

Esther 9:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both nigh and far,

Analysis

And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both nigh and far, Mordecai formalized Purim observance by writing and distributing letters throughout the empire, ensuring all Jews would know to celebrate annually. The phrase "both nigh and far" emphasizes comprehensiveness—every Jewish community should participate. This official communication from Mordecai, now the king's second-in-command (8:2, 15; 10:3), carried authority. His action transformed spontaneous celebration into permanent institution. The written letters ensured accurate transmission across distances and generations. Mordecai's leadership extended beyond crisis management to creating lasting memorial of God's deliverance.

Historical Context

Mordecai's position as highest-ranking Jewish official in the empire gave him authority to establish religious observances. The letter-writing mirrors how royal decrees were distributed (3:13; 8:10)—using the imperial communication network to establish a Jewish festival. Ancient Jewish festivals commemorated God's redemptive acts (Passover, Tabernacles, Dedication/Hanukkah), and Purim joined this tradition. The written nature of the command ensured preservation—oral tradition could be forgotten or corrupted, but written texts survived. Jewish communities worldwide still celebrate Purim annually based on Mordecai's letters establishing it.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Mordecai's establishment of Purim demonstrate the importance of commemorating God's past deliverances for future generations?
2. What does this teach about the role of memorial practices in maintaining faith and covenant identity?

Interlinear Text

אָל סִפְרֵי יְמִינָה וְשִׁלְחָה בָּא לְהָפְדָּכָּי מְרֹדְכָּא יְמִינָה וְיִכְתְּבָה
wrote And Mordecai H853 these things H428 and sent letters H413
H3789 H4782 H1697 H7971 H5612

כָּל יְמִינָה מִדְינּוֹת בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל מִדְינּוֹת לְגַת
H3605 unto all the Jews H834 H3605 that were in all the provinces H4082 of the king H4428
H3064

וְאַחֲרָיו וְבַקְרֹב יְמִינָה וְבַקְרֹב קָרְבָּנִים
Ahasuerus both nigh and far
H325 H7138 H7350