

Foreword

With the request by a friend for a translation of Lamentations it was apparent, having already translated the Wisdom Literature (Job - Song of Solomon) that the only remaining books called the Megilloth, the scrolls that are read at festival / fast days in the Synagogue would be Ruth and Esther. As a result my direction in translation turned to these two books.

The "additions" as found in the Alexandrian Text (*or, The Apocrypha*) added to the work done on Esther since it was deemed important that these additions also be translated. The procedure follows that of the NRSV in designating the 'Additions' in bold faced double brackets [[]]. Also, with a text of Esther that in places is not 'good' Hebrew, this made the work of translation a bit more difficult.

While Protestant Christians are not well acquainted with the tradition of reading these books in their entirety at the specified special Synagogue services, it is good to re-examine these books since a wide variety of concerns, feelings, hopes and doubts are to be found within these pages.

It is my hope that when these pages are read there will be a renewed interest in these relatively brief books of Hebrew Scripture.

Pentecost 2006
Herman A. Hartmann

Dedication

The translation of these
brief books is dedicated
to my sons, Mark and David,
who have both struggled
with serious physical problems
as well as tragedy in their lives,
yet have not given up on life
because of these problems.