

## **A New Decree**

Esther 8

by Don Falkos

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On the same day Haman was executed by impalement, Xerxes promoted Mordecai into Haman's vacated position. The king gave Haman's property to Queen Esther, who passed it on to her cousin and adoptive father, Mordecai.

Although Haman had been dealt with, the decree he had persuaded Xerxes to sign was still in effect. Kneeling before the king and weeping profusely, Esther implored him to revoke the decree. She knew full well it was impossible to rescind it once the king had signed it into law. Still she tried to convince Xerxes the decree wasn't his doing at all, but was the sole responsibility of the deceased Haman, that evil enemy of the Jews.

The king wasn't buying it. The decree to exterminate the Jews must remain in place. But Xerxes ordered Mordecai to write a new decree, one that would effectively counteract Haman's decree without actually revoking it.

Mordecai dictated the decree in the name of King Xerxes. It gave Jews everywhere in the empire the authority to unite in defense of themselves and their property. They were given permission to kill anyone who attacked them on the date specified in Haman's decree and to take the property of those they killed.

Copies of the decree were sent via swift couriers to every province in the empire. It was proclaimed everywhere including right there in the fortress of Susa. The Jews of Susa celebrated the new decree, as did the Jews in every province and city in the empire.

The general populous feared what the Jews might do to them, and many people publicly declared their unity with and support for their Jewish neighbors.