:18-32 (THE DAYS OF PURIM)

The 30<sup>th</sup> Psalm is one which could have been written specifically for the circumstances which surrounded the Jews during the time of Esther. Though it was written by David many centuries earlier, it fits their situation so very well. Other than the several references to the Lord, which are lacking in Esther, the contents reflect going from hopelessness to joy and from utter defeat, to triumph.

And then again, the words reflect the life and times of Joseph, David himself, and of course, Jesus. Yes, David may have been writing about his own terrible plight, but there is no doubt he was prophesying about events in the life of the Lord.

And yet, the parallels don't end there. The Jews endured many more such occasions in one form or another over the past 2000 years, culminating in the Holocaust, and followed by her reestablishment. But even that isn't the end of the story. The book is written, and we know what is coming upon Israel in the future. In fact, it will be worse than anything yet. But, there will be an end to that too. When all seems hopeless, the Lord will once again deliver them, and they will once again sing in elation...

**Text Verse:** "I will extol You, O Lord, for You have lifted me up,  
And have not let my foes rejoice over me." Psalm 30:1

It's a wonderful thing to contemplate, and yet its mournful to consider, what will lead up to their deliverance. How much better for them to just get on their knees

and call out to the Lord now, before the times of real trouble arise. But, as I said, the book is written. What is coming must come and then Israel will be delivered. As Daniel says, “And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.”

All I can say is, “Thank God for Jesus.” He has taken away the prospect of such a terror for us. This doesn’t mean that we won’t face our own horror. A million and a half Armenians were destroyed by the Turks in the early 1900s. Countless other Christians have faced the same end at the hands of their foes, but unlike those who don’t know Christ, that isn’t the end for us. It is simply a step into a new beginning.

The terror of dying for humanity is that of an end, followed by eternal separation. There is no hope, no second chance, and only eternity to contemplate what was lost. Again, thank God for Christ Jesus. In Him there is hope, and there is a new beginning. Someday the whole world will find that out. For now, there are temporary victories leading to that final great Day when the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the oceans. It’s all heading there, and it is all to be found in His superior word. And so let’s turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

### **I. From Sorrow to Joy (verses 18-25)**

**<sup>18</sup> But the Jews who *were* at Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth *day*, as well as on the fourteenth;**

Today we begin our verses with the word, “But.” This then is showing us a contrast to the verse which we ended on in the last sermon. There it said, “*This was on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. And on the fourteenth of the month they rested and made it a day of feasting and gladness.*” Those Jews who defended themselves from their enemies, and who lived in the provinces, had fought on the thirteenth of the month, and they rested on the fourteenth of the month.

In contrast to that, we saw Esther’s petition to the king in verse 13, requesting that the Jews in Shushan be granted an additional day of fighting against their enemies. The king granted her petition, and so we now read of that to begin us

today. Thus, the fighting was on both the thirteenth and the fourteenth of Adar. With that finished, they too, like those in the provinces, then celebrated the victory over their enemies by gathering together. It is the same verb as was used in verse 16. There is an assembly of the Jews, no longer to fight, but to rejoice...

<sup>18</sup> (con't) **and on the fifteenth of *the month* they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness.**

They had rest from their enemies, and so now like those in the provinces, they enter into their rest, making it a day of *mishteh v'simkhah*, or "banqueting and joy." Being a banqueting feast, the people brought out wine and celebrated abundantly. Because of this occurring a day later than the rest of the provinces, we next read...

<sup>19</sup> **Therefore the Jews of the villages who dwelt in the unwalled towns celebrated the fourteenth day of the month of Adar**

The word "dwelt" should be in the present tense, "dwell." It is speaking of the custom which arose out of the events described. Two rather rare, but almost identical, words are used here. The first is *perazi*, or "villages." It is used only three times in the Bible, this being the last. The second is *perazah*, or "unwalled towns." It also being used only three times, this being the first.

The first was used to speak of villages outside of Israel, specifically east of the Jordan, and then in the land of the Philistines, west of Israel proper. The second speaks of the land of Israel, and the city of Jerusalem of the distant future, our time now, when Israel would be a land of unwalled villages (Ezekiel 38), and Jerusalem would be likewise (Zechariah 2:4). For now, the Jews of the empire's villages and unwalled towns celebrated on the fourteenth. In the apocryphal book of 2 Maccabees, it is recorded that this fourteenth day of Adar became known as "the day of Mordecai." It is the main day on which the Jews celebrated...

<sup>19</sup> (con't) **with gladness and feasting, as a holiday, and for sending presents to one another.**

Again as before, the time is described as one of joy and of banqueting. The term "holiday" doesn't necessarily mean they took holidays. Rather, the Hebrew says,

“and a good day.” Thus whether working or not, it is to be a day of celebration. On this day, they would send out *manah*, or portions, to one another, usually meaning sweet cakes and the like. In this verse, there is a complete contrast to that of verse 4:3, which said –

“And in every province where the king’s command and decree arrived, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.”

The mourning had turned to joy, the weeping and wailing had turned into banqueting, and the sackcloth and ashes were replaced with the sending of gifts of food to one another. This then is similar to the response found in Revelation 11:10 after the killing of the two witnesses, where it says, “And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.” This remains the custom of those in the middle east today and it will, as you see, continue on in the end times.

**<sup>20</sup> And Mordecai wrote these things and sent letters to all the Jews, near and far, who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus,**

The verse begins with *va’yiktov mordecai eth ha’devarim he’elleh*, or “And wrote Mordecai the words, the these.” It seems straightforward enough, but scholars are at war as to what “these things” refers to. Is it what has occurred, or what he will now convey. If it is what occurred, does it comprise the book of Esther up to this point, or the events of the past few days which will lead to what will next be stated? Whatever it is referring to, it is a letter by the second highest in the land to all of his people. As you can see, what seems obvious at first does get complicated with a bit of study. In the end, the result comes out the same, a commemoration is forthcoming...

**<sup>21</sup> to establish among them that they should celebrate yearly the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar,**

The reason for this seems clear. The Jews in the provinces fought on one day and celebrated the next. On the other hand, the Jews in Shushan fought on two days and celebrated on the third. In order to bring conformity to annual celebrations of

this day, Mordecai establishes two days of celebration. It seems, based on this, that the “these things” of the previous verse were the details of what had occurred. They are thus presented as justification to all who were unaware of the events in Shushan for holding a two-day festival.

**<sup>22</sup> as the days on which the Jews had rest from their enemies,**

It is not the days of fighting which are celebrated, but the days of resting. The Jews in the country rested on the 14<sup>th</sup>, and the Jews in Shushan rested on the 15<sup>th</sup>. These days of rest are combined into one celebration. It is a pattern set at creation. God labored and then rested, thus He sanctified the seventh day. Later, for Israel, the Sabbath was instituted as a day of rest in commemoration of that (Exodus 20:11). But it was also instituted as a day of rest based on their deliverance from Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:15). The celebration of Purim follows both patterns, rest after labors, and rest after deliverance.

**<sup>22</sup> (con't) as the month which was turned from sorrow to joy for them, and from mourning to a holiday;**

Again, we see in these words the stark contrast between the mourning and wailing in sackcloth and ashes of the initial announcement by Haman, and the joy and celebration of what finally occurred. God took that which was evil, and turned it around for good.

**<sup>22</sup> (con't) that they should make them days of feasting and joy, of sending presents to one another and gifts to the poor.**

The intent of Mordecai’s letter was to establish a remembrance of what occurred. In order to solidify that, the days were to become special days, with more than just a memory of what happened, but an active participation in the day. Thus, each year, the people would come to anxiously anticipate the celebration. And so, the commemoration each year was to follow what occurred on the first occasion – feasting, joy, and sending portions of food. And one extra expectation is given, that of sending gifts to the poor. The obvious reason for this addition is that all Jews were delivered, and thus all Jews, even the poor, should be able to participate in, and celebrate, what occurred.

In this verse is the last use of *mishteh*, or banqueting, in Esther. Out of 46 uses in the Old Testament, 20 of them have been seen in Esther. It is remarkable when considering the size of the book. But it shows the importance of banqueting to the turning of events in the story, and thus in history itself. And so, a festival of banqueting is appropriate to remember this fact. One can picture the words of Isaiah in the joy of the Jews here. In Isaiah 25:6, the *mishteh*, or banquet, is seen twice. Compare the story of Esther, and see how it fits well into Isaiah's prophecy of the future –

And in this mountain  
The Lord of hosts will make for all people  
A feast of choice pieces,  
A feast of wines on the lees,  
Of fat things full of marrow,  
Of well-refined wines on the lees.  
<sup>7</sup> And He will destroy on this mountain  
The surface of the covering cast over all people,  
And the veil that is spread over all nations.  
<sup>8</sup> He will swallow up death forever,  
And the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces;  
The rebuke of His people  
He will take away from all the earth;  
For the Lord has spoken.  
<sup>9</sup> And it will be said in that day:  
"Behold, this *is* our God;  
We have waited for Him, and He will save us.  
This *is* the Lord;  
We have waited for Him;  
We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isaiah 25:6-9

**<sup>23</sup> So the Jews accepted the custom which they had begun, as Mordecai had written to them,**

The custom would be remembered for a year, or a few years, and then it is possible that it would be slowly forgotten. Further, for those who celebrated, they would remember the day of their rest – be it the 14<sup>th</sup> or the 15<sup>th</sup>. In order to have

all join in a united celebration, and in order that the day would never dwindle away, Mordecai wrote to them of the things that occurred and to remember them in this special way, year by year. It says here that they Jews accepted this, receiving it as a permanent custom. And the reason now given is...

**<sup>24</sup> because Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to annihilate them,**

Here, the entire title of Haman is given. He is the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and he is the enemy of the Jews. It is also the last time that he will be mentioned in the Bible. In a short recap, we are reminded that it is he who had plotted against the Jews in order to annihilate them, but instead, it is he who saw annihilation.

**<sup>24</sup> (con't) and had cast Pur (that is, the lot), to consume them and destroy them;**

This takes us back to Chapter 3, where Haman had cast the *pur*, or the lot, in order to set a date for the destruction of the Jews. He may have known that the Lord is the God of the Jews, but what he probably was unaware of is what that meant concerning lots –

“The lot is cast into the lap,  
But its every decision *is* from the Lord.” Proverbs 16:33

As a sort of ironic twist of the Hebrew, the word *hamam* or, consume, is used here – *l’humam u-l’abedam* – to consume them and destroy them. *Hamam* is a word almost always used to speak of an action coming directly from the Lord in order to throw His enemies into confusion. It is probably being used here as a play on the name of Haman. “Haman tried to *hamam* the Jews, but instead Haman got ‘*hamam’d*’ by the Lord.” This is seen next...

**<sup>25</sup> but when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letter that this wicked plot which Haman had devised against the Jews should return on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.**

The name Esther is inserted here, and it seems out of place to do this. It is more likely speaking of the matter itself – “And when the matter was brought before the

king.” Once the truth was brought to his attention, the action necessary to rectify the situation was commanded. Interestingly, and in accord with using the word *hamam* in the previous verse, it doesn’t give the details about the deliverance of the Jews, but instead, it deals with the plot itself and how it was turned back on Haman and his sons. One can infer divine retribution is the intent of the words here.

*A celebration of the foe’s defeat!  
A time to rest in the work accomplished  
A time when the Ruler reigns from His royal seat  
Now there is peace; war and strife is abolished  
Here we relax and rejoice in what has been done  
In this place there is peace and rest  
Who can steal our joy? We looked and there is none  
We are no longer downtrodden; no longer oppressed*

*The days of working for peace and rest  
Have now passed behind; they are no more  
In garments of luxury we now find ourselves dressed  
We have arrived on that marvelous, peaceful shore*

## **II. Words of Peace and Truth (verses 26-32)**

**<sup>26</sup> So they called these days Purim, after the name Pur.**

This one verse both looks backward and then forward. First, it looks backward to what has been said and gives a name based on that, Purim. The Jews gave the Persian word *pur* their own Hebrew plural, calling the celebration *Purim*. The *im* is simply like an “s” on one of our words as a plural marker. The verse also looks forward to what will be said with the next words...

**<sup>26</sup> (con’t) Therefore, because of all the words of this letter, what they had seen concerning this matter, and what had happened to them,**

The word “letter” here is *iggereth*. It is completely different than the other seven times the word “letter” or *sepher*, has been used so far in Esther. It signifies a letter, such as an epistle. The three thoughts are combined into one whole. “The



words of this letter” refers to what Mordecai had written. “What they had seen” refers to the events of Providence that had come to pass before their eyes. And, “what had happened to them” refers to the deliverance based on those events. These three give the reason that...

**<sup>27</sup> the Jews established and imposed it upon themselves and their descendants and all who would join them, that without fail they should celebrate these two days every year, according to the written *instructions* and according to the *prescribed* time,**

Verse 26, leading into verse 27, introduces our final set of two’s in the book. It is the two letters instituting the commemoration of Purim. The first is here, written by Mordecai. The second is written by Esther & Mordecai in verse 29. They contrast, and yet they confirm the instructions for the observance of the celebration at their appointed time, year by year, and wherever the Jews were.

Purim is more than just a voluntary annual celebration of remembrance, but a self-imposed time of remembrance. Mordecai gave the instructions; they were accepted and the self-imposition of them became a resulting custom from that time on. It was to become, and indeed it is, as firm a date of remembrance as the Passover. All Jews, their descendants, and any who would join them – generally meaning proselytes – observe the days. This is seen as we continue...

**<sup>28</sup> *that these days should be* remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city, that these days of Purim should not fail *to be observed* among the Jews, and *that* the memory of them should not perish among their descendants.**

An obvious question arises from the establishment of Purim. “Is it of divine origin, or is it of human origin?” The story is given in the book of Esther, a book of the Bible, but the imposition of the celebration came from a Jew and not only a Jew, but one of the dispersion. It seems hardly likely that the Jews in Israel would feel the need to add something to their culture and life that came from someone who wasn’t a prophet or a priest. But it was accepted.

As Mordecai was second to the king, and as the land of Israel was subject to the laws of Persia, and as there was nothing but good which had come from the

matter, it was accepted as Mordecai had written. Thus, it was of human origin. However, it is as clear as it can be that the Lord had directed the events – from beginning to end – in order to bring about the Jew’s deliverance. Therefore, it is implicitly of divine origin, and certainly divinely sanctioned.

And this is all the more relevant because it is notable that Nisan is the first month of the year in Israel’s redemptive calendar. The last month is Adar. In both months, the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month are considered special days. Nisan 14 is the Passover, and the 15<sup>th</sup> is the first day of Unleavened Bread. Adar 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> are now made special commemorations. The first recognized Israel’s redemption from Egypt. The second recognizes deliverance from the enemies of God’s people. The redemptive year thus opens and closes in recognition of the Lord’s hand in the preservation of His people.

Finally, as the proverbs showed us, the Lord directs the lot. Therefore, the days are not accidental, but purposeful. The unseen hand of the Lord guided the events which led to a national proclamation that the days of Purim would not cease. Therefore, wherever a Jew is, and throughout his generations, the day is to be remembered as a day of deliverance.

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

Here we have an interesting verse. It reads literally, “Then wrote Esther the queen, daughter of Abihail; and Mordecai the Jew, with all authority, to confirm letter the Purim the this, the second.” Esther is suddenly brought back into the narrative, and she is writing the letter along with Mordecai. She is not only named, but so is the name of her father. That hasn’t been seen since verse 2:15. The story is highlighting that Esther is the daughter of *Abikhayil*, or Possessor of Might. This is followed up with “Mordecai the Jew,” instead of just “Mordecai.”

And then it says that they have *kal toqeph* or “full power.” The word *toqeph* is new here. It will be seen twice in Esther, and once in Daniel. They are granted the full power, or authority, to confirm a second letter about Purim. The word “letter” here is the same as in verse 26, *iggereth*. This is the last time it is used in the Bible. The words of the verse are widely translated, and scholars debate over what the true meaning is of what is being relayed.

But because of the use of this word, *iggereth*, it appears that the first letter is that of Mordecai in verse 26, and now a second letter is being issued by Esther, along with Mordecai. This then closes out our final set of two's in the book – the two letters instituting the commemoration of Purim. The first was in verses 26 & 27, written by Mordecai. The second is here, written by Esther and Mordecai. They contrast, and yet they confirm the instructions for the observance of the celebration at their appointed time, year by year, and wherever the Jews find themselves.

**<sup>30</sup> And Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews, to the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, with words of peace and truth,**

These are not copies of the letter which was just written, but they are letters which would accompany that letter. It is a different word here, *sepher* instead of *iggereth*. It then explains why Mordecai is mentioned in the previous verse. Esther and Mordecai wrote the letter, and with it are accompanying letters which then go out to all 127 provinces in the kingdom. As it says, they are letters with words of *shalom v'emeth*, or “of peace and truth.”

What this may mean is that the letters began with a salutation which said something like, “Peace and truth to you who receive this.” Or, it could mean that the substance of the words were both friendly in nature and sincere in content. Interestingly, and as a squiggle for your brain, the word *emeth* is used, like the 127 provinces of the kingdom, 127 times in the Old Testament. And so we should stop here and evaluate the symbolic meaning of the word *emeth*, or truth –

TRUTH in Hebrew is אמת (*emeth* - *aleph*, *mem*, *tav*)

1. Aleph means Strength and points to God
2. Tav means A Mark and points to the Cross
3. Mem is in center of the Alphabet
4. Mem is a pictograph of Water and it means Blood
5. The entire word EMET is symmetrical in the alphabet.
6. God – Blood – Cross.
7. Jesus = TRUTH.
8. He was, He is, He will be.

**<sup>31</sup> to confirm these days of Purim at their *appointed* time, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had prescribed for them, and as they had decreed for themselves and their descendants**

The three verbs, “confirm,” “prescribe,” and “decree,” are all from the same Hebrew word. The word means “to stand,” and thus it signifies “fixing,” or “establishing.” The letters of Mordecai confirmed what was prescribed by both himself and Esther concerning the days of Purim – when it should be held, how it should be observed, and so on.

**<sup>31 (con’t)</sup> concerning matters of their fasting and lamenting.**

These words completely dumbfound scholars. First, the word fasting is plural. It should say, “fastings.” Some claim the words are a later insertion, some claim they are speaking of fasting and mourning on the thirteenth of the month, known as “Esther’s Fast.” Others just ignore any context and ramble on about the state of Esther and Mordecai when they first got the bad *news* about the annihilation of the *Jews*, and how that should be continued on by the Jews in the future.

What is probably correct, is that the “matters of their fastings and lamenting” has nothing at all to do with Purim. Instead, it is speaking of what is noted in Zechariah 7:5 –

“Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh *months* during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me—for Me?’” Zechariah 7:5

The Jews already had customary times of fastings and lamenting, as during their time of exile. They are not biblically mandated, but were customary times of mourning, just as “Holocaust Remembrance Day” is observed today in Israel. The days of Purim are now being tied in with those times of fastings and lamenting as customs to be observed by the Jews. Unlike those, however, Purim was always to be observed, and by all people.

**\*<sup>32</sup> So the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim, and it was written in the book.**

Esther was given authority to confirm the matters of Purim, something pertaining only to the Jews, by a command. After that was accomplished, the details were written *ba'sepher*, or in the book. The question is, "What book?" Some say it is the book of Esther, but that is not a natural way for a Hebrew author to refer to a book he is writing in. Others think it might be a book used as a basis for the book of Esther which has not been preserved. But what is probably correct is that it is speaking of the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Persia and Media. It has already been described this way four times in Esther, and there is no reason to assume that it isn't the same here.

As a point of note, the *maamar*, or decree, of Esther is the same word as was used concerning King Ahasuerus towards Vashti in verse 1:15. It is a command. This is its third and last use in the Bible. And as a curious finishing note to the verse and the Chapter, Catholic Bibles, such as the Latin Vulgate and the Douay-Rheims, translate this verse in the most odd manner. They say, "And all things which are contained in the history of this book, which is called Esther." That is so far from the Hebrew that it had to be intentional.

It may be that because the word *maamar*, or command, is coming from a woman, they intentionally changed the wording so that it could not conflict with later instructions in the Bible about women not having authority over men. If that is the case, as I suspect, that is a terribly stupid reason for changing the word of God.

Deborah was a Judge of Israel; and despite the circumstances, there was one ruling queen, Athaliah, in Jerusalem for a while. She eventually got whacked and things got back on the right path, but the Bible is a record of what occurred, and what was said, regardless of the propriety of the situation. Translations of the Bible need to reflect what is said, not what one desires for it to say.

We now have one chapter, of three verses, left to go. What will come out in that sermon was still yet unknown at my time of typing this sermon. Like Jonah, I hadn't got my mind made up in advance, and I can only present to you what the Lord will reveal as I contemplate what has been presented in these past nine chapters.

For now, what I can tell you, is that I hope you are much better informed on the book than when we started. If nothing else, we have reviewed every verse and

every sentence with a view to the hidden Lord who is still clearly evident in its pages. He is, after all, the main Subject of all of Scripture. What we need to do now, and at all times as we read the word, is to think on Him, on His plan of redemption, and on what lies ahead for Israel as a people, and for us as a body, in that plan. With these things in mind, the Lord will continue to open our minds and reveal Himself to us.

As we have seen since Chapter 1, His attention is on what is happening, He is there – directing the events, and what seems clearly hopeless, is actually a chance for the Lord to shine through all the more at the end. Imagine the pain of the those who walked with Christ as they saw Him crucified. The darkness which must have covered their hearts would have been unimaginable. And yet, despite the greatest moment of pitch black they had ever encountered, there shown forth the most resplendent light they could ever have imagined.

This is what we too need to focus on as we hit those black, dark moments in our own lives. Children may be as lost as the prodigal son, marriages may be torn and destroyed, finances may be completely used up, but these things can never cover the light which lies ahead for the redeemed of the Lord. Israel went from sackcloth and ashes to feasting and joy. So too will we at the end of this difficult road, if we just profess faith in Christ. He's already gone before us to open the doors and prepare the table. Let us follow Him until we pass through and sit down to dine, rejoicing in His marvelous presence for countless ages to come.

**Closing Verse:** “You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;  
You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,  
<sup>12</sup>To the end that *my* glory may sing praise to You and not be silent.  
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever. Psalm 30:11, 12

**Next Week:** Esther 10:1-3 *Really powerful and famous was this guy...* (The Greatness of Mordecai) (13<sup>th</sup> Esther Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. At times, you might feel as if he has no great design for you in life, but he has brought you to this moment to reveal His glory in and through you. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

## The Days of Purim

But the Jews who were at Shushan  
Assembled together on the thirteenth day  
-----as well as on the fourteenth, after great success  
And on the fifteenth of the month they rested  
And made it a day of feasting and gladness

Therefore the Jews of the villages  
Who dwelt in the unwalled towns celebrated the fourteenth day  
-----whoo hoo! O brother!  
Of the month of Adar with gladness and feasting  
As a holiday, and for sending presents to one another

And Mordecai wrote these things  
And sent letters to all the Jews, near and far  
Who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus  
To establish among them that they should celebrate yearly  
-----the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar

As the days on which the Jews  
Had rest from their enemies, hip hip hooray  
As the month which was turned from sorrow to joy for them  
And from mourning to a holiday  
That they should make them days of feasting and joy, for sure  
Of sending presents to one another and gifts to the poor  
So the Jews accepted the custom which they had begun  
As Mordecai had written to them, with this good news  
Because Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite  
The enemy of all the Jews

Had plotted against the Jews to annihilate them  
And had cast Pur (that is, the lot)  
To consume them and destroy them  
But when Esther came before the king  
-----he commanded by letter that this wicked plot...

Which Haman had devised against the Jews  
Should return on his own head  
And that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows  
There they hung, eleven of them dead  
So they called these days Purim, after the name Pur  
Therefore, because of all the words of this letter  
What they had seen concerning this matter  
And what had happened to them; how things turned for the better  
The Jews established and imposed it  
Upon themselves and their descendants far and near  
And all who would join them  
That without fail they should celebrate these two days every year  
According to the written instructions  
And according to the prescribed time, with happy elation  
That these days should be remembered  
And kept throughout every generation

Every family, every province, and every city  
That these days of Purim should not fail  
-----to be observed among the Jews  
And that the memory of them should not perish  
Among their descendants, but should be kept alive this happy news

Then Queen Esther, the daughter of Abihail  
With Mordecai the Jew  
Wrote with full authority to confirm this second letter about Purim  
This thing he did do

And Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews  
To the provinces one hundred and twenty-seven  
Of the kingdom of Ahasuerus  
With words of peace and truth, words without leaven

To confirm these days of Purim at their appointed time  
As Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther for them had prescribed  
And as they had decreed for themselves and their descendants  
Concerning matters of their fasting and lamenting



-----as they had described

So the decree of Esther these matters of Purim confirmed  
And it was written in the book; thus it was affirmed

Lord God, thank You for Your presence that is with us  
Even when we don't realize that You are there  
Because You sent Your own Son Jesus  
We can know that You truly do care

And so Lord, be real to us in a wonderful new way  
Open our minds and our hearts to seeing You always  
Through every step we take, and throughout every day  
Be real to us, O God, and to You will shall give all of our praise

Hallelujah and Amen...