

Chapter 9

The Iewes kil their enemies which would haue killed them, 6. namely the tenne sonnes of Aman are hanged on gallowes, 13. more flaine the next day. 17. The day folowing is made holie, and fo to be kept euerie yeare.

Therfore in the thirteenth day of the twelfth moneth, which we haue faid now before to be called Adar, when flaughter was prepared for al the Iewes, and their enemies gaped after their bloud, ^athe cafe being changed to the contrarie, the Iewes began to be fuperiours, and ^ato reuenge them felues of their aduerfaries. ² And they were gathered together in euerie citie, and towne, and place, to extend their hand againft their enemies, and their perfecutors. And none durft refift, becaufe the feare of their greatnes did penetrate al peoples. ³ For both the iudges of the prouinces, and cap-taynes, and lieutenantes, and euerie dignitie, that was chiefe ouer euerie place and worke, extolled the Iewes for feare of Mardocheus: ⁴ whom they knew to be prince of the palace, and to be able to doe very much: the fame alfo of his name increafed dayly, and flew abroad through al mens mouthes. ⁵ Therefore the Iewes ftroke their enemies with a great flaughter, and flew them, repaying them that which they had prepared to doe to them: ⁶ in fo much that in Sufan alfo they killed fiue hundred men, befides the tenne sonnes of Aman the Agagite the enemy of the Iewes: whose names be thefe: ⁷ Pharfan-datha, and Delphon, and Elphatha, ⁸ and Phoratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha, ⁹ and Phermefta, and Arifai, and Aridai, and Iezatha. ¹⁰ Whom when they had flaine, they would not take prayes of their goodes. ¹¹ And by and by the number of them that were killed in Sufan,

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^a VWhere no more danger remaineth remiffion of iniuries is more commendable then reuenge, but where malice continueth, and new danger may probably enfue, iuftice is neceffarie, and afterwards peace may be made more fe curely. *S. Bernard fer. 2. de verb. Apoft.*

was brought to the king. ¹² Who faid to the queene: In the citie of Sufan the Iewes haue killed fiue hundred men, besides the ^aten fonnes of Aman: how great a flaughter thinkeft thou doe they make in al the prouinces? what askeft thou more, & what wilt thou that I cōmand to be done? ¹³ To whom she answered: If it please the king, let there authoritie be geuen to the Iewes, that as they haue done to day in Sufan, so also they may doe to morrow, and that the tenne fonnes of Aman be hanged on gibbets. ¹⁴ And the king commanded that it should be so done. And forthwith the edict hong in Sufan, and the tenne fonnes of Aman were hanged. ¹⁵ The fourteenth day of the moneth Adar the Iewes being gathered together, there were killed in Sufan three hundred men: neither was their substance spoyle by them. ¹⁶ Yea and through al prouinces, which were subiect to the kings dominion, the Iewes stood for their liues, their enemies and persecutors being flayne: in so much that there was fully feuentie fiue thousand of them that were killed, and no man tooke any of their goodes.

¹⁷ And the thirteenth day of the moneth Adar was the first day with them al of the flaughter, & the fourteenth day they ceased to kil. Which they ordayned to be solemne, so that in it at al times afterward they gaue them selues to good chere, mirth & bankets. ¹⁸ But they that made the flaughter in the citie of Sufan, were occupied in the flaughter the thirteenth and fourteenth day of the same moneth: and in the fifteenth day they ceased to kil. And therefore they ordayned the same solemne day of good cheere and ioyfulness. ¹⁹ But those Iewes, that abode in townes not walled and villages, ordayned the fourteenth day of the moneth Adar for bankettes and ioy, so that they reioyse in it, and send one an other portions of bankets and meates. ²⁰ Mardocheus therefore wrote al these things, and being comprised in letters sent them to the Iewes, that abode in al the kings prouinces, as wel those that lay neere, as far of, ²¹ that they should

The fourth part. Other things following their deliuerie from danger.

^a In the first flaughter Amans tenne fonnes were flayne and afterwards also hanged. *v. 14.*

take ^{a)}the fourteenth and fifteenth day of the moneth Adar for feastes, and the yeare alwayes returning should celebrate them with folemne honour: ²² because in the same dayes the Iewes reuenged them felues of their enemies, and mourning and forrow were turned into mirth and ioy, and that these should be dayes of good cheere and gladneffe, and they should fend one to an other portions of meates, and should geue giftes to the poore. ²³ And the Iewes receiued into a folemne rite al things, which they had begune to doe at that time, and which Mardocheus by letters had commanded to be done. ²⁴ For Aman, the sonne of Amadathi of the stocke of Agag, the enemye and aduerfarie of the Iewes, purposed euil against them, to kil them and deftroy them: and he cast Phur, which in our language is turned, a lot. ²⁵ And afterward Efther went in to the king, beseeching that his endeouours might by the kings letters be made voyde: & the euil that he had intended against the Iewes, might returne vpon his owne head. Finally they hong both him and his sonnes vpon the gallowes, ²⁶ and since that time these dayes are called Phurim, that is, of Lottes: because Phur, that is, a lot, was cast into the pot. And al things, that were done, are containd in the volume of this epistle, that is, of this booke: ²⁷ and the thinges that they susteyned, and that were afterward changed, the Iewes ^{b)}tooke vpon them felues and their feede, and vpon al, that would be ioyned to theyr religion, that it should be lawful for none to passe without folemnie these dayes: which the writing testifieth, and certaine times require, as yeares continually succede one an other. ²⁸ These are daies, which no obliuion shal euer put out: and al prouinces in al the world shal celebrate through out al generations: neither is there any citie, wherein the daies of Phurim, that is, of lottes, must not

^a The Iewes in Sufan kept the fifteenth day holie, *v. 18.* those that dwelt in other places kept the fourteenth day.

^b A feast instituted by Mardocheus was accepted and obserued by al the Iewes, as a constitution agreable and not contrarie to the law. *Deut. 4. v. 2. & 12. v. 32.*

be obserued of the Iewes, and of their progenie, which is bound to these ceremonies. ²⁹ And Eſther the queene the daughter of Abihail, and Mardocheus the Iew wrote also the ſecond epiſtle, that with al diligence this day ſhould be eſtabliſhed ſolemne for the time to come. ³⁰ And they ſent to al the Iewes, that were in the hundred and ſeuē and twentie prouinces of king Affuerus, that they ſhould haue peace, and receiue truth, ³¹ obſeruing the Daies of lottes, and in their time ſhould celebrate them with ioy: as Mardocheus and Eſther had appoynted, and they tooke vpon them to be obſerued of them ſelues, and of their feede, faſtes, and cries, and the daies of Lottes, ³² and al thinges, which are conteyned in the hiftorie of this booke, which is called Eſther.

ANNOTATIONS

Pſal. 76. 1 The caſe being changed.) In this whole hiftorie (as in manie other paſſages of holie Scripture) we ſee the meruelous change of the right hand of the higheſt. Firſt in the verie inſtant of extreme danger, the kinges face with burning eyes ſhewing the furie of his breaft *ch. 15. v. 10.* was turned into mildnes towards Eſther. *v. 11.* Secondly proud Aman being advanced in honour & office, aboue al princes of the kinges court, *ch. 3. v. 1.* was ſodainly forced publikely to lead Mardocheus his horſe, whom he moſt hated. *ch. 6. v. 10.* Thirdly, he was conſtrayned with loud voice to proclame his honour, whom he moſt deſpised and threatned. Fourthly, the ſame Aman, before called the father (as it were the onlie gouernour) of the king, *ch. 13. v. 6. ch. 16. v. 11.* was forthwith condemned for a traitor. *ch. 7. v. 8. ch. 16. v. 18.* Fifthly, he that could not abide to ſee Mardocheus, *ch. 5. v. 13.* afterward durſt not looke vpon the king, nor could endure his countenance. *ch. 7. v. 6.* Sixtly, he was hanged on the ſame gallowes, which he had prepared for Mardocheus. *ch. 7. v. 9.* Seuently, vvhēras he was not content with the death of Mardocheus alone, but procured the kings decree to deſtroy the whole nation, *ch. 3. v. 6.* and ſo feaſted with the king, when the Iewes mourned, *v. 15.* ſhortly after the king ſent new letters for the Iewes faſtie, geuing them leaue to kil whom foeuer they would of their enemies. *ch. 8. v. 8. 11.* Eightly, the ſame day which was deſigned for deſtruction, was made the day of ioy and exultation to the children of God. *ch. 9. v. 1. 17. ch. 16. v. 21. &c.* By which literal ſenſe Gods meruelous prouidence is manifeſtly ſhewed, neuer ſuffering his church to periſh. It hath moreouer

Great, and maruelous changes by the power of God.

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two special myftical fenfes. Firft, as faftie of temporal life was procured to one nation by Efters interceffion to king Affuerus, fo general faluation is procured to al mankind by mediation of the bleffed virgin Marie, crufting the ferpents head; and the fentence of death is changed by new letters, granting euerlafting life, and glorie to al Gods true feruantes. Efther alfo, as likewise Iudith, in figure of the Church (faith S. Ierom, *Prologo in Sophon.*) killed the aduerfaries, and deliuered Ifrael from danger of perifhing.

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our B. ladie,

And of the
Church.