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## Four Esther Stories for Purim

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The first Feast of Purim was recorded in the *Megillah*, the *Scroll of Esther*. To read a devotional overview of Esther's story called *The Scroll of Esther*, please search for it at [ShaleFragments.com](http://ShaleFragments.com)

These four stories are included in this post:

1. The Story of Esther found on the back of *The Feasts of Lots* Art Card
2. The Story of the Art Process
3. The Story of Another Esther
4. The Story of Us

### The story of Esther found on the back of *The Feasts of Lots* Art Card

(This Art Card is from *The Feasts of Israel Fulfilled Collection* at [Flower Girl Greetings.com](http://FlowerGirlGreetings.com))

The first **Feast of Lots** or **Purim** was recorded in the *Megillah*, the *Scroll of Esther*. It is celebrated annually in late winter or early spring.

The kingdom of Judah had been exiled to Babylonia. In 538 BC, king Cyrus gave an edict for the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple. Nehemiah, Ezra, and others returned, but many stayed. Esther and her cousin Mordecai were among the descendants of those who stayed.

Esther became queen of the vast Persian empire, a position that would influence the deliverance of the entire Jewish nation from their enemy, Haman, who was second only to the king.

Mordecai would not bow to Haman, so Haman plotted to have the entire Jewish nation annihilated. He determined the day of their destruction (Adar 13) by casting the *pur* or *lot*.

Mordecai implored Esther to intervene saying, "Who knows whether you have attained royalty for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14) Esther asked her people to fast for three days. After the three days, she would risk her life by summoning the king on their behalf. When she came into the inner court of the king's palace, he extended the golden scepter of favor to her. "So, Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter." (Esther 5:2)

A series of dramatic and miraculous reversals ensued. The day appointed for the Jews' destruction became their day of victory! (Esther 9:1) So, Mordecai declared the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of Adar to be annual days of rest and celebration!

Although God is not mentioned in the story of Esther, its message is clear – God remains faithful to His covenant people even in the midst of their unfaithfulness.

**Messiah Yeshua** calls us all into His family! "To as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God..." (John 1:12)

He “delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” (Colossians 1:13-14) To His throne of grace, we can now draw near with confidence to receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

### Artist’s Notes on the inside-top of the Art Card

Esther found favor in the king’s sight, and he extended the golden scepter to her. “So Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter.” (Esther 5:2)

The artwork represents this pivotal act that took place within the extravagant interior of the Persian palace.

The scepter and Esther’s robe are spackled with gold leaf and deep, Israeli blue watercolor symbolizing the favor of the king falling over Esther and her people.

“There were hangings of fine white and violet linen held by cords of purple linen on silver rings.” (Esther 1:6)

Mosaic walls and pavement made of porphyry, marble and other precious stones were common in Persian palaces.

## The Story of the Art Process

When I decided to add the Purim card to *The Feasts of Israel Fulfilled Collection*, I had no idea the art process would be the most difficult I had encountered. Capturing the dazzle and gold leaf reflections from the original art to reproduce it for the printer was not easy!

Deciding on the card’s image was the easy part. Esther found favor in the king’s sight, and he extended the golden scepter to her. “So, Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter.” (Esther 5:2) The artwork represents this pivotal act that took place within the extravagant interior of the Persian palace.

### The Art Process:

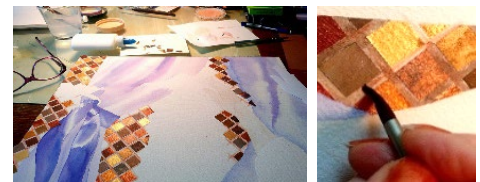
- The king’s scepter and the piece of Esther’s robe were cut out and glued on top of the other art. They are both spackled with gold leaf and deep, Israeli blue watercolor symbolizing the favor of the pagan king falling over Esther and her people.



- The curtains, sun’s rays and silver ring were painted with watercolor. Esther 1:6 says, “There were hangings of fine white and violet linen held by cords of purple linen on silver rings.”



- Mosaic walls and pavement made of porphyry, marble and other precious stones were common in Persian palaces. The tiles were cut out of sparkly fabric, or paper I painted with metallic ink, or various marbled papers. I glued each tile in place and put a watercolor wash between them for the mortar.



- Finally, the art was finished. I usually scan the art at a high resolution and place the image into the card file for the printer. But the scan flattened all the shine from the gold leaf and tiles. So, I took a picture of the art with my camera under high-intensity lamps and, also at an angle in the sun in the cold (I wanted to print the cards in December)! I tried many ways to photograph the art to get the light to reflect and appear bright in the image just like the original art. Finally, the solution came.

- Then, at the printer, adjustments were made (as usual) because their inks always change the brightness!



## The Story of Another Esther

My grandmother Esther passed away in 2000 at the age of 98½. She had a difficult life, but in her early 40s, a pastor and his wife reached out to her with incredible love, and she met Jesus her Savior. She became a light to our family with her consistent prayers on our behalf. I remember not appreciating her constant talking about “The Lord.” But her faithful prayers finally availed for me!

After her stroke, I would go to the care facility and sing hymns to her often, which she loved. She would swing her hands to the sound of my voice. She would also point me to sing to the others around her, because she wanted them to hear of God’s love. As a young girl, she had worked in the fabric factories or mills in Connecticut, so her eyes brightened when she noticed the fabric of my clothes; she ran her hand across the texture, oohing and aahing. When she had been able, she sewed doll clothes for me by hand with no patterns. What I would do now to have those dresses!

I remember her wrinkled hands sewing a white dress with tiny roses on it as I asked her to “please hurry up.” In her adverse circumstances, my grandmother radiated the love of God and stood for His truth.

## The Story of Us

When the Esther of the Bible was a child, she didn’t dream of being married to a pagan king and being one of many women in his harem. But her position as Queen brought about the deliverance of her people.

What circumstance have we wanted to change, but it has not changed, either because of our choices or God’s sovereign plan? What purpose will God fulfill in us through our “lot”? There is much I would like to change. BUT GOD beckons us holding out His bright scepter of favor saying, “Come into my presence, my beloved and receive my love.”

These words may sound trite, especially in the middle of grief and pain, during late night hours with no sleep, in heartache, confusion and doubt. But Psalm 16:6 says, “The lines (my lot) have fallen to me in pleasant places; indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.”

One day, we will be in that Beautiful Land. It is our Eternal Lot, our inheritance. Esther’s “lots” were like tossed coins that determined an outcome that was reversed by God in her favor. Our lot is Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) Himself! He is the Lover of our souls, our portion, and our inheritance now and always!

“In Him we have obtained an inheritance having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will to the end that we who were the first to hope in Messiah would be to the praise of His glory.” (Ephesians 1:11-12) Our inheritance is sure and full of hope!

Sending love in Him, Beth Ann