

Biblical Notes — Esther 8:17

17 – In each and every province and in each and every city, wherever the king's commandment and his decree arrived, there was gladness and joy for the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many among the peoples of the land became Jews, for the dread of the Jews had fallen on them.

ובכל-מדינה ומدينة וביר מקוּם אֲשֶׁר דָּבָר-הָאֱלֹהִים וְתַחַת מְלַעַת שְׁמַעְיָה וְיָמָם מִשְׁמָעָה וְיָמָם לִזְהֹוִים מִשְׁמָעָה וְשָׁבָת שְׁמָעָה וְיָמָם נִמְתְּחִינִים קִידְמָנָל פָּמְדִת-הַיּוּנִים עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ:

Esther 8:17 is simply referencing that these people conformed themselves to the Jewish religion (proselytes). Not that they somehow changed their ethnicity. They began to follow the practices, custom of the Jews. "(m) Conformed themselves to the Jew's religion."

— Geneva Study Bible, Commentary on Esther 8:17.

"And many of the people of the land became Jews] That is, they were proselyted, professing the Jewish religion, and siding with them; some in sincerity, doubtless, and some out of sinistery, and for self-respect, because they saw the king favoured them, the queen and Mordecai were altogether of them and for them."

— John Trapp, John Trapp Complete Commentary, Commentary on Esther 8:17.

"17. Many... became Jews — Divine Providence had so signally interposed that all thoughtful minds were profoundly impressed, and not a few became proselytes, and embraced Judaism as the true religion." — Daniel Whendon, Commentary on Esther 8:17.

"became Jews = made common cause with the Jews"

— E.W. Bullinger's Companion Bible Notes, Commentary on Esther 8:17.

"(17) Became Jews.—That is, embraced their religion as proselytes"

— Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Commentary on Esther 8:17