

Purim means 'lots,' chance, and conjecture.  
God's name was absent, concealed.  
But Esther means hester--hidden, obscure.  
Unmask and all is revealed.  
It happened in the days of Ahasuerus the King -  
A boor, and a fool to boot.  
He made a great feast for the nations he ruled -  
To display his treasures and loot.  
He had no shame, did not fear God's name.  
The fortune was not his to keep -  
It was stolen from the Temple in Jerusalem  
Which lay in a sorrowful heap.  
Yet invitations were sent addressed to the Jews  
At the palace to celebrate.  
Though they were warned, they did not stay away.  
And God's anger was kindled, irate.  
The festivities lasted one hundred eighty days.  
The wine and the spirits flew.  
Restriction and deliverance were being prepared,  
But at the time, nobody knew.

The drunken king ordered Queen Vashti to appear.  
She refused him unceremoniously.  
Upon advice from his court, he cut her head off,  
And regretted it almost instantaneously.  
So a beauty pageant was quickly announced  
To choose a new queen in her stead.  
All the maidens vied for this honor so great,  
But beautiful Esther was filled with dread.  
Her kinsman was Mordecai, a Jew so renowned,  
Her lineage from King Saul's royal gene.  
She tried to hide, but fate would not be denied.  
Ahasuerus chose her as his new queen.  
Mordecai gave her instructions precise.  
To the palace he came every day.  
Esther was not to reveal her nation of birth,  
Yet remain Jewish in every way.  
The stage was now set for Jewish salvation.  
Esther was a powerful force.  
She urged Ahasuerus to choose an advisor -  
The Jew Mordecai, of course!  
One day Mordecai heard two soldiers plot,  
To kill the king was their aim.  
He told it to Esther who saved the king's life,  
But gave credit to Mordecai by name.

How an ill wind was brewing for the Jewish nation  
In the guise of **Haman** the Aggagite.  
The royal ring was bestowed on him by the king,  
Though he was a wicked anti-Semite.  
**Haman** was proud, he preened at the gates.  
He commanded all to bow.  
But Mordecai refused, he said, "I'm a Jew.  
And my God does not allow."  
**Haman** wanted revenge on all the Jews.  
To annihilate them was his vow.  
He'd slaughter them all on one bloody day.  
The only question was how?

But this evil man thought of a plan.  
He devised a kind of lottery  
To determine the date for the poor Jews' fate.  
The thirteenth of Adar it was to be.

Now **Haman** pleaded his case to the King  
That the Jews were of no use at all.  
Ahasuerus agreed, and it was quickly decreed  
That our people were slated to fall.  
When Mordecai learned of this treachery  
Sackcloth and ashes he donned.  
Weeping and wailing he ran through the streets  
Knowing Esther would surely respond.  
Dear Esther, he said, your time has arrived.  
For this you were chosen as queen  
To plead on the throne on behalf of your folk.  
Divine providence can clearly be seen.  
For her people Esther would risk her life.  
She had but one request to make.  
For three days the Jews must fast, regret their past  
And all other gods forsake.  
Esther and her maidens would likewise fast.  
Then make a move so bold.  
To see the king unbidden was forbidden  
Unless he extend his scepter of gold.

Dressed in royalty and cloaked in Divinity  
Esther was grace personified.  
Her prayers were answered, hope was at hand.  
The king invited her inside.  
Half of my kingdom is yours, he said.  
Esther should have been delighted  
But she was waiting for a sign Divine.  
So to a party she invited  
Not only the king, but **Haman**, too -  
A move calculated to distress.  
The Jews would put their trust in God.  
And the king would become jealous.  
Esther waited for an opportunity  
But there was no sign in sight.  
She had to stall and risk it all  
With a party a second night.  
**Haman** was gloating, "the queen chose me.  
It was just the King and I."  
But his bubble bursts and his anger spurts  
When he sees the Jew Mordecai.  
His wicked wife, Zeresh, comes up with a plan.  
Build a gallows about fifty feet.  
Go ask the king, to let Mordecai swing,  
And your joy will then be complete.

What a night was ahead, the kingdom's astir.  
No one is sleeping it seems.  
Esther is planning, Mordecai is praying,  
And the king has disturbing dreams.  
In the very heavens the angels are weeping.  
God hears his children in need.

The king is awakened, his sleep is forsaken  
From his royal book he begins to read  
The pages turn as if on their own,  
To an entry long ago recorded.  
Mordecai, the Jew, saved the life of the king  
But his loyalty was not rewarded.  
Ahasuerus hears **Haman** in the courtyard  
And calls him in post haste.  
How can I honor a man who's deserving  
I have no time to waste.  
**Haman** lays out a course of grand action  
All the while thinking it's his.  
A gala parade astride the king's horse  
Who else would he honor but me?  
But his downfall was near, his end was in sight  
Imagine his horror and dread  
When the king said go, do to Mordecai  
Exactly the things that you said.

When Esther heard this turn of event  
She knew it was her cue.  
And that it was right at the party that night  
To reveal that she was a Jew.  
If I have found favor in the eyes of the king  
And your highness will agree,  
Please spare my life and the lives of my people  
From death by an evil decree.  
Who would dare to threaten my queen  
Asked Ahasuerus in a great fright.  
It is none other than your trusted advisor  
**Haman** the Aggagite.  
The king was enraged, he needed action  
From the room he quickly fled.  
And on the gallows intended for Mordecai  
He had **Haman** hanged instead.

Now letters were swiftly dispatched  
To all the kingdom near and far  
For the Jews to prepare, their foes to be  
On the thirteenth of Adar.  
The Jews were triumphant against the enemy  
They fought bravely for their nation  
And the days that were slated for destruction  
Became days of celebration.  
Now proclamations were sent to all the kingdoms  
Rejoice and be of good cheer.  
Remember these days of Purim  
And commemorate them every year  
By sending food gifts to your friends  
And eating a feast galore.  
By reading the Esther scroll not once, but  
And giving charity to the poor.  
Purim means 'lots,' chance, and conjecture  
God's name was absent, concealed.  
But Esther means hester, hidden, obscure  
Unmask and all is revealed.

**HAPPY PURIM!**

## Purim Celebration

Esther Devotional – Pastor Marcia

Special Esther reading – Pastor Marcia

Potluck supper

Ongoing: Royal photo booth

Closing song: Shalom

Prayer



## Upcoming NCSDA Women's Ministry Events:

April 1 - Women's Outdoor Day

April 29, 30 - Women's Retreat

**Ongoing** - Sock Drive for Friendship House

# The Book of Esther in Rhyme



## Shalom\*

*Shalom, my friends, shalom my friends  
Shalom, Shalom  
May peace be with you,  
God's peace be with you  
Shalom, shalom*

*Till we meet again, till we meet again  
Shalom, Shalom  
May peace be with you,  
God's peace be with you  
Shalom, shalom*

\*The word "Shalom" has a triple meaning: hello, farewell and peace ~ with special overtones of loving concern and sincere caring for each other.

By Fay Kranz Greene

From [http://www.chabad.org/holidays/purim/article\\_cdo/aid/2834/jewish/In-Rhyme.htm](http://www.chabad.org/holidays/purim/article_cdo/aid/2834/jewish/In-Rhyme.htm)