

Chapter 14

Efther prayeth in humilitie of spirite, that God wil deliuer the people from the crueltie of Aman.

Efther also the queene fled to our Lord, fearing the peril that was at hand. ² And when she had laid of her royal garmentes, she tooke clothes meete for weeping and mourning, and for diuers oyntmentes, filled her head with ashes and dung, and her bodie she humbled with fastes: and al the places, in which before she was accustomed to reioyse, she filled with tearing of her heares. ³ And she befought our Lord the God of Ifrael, saying: My Lord, which onlie art our king, helpe me solitarie woman, and which haue no other helper beside thee. ⁴ My peril is in my handes. ⁵ I haue heard of my father that thou Lord didst take Ifrael out from al Gentiles, and our fathers out of al their predeceffours before, that thou mightest possesse an euerlasting inheritance, and thou hast done to them as thou hast spoken. ⁶ We haue finned in thy fight, and therefore thou hast deliuered vs into the handes of our enemies: ⁷ for we haue worshipping their goddes. Thou art iust ô Lord. ⁸ And now it sufficeth them not, that they oppresse vs with most hard seruitude, but imputing the force of their handes to the might of their idols, ⁹ they wil change thy promiffes, and destroy thine inheritance, and shut the mouthes of them that praye thee, and extinguish the glorie of thy temple and altar, ¹⁰ that they may open the mouthes of Gentiles, and praye the strength of idols, and magnifie a carnal king for euer. ¹¹ Deliuer not ô Lord thy scepter to them ^a)that are not, lest they laugh at our ruine: but turne their counsel vpon them, and destroy him, that hath begune to do cruelly against vs. ¹² Remember ô Lord: and shew thy self to vs in the time of our tribulation, and geue me confidence Lord king of goddes, and of al power: ¹³ geue me speach

^a *Idoles are nothing in the vworld, 1. Cor. 8.* but bare imaginations of men.

wel framed in my mouth in the prence of the lion, and turne his hart into the hatred of our enemie, that both him self may perishe, and the rest that consent vnto him. ¹⁴ But deliuer vs in thy hand, and helpe me, hauing no other helpe, but thee ô Lord which haft the knowlege of al things, ¹⁵ and knowest that I hate the glorie of the wicked, and ^a)detest the bed of the vncircumcised, and of euerie stranger. ¹⁶ Thou knowest my neceffitie, that I abhorre the signe of my pride and glorie, which is vpon my head in the daies of my oftentation, and detest it as the cloth of a woman in her monthlie floores, and weare it not in the daies of my filence, ¹⁷ and that I haue not eaten at Amans table, neither the kings banquet hath pleased me, and that I haue not drunke the wine of libamentes: ¹⁸ and that thy handmayde did neuer reioyfe, since I was transported hither vnto this day, but in thee ô Lord the God of Abraham. ¹⁹ O God strong aboue al, heare the voyce of them, that haue no other hope, and deliuer vs from the hand of the wicked, and deliuer me from my feare.

^a Of herselfe, nor for worldlie glorie she desired not to marie a heathen king but for the cōmon good she married him, God dispenfing with the law in this behalf. See *ch. 2*.