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**Megillat Esther**

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# I. Introduction

Megillat Esther takes place over a [nine](nine.html) year period, during the period of the [Babylonian](bavel.html) [exile](galuyot.html) from the [land of Israel](city.html) following the destruction of the [first](one.html) [Temple](temple.html) (about 2500 years ago).

Esther is related to the word “nistar”, which means hidden, and the word *Megillah* which is related to the word “megaleh”, which means “to reveal”. Thus the Megillah of Esther can be literally translated as “the revelation of the hidden”.

[Purim](Purim.html), which is celebrated on [Adar](feasts.html) 14, is a [festival](festival.html) ordained by our Hakhamim, which comes to [teach](teacher.html) us that [HaShem](hashem.html) is Echad, [One](one.html), and His [Name](name.html) is Echad – *Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4*.

All of the dichotomies in Megilah Esther, all of the topsy-turvy [events](feasts.html), they all come to [teach](teacher.html) us that [HaShem](hashem.html) is Echad. How they do this is the [secret](sod.html) of [Purim](Purim.html).

For [HaShem](hashem.html) to be [one](one.html), every [event](feasts.html) and every individual must be a part of [HaShem](hashem.html). The turning of evil into good is what [Purim](Purim.html) does to [teach](teacher.html) us the [Oneness](oneness.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html).

The destruction of the enemies of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) could have been accomplish, [eleven](eleven.html) months earlier, after the death of Haman, if the goal had merely been the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). But, that was NOT the goal. The goal was to have a total reversal. That which was meant for evil MUST be changed into the good. The evil must be reversed! It is only when the evil is turned to good that [HaShem](hashem.html) becomes Echad.

The Sages [teach](teacher.html) that [one](one.html) must drink enough wine so that [one](one.html) does not [know](daat.html) the difference between *Blessed is Mordechai* and *Cursed is Haman*. This, too, was designed to show us that [HaShem](hashem.html) is Echad. How does this happen?

Wine is related to [Daat](daat.html), [knowledge](knowledge.html). Both maintain excellence only in humble containers. Both get better with age. Wine, and associated products, is the only substance on earth that gets better with age. Wine, and the [sod](sod.html), the [secret](sod.html) level of Torah, both have the same gematria, which is why the Sages [teach](teacher.html) that when “wine goes in the [secret](sod.html) comes out”.

So, what [secret](sod.html) does wine reveal on [Purim](Purim.html)? Since we [know](daat.html) what the Sages [command](cmds613.html), as [one](one.html) of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) of [Purim](Purim.html), is to drink enough wine so that [one](one.html) does not [know](daat.html) the difference between “Blessed is Mordechai” and “Cursed is Haman”, we have the beginning of an answer to our question. This [mitzva](cmds613.html) is [coming](coming.html) to [teach](teacher.html) us that the [secret](sod.html) of [Purim](Purim.html) is to reveal that [HaShem](hashem.html) is echad only when the [two](two.html) statements are equal:

*Blessed is Mordechai = Cursed is Haman*

“Cursed Haman”, ארור המן, has a gematria of 502.

“Blessed Mordechai”, לברוך מרדכי, has a gematria of 502.

When the evil is so thoroughly reversed that it is the good, then [HaShem](hashem.html) is Echad.

This, also, is the [secret](sod.html) behind teshuva, *repenting* or better *returning*. When a [sin](sin.html) CAUSES us to do teshuva, the **teshuva makes the** [**sin**](sin.html) **into a** [**mitzva**](cmds613.html) **(a good deed)**!!! After all, any thing that moves us closer to [HaShem](hashem.html) is defined as a [mitzva](cmds613.html).

When [sin](sin.html) becomes a [mitzva](cmds613.html), through teshuva, then evil becomes reversed and becomes *the good*. Then [HaShem](hashem.html) is Echad.

This reversal of evil into good is the hidden [secret](sod.html) behind all of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) of [Purim](Purim.html). It is the [secret](sod.html) of all of the [events](feasts.html) and plots of Megillah Esther.

As we [study](study.html) Megillah Esther and the [Purim](Purim.html) [festival](festival.html), watch for this constant theme.

# II. The Destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html)

There are [two](two.html) ways in which to try to destroy the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people: [physically](physical.html) and [spiritually](physical.html). Our enemies have attempted both.

[**Chanukah**](chanukah.html) is the celebration over those who have tried, and failed, to culturally assimilate us (the Greeks and Western Culture). They did not try to kill us, they tried to separate us from [HaShem](hashem.html) and from Torah. For a [spiritual](physical.html) [attack](attacks.html), we attacked [physically](physical.html). *Everything is in the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of* [*Heaven*](heaven.html) *except the* [*fear*](fear.html) *of* [*Heaven*](heaven.html).[[1]](#footnote-1) When we must demonstrate our [fear](fear.html) of [Heaven](heaven.html), we are on our own and we must [*physically*](physical.html) demonstrate our [fear](fear.html) of [Heaven](heaven.html).

[**Purim**](Purim.html) is the celebration over those who have tried and failed to [physically](physical.html) destroy us (the Persians and Western Culture). For a [physical](physical.html) [attack](attacks.html), we reacted [spiritually](physical.html). Here our lives are [physically](physical.html) in danger for no other reason than just pure hate. There is no [attack](attacks.html) to prevent us from fulfilling the [mitzvot](cmds613.html). There was no [spiritual](physical.html) [attack](attacks.html), only a [physical](physical.html) [attack](attacks.html). For this we realize that [HaShem](hashem.html) is [coming](coming.html) against us. When [HaShem](hashem.html) is [coming](coming.html) against us, all we can to is repent. Any [physical](physical.html) response will be entirely in vain because we would be fighting [HaShem](hashem.html).

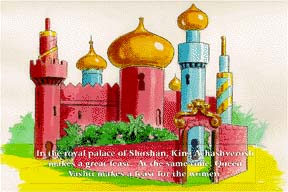
# III. The Meaning of [Purim](Purim.html)

What does “[Purim](Purim.html)” mean?

In Megillat Esther, neither [HaShem](hashem.html), inner [spiritual](physical.html), nor ethical values seem to determine the course of [events](feasts.html), but rather external values, such as power, wealth, [physical](physical.html) beauty, [sex](marriageact.html) (if you’re a man), and, more than anything else, luck, chance, or coincidence. Indeed, [Purim](Purim.html) means *chance* or *coincidence*, that is, the lots by which Haman (the [wicked](wicked.html) descendent of [Amalek](amalek.html) who seeks to annihilate the [Jews](gen-jew.html)) decided on which day the [Jews](gen-jew.html) should be destroyed.

The [holiday](festival.html) is called [Purim](Purim.html) after the selection process that Haman used to select the date of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) destruction: a lottery (or a “Pur”), using astrological forecasting. This method was supposed to result in the date that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were most vulnerable to [attack](attacks.html). In fact, this was astrologically true: The [Jews](gen-jew.html) **were** most vulnerable on the 13th of [Adar](feasts.html). [One](one.html) of the miracles of [Purim](Purim.html) was that [HaShem](hashem.html) totally reversed the astrological implications of the day so that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) would instead be victorious. Because of this miracle that came about through the lottery, the “Pur,” the [holiday](festival.html) is called [Purim](Purim.html).

However, that very lottery triggered a series of [events](feasts.html) that led to his own downfall instead, revealing the [hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) in the entire affair. This is also why [Purim](Purim.html) is a [holiday](festival.html) related to Torah SheBaalPeh, the [oral Torah](orallaw.html), which reveals that which is hidden within the simple [letters](letters.html) and stories of Torah Shebiktav, the written Torah.



If Achashverosh (a grubby man who picks his wife through a beauty contest and accepts bribe money for the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html)) hadn’t thrown such a big party maybe he wouldn’t have become drunk, and if Vashti (who [name](name.html) means, “and drink”) hadn’t come into the party when Achashverosh was drunk perhaps he wouldn’t have become angry with her and had her killed. And if she hadn’t been killed then Esther (Mordechai’s cousin and wife) wouldn’t have become queen. And if Achashverosh hadn’t decided, on a whim, to find a [new](new.html) queen by having a beauty contest, then perhaps Esther wouldn’t have become queen. And if Esther were not beautiful... and if Mordechai (the Chief Rabbi of Shushan and member of the highest [Jewish](gen-jew.html) Court of [Law](law.html), the Sanhedrin) hadn’t heard about the contest... And if Mordechai hadn’t overheard the plotting against the king... And if Achashverosh hadn’t been unable to [sleep](mashal.html) that night, and hadn’t asked his servants to read to him from the book of chronicles of his kingdom, and if they hadn’t just happened to have opened to the place which told about how Mordechai had saved the king’s life! The role of chance, coincidence, or apparent coincidence, is striking, in Megillat Esther!

# IV. [Purim](Purim.html) and Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html)

On most years Parashat Ki Tisa, in the [annual](annual.html) [cycle](cycles.html), is read in close proximity to [Purim](Purim.html), and according to the Tikunei [Zohar](orallaw.html), there exists an intrinsic relationship between [Purim](Purim.html) and [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im, the day on which the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were forgiven for the [sin](sin.html) of the golden calf.

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Shemoth, Section 2, Page 185a*** *‘Observe this: the goat which the Israelites sent down to Azazel, into that desert, was sent with the intention of giving to the “other side” a portion, so pacifying and keeping it occupied that it might not do harm to the sons of the Kingdom. But it may be objected: “Why, then, was it necessary to have* [*two*](two.html) *goats,* [*one*](one.html) *“to the Lord” and* [*one*](one.html) *to the “other side”? The answer to this question can be* [*gathered*](gather.html) *from the following parable. A king once became angered with his son, and he called to that minister whose office it was to punish offenders that he might be at* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *to chastise his son on the morrow. The minister, in high spirits, was overjoyed, and entered the palace to partake of* [*food*](food.html) *there. The prince, on seeing him, thought to himself: “Surely, that man comes here to no good purpose, but doubtless because my father is angry with me.” So what did he do? He straightway went in unto his father and persuaded him to* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *him. Then the king commanded that a banquet should be prepared for him and his son, but that the minister should not be told thereof, for, he thought to himself, should he get wind of the repast which I have ordered for myself and my son, he will disturb our meal. What, then, did the king do? He called to his chamberlain and said unto him: “Prepare* [*first*](one.html) *a meal for this minister, in order that he may imagine that I am showing him a mark of special favour by giving a banquet in his honour, and so be satisfied and depart, without knowing anything of the previous meal which I have commanded thee to prepare, and which we shall consume when he is gone. Therefore let him, as I have said, take his part and then go, that our joy may be complete and undisturbed.” And so it was done. Now, if the king had not dealt thus with his minister and his son, the former would not have left the palace, and the feast of* [*forgiveness*](forgive.html) *would have been marred. Similarly, the Holy* [*One*](one.html) *said to Israel: “Prepare ye* [*two*](two.html) *goats,* [*one*](one.html) *for Me and* [*one*](one.html) *for that Accuser, in order that he may imagine that he is participating in My meal, but in reality may be quite unaware of the true meal of our joy. Let him take his part and go his way and leave My house.” As the “supernal Mother”, the* [*world*](futures.html) *to come, comes down to* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in the palace of the lower* [*world*](worlds.html) *in order that all faces should be lit up there, it is meet that the Accuser should not be found in its holy presence, neither he nor any other of the ministers of judgement, when it dispenses blessings and radiates light upon all things and* [*freedom*](freedom.html) *unto all creatures, and Israel takes of these blessings. For when the “*[*world*](futures.html) *to come” enters into its palace, the lower* [*world*](worlds.html)*, and finds that it rejoices with its children in the most excellent meal, it blesses the table, and all the* [*worlds*](worlds.html) *are blessed, and all is joy and radiant looks. Therefore it says (in regard to the Day of* [*Atonement*](kippur.html)*): ‘‘That ye may be* [*clean*](purity.html) *from all your* [*sins*](sin.html) *before the Lord” (Lev. XVI, 30). It is written: “And Aaron shall cast lots upon the* [*two*](two.html) *goats,* [*one*](one.html) *lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel”. This gives the Accuser great joy: that God should take a lot with him, and, as it were, invite him by the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*’s own* [*desire*](needs.html) *and invitation. But he little realizes how that the Lord heaps coals of* [*fire*](fire.html) *on his* [*head*](body.html) *and upon the heads of all his legions. Haman, too, “went forth that day joyful and with a glad* [*heart*](body.html)*” (Esther v, 9)-namely, with that portion which was given him. But when the Supernal King comes in unto the Matrona She pleads before the King for Herself, for Her children, for Her people, and even when Israel is in* [*exile*](galuyot.html)*, if they* [*pray*](prayer.html) *all this day long (on the Day of* [*Atonement*](kippur.html)*), She ascends unto the Supernal King and pleads for Her children, whereby all the punishments which the Holy* [*One*](one.html) *is about to inflict upon* [*Edom*](edom.html) *(Rome) are decreed and fixed, and, in addition, those concerning the unsuspecting Accuser himself -for though he knows it not, he is destined to be done away with, as it is written, “And death will be swallowed up for ever” (Isa. xxv, 8). So Esther said: “For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed... for the enemy could not countervail the king’s damage” (Ibid. VII, 4). And then: “Haman was frightened before the presence of the King and the queen” (Ibid. VII, 6). Then radiant looks and perfect joy prevail, and Israel enters into* [*freedom*](freedom.html) *on that day. And from that day on* [*freedom*](freedom.html) *and joy reign manifestly over them, and the Holy* [*One*](one.html) *wills to associate Himself with them in joy thenceforward. And as the Israelites gave Satan a portion in order that he might leave them alone and in peace, so also did they give a portion to the pagan* [*nations*](nations.html) *(the* [*offering*](korbanot) *of* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *oxen on the* [*Feast of Tabernacles*](succoth.html) *for the* [*seventy*](seventy.html)[*nations*](nations.html)*) in order that they might leave them alone here on earth below*

The [Zohar](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html) that there is a relationship between [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im (Day of the Atonements), and [Purim](Purim.html). Notice the similarity of sound and spelling. In fact *Ki* is a causative prefix often found in the scriptures. Note that on both days the pur or lot is cast. “Yom Ki [purim](Purim.html)” means “a day like [Purim](Purim.html)”.

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) says that every [Shabbat](sabbath.html) and [Holiday](festival.html) is half [spiritual](physical.html) and half [physical](physical.html):

***Pesachim 68b*** *Now according to him who explained. ‘*[*One*](one.html) *means by* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and the other means with a utensil,’ why did he not say. Both mean by* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, yet there is no difficulty:* [*one*](one.html) *refers to a moist [wart]; the other, to a dry* [*one*](one.html)*? — He can answer you: a dry* [*one*](one.html) *[just] crumbles away.[[2]](#footnote-2) And according to him who maintained, ‘Both mean by* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, yet there is no difficulty:* [*one*](one.html) *refers to a moist [wart]; the other to a dry* [*one*](one.html)*’; why did he not say: Both refer to a moist [wart], yet there is no difficulty:* [*one*](one.html) *means by* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and the other means with a utensil? — He can answer you: as for a utensil, Surely he [the Tanna]* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *there, ‘if [it is done] with a utensil, it is forbidden in both cases!’[[3]](#footnote-3) And the other?[[4]](#footnote-4) That which he* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *[about] a utensil here, [is because] he comes to inform us of the controversy of R. Eliezer and R. Joshua. SAID R. ELIEZER . . . IF SHECHITAH etc. R. Joshua is consistent with his view, for he maintains, Rejoicing on a* [*Festival*](festival.html) *too is a religious duty.[[5]](#footnote-5) For it was* [*taught*](teacher.html)*, R. Eliezer said: A man has nought else [to do] on a* [*Festival*](festival.html)[*save*](salvation.html) *either to* [*eat*](eating.html) *and drink or to sit and* [*study*](study.html)*. R. Joshua said: Divide it: [devote] half of it to* [*eating*](eating.html) *and drinking, and half of it to the Beth Hamidrash. Now R. Johanan said thereon: Both deduce it from the same verse.* [*One*](one.html) *verse says, a* [*solemn assembly*](rehearse.html) *to the Lord thy God,[[6]](#footnote-6) whereas another verse says, there shall be a* [*solemn assembly*](rehearse.html) *unto you:[[7]](#footnote-7) R. Eliezer holds: [That means] either entirely to God or entirely to you; while R. Joshua holds, Divide it: [Devote] half to God and half to yourselves.*

We spend part of the day [praying](prayer.html) in the [synagogue](synagog.html) (the [spiritual](physical.html)), and the rest of the day [eating](eating.html) a fine meal and relaxing at home (the [physical](physical.html)).

[One](one.html) exception to this rule is Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html), when both halves are [spiritual](physical.html): We spend our entire day [praying](prayer.html) in the [synagogue](synagog.html), with no [food](food.html), no marital relations, and minimal rest.

The second exception is [Purim](Purim.html), when both halves are [physical](physical.html): We feast, visit friends, dress in costumes, and drink to excess.

The Vilna Gaon (18th century Lithuania) explains that [*Purim*](Purim.html) shares the same [letters](letters.html) as *Yom* [*HaKippurim*](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html), the Torah [name](name.html) for [Yom Kippur](kippur.html). That which we accomplish on Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html) with [spiritual](physical.html) pursuits, we accomplish on [Purim](Purim.html) with [physical](physical.html) pursuits. These holidays are [two](two.html) sides of the same coin, [two](two.html) halves of the same day.

The Arizal, the greatest kabbalist of the past 700 years, also points out that the Torah refers to [*Yom Kippur*](kippur.html) as [*Yom Kippur*](kippur.html)*im*, which can either be read as the *day of* [*atonement*](kippur.html) or the *day like* [*Purim*](Purim.html). It would seem, then, that the [two](two.html) holidays are not only related but, in some way, [Purim](Purim.html) is even greater!

The Arizal explained this relationship as follows. [**Purim**](Purim.html) **is, in fact, on a higher level**, and [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im should be translated as a *day like* [*Purim*](Purim.html). *like* means that [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im is a lesser holy day than [Purim](Purim.html) because the reality is always greater than the copy that is *like* it. The [Talmud](orallaw.html), states that, in the [future](future.html), all holidays will fall into disuse with the exception of [Purim](Purim.html).

Interestingly, we see the balance of half-[physical](physical.html)/half-[spiritual](physical.html) reflected within each [holiday](festival.html) itself. On Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html), we prepare for the fast by having a feast the day before. On [Purim](Purim.html), we prepare for the feast by fasting the day before (Taanit Esther).

We would assume that Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html) is the greater of the [two](two.html) days. But in [one](one.html) sense, [Purim](Purim.html) is even greater: It is easier to achieve [spiritual](physical.html) elevation on a day like Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html), when we [pray](prayer.html) and have no [time](time.html) for forbidden activities like gossip or getting angry. By fasting, the soul achieves dominance over the [body](body.html). However on [Purim](Purim.html), in our state of rambunctious drunkenness, it is much harder to maintain our human dignity. As Rabbi Eliyahu KiTov writes: “If [one](one.html) attains holiness through affliction, and another attains holiness through indulgence, who is the greater of the [two](two.html)? It may be said that the [one](one.html) who attains holiness through indulgence is greater, for the attainment of holiness through indulgence requires an infinitely greater degree of striving and effort.”

The purpose of life, as Judaism sees it, is to enjoy the greatest pleasures this [world](worlds.html) has to offer. But these pleasures are not only [physical](physical.html). Rather, as they become more profound they also become increasingly abstract, such as love, meaning, and creativity. To appreciate these more subtle joys we have [two](two.html) options: the [first](one.html) is to remove oneself from the [physical](physical.html) [world](worlds.html), and the second is to immerse oneself within it, probing its depths until [one](one.html) reveals the profound wonders hidden within it.

On Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html) we employ the [first](one.html) method by abstaining from all earthly activities ([eating](eating.html), working, bathing, etc.) in an attempt to get in touch with our [spiritual](physical.html) nature. In this way we become like souls without [bodies](body.html). Unfortunately, this *high* comes at the expense of an important aspect of our humanity, because Judaism maintains that mankind was created to appreciate this [world](worlds.html) on both levels, [body](body.html) and soul. [Purim](Purim.html), on the other [hand](fourteen.html), treads the second pathway, a pathway toward [spiritual](physical.html) awareness bordering on euphoria by immersion within the [physical](physical.html).

Lets examine some of the ways that Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html) is a day like [Purim](Purim.html). To help us understand some relationships, lets look at the meaning of the word [*Purim*](Purim.html).

[Purim](Purim.html) is a Persian word that means *lots*. *Lots* were a device used to determine the will of [HaShem](hashem.html) in a matter much like dice are used in gambling.

So, here are some of the relationships between Yom [HaKippurim](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\kippur.html) and [Purim](Purim.html). Please feel free to send me any additional connections that you may see:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **On** [**Purim**](Purim.html) | **On** [**Yom Kippur**](kippur.html)**im** |
| Achashverosh donned the priestly garments and used the [Temple](temple.html) vessels at the feast that he made.[[8]](#footnote-8) | The [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol donned the priestly garments and used the [Temple](temple.html) vessels on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im. |
| Achashverosh’s palace had an inner and an outer court. | Holy [Temple](temple.html) had an inner and an outer court. |
| Lots (goral) were cast in the presence of Haman, for a proper day to destroy the [Jews](gen-jew.html). Est.3:7 | The [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol cast lots (goral) in the presence of the goat for Azazel, to determine which goat was *for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) and which goat was *for Azazel*. Lev.16:9 |
| [Purim](Purim.html) is a [time](time.html) of joy. | [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im is a [time](time.html) to afflict your soul. |
| On [Purim](Purim.html), we prepare for the feast by fasting the day before (Ta’anith Esther)! | On [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im, we prepare for the fast by having a feast the day before. |
| On [Purim](Purim.html) we must drink enough wine so that we can not tell the difference between blessed is Mordecai and cursed is Haman. We must be so inebriated that we can not tell the difference between the [one](one.html) destined for holiness (Mordecai) and the [one](one.html) destined for destruction (Haman). | We must choose [two](two.html) goats which are identical in outward appearance. They must be so identical that we can not tell the difference between the goat for [HaShem](hashem.html) and the goat for Azazel. They must be so identical that we can not tell the difference between the goat destined for elevation (l’[HaShem](hashem.html)) to holiness and the goat destined for destruction (l’Azazel).  Haman (l’Azazel) and “The King” (L’[HaShem](hashem.html)) both come to the wine feast. The look alike just as the goats did, especially after the wine. |
| We dress in costumes to conceal who we are. Esther, when she went in to the inner chamber to visit “The King”, she was simply herself with the garments of a queen. Est. 5:1 | The [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol, the [High Priest](priests.html), wears special, plain linen clothing to show exactly who he is and what he represents in Israel. He was himself without embellishment. Lev. 16:4 |
| Esther can’t go into King Achashverosh any [time](time.html) she [wants](needs.html). She must go when accepted. Est. 4:11 If Esther fails to go into the King, at the right [time](time.html), then she and his house will die. Est. 4:14 | [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol not allowed to go into the Holy of Holies at any [time](time.html). It must be acceptable [time](time.html). Lev. 16:2 |
| Vashti did NOT go into see King Achashverosh at the proper [time](time.html) and she died because of that failure.  Esther did approach King Achashverosh in an acceptable way. She [teaches](teacher.html) us how to do it correctly: 1) With everyone fasting. 2) With the proper clothes (Garments of the queen). 3) At the right [time](time.html), with everyone properly prepared. | Nadab and Abihu did NOT try to draw near to [HaShem](hashem.html) *in the proper way* and they died. Lev. 10:1-2  1) They came without fasting. 2) They came without the proper clothes. 3) They came at the wrong [time](time.html) – neither they nor the people were properly prepared.  Aharon did go into the Holy of Holies safely by going in the right way. Lev. 10  [Four](four.html) parallels before Esther going – when Esther's going into the king taking us back to the [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) service and it's not just that there's [four](four.html) general parallels, they've actually proceeded in order. The [first](one.html) issue is Esther's [fear](fear.html) of dying because people might die, followed by the ba'eit hazot notion. That no, there's a specific moment that you could come, followed by fine, I'm going to go and this is how I'm going to go and followed by and I'm going to be wearing these clothes. |
| The Megillah of Esther is read at [Purim](Purim.html). In the Megillah, Esther goes into the inner room and [spoke](mashal.html) with “The King”. It turns out that the Megillah describes the palace of “The King” with the exact same words that it describes the house of The Holy [One](one.html). Est. 1 | At [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im, the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol goes into the inner room, the Holy of Holies, and speaks with “The King”. |
| We elevate [eating](eating.html) and drinking. | We completely abstain from [eating](eating.html) and drinking. |
| [Jews](gen-jew.html) accept the Torah without a mountain hanging over them. | [Jews](gen-jew.html) accept the Torah with a mountain hanging over them. |
| In the Megillah of Esther we never see the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html). When the Megillah is read, we blot out the [name](name.html) of Haman. | Only on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im is the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) pronounced, and only by the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol. |
| Mordecai refused to bow to Haman (Est. 3:2) because Mordecai’s father, [Benyamin](benyamin.html), did not bow to Haman’s father, [Esau](edom.html). [Esau](edom.html) was the father of [Amalek](amalek.html) who was the father of Haman. | Only on this day do [Jews](gen-jew.html) kneel. They kneel when the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) is pronounced by the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol. Psa. 95:6 |

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# V. All The [Festivals](festivals.html)

In Sefer Divash L’Phi from the Chidah, he states that [Purim](Purim.html) includes in it, all of the Yamim Tovim ([festivals](festivals.html)).

On [Pesach](passover.html) ([Passover](passover.html)) they went out of slavery to [freedom](freedom.html), and here, on [Purim](Purim.html) they went out of a decree for death to life.

The Sages tell us that [third](three.html) day of Esther’s fast was the 15th of [Nisan](feasts.html), the night of the [Passover](passover.html) [Seder](haggada.html)[[9]](#footnote-9). Because of the desperate situation, the [seder](haggada.html) could be forfeited. Still, Esther kept as much as she could and served [matza](chametz.html) at the banquets. Additionally, the banquets are called a wine feast (5:6, 7:2, 7:7), alluding to the [four](four.html) cups of wine that were drunk at the [seder](haggada.html).

Just as Esther had spent the whole evening telling the national story (the [Haggada](haggada.html)), Achashverosh reviews the story of his kingdom as well. When Achashverosh reviews his “royal book” and, for the [first](one.html) [time](time.html), becomes aware that Mordechai had saved the King’s life (6:2), he determines to reward Mordechai.

On [Shavuot](shavuot.html) ([Feast of Weeks](shavuot.html)) they received the Torah and on [Purim](Purim.html) they once again accepted the Torah.

On [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h (The Feast of Trumpets) the book of life and the book of death are open and on [Purim](Purim.html) they were judged if the decree would stand [and they would be killed] or if they would be rescued.

On [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im (The Day of [Atonement](kippur.html)) they are forgiven for all their [sins](sin.html) and on [Purim](Purim.html) they were forgiven for having had enjoyment at the meal the king had made, contrary to the Torah.

On [Succoth](succoth.html) (The [Feast of Tabernacles](succoth.html)) they are under the shadow of the clouds of glory and on [Purim](Purim.html) many came under the shade of the wings of the Shechinah, as the verse says, many of the people of the land became [Jews](gen-jew.html).

It may be that for this reason the [holiday](festival.html) is called [Purim](Purim.html) because of the Pur. This is because the [first](one.html) [letters](letters.html) of [*Purim*](Purim.html) are the [first](one.html) [letters](letters.html) of the words: [Pesach](passover.html), And [Succoth](succoth.html), [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h, [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im, *Matan Torah*, the giving of the Torah.[[10]](#footnote-10)

# VI. What is [Purim](Purim.html) all about?

The day of [Purim](Purim.html) consists of [four](four.html) main activities: sending treats to [one](one.html) or more friends, giving gifts to the poor, listening to the story of [Purim](Purim.html), and, of course, the festive meal. Judaism, as the science of self-perfection, utilizes the technique of awakening [one](one.html)’s inner [world](worlds.html) through outer expression. When we understand the depth of these activities we can use them to develop a [spiritual](physical.html) perspective on reality.



The word [*HaShem*](hashem.html) doesn’t appear openly in the Megillat, because in life the Divine remains hidden until we read between the lines of our own life-story. The very [name](name.html) *Megillat Esther* alludes to this, since in [Hebrew](hebrew.html), “Megillat” also means *revelation of*, and *Esther* means *that which is hidden*. Putting the [two](two.html) together, *Megillat Esther* means *revealing the hidden*. This explains the custom of wearing masks and costumes on [Purim](Purim.html): It causes those who see us to attempt to reveal that which we have hidden, since this is essence of what we all should do while reading the Megillat Esther.

According to [Jewish](gen-jew.html) thought, the last people to see the [world](worlds.html) in a state of perfection were [Adam](adam.html) and Eve. The [Garden of Eden](eden.html) means a perfect [world](worlds.html). How did [Adam](adam.html) and Eve fall from that state? By [eating](eating.html) from the Tree of [Knowledge](thetree.html) of Good and Evil. That is, they pursued the [world](worlds.html) of illusion, in which the transcendence of the universe (good) is masked by seeming imperfection (evil). If we approach [Purim](Purim.html) correctly, when we reach the tipsy state of no longer knowing good from evil, we actually realign our perspective by seeing the Transcendent as the source of all [physical](physical.html) reality, thereby revealing its hidden perfection. Therefore [Purim](Purim.html) at its peak is like a taste of Eden.

Now we can understand how [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im and [Purim](Purim.html) are really [two](two.html) halves of the same day: they both serve to reconnect us to the highest Source of spirituality. However, on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im we abandon the [physical](physical.html) while on [Purim](Purim.html) we embrace it. Thus the greatness of [Purim](Purim.html) is the unique opportunity for both [body](body.html) and soul to revel in the hidden spirituality of the [physical](physical.html) [world](worlds.html).

# VII. Allusions

We [know](daat.html) that at the beginning of a thing, all of the energy of [creation](bara.html) comes together to form that thing. From there on, everything is just maintenance. This means that if we can go back to where a word is [first](one.html) used in the Torah, we can see its beginning. We can see the essence of the word by examining the context of its conception or genesis.

Since Torah is literally the blueprint for the [world](worlds.html), the place where a word is [first](one.html) found in the Torah is where that thing is created. This helps us to understand what [HaShem](hashem.html) is trying to accomplish in His [world](worlds.html).

What allusions, in Esther, are found in the [Talmud](orallaw.html)?

***Chullin 139b*** *Where is Haman indicated in the Torah? — In the verse: Is it [hamin] from the tree?[[11]](#footnote-11) Where is Esther indicated in the Torah? — [In the verse,] And I will surely hide [asthir] my* [*face*](body.html)*.[[12]](#footnote-12) Where is Mordecai indicated in the Torah? — In the verse: Flowing myrrh,[[13]](#footnote-13) which the Targum renders as mira dakia.[[14]](#footnote-14)*

The [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[15]](#footnote-15) offers as the origin of the [name](name.html) *Haman* the verse in Bereshit that refers to [Adam](adam.html)’s [sin](sin.html): *Hamin HaEtz hazeh* (“from this tree”?).

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:11*** *And he said, Who told thee that thou [wast] naked? Hast thou* [*eaten*](eating.html) *of the tree* (Hamin HaEtz hazeh)*, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not* [*eat*](eating.html)*?*

The following table shows the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) characters that make up the word for “Haman”, and the places where it is found. The [first](one.html) item details it’s beginning or conception:

המן = *Hamin* (“from”) - Bereshit 3:11

המן = *HaMan* (the manna) - Shemot 16:35, Bamidbar 11:6, 11:9, 20:10, Devarim 8:3, Yehoshua 5:12

המן = *Hamin* (“from”) - Bamidbar 20:10

המן = *Hamin* (“whence”) - 2 Melachim 6:27

המן = ***Haman*** - Esther 3:1, 3:5, 3:6, 3:7, 3:8, 3:12, 4:7, 5:5, 5:9-12, 5:14, 6:5-7, …

Haman is found in the **QUESTION**, in Bereshit!

Now that we [know](daat.html) that Haman is connected with the **question** regarding the Tree of the [Knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil. The mystics call the Tree of the [Knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil, “the tree of doubt”. The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for doubt (*sufek*) and the word [*Amalek*](amalek.html) share the same gematria, 240.[[16]](#footnote-16)

From the [time](time.html) that [Adam](adam.html) [ate](eating.html) from that tree, he had doubts, and [HaShem](hashem.html) manifested Himself with doubts. After all, why did [HaShem](hashem.html) have to “ask” where [Adam](adam.html) was? It is a cardinal rule of our faith that [HaShem](hashem.html) knows everything there is no doubt.

So, Haman was *conceived* in the garden when [Adam](adam.html) [ate](eating.html) from the Tree of the [Knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil. Haman *is* the gap between ourselves and [HaShem](hashem.html). Haman, an [Amalekite](amalek.html) descendant of king Agag (Gog), is the epitome of the role of the [Amalekites](amalek.html). The [Amalekites](amalek.html) represent the gap between us and [HaShem](hashem.html).

Lets take a look at the [Amalekites](amalek.html) and how they fulfill their role in separating us from [HaShem](hashem.html). When we came [out of Egypt](thebirth.html) after we had accepted the Torah and were ready to enter the promised land and bring in the final restoration of our relationship with [HaShem](hashem.html), then the [Amalekites](amalek.html) threw themselves at us in battle. A battle they [KNEW](daat.html) they had no chance of winning. They had seen the miracles that [HaShem](hashem.html) had done for His people, and he [knew](daat.html) he could not defeat us. Never the less, it is his job to put a gap between [HaShem](hashem.html) and us.

The [first](one.html) [attack](attacks.html) by [Amalek](amalek.html) occurred just prior to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people’s arrival at Har [Sinai](stages.html), in a place called Refidim. But, as we [know](daat.html) from tradition, many of the names given to the camps during the [forty](forty.html) years in the desert had more to do with what occurred there [*spiritually*](physical.html), than [*physically*](physical.html).

Rebi Chanina said, “I asked Rebi Eliezer in the big Beit [Midrash](orallaw.html) ... ‘What does Refidim mean?’ He answered me, ‘That was its [name](name.html).’ ... Rebi Yehoshua said, “[It means] they became weak (*reefu*) in Torah.”[[17]](#footnote-17)

And that is why [Amalek](amalek.html) attacked them[[18]](#footnote-18).

The incident when Moshe struck the [rock](rock.html) also contains a hint to [Amalek](amalek.html). This episode is a duplication of the [one](one.html) at the [time](time.html) the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) manna [first](one.html) fell, then, it comes as no surprise to find an allusion to Haman here as well:

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 20:9*** *Moshe took his* [*staff*](staff.html) *from before God as commanded. Moshe and Aharon* [*gathered*](gather.html) *the* [*community*](community.html) *before the* [*rock*](rock.html) *and said to them, “From this (ha-min; heh, mem, nun)* [*rock*](rock.html) *(ha-selah) should water come out!”*

Not only is *Haman* found in this verse, but the word *ha-selah* (the [rock](rock.html)) is equal in *gematria* to the word *HaEtz*:

*HaEtz* (heh, ayin, tzaddik) = ha-selah (heh, samech, lamed, ayin)

5+70+90 = 5+60+30+70

= 165

*HaEtz* is the next word after the [*first*](one.html) allusion to Haman, after [Adam](adam.html) [ate](eating.html) from the Tree of the [Knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil:

***Bereshit 3:11*** *ha-min HaEtz?*

No wonder [Amalek](amalek.html) [attacks](attacks.html) the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, again, after this episode:

*The Canaanite, the king of Arad ... fought against Israel[[19]](#footnote-19) ...* ... This is [Amalek](amalek.html)[[20]](#footnote-20) ...

Hence, this episode at *Mei Merivah* (“Waters of Dispute” as they are called) was not simply a fight about water; it was another battle in the long war against nature, doubt, and [Amalek](amalek.html). The drying up of Miriam’s well had created another opportunity to [teach](teacher.html) the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people what is supposed to distinguish them from the [nations](nations.html) of the [world](worlds.html): their potential to rise above nature, especially through the usage of *speech*.

There is a [Midrash](orallaw.html) that indicates that with the exception of [Qorach](qorach.html), Haman was the wealthiest man in the Tanach. He was wealthy because he stole the wealth of the Judean kings and the wealth of the [Temple](temple.html).

The [Triennial](shmita.html) Torah portion, in the [first](one.html) [cycle](cycles.html), includes the next few passages as allusions to [Purim](Purim.html), as it is read on the last regular [Shabbat](sabbath.html) before [Purim](Purim.html).

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 32:20*** *And He said, “I will hide My* [*face*](body.html) *from them. I will see what their end will be, for they are a* [*generation*](toldot.html) *of changes; they are not [recognizable] as My children whom I have reared.*

In verse 48 in the Targum Jonathan we see the specific date of Moshe’s death as the 7th of [Adar](feasts.html). By this date, we [know](daat.html) that the Fast of Esther and [Purim](Purim.html) are just around the corner.

***Targum Pseudo Yonataon to Devarim (Deuteronomy) 32:48*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)[*spoke*](mashal.html) *with Mosheh* ***on the*** [***seventh***](seven.html) ***of the month*** [***Adar***](feasts.html)***,*** *on the same day, saying,*

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 32:9*** *Because the Lord’s portion is His people* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*,* ***the lot*** *(the word for ‘lots’ is* [*Purim*](Purim.html)*)**of His* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*.*

**Allusions to Mordechai**

Where is Mordechai alluded to in the Torah? *(Rashi: the greatness of Mordechai.)* As it says, “Pure myhrr”,[[21]](#footnote-21) which translates [into Aramaic, Onkelos] *mara dachia* [the consonants of which spell Mordechai]. *(Rashi: The pure myhrr is referred to in this verse as ‘the* [*head*](body.html) *of all spices.’ The righteous Men of the Great Assembly are compared to fragrant spices, and their* [*head*](body.html)*-leader-is Mordechai.)*

**Allusions to** [**HaShem**](hashem.html)

Megillat Esther, too, recounts an altogether natural

story. *The* [*name*](name.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *is not mentioned even once in the Megillat*. Mordechai [commands](cmds613.html) that the days of [Purim](Purim.html) be commemorated, and it is through this that the [nation](nations.html) comes to the realization that even those things that appear natural are in fact directed by [HaShem](hashem.html). Indeed, in the Megillat itself the victory over [Amalek](amalek.html) leads to the reinstatement of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html):

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 55:13*** *“In place of the thorn-bush a cypress will rise, and in place of the nettle, a myrtle...”*

“In place of the thorn-bush” - in place of Haman “a cypress will rise” - this refers to Mordechai.

“In place of the nettle” - in place of Vashti

“a myrtle” - this is Esther the righteous [one](one.html), who is called Hadassah.

“And it shall be for [HaShem](hashem.html) for a [name](name.html)“ - this refers to the reading of the Megillat.’[[22]](#footnote-22)

There are at least [four](four.html) times when the ineffable [Name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) appears in acrostic form embedded in the text of Esther. This ineffable [name](name.html), [known](daat.html) as the tetragrammaton (yod hay vav hay), was pronounced only by the [High Priest](priests.html) of Israel, only on the Day of [Atonement](kippur.html). The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) [letters](letters.html) yud-hay-vav-hay are vocalized as “Adonai”.

The yud-hay-vav-hay appears in: **Esther 1.20** as the [first](one.html) [letters](letters.html) of [four](four.html) consecutive words when read backward:

היא וכל־הנשים יתנ

Hi v’chol h’nashim yitnu

“It, and all the women will give.”

In **Esther 5.4** these [letters](letters.html) (yud-hay-vav-hay) appear again by initial [letters](letters.html) of [four](four.html) successive words when read forward:

יָבֹ֨וא הַמֶּ֤לֶךְ וְהָמָן֙ הַיֹּ֔ום

Yavo hamelech v’haman hayom

“and let the king and Haman come today.”

Again, in **Esther 5.13** the yud-hay-vav-hay is formed by final [letters](letters.html) of [four](four.html) consecutive words when read backward:

זה איננו שוה לי

zah ainenu shoveh li

“This gives no satisfaction to me.”

In **Esther 7.7** by the final [letter](letters.html) of [four](four.html) consecutive words read forward:

כי כלתה אליו הרעה

ki chaltah ailav hara’ah

“that his fate had been determined.”

**Where can we see an allusion to Esther in the Torah**?[[23]](#footnote-23)

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:16-18*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said to Moses: “You are going to rest with your* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, and these people will soon prostitute themselves to the foreign gods of the land they are entering. They will forsake me and break the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *I made with them. On that day I will become angry with them and forsake them; I will hide my* [*face*](body.html) *from them, and they will be destroyed. Many disasters and difficulties will come upon them, and on that day they will ask, ‘Have not these disasters come upon us because our God is not with us?’ And I will certainly hide my* [*face*](body.html) *on that day because of all their* [*wickedness*](wicked.html) *in turning to other gods.*

Rashi makes the following comment on the above Torah verses: *“During the* [*time*](time.html) *of Esther there will be a hiding of the* [*face*](body.html)*, and this will be a* [*time*](time.html) *of great troubles.”*

The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for hide is *esther*, so we have an allusion, in the Torah, to Esther, because in her day [HaShem](hashem.html) did hide His [face](body.html) to the extent that we do not find the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) in the book of Esther.

In fact, the disguises and the masks, of [Purim](Purim.html), are all designed to underscore the essential hiddenness of this day.

Where are there allusions to [Purim](Purim.html) in the Nazarean Codicil?[[24]](#footnote-24) The pasukim [speak](mashal.html) of the [time](time.html) just before [Pesach](passover.html), the [time](time.html) of [Purim](Purim.html). Notice that the message is the revelation of the hidden:

***I Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 21:29 – 22:1*** *He told them this parable: “Look at the* [*fig*](bethphag.html) *tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and* [*know*](daat.html) *that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you* [*know*](daat.html) *that the kingdom of God is near. “I tell you the truth, this* [*generation*](toldot.html) *will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.* [*Heaven*](heaven.html) *and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the* [*face*](body.html) *of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and* [*pray*](prayer.html) *that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.” Each day* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *was* [*teaching*](teacher.html) *at the* [*temple*](temple.html)*, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the* [*Mount of Olives*](east.html)*, And all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the* [*temple*](temple.html)*. Now the Feast of* [*Unleavened*](chametz.html) *Bread, called the* [*Passover*](passover.html)*, was approaching…*

[Luke](luke.html) writes in the [remez](remez.html), or hint, level. So we see the last verse of the above passage points to [Passover](passover.html). So, the “hint” might be that the previous stitch points to [Purim](Purim.html) which precedes [Passover](passover.html) by [thirty](thirty.html) days. The passage begins with [speaking](mashal.html) of the approach of summer and goes forward to describe the state of life that we encounter in the opening chapter of the book of Esther. As we near the end of this passage, we encounter the same anxiety that gripped the [Jews](gen-jew.html) just after Haman’s decree was promulgated.

Another hint of [Purim](Purim.html), found in the Nazarean Codicil, is found in the book which could be called second [Luke](luke.html). This book, Acts, is also written at the [remez](remez.html), or hint, level. Once again, just before [Passover](passover.html) we find that [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people are sending gifts to the poor. This is [one](one.html) of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) of [Purim](Purim.html), found in the Book of Esther:

***II Luqas (Acts) 11:25 - 12:1*** *Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, And when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the* [*church*](church.html) *and* [*taught*](teacher.html) *great* [*numbers*](nchart.html) *of people. The disciples were called Christians* [*first*](one.html) *at Antioch. During this* [*time*](time.html) *some prophets came down from* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *to Antioch.* [*One*](one.html) *of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe* [*famine*](famine.html) *would spread over the entire Roman* [*world*](worlds.html)*. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul. It was about this* [*time*](time.html) *that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the* [*church*](church.html)*, intending to persecute them.*

This following passage is a [command](cmds613.html) from Hakham Paul, to Timothy, to be attentive to the reading. There is no more important reading than the halachic obligation to hear the Megillah. Every word must be heard and we must be attentive to every word:

***I Timothy 4:12-13*** *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in* [*purity*](purity.html)*. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*

# VIII. Names

Esther and Hadassah were different names for the same person:

***Esther 2:7*** *Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This girl, who was also* [*known*](daat.html) *as Esther, was lovely in form and features, and Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter when her father and mother died.*

*Hadassah* is derived from the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for myrtle: 1918 hadac, had-as’; of uncert. der.; the myrtle:-(myrtle) tree.

*Esther* is derived from the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) Istahar meaning *as beautiful as the* [*moon*](chodesh.html). Others say that Esther means *hidden (from the root astir)*. Esther was Mordechai’s cousin and **wife**. How can she be his wife when the English text clearly says *daughter*? In Esther 2:7, we see the word *daughter*. Daughter, in [Hebrew](hebrew.html), is, בת - bat. The same [Hebrew](hebrew.html) characters can also be vocalized as *Beit*, which means *house*. If Esther was Mordechai’s *house*, then she was his wife. Chazal [teach](teacher.html) that we ‘read’ *wife* and we say *daughter* (for more [insight](insights.html) take a look at the [study](study.html) titled kri&ktiv). This idea of reading [one](one.html) thing and saying something different occurs regularly in the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) version of the Tanach.

In the Megillat Esther, the heroine, Esther, undergoes a remarkable transformation. She starts off being submissve and ends up giving orders. Notice:

***Esther 2:10*** *- Esther obeys Mordechai and does not reveal her ancestry.*

***Esther 2:15*** *- Esther goes to the King with only that which is recommended by Hegai.*

***Esther 2:20*** *- Esther continues to hide her family background and nationality in obedience to Mordechai. She continues to follow Mordechai’s instructions even after she has become queen.*

***Esther 2:22*** *- Esther gives Mordechai credit for saving the king’s life.*

***Esther 4:11*** *- Esther complains about Mordechai’s* [*command*](cmds613.html) *that she go into the king and plead for her people.*

***Esther 4:16 - 17*** *- Esther changes her role as she obeys Mordechai, again. Esther “orders” Mordechai and the other* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *to fast.*

***Esther 5:7-8*** *- Esther begins devising her own strategy to effect the deliverance of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)*.*

***Esther 7:3-4*** *- Esther continues to act on her own initiative.*

***Esther 8:3*** *- Esther continues to act on her own initiative.*

***Esther 8:12-13*** *- Esther continues to act on her own initiative.*

***Esther 9:32*** *- Esther is now giving orders to the entire kingdom.*

Thus we understand that Esther has dramatically changed her role from talmid (student) to Hakham ([teacher](teacher.html)). When we realize that Esther is a an allegory for the Bne Israel, then we realize that this is the intended transformation for all of the Bne Israel. They should [first](one.html) become talmidim and advamce in their Torah studies until they become Hakhamim.

The transformation of the Bne Israel is not the only transformation we see in the Book of Esther.

Is the prophet Daniel in the book of Esther?

***Esther 4:5*** *Then Esther summoned Hathach,* [*one*](one.html) *of the king’s eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why.*

Rav, in the [Gemara](orallaw.html), says that Hathach is Daniel:

***Megilah 15a*** *And Esther called Hatach. Rab said: Hatach is the same as Daniel. Why was he called Hatach? Because he was degraded [hataku-hu] from his position.[[25]](#footnote-25) Samuel said, Because all affairs of state were decided [nehtakim] by his voice.*

# IX. [Redemption](redemption.html)

We can also see that the problems in the [time](time.html) of Esther began in Shushan, when the [Jews](gen-jew.html) partook of the festive meal of the king, an inappropriate [experience](experience.html) which echoes the festivities after the golden calf.

[Pesach](passover.html) and [Purim](Purim.html) both focus on [redemption](redemption.html). At [Pesach](passover.html) there were so many open miracles that we had no choice but to believe. The Sages tell us that we freely accepted the Torah at [Purim](Purim.html).[[26]](#footnote-26)

When Esther went into Achashverosh, she felt an acute loss of the Presence of [HaShem](hashem.html). She said, *My God, my God, why have you left me?*.[[27]](#footnote-27) Now, we [know](daat.html) that Esther went to Achashverosh on [Pesach](passover.html), and that this phrase is associated elsewhere with [Pesach](passover.html)! Now, note what [Yeshua](yeshua.html) said on [Pesach](passover.html):

***Matityahu (Matthew) 27:46*** *And about the* [*ninth*](nine.html) *hour* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Thus we see a [connection](connection.html) between Esther and [Yeshua](yeshua.html) and between [Purim](Purim.html) and [Pesach](passover.html). [Purim](Purim.html) and [Pesach](passover.html) have a common theme. This theme is [redemption](redemption.html) (See R2R for more [insights](insights.html) on this [connection](connection.html)).

Lot was [redeemed](redemption.html) at [Pesach](passover.html). His [name](name.html) means either:

לוט = Lot = curse

טול = Tol = [redemption](redemption.html).

It is in Shushan so many years later that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) finally accepted the Torah completely and, therefore, advanced the [time](time.html) of the [redemption](redemption.html).

# X. King 🡺 War against [Amalek](amalek.html) 🡺 [Temple](temple.html)

B’[Seder](haggada.html) – In Order:

The [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[28]](#footnote-28) clarifies the process of the rebuilding of the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html). It states that the [nation](nations.html) of Israel is commanded to perform [three](three.html) [commandments](cmds613.html) **sequentially** after they occupy the [land of Israel](city.html):

1. They are to appoint a king,
2. They are to eradicate the offspring of [Amalek](amalek.html), and
3. They are to construct the holy [Temple](temple.html).

***Sanhedrin 20b*** *It has been* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: R. Jose said:* [*Three*](three.html)[*commandments*](cmds613.html) *were given to Israel when they entered the land; [i] to appoint a king; [ii] to cut off the* [*seed*](flower.html) *of* [*Amalek*](amalek.html)*; [iii] and to build themselves the chosen house [i.e. the* [*Temple*](temple.html)*] and I do not* [*know*](daat.html) *which of them has priority. But, when it is said: The* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *upon the throne of the Lord, the Lord will have war with* [*Amalek*](amalek.html) *from* [*generation*](toldot.html) *to* [*generation*](toldot.html)*, we must infer that they had* [*first*](one.html) *to set up a king, for ‘throne’ implies a king, as it is written, Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king. Yet I still do not* [*know*](daat.html) *which [of the other* [*two*](two.html)*] comes* [*first*](one.html)*, the building of the chosen* [*Temple*](temple.html) *or the cutting off of the* [*seed*](flower.html) *of* [*Amalek*](amalek.html)*. Hence, when it is written, And when He giveth you rest from all your enemies round about etc., and then [Scripture proceeds], Then it shall come to pass that the place which the Lord your God shall choose, it is to be inferred that the extermination of* [*Amalek*](amalek.html) *is* [*first*](one.html)*. And so it is written of David, And it came to pass when the king dwelt in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from his enemies round about, and the passage continues; that the king said unto Nathan the Prophet: See now, I* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in a house of cedars etc.[[29]](#footnote-29)*

This is a fascinating pattern that seems to repeat itself in regards to [Amalek](amalek.html). When we come into [eretz Israel](city.html), we were commanded to appoint a King. Keep in mind that a *King* is not just a king, but rather he is the emblem of government and of justice:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 17:14-15*** *When thou art come unto the land which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *that [are] about me; Thou shalt in any wise set [him] king over thee, whom* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God shall choose: [*[*one*](one.html)*] from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which [is] not thy brother.*

Next, after we are in [eretz Israel](city.html), we were told to destroy [Amalek](amalek.html):

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 25:17-19*** *Remember what* [*Amalek*](amalek.html) *did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth* [*out of Egypt*](thebirth.html)*; How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, [even] all [that were] feeble behind thee, when thou [wast] faint and weary; and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be, when* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God giveth thee [for] an* [*inheritance*](inherit.html) *to possess it, [that] thou shalt blot out the remembrance of* [*Amalek*](amalek.html) *from under* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*; thou shalt not forget [it].*

Now there are Hakhamim who have told us that [Amalek](amalek.html) is not just this [one](one.html) [nation](nations.html), but rather, [Amalek](amalek.html) is identified as *any* [nation](nations.html) which is determined to destroy ALL [Jews](gen-jew.html), no matter what the cost to themselves.

The [third](three.html) [mitzva](cmds613.html) commanded to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People after they enter [eretz Israel](city.html), is to build the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) (the [Temple](temple.html)).

Now, this pattern:

King 🡺 War against [Amalek](amalek.html) 🡺 [Temple](temple.html),

was followed in the days of Moshe. Moshe was [appointed](settimes.html) the leader, or King, over Israel. Then, after bringing the people to the borders of [eretz Israel](city.html), in Shemot 17, he waged war against [Amalek](amalek.html). Lastly, Moshe was commanded to establish the [Mishkan](mikdash.html), the [Tabernacle](mikdash.html).

This pattern was followed again in the days of King Saul. [First](one.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) brings the people into [eretz Israel](city.html). Then He anoints Saul as King. Then, in Shmuel Alef (I Samuel) chapter 15, King Saul makes war against [Amalek](amalek.html). Lastly, King Solomon builds the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html).



This pattern was followed again in the days of Mordecai and Esther. [First](one.html) [HaShem](hashem.html) causes his people to return to [eretz Israel](city.html) from [Babylon](bavel.html), then He raises up The King (hinted at in Megillat Esther regarding King Achashverosh) and also Zerubbabel to govern His people. Then the [Jews](gen-jew.html) make war against Haman and the rest of the [Amalekites](amalek.html) who wish to destroy the [Jews](gen-jew.html). Finally, King Darius orders the rebuilding of the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html).

Finally, we see this same pattern in the days of the Maccabeans. The Maccabees became the leaders of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people and proceeded to drive out the descendants of [Esau](edom.html), the Syrians. Finally, they reestablished the altar in the [Temple](temple.html).

[Purim](Purim.html) is celebrated in [Adar](feasts.html) and points plainly at [Benyamin](benyamin.html). Mordecai, a major participant in the story, was a Benjamite:

***Esther 2:5*** *[Now] in Shushan the palace there was a certain* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)*, whose* [*name*](name.html) *[was] Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;*

Haman, the enemy of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) in the book of Esther, was the descendant of an [Amalekite](amalek.html) who was supposed to be slain by a Benjamite. His [name](name.html) was King Saul:

***1 Shmuel (Samuel) 9:21*** *And Saul answered and said, [Am] not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the* [*tribes*](tribes.html) *of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of* [*Benyamin*](benyamin.html)*? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?*

***1 Shmuel (Samuel) 15:7-8*** *And Saul smote the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *from Havilah [until] thou comest to Shur, that [is] over against Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.*

Mordechai, in Megillat Esther, refused to bow down (he was from the [tribe](tribes.html) of [Benyamin](benyamin.html)). In fact, he always stood.

In Shoftim, we learn that the Benjamite *King* is supposed to destroy [Amalek](amalek.html):

***Shoftim (Judges) 5:14*** *Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against* [*Amalek*](amalek.html)*; after thee,* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*, among thy people; out of Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer.*

Notice the pattern:

King Saul comes to destroy [Amalek](amalek.html) and fails. He is replaced with King David.

In the [future](future.html), I expect to see the same pattern:

A Benjamite king comes [first](one.html) to destroy [Amalek](amalek.html), Then [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David comes to reign. Look for the pattern!



Given this pattern, which was repeated [three](three.html) times, we would expect the pattern to occur again!

The Gulf war provided a hint towards this pattern. The [Jews](gen-jew.html) were in [eretz Israel](city.html). They had established a government, a king. Then the people of the entire [world](worlds.html), EXCEPT THE [JEWS](gen-jew.html), made war against Saddam Hussein (an [Amalekite](amalek.html)), because of oil! Lastly, we have [HaShem](hashem.html) causing great controversy regarding the Har HaBayit, the [Temple](temple.html) mount.

Now, the pattern of HaSatan has been to imitate the patterns of [HaShem](hashem.html), with a twist. Therefore, we can expect that HaSatan will cause His own anti-[mashiach](mashiach.html) to be made king over the [Jews](gen-jew.html). He will then wage war against the people of [HaShem](hashem.html). Lastly, this anti-[mashiach](mashiach.html) will cause a [temple](temple.html) to be built.

In, 1948, [HaShem](hashem.html) began bringing His people back to [eretz Israel](city.html). Then He established a government, a king, over His people. Further, we expect that [HaShem](hashem.html) will complete this process when He brings us [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David, The King. At this [time](time.html), we should expect to have a war against [Amalek](amalek.html). This war should be the pattern for the final destruction for all of the [Amalekites](amalek.html). Finally, according to Yehezechel (Ezekiel) 40ff, we should expect The King to rebuild the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html).

The Israeli Government is also [Amalek](amalek.html). If we treat the word as an English word whereby the prefix “A” means “without”, then A-melek = No King.

Now we can understand the [Talmud](orallaw.html) in Tractate [Shabbat](sabbath.html) when it states that the [study](study.html) of Torah is *greater* than the building of the [Temple](temple.html). Before we can even consider rebuilding the [Temple](temple.html), the destruction of the [nation](nations.html) of [Amalek](amalek.html) is necessary. In order for the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people to decimate [Amalek](amalek.html), we do not need swords, guns, or tanks; rather we need to have the word of [HaShem](hashem.html) on our lips. As we say every day in the morning [prayers](prayer.html):

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 20:8*** *Some with chariots, and some with horses, but we in the* [*Name*](name.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, our G-d we call out.*

This extermination of [Amalek](amalek.html), the epitome of evil, is needed before the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people can create the holy [Temple](temple.html) to house the epitome of good. After the annihilation of [Amalek](amalek.html) is complete, the importance of the [study](study.html) of Torah parallels the construction of the [Temple](temple.html), since **Torah itself constructs the** [**spiritual**](physical.html) **foundation of the holy** [**Temple**](temple.html).

So, look for this pattern: King 🡺 War against [Amalek](amalek.html) 🡺 [Temple](temple.html).

# XI. An Historical Perspective

There were prophets in [Babylon](bavel.html) to [speak](mashal.html) forth [HaShem](hashem.html)’s word:

Daniel

Haggai

Ezra

Zechariah

Malachi

Lets look at what had happened shortly before the story of Esther:

Belshazzar and Achashverosh both attempted to calculate the end of the [seventy](seventy.html) years of captivity prophesied by Jeremiah:

***Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 25:11-14*** *‘And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these* [*nations*](nations.html) *shall serve the king of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)[*seventy*](seventy.html) *years. ‘ Then it will be when* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *years are completed I will punish the king of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html) *and that* [*nation*](nations.html)*,’ declares the \Lord\,’ for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation. ‘And I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the* [*nations*](nations.html)*. ‘(For many* [*nations*](nations.html) *and great kings shall make slaves of them, even them; and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*.)’ “*

Belshazzar’s calculation led him to have a big party with the [Temple](temple.html) implements, at the end of the [seventy](seventy.html) years. Unfortunately, his calculations were wrong, and Belshazzar paid with his life, for his blasphemy.

The Megillah Esther opens with:

***Esther 1:3*** *And in the* [*third*](three.html) *year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials. The military leaders of Persia and Media, the princes, and the nobles of the provinces were present.*

Achashverosh also miscounted the [seventy](seventy.html) years, and like Belshazzar, he also had the nerve to party with the [Temple](temple.html) implements. Unlike Belshazzar, his end did not come immediately, because God’s plan called for him to father Darius, who would properly calculate the end of the [seventy](seventy.html) years. Darius, however, fulfilled the prophesy rather than follow his predecessors and profane the [Temple](temple.html) implements.

After Belshazzar’s disastrous party, Koresh (Cyrus) will take control of [Babylon](bavel.html) and begin to return the Israelites to their land:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 45:1-6*** *“This is what* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says to his anointed, to Koresh (Cyrus), whose right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *I take hold of to subdue* [*nations*](nations.html) *before him and to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: I will go before you and will level the mountains; I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in* [*secret*](sod.html) *places, so that you may* [*know*](daat.html) *that I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the God of Israel, who summons you by* [*name*](name.html)*. For the sake of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *my servant, of Israel my chosen, I summon you by* [*name*](name.html) *and bestow on you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge me. I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me, So that from the rising of the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *to the place of its setting men may* [*know*](daat.html) *there is none besides me. I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and there is no other.*

[One](one.html) might logically ask why Mordecai and Esther, along with all of the [Babylonian](bavel.html) [Jews](gen-jew.html), did not return to Israel when Koresh (Cyrus) permitted it. It is possible that Mordecai, like Daniel, was not permitted to return because of his governmental duties. If so, then it would be understandable why Esther did not return. This, however, could not hold true for all of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) in [Babylon](bavel.html). So, why didn’t they return to the promised land when they had the chance?

[Two](two.html) years after Koresh (Cyrus) gave the order to rebuild [Jerusalem](city.html), Achashverosh became King. Out of the millions of [Jews](gen-jew.html) who were taken captive to [Babylon](bavel.html), [forty](forty.html)-[two](two.html) thousand returned to Israel.

***Ezra 4:1-24*** *When the enemies of Judah and* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html) *heard that the* [*exiles*](galuyot.html) *were building a* [*temple*](temple.html) *for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the God of Israel, They came to Zerubbabel and to the heads of the families and said, “Let us help you build because, like you, we seek your God and have been sacrificing to him since the* [*time*](time.html) *of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here.” But Zerubbabel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the families of Israel answered, “You have no part with us in building a* [*temple*](temple.html) *to our God. We alone will build it for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the God of Israel, as King Koresh (Cyrus), the king of Persia, commanded us.” Then the peoples around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building. They hired counselors to work against them and frustrate their plans during the entire reign of Koresh (Cyrus) king of Persia and down to the reign of Darius king of Persia. At the beginning of the reign of Achashverosh, they lodged an accusation against the people of Judah and* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*. And in the days of Achashverosh king of Persia, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and the rest of his associates wrote a* [*letter*](letters.html) *to Achashverosh. The* [*letter*](letters.html) *was written in Aramaic script and in the Aramaic language. Rehum the commanding officer and Shimshai the secretary wrote a* [*letter*](letters.html) *against* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *to Achashverosh the king as follows: Rehum the commanding officer and Shimshai the secretary, together with the rest of their associates--the judges and officials over the men from Tripolis, Persia, Erech and* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, the Elamites of Susa, And the other people whom the great and honorable Ashurbanipal deported and settled in the* [*city*](city.html) *of Samaria and elsewhere in Trans-Euphrates. (This is a copy of the* [*letter*](letters.html) *they sent him.) To King Achashverosh, From your servants, the men of Trans-Euphrates: The king should* [*know*](daat.html) *that the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *who came up to us from you have gone to* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *and are rebuilding that rebellious and* [*wicked*](wicked.html)[*city*](city.html)*. They are restoring the walls and repairing the foundations. Furthermore, the king should* [*know*](daat.html) *that if this* [*city*](city.html) *is built and its walls are restored, no more taxes, tribute or duty will be paid, and the royal revenues will suffer. Now since we are under obligation to the palace and it is not proper for us to see the king dishonored, we are sending this message to inform the king, So that a search may be made in the archives of your predecessors. In these records you will find that this* [*city*](city.html) *is a rebellious* [*city*](city.html)*, troublesome to kings and provinces, a place of rebellion from ancient times. That is why this* [*city*](city.html) *was destroyed. We inform the king that if this* [*city*](city.html) *is built and its walls are restored, you will be left with nothing in Trans-Euphrates. The king sent this reply: To Rehum the commanding officer, Shimshai the secretary and the rest of their associates living in Samaria and elsewhere in Trans-Euphrates: Greetings. The* [*letter*](letters.html) *you sent us has been read and translated in my presence. I issued an order and a search was made, and it was found that this* [*city*](city.html) *has a long history of revolt against kings and has been a place of rebellion and sedition.* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *has had powerful kings ruling over the whole of Trans-Euphrates, and taxes, tribute and duty were paid to them. Now issue an order to these men to stop work, so that this* [*city*](city.html) *will not be rebuilt until I so order. Be careful not to neglect this matter. Why let this threat grow, to the detriment of the royal interests? As soon as the copy of the* [*letter*](letters.html) *of King Achashverosh was read to Rehum and Shimshai the secretary and their associates, they went immediately to the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *in* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *and compelled them by force to stop. Thus the work on the* [*house of God*](housegod.html) *in* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

So, Achashverosh stopped what Koresh (Cyrus) had begun. This caused the Israelites to become confused about the following prophecy:

***Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 29:10-14*** *This is what* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says: “When* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *years are completed for* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. For I* [*know*](daat.html) *the plans I have for you,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a* [*future*](future.html)*. Then you will call upon me and come and* [*pray*](prayer.html) *to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your* [*heart*](body.html)*. I will be found by you,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will* [*gather*](gather.html) *you from all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *and places where I have banished you,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, “and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into* [*exile*](galuyot.html)*.”*

and:

***Daniel 9:1-3*** *In the* [*first*](one.html) *year of Darius son of Achashverosh (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the* [*Babylonian*](bavel.html) *kingdom-- In the* [*first*](one.html) *year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *would last* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *years. So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.*

It is at this point that the party in the opening verses of Esther takes place:

***Esther 1:1-9*** *This is what happened during the* [*time*](time.html) *of Achashverosh, the Achashverosh who ruled over 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush: At that* [*time*](time.html) *King Achashverosh reigned from his royal throne in the citadel of Susa, And in the* [*third*](three.html) *year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials. The military leaders of Persia and Media, the princes, and the nobles of the provinces were present. For a full 180 days he displayed the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of* [*his majesty*](yeshua.html)*. When these days were over, the king gave a banquet, lasting* [*seven*](seven.html) *days, in the enclosed garden of the king’s palace, for all the people from the least to the greatest, who were in the citadel of Susa. The garden had hangings of white and blue linen, fastened with cords of white linen and purple material to silver rings on marble pillars. There were couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl and other costly stones. Wine was served in goblets of gold, each* [*one*](one.html) *different from the other, and the royal wine was abundant, in keeping with the king’s liberality. By the king’s* [*command*](cmds613.html) *each guest was allowed to drink in his own way, for the king instructed all the wine stewards to serve each man what he wished. Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the royal palace of King Achashverosh.*

Esther’s rose to prominence in:

***Esther 2:16*** *She was taken to King Achashverosh in the royal residence in the tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *year of his reign.*

And the book of Esther closes with this:

***Esther 3:7*** *In the* [*twelfth*](twelve.html) *year of King Achashverosh, in the* [*first*](one.html) *month, the month of* [*Nisan*](feasts.html)*, they cast the <pur> (that is, the lot) in the presence of Haman to select a day and month. And the lot fell on the* [*twelfth*](twelve.html) *month, the month of* [*Adar*](feasts.html)*.*

So, we have [nine](nine.html) years ([ten](ten.html)?) between the [time](time.html) when Achashverosh celebrates the end of the “[seventy](seventy.html) years” and the [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Jews](gen-jew.html).

Here is the year by year chronology of the [Babylonian](bavel.html) captivity[[30]](#footnote-30):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year AM | Year BCE | [**EVENT**](feasts.html) |
| 3319 | 441 | Nebuchadnezzar assumes the throne of [Babylon](bavel.html). He reigns from 3318 till 3363. |
|  |  |  |
| 3320 | 440 | Nebuchadnezzar conquers King Yehoyakim. Israel becomes a vassal state. |
|  |  |  |
| 3327 | 433 | Nebuchadnezzar [exiles](galuyot.html) King Yechaniah together with the leading scholars. |
|  |  |  |
| 3338 | 420 | Nebuchadnezzar destroys the [Temple](temple.html) and [exiles](galuyot.html) the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html). |
|  |  |  |
| 3363 | 397 | Evil Merodach reigns until 3386. |
|  |  |  |
| 3386 | 374 | Belshazzar begins to reign. He reigns until 3389. He is the last [Babylonian](bavel.html) king. |
|  |  |  |
| 3389 | 371 | Belshazzar, dating the “[seventy](seventy.html)” from the accession to the throne of Nebuchadnezzar, celebrates and dies. He interprets “[seventy](seventy.html) years of [Babylon](bavel.html)” as a reference to the reigning dynasty. |
|  |  |  |
| 3389 | 371 | Darius the Mede (Daniel 5:30-31) defeats Belshazzar and reigns for [one](one.html) year. |
|  |  |  |
| 3390 | 370 | Koresh (Cyrus) orders the construction of the [Temple](temple.html). It is indeed [seventy](seventy.html) years since the [first](one.html) stage of the [exile](galuyot.html), the conquest of Judea. God has “remembered” [Jerusalem](city.html) as promised to Jeremiah, but not yet [redeemed](redemption.html) it. |
|  |  |  |
| 3393 | 367 | Achashverosh becomes king and orders the cessation of construction of the [Temple](temple.html). |
|  |  |  |
| 3393 | 367 | Achashverosh, in the [third](three.html) year of his reign, concludes that “[seventy](seventy.html) years”, dating from Yechaniah’s [exile](galuyot.html), have ended. Although only sixty-[seven](seven.html) [calendar](calendar.html) years have elapsed, Achashverosh follows the ancient custom of counting a fraction of a royal year as a full year. |
|  |  |  |
| 3407 | 353 | Achashverosh dies and is succeeded by Darius the Persian - Ezra 4:24 (not Darius the Mede who succeeded Belshazzar as king), son of Achashverosh and Esther. |
|  |  |  |
| 3407 | 353 | Darius the Persian, son of Achashverosh and Esther, orders that construction of the [Temple](temple.html) begin again. It is “[seventy](seventy.html) years” since the destruction of [Jerusalem](city.html). He reigns until 3442. |

Here is another way of looking at the timing:

DATE [EVENT](feasts.html)

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

[Nisan](feasts.html) 13 - Haman orders the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). Esther 3:12

- The [Jews](gen-jew.html) begin to fast. Esther 4:16. Day [one](one.html) of a [three](three.html) day fast.

[Nisan](feasts.html) 14 - Day [two](two.html) of a [three](three.html) day fast.

[Nisan](feasts.html) 15 - Day [three](three.html) of a [three](three.html) day fast ordered by Queen Esther. [[31]](#footnote-31)

[Nisan](feasts.html) 16 - Esther goes to the King uninvited. Esther 5:1

- Esther has dinner with Haman and the King. Esther 5:4

[Nisan](feasts.html) 17 - Esther has dinner with Haman and the King for a second night. Esther 5:8

- Haman is hung on his own gallows.

- [Yeshua](yeshua.html) rises from the dead, thereby taking the captives from the prince of the

power of the air.

[Adar](feasts.html) 13 - The day for the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html), a year later. Esther 3:13

It is extremely interesting to see how similar [events](feasts.html) always occur on the same day. Other [events](feasts.html) that occurred on [Nisan](feasts.html) 13 through 17:

[**Nisan**](feasts.html) **13**

Water swells on the earth in the days of [Noah](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\noachide.html). Day 103. ***Genesis 7:24***

All [leaven](chametz.html) must be put away by this evening. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:15*** - Gateway to Judaism

[HaShem](hashem.html) and the [angels](angels.html) visit [Abraham](avraham.html), [three](three.html) days after his [circumcision](circumcz.html) - 2048. ***Genesis 18:1ff*** Bava Metzia 86b

Yocheved hides Moses after a [six](six.html) month and [one](one.html) day pregnancy - day 36. Artscroll Mesorah on Shavuos, page 61.

Levites still consecrating the [temple](temple.html) in Hezekiah’s day, day 13. ***II Chronicles 29:17***

King Hezekiah fell critically ill. According to [Seder](haggada.html) Olam, King Hezekiah was taken ill [three](three.html) days before the defeat of King

Sennacherib - day 2. ***2 Kings 20:1****,* [*Seder*](haggada.html) *Olam 23*

Haman buys the order for the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). ***Esther 3:7-12***

Esther has Mordecai and the [Jews](gen-jew.html) fast for [three](three.html) days before seeing the king. ***Esther 4:16***

Satan enters Judas Iscariot. [***Luke***](luke.html) ***22:3***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) sends [two](two.html) disciples, from Bethany, to [Jerusalem](city.html) to prepare for [Pesach](passover.html). ***Mark 14:1-16***

[**Nisan**](feasts.html) **14**

Fast-day of the [first](one.html)-born. ***Soferim 21***

Water swells on the earth in the days of [Noah](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\noachide.html). Day 104. ***Genesis 7:24***

Cain and Able offer their sacrifices. ***Genesis 4:3-5***, *PdRE, section 21, Yonaton b. Uziel*

Og comes to [Abram](avraham.html) and relates the capture of Lot. **Targun Pseudo Yonatan to Bereshit 14**

[Isaac](isaac.html) blesses [Jacob](israelja.html) and [Esau](edom.html). ***Genesis 27. Targum Pseudo Yonatan on Genesis 27.***

On high they praise [HaShem](hashem.html) and the treasures of dew are opened. ***Targum Pseudo Yonatan on Genesis 27.***

Mordecai and the [Jews](gen-jew.html) fast for the second day. ***Esther 4:16***

Preparation day. ***John 19:14, 31***

Yocheved hides Moses after a [six](six.html) month and [one](one.html) day pregnancy - day 37. Artscroll Mesorah on Shavuos, page 61.

Levites still consecrating the [temple](temple.html) in Hezekiah’s day, day 14. ***II Chronicles 29:17***

Naomi and [Ruth](ruth.html) arrived in [Bethlehem](bethlehem.html). *Targum,* [***Ruth***](ruth.html) ***1:22***

King Hezekiah fell critically ill. According to [Seder](haggada.html) Olam, King Hezekiah was taken ill [three](three.html) days before the defeat of King

Sennacherib - day 3. ***2 Kings 20:1****,* [*Seder*](haggada.html) *Olam 23*

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) has a [Pesach](passover.html) [seder](haggada.html). ***John 13:1***

Paschal lambs are killed at twilight. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:1-6***

Pilate releases Barabbas. ***Matthew 27:15-21***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) was crucified. ***John 19:42***

Curtain of the [temple](temple.html) rent. ***Matthew 27:51***

Holy dead are raised to life. ***Matthew 27:52-53***

Darkness came over all the land from the [sixth](six.html) until the [ninth](nine.html) hour. ***Matthew 27:34-45***

[**Nisan**](feasts.html) **15**

[**Pesach**](passover.html) **/ Hag ha-**[**Matza**](chametz.html). A [Sabbath](sabbath.html) of Sabbaths (Leviticus 23:6-7) (15 - 21) [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:17-20***

Water swells on the earth in the days of [Noah](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\noachide.html). Day 105. ***Genesis 7:24***

[Abram](avraham.html) leaves Haran [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:40-41***, ***Genesis 12:1-10***

[Abraham](avraham.html) learns of Lot’s captivity and defeats the 4 kings. “Legends of the Bible”, Ginzberg

God afflicts Pharoah, orders [Abram](avraham.html) and Sarai to leave Egypt, with gifts. ***Genesis 12:15-20***, Yalkut Shimoni

God afflicts Avimelech in a [dream](dreams.html), regarding Sarah. ***Genesis 20***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

[Covenant](covenant.html) between the parts, 430 years before the [Exodus](exodus.html). **Genesis 15:18**, [*Seder*](haggada.html) *Olam 5, Pirkei deRabbi Eliezer*

[Abraham](avraham.html) is visited by [angels](angels.html) and told that [Isaac](isaac.html) will be born next year in 2047. ***Genesis 18:10****,* [*Seder*](haggada.html) *Olam 5*

Lot entertains [two](two.html) [angels](angels.html), then Sodom is destroyed while Lot and his daughters are delivered. ***Genesis 19:1, 18:14***

[Isaac](isaac.html) was born after a [seven](seven.html) month pregnancy, in a leap year - 2048. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:40-41***, ***Genesis 18, 19,*** *Rosh HaShannah 10b*

[Abraham](avraham.html) binds [Isaac](isaac.html) (Akeidah). This is the tenth trial. ***Genesis 22:1-18*** (see the [Zohar](orallaw.html) on Genesis 28:11)

[Isaac](isaac.html) was sacrificed. [***Seder***](haggada.html) ***Olam***

[Isaac](isaac.html) blesses [Jacob](israelja.html). ***Genesis 27:4****; Yonatan b. Uziel; PdRE 2*, Rashi on Genesis 27:9

God tells Laban to leave [Jacob](israelja.html) alone, in a [dream](dreams.html). ***Genesis 31:24***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

[Jacob](israelja.html) wrestles with an [angel](angels.html). ***Genesis 32:24***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah. ***Genesis 19***

Death of Job. *Jer.* [*Sotah*](hair.html) *5:8*

[Jacob](israelja.html) and sixty-[nine](nine.html) descendants enter Egypt. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:40-42*** - 2238 AM

Yocheved hides Moses after a 6 month and [one](one.html) day pregnancy - day 38. Artscroll Mesorah on Shavuos, page 61.

Moses saw the burning bush in 2447. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***3:2****, Bahya, Bo*

Israelites in Egypt celebrate the [first](one.html) [Pesach](passover.html) (2448 BCE). [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:6-11***

Egyptian officials beg Moses and the Israelites to leave. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***11:8***

Egyptians bury their firstborn. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***33:3-4***

Israelites leave [Ramses](stages.html) and [journey](stages.html) towards [Succoth](succoth.html), day [one](one.html). The [Exodus](exodus.html) begins! [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:48-51*** - 2448 AM

All males to appear before the Lord in [Jerusalem](city.html). ***Deuteronomy 16:16***

Israelites celebrate [Pesach](passover.html) in the [Sinai](stages.html) desert. [***Numbers***](nchart.html) ***9:1-5***

Joshua and the Israelites celebrate [Pesach](passover.html) at Gilgal. ***Joshua 5:10***

Joshua and the Israelites besiege [Jericho](stages.html) and march around the [city](city.html) – day 1. ***Joshua 6:1ff***

Gideon is visited by an [angel](angels.html) regarding the [salvation](salvation.html) of Israel. ***Judges 6***

Gideon destroys Midian with the [omer](omer.html)’s barley cake. ***Judges 7***, [*Midrash*](orallaw.html) *Yalkut 62*, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

[Hashem](hashem.html) swept away the army of the prince of Charoshes (Sisera) with the [stars](mazaroth.html) of night***. Judges 4 and 5***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

[Ruth](ruth.html) and Naomi enter the Promised land after leaving [Moab](stages.html)*. The Artscroll Machzor for* [*Pesach*](passover.html)*.*

Levites still consecrating the [temple](temple.html) in Hezekiah’s day, day 15. ***II Chronicles 29:17***

God heals the people. ***II Chronicles 30:1-20***

[Exiles](galuyot.html) celebrated with joy because Assyrian King to help with [temple](temple.html). ***Ezra 6:22***

Josiah celebrates [Pesach](passover.html) in the midst of removing [idolatry](idolatry.html). ***II Kings 23:19-25***

The Assyrian army of Sennacherib, which threatened [Jerusalem](city.html) was destroyed. ***2 Kings 19:35****, Targum Rav* [*Yosef*](joseph.html)

Nebuchadnezzar had a [dream](dreams.html) about a statue of [four](four.html) metals. ***Daniel 2 and 3***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

The [hand](fourteen.html) writing on the wall delivers a message of judgement to Belshazzar. ***Daniel 5***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

Daniel is thrown into the lion’s den in 3389. ***Daniel 6,*** *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

Israelites who returned from [Babylonian](bavel.html) [exile](galuyot.html), celebrated [Pesach](passover.html). ***Ezra 6:19-22***

King Achashverosh has his [sleep](mashal.html) disturbed. ***Esther 6:1***

Vashti is executed by King Achashverosh. ***Esther 1:21****; Derash le-*[*Purim*](Purim.html)

Mordecai is honored by Haman and king Achashverosh. ***Esther 5:1 - 6:10***

Mordecai and the [Jews](gen-jew.html) fast for the [third](three.html) and last day. ***Esther 4:16***

Esther invites the king to feast. ***Esther 5:1-4,*** [*Seder*](haggada.html) *Olam 29*

To be celebrated during the [millennium](millenium.html). ***Ezekiel 45:21-24***

John the Baptist is born. [***Luke***](luke.html) ***1:24***

[Joseph](joseph.html) and Mary celebrate [Pesach](passover.html) in [Jerusalem](city.html) with 12 year old [Yeshua](yeshua.html). [***Luke***](luke.html) ***2:39-41***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) performs miracles and is believed. ***John 2:23***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s [first](one.html) day in the grave. ***Matthew 27:62***

Chief [priests](priests.html) and Pharisees get Pilate to make the tomb of [Yeshua](yeshua.html) secure. ***Matthew 27:62-66***

Peter is arrested. ***Acts 12:3***

The day of vengeance when the winepress is trodden. ***Isaiah 63***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

The [exile](galuyot.html) ends with unique day, without daytime or nighttime. ***Zechariah 16:6, Micah 7:15 and*** [***Psalm***](psalms1.html) ***139:12***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

Double misfortune will You bring in an instant upon Utsis ([Edom](edom.html)) on [Passover](passover.html). ***Isaiah 47***, *The* [*Haggada*](haggada.html)

[Pesach](passover.html) will be celebrated in Ezekiel’s [future](future.html). ***Ezekiel 45:21-22***

**Torah** section is [*Exodus*](exodus.html) *12:21-51;* [*Numbers*](nchart.html) *28:19-25*. **Haftorah** is *Joshua 5:2 - 6:1*.

[**Nisan**](feasts.html) **16**

**Hag ha-**[**Matza**](chametz.html) - Second day. A partial [Sabbath](sabbath.html) ([Mishna](orallaw.html): [Seder](haggada.html) [Moed](settimes.html): Tractate [Moed](settimes.html) Katan). [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:17-20***

**The** [**Omer**](omer.html) or the day after [Pesach](passover.html) - bread of the FIRSTFRUITS(Pharisees) ***Leviticus 23:15***

**The** [**Omer**](omer.html) is offered. ***Leviticus 23:14***, **Rambam, Temidin U’Musafin 7:2-17**

Water swells on the earth in the days of [Noah](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\noachide.html). Day 106. ***Genesis 7:24***

[Birth](birth.html) of Levi. [*Midrash*](orallaw.html) *Tadshe,* [*Midrash*](orallaw.html) *Yalkut 1*

Yocheved hides Moses after a 6 month and [one](one.html) day pregnancy - day 39. Artscroll Mesorah on Shavuos, page 61.

Israelites leave [Ramses](stages.html) and [journey](stages.html) towards [Succoth](succoth.html), for [three](three.html) days. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:48-51***

The supply of manna was exhausted in 2488. *Kiddushin 38a*

The [Omer](omer.html) was offered for the [first](one.html) [time](time.html) by [Jews](gen-jew.html) in Israel. ***Joshua 5:11****, Rosh HaShannah 13a*

Israelites [eat](eating.html) produce of the promised land (2488 BCE). ***Joshua 5:11***

Bread from [heaven](heaven.html) (Manna) stopped.  ***Joshua 5:12***

Joshua and the Israelites march around [Jericho](stages.html) – day 2. ***Joshua 6:1ff***

An [angel](angels.html) ordered Gideon to [attack](attacks.html) the Midianites. ***Judges 6:19****, Rashi*

King Saul’s [seven](seven.html) sons were killed.[*Midrash*](orallaw.html) *Rabbah, Naso, ch.8*

David and his men [eat](eating.html) consecrated bread. [***Luke***](luke.html) ***6:1-5 and 1 Samuel 21:1-6***? [[32]](#footnote-32)

Hezekiah finishes consecrating the [Temple](temple.html), day 16. ***II Chronicles 29:17***

Esther, Haman, and the king feast. King kills Haman. ***Esther 5:5-5***

Haman was hanged in 3404. ***Esther 7:10****,* [*Seder*](haggada.html) *Olam 29*

Mordecai becomes chief minister in place of Haman. ***Esther 8:2***

Cyrus, King of Persia, captured [Babylon](bavel.html) in 539 BCE.

[Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s disciples pick grain on the day (partial [Sabbath](sabbath.html)) after [Pesach](passover.html). [***Luke***](luke.html) ***6:1***, ***Matthew 12:1 - 13:30*** 2

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) tells the parable of the wheat and the tares. ***Matthew 13:24-30***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) heals the man with the withered [hand](fourteen.html). ***Matthew 12:9-16***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) gives sight and [hearing](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\mashal.html) to a [demon](demons.html) possessed man. ***Matthew 12:22-23***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) tells the parable of the wheat and the tares. ***Matthew 13:24-30***

[Two](two.html) Miryams prepared spices and perfumes to embalm [Yeshua](yeshua.html). [***Luke***](luke.html) ***23:56***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html)’s second day in the tomb. ***John 19:30-36***

**Torah** section is *Leviticus 22:26 - 23:44;* [*Numbers*](nchart.html) *28:19-25*. **Haftorah** is *2 Kings 23:1-9; 21-25*.

[**Nisan**](feasts.html) **17**

**Hag ha-**[**Matza**](chametz.html) - [Third](three.html) day. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:17-20***

The [Omer](omer.html), day 2.

Water swells on the earth in the days of [Noah](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\noachide.html). Day 107. ***Genesis 7:24***

[Abraham](avraham.html) returns to his family in Beer Sheva. ***Genesis 22:19***

Yocheved hides Moses after a [six](six.html) month and [one](one.html) day pregnancy - day 40. Artscroll Mesorah on Shavuos, page 61.

Israelites leave [Ramses](stages.html) and [journey](stages.html) towards [Succoth](succoth.html), day [two](two.html). [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***12:48-51***

Moses collects [Joseph](joseph.html)’s bones. [***Exodus***](exodus.html) ***13:19***

Joshua and the Israelites march around [Jericho](stages.html) – day 3. ***Joshua 6:1ff***

Hamans plans came to naught. ***Esther 3:12, 4:16, 5:1, 7:2-9***

[Resurrection](techiyat.html) [Sabbath](sabbath.html). [Yeshua](yeshua.html) rose from the dead, at the end of the [third](three.html) day. It is a [Sabbath](sabbath.html). ***Matthew 12:48***

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) heals the man with a withered [hand](fourteen.html) on the [Sabbath](sabbath.html) after [Pesach](passover.html). [***Luke***](luke.html) ***6:6-11***

Peter is arrested and imprisoned by Herod. ***Acts 12:3***

**Torah** section is [*Exodus*](exodus.html) *13:1-16;* [*Numbers*](nchart.html) *28:19-25*. There is no Haftorah.

So, the sages understood that Darius the Persian, was the son of Achashverosh and Esther. After Darius took the throne he finally completed the “[seventy](seventy.html) years” in:

***Ezra 4:24*** *Thus the work on the* [*house of God*](housegod.html) *in* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *came to a standstill until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

# XII. The Kings Palace

At this point, bells should be going off in our heads. A king (Achashverosh), in his palatial house in Shushan, has ordered that the house ([Temple](temple.html)) of the King of the Universe ([HaShem](hashem.html)), should not be completed! The Israelites in Shushan are in [exile](galuyot.html):

***Esther 2:5-6*** *Now there was in the citadel of Susa a* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html) *of the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*, named Mordecai son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, Who had been carried into* [*exile*](galuyot.html) *from* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *by Nebuchadnezzar king of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, among those taken captive with Jehoiachin king of Judah.*

So, lets put some of these pieces together: Some Israelites ([forty](forty.html)-[two](two.html) thousand) are back in Israel trying to rebuild the [Temple](temple.html). Most Israelites are in [exile](galuyot.html) in [Babylon](bavel.html): they did not return! The Israelites, in [Babylon](bavel.html), are in the wrong place. They should be in Israel. The Israelites in the wrong place are celebrating in the wrong house! This disparity is magnified when we examine these [two](two.html) “houses”:

1. They were both made with tekhelet (blue), argaman (purple), gold, and silver:

***Esther 1:6*** *[Where were] white, green, and blue, [hangings], fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds [were of] gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble.*

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 25:2-8*** *“Tell the Israelites to bring me an* [*offering*](korbanot)*. You are to receive the* [*offering*](korbanot) *for me from each man whose* [*heart*](body.html) *prompts him to give. These are the offerings you are to receive from them: gold, silver and bronze; Blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat* [*hair*](hair.html)*; Ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood; Olive oil for the light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant* [*incense*](ketoret.html)*; And onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece. “Then have them make a* [*sanctuary*](mikdash.html) *for me, and I will* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *among them.*

The *purple* in the above verse according to Strong’s is:

8504 tekhelet, tek-ay’-leth; prob. for 7827; the cerulean mussel, i.e. the color (violet) obtained therefrom or stuff dyed therewith:-blue.

713 ‘argaman, ar-gaw-mawn’; of for. or.; purple (the color or the dyed stuff):-purple.

2. Achashverosh and [HaShem](hashem.html) both claimed sovereignty over the same area:

***Esther 10:1-2*** *King Xerxes imposed tribute throughout the empire, to its distant shores. And all his acts of power and might, together with a full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king had raised him, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Media and Persia?*

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 41:4-5*** *Who has done this and carried it through, calling forth the* [*generations*](toldot.html) *from the beginning? I,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*--with the* [*first*](one.html) *of them and with the last--I am he.” The islands have seen it and* [*fear*](fear.html)*; the ends of the earth tremble. They approach and come forward;*

The story of Esther closes with Achashverosh *proving* his sovereignty while [HaShem](hashem.html) is left unmentioned.

3. Both “houses” had an inner and an outer court. Unauthorized entry into the inner court, of both “houses”, brought death to the [one](one.html) who trespassed. Similarly, the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol ([High Priest](priests.html)) enters the Holy of Holies twice, once to obscure things with [incense](ketoret.html) and once to accomplish the [atonement](atonemen.html), whilst Esther entered the inner sanctum twice, once to get the king drunk with wine and the second [time](time.html) to get the decree annulled. It is also interesting to note that the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol enters with a plain white garment whilst Esther entered all dolled up:

***Esther 4:11*** *“All the king’s officials and the people of the royal provinces* [*know*](daat.html) *that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but* [*one*](one.html)[*law*](law.html)*: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But* [*thirty*](thirty.html) *days have passed since I was called to go to the king.”*

***Esther 6:4*** *The king said, “Who is in the court?” Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the palace to* [*speak*](mashal.html) *to the king about hanging Mordecai on the gallows he had erected for him.*

***Ezekiel 42:1-3*** *Then the man led me northward into the outer court and brought me to the rooms opposite the* [*temple*](temple.html) *courtyard and opposite the outer wall on the north side. The building whose door faced north was a hundred cubits long and fifty cubits wide. Both in the section* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *cubits from the inner court and in the section opposite the pavement of the outer court, gallery faced gallery at the* [*three*](three.html) *levels.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 16:2***[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said to Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron not to come whenever he chooses into the Most Holy Place behind the curtain in front of the* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *cover on the* [*ark*](ark.html)*, or else he will die, because I appear in the* [*cloud*](important.html) *over the* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *cover.*

4. The Book of Esther, and the Tanakh, [twelve](twelve.html) times refers to Shushan as:

***Esther 1:2*** *[That] in those days, when the king Achashverosh sat on the throne of his kingdom, which [was] in Shushan the palace,*

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1002 biyrah, bee-raw’; of for. or.; a castle or palace:-palace.

This word, biyrah (palace), is used consistently to refer to Shushan AND to [HaShem](hashem.html)’s house:

***Divrei HaYamim (I Chronicles) 29:1*** *Then King David said to the whole assembly: “My son Solomon, the* [*one*](one.html) *whom God has chosen, is young and inexperienced. The task is great, because this palatial structure is not for man but for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God.*

***Divrei HaYamim (I Chronicles) 29:19*** *And give my son Solomon the wholehearted devotion to keep your* [*commands*](cmds613.html)*, requirements and decrees and to do everything to build the palatial structure for which I have provided.”*

***Nehemiah 2:8*** *And may I have a* [*letter*](letters.html) *to Asaph, keeper of the king’s forest, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel of the* [*temple*](temple.html) *and for the* [*city*](city.html) *wall and for the residence I will occupy?” And because the gracious* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests.*

***Nehemiah 7:2*** *I put in charge of* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *my brother Hanani, along with Hananiah the commander of the citadel, because he was a man of integrity and feared God more than most men do.*

So, even the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word, biyrah, links the king’s house (Achashverosh) with the KING’S HOUSE ([HaShem](hashem.html))! It is noteworthy that the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) is not found in the Book of Esther, while the word “king” is found nearly 200 times. [HaShem](hashem.html) is not in the house at Shushan, king Achashverosh is in this house!

Ok, lets sum this up: [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people were carried into [exile](galuyot.html) because of disobedience. At the end of the [seventy](seventy.html) [appointed](settimes.html) years, some [forty](forty.html)-[two](two.html) thousand actually return to the promised land, while millions more remained in the comfort of [Babylon](bavel.html). All of the [exiles](galuyot.html) had been invited to return, but only a small fraction actually returned. These [exiled](galuyot.html) Israelite slaves chose to celebrate in king Achashverosh’s house rather than return to the promised land to celebrate in King [HaShem](hashem.html) ‘s house. [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html) is revealed in His House, while [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html) is concealed in Achashverosh’s house. Instead of serving as *inhabitants* in [HaShem](hashem.html)’s house, they are serving as [exiled](galuyot.html) slaves in Achashverosh’s house. Instead of serving the Sovereign of the Universe, they serve the sovereign of [Babylon](bavel.html). No wonder they are getting into trouble!

The sages understood that the reason for this party was due to the calculations that Achashverosh made: he believed that the [seventy](seventy.html) years had expired and that he could rejoice because the prophesy would not be fulfilled. They also believed that he was using the [Temple](temple.html) utensils for this party.

# XIII. [Insights](insights.html)

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) contains several interesting [insights](insights.html):

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Genesis LVIII:3*** *3. A HUNDRED AND* [*SEVEN*](seven.html) *AND* [*TWENTY*](twenty.html) *YEARS. R. Akiba was once lecturing, and the congregation became drowsy. Wishing to arouse them, he remarked: Why did Esther deserve to reign over a hundred and* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*seven*](seven.html) *provinces? The reason is this: Let Esther, the descendant of Sarah, who lived a hundred and* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*seven*](seven.html) *years, come and reign over a hundred and* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*seven*](seven.html) *provinces.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Leviticus XXVIII:6*** *A Roman lady addressed a question to R. Jose. She said to him: ‘How grieved that righteous man[[33]](#footnote-33)\_ must have been! How many menservants and maidservants he had, yet they rejected his* [*food*](food.html) *and his drink!’ The answered her: ‘Why all this? To inform you that as long as Israel are in sorrow the righteous also suffer sorrow with them.’ R. Levi said: It was the same* [*merit*](merit.html) *that stood them in good stead in the days of Haman. For R. Levi said: When Mordecai saw Haman* [*coming*](coming.html) *towards him leading the horse in his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, he remarked: ‘It appears to me that this villain comes for the sole purpose of slaying me.’ His disciples were* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *and learning in his presence. Said he to them: ‘ Rise and flee, lest you be scorched by my coal!’ They answered him: ‘Whether to be killed or to remain alive, we are with you, and will not desert you!’ What did he do? He enveloped himself in his talit and stood before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, in* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*, while his disciples sat and learned. Haman said to them: ‘What are you studying?’ They answered him: ‘The* [*commandment*](cmds613.html) *of the sheaf which Israel used to offer in the* [*Temple*](temple.html) *on this day.’ He asked them: ‘ What was this sheaf made of, gold or silver? ‘ They replied: ‘ Of barley.’ ‘And how much,’ he asked them, ‘was it worth?* [*Ten*](ten.html) *centenaria?’ They replied: ‘*[*Ten*](ten.html) *manehs were sufficient.’ He said to them: ‘Arise, for your* [*ten*](ten.html) *manehs have conquered the* [*ten*](ten.html) *thousand centenaria of silver!’ When Esther heard how matters stood she issued a proclamation throughout the province, saying: ‘Let no* [*one*](one.html) *open his shop in the market-place! Let all the people go out, for the chief of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *is about to be hanged!’ When Mordecai finished* [*praying*](prayer.html)*, Haman said to him: ‘Put on this royal robe, set this crown upon your* [*head*](body.html)*, and come and ride upon this horse.’ He answered him: ‘O you most foolish man in the* [*world*](worlds.html)*! Do you not* [*know*](daat.html) *that I have just emerged from sackcloth and ashes? Would a person put on royal robes without bathing? Why do you wish to disgrace royalty? ‘ So he went for a bath-attendant but could not find* [*one*](one.html)*. What did he do? Putting on bathing apparel he went and mixed the water and cleansed the bath, then he bathed him. When he finished Mordecai donned the royal robe. Haman said to him: ‘Set this kingly crown on your* [*head*](body.html)*!’ Said he: ‘Would a person put the king’s crown on his* [*head*](body.html) *without a haircut? Why do you wish to disgrace royalty?’ He went in search of a barber and could not find* [*one*](one.html)*. What did he do? Producing barber’s tools he sat down and gave him a haircut. As he was* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *and cutting his* [*hair*](hair.html) *Haman began sighing. ‘What ails you?’ Mordecai asked. ‘Woe to that man! ‘he replied, ‘What has come over him! He who used to appoint the Comes Privatarum, he who used to appoint the Comes Calator, he who used to appoint the Magister Palatii, is such a man to be made a bath-attendant and a barber?’ Said the other: ‘And did I not* [*know*](daat.html) *the father of that man (may his bones be ground to* [*dust*](rock.html)*!) at Kefar Kiryanos, who was a bath-attendant and a barber, and whose tools these are!’ When Haman finished cutting his* [*hair*](hair.html)*, he said to Mordecai: ‘Mount and ride on this horse!’ He said to him: ‘I have no strength, for I am an old man. “ Said the other: ‘Am not I too an old man? ‘ ‘ But,’ the former retorted, ‘ have you not brought it all on yourself?’ Haman said: ‘Stand, I will bend my back for you so that you can step upon me and mount and ride upon this horse, to fulfill for you what your Scripture says: And thine enemies shall dwindle away before thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places’ (Deut. XXXIII, 29). As Mordecai rode on the horse he began to praise the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said: ‘I will extol Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast raised me up... O Lord my God, I cried unto Thee, and Thou didst heal me; O Lord, Thou broughtest up my soul from the nether-*[*world*](worlds.html)*’ (Ps. XXX, 2 f). What did his disciples say? ‘ Sing praise unto the Lord, O ye His godly ones, and give thanks to His holy* [*name*](name.html)*. For His anger is but for a moment,’ etc. (ib. 5 f). What did the villain say? ‘Now I had said in my security: I shall never be moved. Thou hast established, O Lord, in Thy favour the mountain as a stronghold’ (ib. 7 f). What did Esther say? ‘ Unto Thee, O Lord, did I call... what profit is there in my* [*blood*](body.html)*, when I go down to the pit? Shall the* [*dust*](rock.html) *praise Thee? shall it declare Thy truth?’ (ib. 9 f). What did Israel say? ‘Hear, O Lord, and be gracious unto me;... Thou didst turn* [*fear*](fear.html) *me my* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *into dancing’ (ib. 11 f). R. Phinehas said: Mordecai was then occupied with the reading of the* [*Shema*](shema.html)*’ and he did not interrupt it, as may be inferred from the fact that it says, So that my glory may sing praise to Thee, and not be silent: O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever (ib. 13).*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Esther I:3*** *ACHASHVEROSH. R. Levi and the Rabbis differed on this. R. Levi said: Achashverosh is the same as Artaxerxes; and why was he called Achashverosh? Because no* [*one*](one.html) *could mention him without feeling a headache. The Rabbis said: Artaxerxes was the same as Achashverosh; and why was he called Artaxerxes? Because he used to fall into a passion and then be sorry (martiah vehash). ACHASHVEROSH: THIS IS ACHASHVEROSH. R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *and the Rabbis explained differently. R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: [He was the] ACHASHVEROSH in whose days all trouble came, as it says, There was great* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *among the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *(Est. IV, 3). THIS IS ACHASHVEROSH: in whose days all blessings came, as it says, The* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *had gladness and joy*

*, a feast and a good day (ib. VIII, 17). The Rabbis say: ACHASHVEROSH, before Esther went in unto him; THIS IS ACHASHVEROSH; after Esther went in unto him he did not have* [*intercourse*](marriageact.html) *with women in the period of separation.*

Why was Vashti deposed?

***Esther 1:10-12*** *On the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the* [*seven*](seven.html) *eunuchs who served him--Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Carcas-- To bring before him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at. But when the attendants delivered the king’s* [*command*](cmds613.html)*, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger.*

At the feast, Achashverosh asks Queen Vashti to parade “wearing the royal crown” (1:11). The [Midrash](orallaw.html) derives from here that Vashti was to appear wearing the crown only – i.e. naked:

[*Midrash*](orallaw.html) *Rabbah - Esther III:13 13. TO BRING VASHTI THE QUEEN BEFORE THE KING WITH THE CROWN ROYAL (I, 11). R. Aibu said: What makes* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for Israel is that when the Israelites* [*eat*](eating.html) *and drink and make merry they bless and praise and extol the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, whereas when the other* [*nations*](nations.html)[*eat*](eating.html) *and drink they turn to lewdness. So here,* [*one*](one.html) *said, ‘The Median women are more beautiful,’ and the other said, ‘The Persian women are more beautiful.’ Said that fool to them: ‘The vessel which I use is neither Median nor Persian, but Chaldean. Would you like to see it?’ They replied, ‘ Yes, but she must be naked.’ ‘ Very well,’ he said to them, ‘ let her be naked.’ R. Phinehas and R. Hama b. Guria in the* [*name*](name.html) *of Rab said: She asked permission to wear at least as much as a girdle, like a harlot, but they would not allow her. He said to her: ‘It must be naked.’ She said, ‘I will come in without a crown.’ [He said]: ‘ If so, they will say, ‘ ‘ She is a maidservant.”‘ Then she [a maidservant] might put on royal garments and enter? R. Huna said: A subject must not put on royal garments.*

Who were the wise men who “[knew](daat.html) the times“?

***Esther 1:13*** *Since it was customary for the king to consult experts in matters of* [*law*](law.html) *and justice, he* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *with the wise men who understood the times*

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) answers this question:

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Esther IV:1*** *1. THEN THE KING SAID TO THE WISE MEN, WHO* [*KNEW*](daat.html) *THE TIMES (1, 13). Who were these? R. Simon said: These were the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of Issachar, as it says, And of the children of Issachar, men that had understanding of the times, to* [*know*](daat.html) *what Israel ought to do (I Chron. XI, 33). R. Tanhuma said: This means, for fixing the* [*calendar*](calendar.html)*: R. Jose b. Kazrath said: For intercalation. (‘To* [*know*](daat.html) *what Israel ought to do’: they* [*knew*](daat.html) *how to heal skin disease. The heads of them were* [*two*](two.html) *hundred (ib.): these are the* [*two*](two.html) *hundred presidents of the Sanhedrin which the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of Issachar produced. And all their brethren were at their* [*commandment*](cmds613.html) *(ib.): they all accepted the Halakhah as pronounced by them as if it were the Halakhah of Moses at* [*Sinai*](stages.html)*.) The* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *Achashverosh said to them: ‘Seeing that I ordered Vashti to appear before me naked and she refused, what is to be her punishment?’ They replied: ‘Your Majesty, when we were in our own land, we used to inquire of the Urim and Thummim, but now we are tossed about,’ and they quoted to him the verse,* [*Moab*](stages.html) *hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity; therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed (Jer. XLVIII, 11) He said to them: ‘Is any* [*one*](one.html) *of them here?’ They replied: ‘ Their near neighbours [are] ‘; and so it says, AND THE NEXT UNTO HIM WAS CARSHENA, SHETHAR, ADMETHA, TARSHISH, MERES, MARSENA, AND MEMUCAN (Memuchan was Haman; why was Haman called Memuchan? Because he was set aside for punishment (muchan l’puranos). (Megillah 12b)), THE* [*SEVEN*](seven.html) *PRINCES OF PERSIA AND MEDIA, etc. (I, 14). The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *cometh in his stead (Proverbs XI, 8). ‘The righteous is delivered out of trouble’: this is the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of Issachar. ‘And the* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *cometh in his stead’: these are the* [*seven*](seven.html) *princes of Persia and Media.*

An interesting change takes place in the King’s [authority](authority.html):

***Esther 1:12-14*** *But when the attendants delivered the king’s* [*command*](cmds613.html)*, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger. Since it was customary for the king to consult experts in matters of* [*law*](law.html) *and justice, he* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *with the wise men who understood the times And were closest to the king--Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memuchan (Memuchan was Haman; why was Haman called Memuchan (Me-muchan)? Because he was set aside for punishment (muchan l’puranos). (Megillah 12b)), the* [*seven*](seven.html) *nobles of Persia and Media who had special access to the king and were highest in the kingdom.*

The King is furious, but, he still takes [time](time.html) to consult with his advisors. Later on we see this:

***Esther 7:5-10*** *King Achashverosh asked Queen Esther, “Who is he? Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?” Esther said, “The adversary and enemy is this vile Haman.” Then Haman was terrified before the king and queen. The king got up in a rage, left his wine and went out into the palace garden. But Haman, realizing that the king had already decided his fate, stayed behind to beg Queen Esther for his life. Just as the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was reclining. The king exclaimed, “Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?” As soon as the word left the king’s* [*mouth*](body.html)*, they covered Haman’s* [*face*](body.html)*. Then Harbona,* [*one*](one.html) *of the eunuchs attending the king, said, “A gallows* [*seventy*](seventy.html)*-*[*five*](five.html)[*feet*](heel.html) *high stands by Haman’s house. He had it made for Mordecai, who* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *up to help the king.” The king said, “Hang him on it!” So they hanged Haman on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king’s fury subsided.*

It appears as though the King did not consult his advisors this [time](time.html). The sages understood that Haman had asked the King to stop doing this so that he could get his edict of annihilation signed. So, again we see the [hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) meting out justice in-kind.

The Sages tell us that [third](three.html) day of Esther’s fast was the 15th of [Nisan](feasts.html), the night of the [Passover](passover.html) [Seder](haggada.html). Because of the dire situation, the regular [Seder](haggada.html) could be forfeited. Still, Esther kept as much as she could and served [Matzot](chametz.html) at the banquets. Additionally, the banquets are called “Mishteh ha-yayin”, a wine feast (5:6, 7:2, 7:7), alluding to the [four](four.html) cups of wine drunk at the [seder](haggada.html).

That night, following the [first](one.html) banquet, the King is unable to [sleep](mashal.html) (6:1). It could be that the [Pesach](passover.html) [food](food.html), particularly the [matzot](chametz.html) and excess wine, caused him heartburn.

Achashverosh figures that since Esther spent the whole evening telling national history (the [Haggada](haggada.html) - it is [Passover](passover.html) after all.), he can review the history of his kingdom as well. So Achashverosh reviews his *royal book*, and for the [first](one.html) [time](time.html) becomes aware that Mordechai had saved the King’s life (6:2).

Why did Esther have [seven](seven.html) maids?

***Esther 2:9*** *The girl pleased him and won his favor. Immediately he provided her with her beauty treatments and special* [*food*](food.html)*. He assigned to her* [*seven*](seven.html) *maids selected from the king’s palace and moved her and her maids into the best place in the harem.*

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) explains that she had [one](one.html) maid for each day of the week so that no [one](one.html) would suspect that she was a [Jew](gen-jew.html). She worked for [six](six.html) days and rested on the [seventh](seven.html) day.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Why 10,000 talents (Kikars):

***Esther 3:8-9*** *Then Haman said to King Achashverosh, “There is a certain people dispersed and scattered among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom whose customs are different from those of all other people and who do not obey the king’s* [*laws*](law.html)*; it is not in the king’s best interest to tolerate them. If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and I will put* [*ten*](ten.html) *thousand talents of silver into the royal treasury for the men who carry out this business.”*

Tosafot indicates that there were 600,000 males. These had a 50 [Shekalim](shekalim.html) [redemption](redemption.html) value (Leviticus 27:3). So: 600,000 X 50 = 30,000,000 / 3,000 = 10,000 talents.

When Haman proposed to Achashverosh the annihilation of the [Jews](gen-jew.html), he offered to pay 10,000 “kikars” for the right to do so (Esther 3:9). Since [one](one.html) kikar equals 3,000 shekels, Haman was in fact putting a price tag of 30 million shekels on the [Jews](gen-jew.html).

Since there are 600,000 main souls in the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html) (see [Numbers](nchart.html) 2:32), and 50 shekels is the donation value of an adult [male](male+female.html) (as specified in Leviticus 27:3), this amount multiplied times 600,000 souls equals [thirty](thirty.html) million.

The Chizkuni on our verse independently gives us a calculation of how Haman’s 10,000 “kikar” weights of silver equal the amount of half-[Shekalim](shekalim.html) 600,000 Bnei Israel would give. On average, people live [seventy](seventy.html) years. The responsibility to give a half-shekel begins at the age of [twenty](twenty.html). On average people give a half-shekel for fifty years. The [type](types.html) of half-shekel given is in the “shekel hakodesh” coin system, which has double the value of non-kodesh “[Shekalim](shekalim.html),” hence [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html) shekelei kodesh given in a lifetime equal fifty standard [Shekalim](shekalim.html). Fifty “[Shekalim](shekalim.html)” equal a hundred zuzim, given on average by each person. Sixty people would give 6,000 “zuzim,” equal to sixty “maneh”, the weight of a “kikar” of silver. [Ten](ten.html) thousand times this amount was given by 600,000 people as sixty goes into 600,000 [ten](ten.html) thousand times. Thus a total of 10,000 “kikar kesef,” a “kesef” equals a “zuz,” was given by these 600,000 people, and Haman offered an equal amount. The Ba”ch on the above Tosafot calculates exactly as the Chizkuni and says that this is the intention of the Tosafot.

Another idea was:

***II Melachim (Kings) 24:13-14*** *As* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *had declared, Nebuchadnezzar removed all the treasures from the* [*temple*](temple.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *and from the royal palace, and took away all the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had made for the* [*temple*](temple.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. He carried into* [*exile*](galuyot.html) *all* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*: all the officers and fighting men, and all the craftsmen and artisans--a total of* [*ten*](ten.html) *thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left.*

Therefore there was a talent for each of the officers, fighting men, craftsman, and artisans.

[One](one.html) talent contains 3000 [Shekalim](shekalim.html) ([Exodus](exodus.html) 35:24). A shekel contains approximately .80 ounces of silver. Thus a talent of silver is equal to about 2,400 ounces. The price Haman was ready to pay for the right to exterminate the [Jews](gen-jew.html), 10,000 talents, was 24 million ounces, or 750 tons of silver! $5 X 24,000,000 = $120,000,000 at today’s price. in the 1870’s silver was worth 40 times as much! This yields $4,800,000,000. So, try to imagine what silver was worth in Mordechai’s day.

Another idea:

The Megillah[[35]](#footnote-35) states that Haman offered to increase the King’s coffers by 10,000 kikar silver in exchange for the right to get rid of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). Tosafot in Megillah 16a, indicates that this was a half Shekel for every [Jewish](gen-jew.html) person. On a metaphysical level the Hakhamim tell us that Haman was trying to negate the [merit](merit.html) of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) [annual](annual.html) half-Shekel contribution to the [Temple](temple.html)’s upkeep. The [Gemara](orallaw.html)[[36]](#footnote-36) says that since [HaShem](hashem.html) [knew](daat.html) that Haman would offer Shekels to Achashverosh to ‘purchase’ the right to destroy the [Jews](gen-jew.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) pre-empted Haman’s contribution through the half-shekel. The [merit](merit.html) of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) contributing the [annual](annual.html) half-shekel protected them (in the [future](future.html)) against Haman’s evil designs.

There is an interpretation of this [Gemara](orallaw.html) said in the [name](name.html) of the *Yismach Yisrael*. Haman’s potential for destroying the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people was hinted at in his own description of the [nation](nations.html):

***Esther 3:8*** *“There is a people that is dispersed and divided...”.*

It is only because there is division and unjustified hatred within the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html) that their enemies have the ability to harm them. When the [Jews](gen-jew.html) are divided, they represent only individuals, not a Klal, a communal entity. When that happens we have lost our strength.

Haman’s whole plot was based on the division of the [nation](nations.html). That is why [HaShem](hashem.html) insisted that each [Jew](gen-jew.html) should give exactly [one](one.html) half shekel. The symbolism of the half-shekel is that each [Jew](gen-jew.html) is only a fraction of the entity. He [needs](needs.html) to combine with his fellow [Jew](gen-jew.html) to make a significant contribution. If we think we can be ‘an entire shekel unto ourselves’, that is not going to work. Our strength is through the recognition that we need each other, and the realization that we need to set aside our petty differences to come together to provide a complete shekel.

This silver, then, has several very significant implications. Now, lets see how this silver, and it’s evil decree will be handled.

The Sages say that Esther’s fast began the day that Haman ordered the decree to go out:

***Esther 3:12*** *Then on the* [*thirteenth*](thirteen.html) *day of the* [*first*](one.html) *month the royal secretaries were summoned. They wrote out in the script of each province and in the language of each people all Haman’s orders to the king’s satraps, the governors of the various provinces and the nobles of the various peoples. These were written in the* [*name*](name.html) *of King Achashverosh himself and sealed with his own ring.*

The decree then went out on [Nisan](feasts.html) 13. So Esther and the [Jews](gen-jew.html) of Shushan fasted on [Nisan](feasts.html) 13, 14, and 15. The evening of the 14th was [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [Passover](passover.html) feast:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:5***[*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s* [*Passover*](passover.html) *begins at twilight on the* [*fourteenth*](fourteen.html) *day of the* [*first*](one.html) *month.*

The [Midrash](orallaw.html) states that Mordechai protested the fast on [Passover](passover.html). Esther replied that if there are no Israelites, there will be no [Passover](passover.html)!

The deliverance of the Israelites began:

***Esther 5:1-2*** *On the* [*third*](three.html) *day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king’s hall. The king was* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance. When he saw Queen Esther* [*standing*](mashal.html) *in the court, he was pleased with her and held out to her the gold scepter that was in his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.*

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) records an interesting thing about Esther’s appearance before the king:

***Megillat 15b*** *“And it was so when the king saw Esther the queen. R. Johanan said:* [*Three*](three.html) *ministering* [*angels*](angels.html) *were* [*appointed*](settimes.html) *to help her at that moment;* [*one*](one.html) *to make her* [*head*](body.html) *erect, a second to endow her with charm and a* [*third*](three.html) *to stretch the golden scepter.”*

R’ Yehudah Prero interprets the [Talmud](orallaw.html) for us: [Three](three.html) [angels](angels.html) assisted Esther when she went before the king. [One](one.html) was there to help her raise her [head](body.html), as she was so weak from fasting that she could not keep her [head](body.html) up without assistance. The second [angel](angels.html) was there to assure that she would find favor in Achashverosh’s [eyes](body.html), even though her beauty had diminished to the point that Achashverosh might be angered.

The usual gesture of the king that indicated approval of a visit and permission to enter the king’s chambers was his lifting of his scepter and extending it towards the person. In order to assure that Achashverosh would perform this necessary gesture even though he did not order the visit (making “illegal”), an [angel](angels.html) (the [third](three.html) [one](one.html) discussed above) came and extended the scepter that Achashverosh was holding. With the assistance of the [angels](angels.html), Esther was admitted to Achashverosh’s court without suffering any dire [consequences](conseq.html).

The [first](one.html) day of [Passover](passover.html), the same day that deliverance for the Israelites in Egypt began. It looks as though Haman died on the 17th of [Nisan](feasts.html) - the same day that [Yeshua](yeshua.html) arose!

If you consider that the King was aware that Esther was willing to die in order to bring a request to him, then you can understand why he was willing to grant her request. He would [know](daat.html) that it was a most serious request. Obviously this also accounts for him repeating his question at the [two](two.html) banquets. He [knew](daat.html) that she would not have risked death to invite him to dinner.

***Esther 9:22*** *As the* [*time*](time.html) *when the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of* [*food*](food.html) *to* [*one*](one.html) *another and gifts to the poor.*

KJV renders it as:

***Esther 9:22*** *As the days wherein the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions* [*one*](one.html) *to another, and gifts to the poor.*

*sorrow* is: 3015 yagown, yaw-gohn’; from 3013; affliction:-grief, sorrow.

*joy* is: 8057 simchah, sim-khaw’; from 8056; blithesomeness or glee, (religious or [festival](festival.html)):-X exceeding (- ly), gladness, joy (-fulness), mirth, pleasure, rejoice (-ing).

[*mourning*](mourning.html) is: 0060 ‘ebel, ay’-bel; from 56; lamentation:-[mourning](mourning.html).

*good* day is: 2896 towb, tobe; from 2895; good (as an adj.) in the widest sense; used likewise as a noun, both in the masc. and the fem., the sing. and the plur. (good, a good or good thing, a good man or woman; the good, goods or good things, good men or women), also as an adv. (well):- beautiful, best, better, bountiful, cheerful, at ease, X fair (word), (be in) favor, fine, glad, good (deed, -lier, liest, -ly, -ness, -s), graciously, joyful, kindly, kindness, liketh (best), loving, merry, X most, pleasant, + pleaseth, pleasure, precious, prosperity, ready, sweet, wealth, welfare, (be) well ([-favoured]).

good *day* 3117 yowm, yome; from an unused root mean. to be hot; a day (as the warm hours) whether lit. (from sunrise to sunset, or from [one](one.html) sunset to the next), or [fig](bethphag.html). (a space of [time](time.html) defined by an associated term), [often used adv.]:-age, + always, + chronicles, continually (-ance), daily, ([[birth](birth.html)-], each, to) day, (now a, [two](two.html)) days (agone), + elder, X end, + evening, + (for) ever (-lasting, more), X full, life, as (so) long as (... live), (even) now, + old, + outlived, + perpetually, presently,+ remaineth, X required, season, X since, space, then, (process of) [time](time.html), + as at other times, + in trouble, weather, (as) when, (a, the, within a) while (that), X whole (+ age), (full) year (-ly), + younger.

This reminds me of:

***Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 31:7-14*** *This is what* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says: “Sing with joy for* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*; shout for the foremost of the* [*nations*](nations.html)*. Make your praises heard, and say, ‘O* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*,* [*save*](salvation.html) *your people, the remnant of Israel.’ See, I will bring them from the land of the north and* [*gather*](gather.html) *them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return. They will come with* [*weeping*](mashal.html)*; they will* [*pray*](prayer.html) *as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel’s father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son. “Hear the word of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, O* [*nations*](nations.html)*; proclaim it in distant coastlands: ‘He who scattered Israel will* [*gather*](gather.html) *them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.’ For* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will ransom* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *and* [*redeem*](redemption.html) *them from the* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of those stronger than they. They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion; they will rejoice in the bounty of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*--the grain, the* [*new*](new.html) *wine and the oil, the young of the flocks and herds. They will be like a well-watered garden, and they will sorrow no more. Then maidens will dance and be glad, young men and old as well. I will turn their* [*mourning*](mourning.html) *into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow. I will satisfy the* [*priests*](priests.html) *with abundance, and my people will be filled with my bounty,” declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

\* \* \*

The term “Sefirah”, perhaps the most basic term within the lexicon of the Kabbalistic tradition, finds repeated expression in the Book of Esther. Of the names for the Sefirot, the emanations of Divine light and energy which are the basic forces of [creation](bara.html), all but [one](one.html) explicitly appear in the Book of Esther. No other Biblical text exhibits such a density of Kabbalistic terminology.

\* \* \*

***Esther 8:16****The* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *had light and gladness, and joy and honour.*

Megillat Esther tells us, “for the [Jews](gen-jew.html) there was light, happiness, joy and preciousness”. Rabbi Yehudah[[37]](#footnote-37) explains that orah – light, refers to Torah. Simcha – happiness, is Yom Tov. Sason – joy, is [brit mila](circumcz.html)h. And yeqar – preciousness, is [tefillin](tefillin.html).

So why could not the megillah simply say, “for the [Jews](gen-jew.html) there was Torah, holidays, milah and [tefillin](tefillin.html)”. Why did it encode the words? In the [first](one.html) [Temple](temple.html) we had Torah, but it was not a light to us. We observed the [laws](law.html) of Yom Tov but found no happiness in it. We kept milah and wore [tefillin](tefillin.html) but with no joy or sense of preciousness. With [Purim](Purim.html) there was a [new](new.html) acceptance of the Torah, [one](one.html) which based observance upon its underlying [fear](fear.html) ([awe](fear.html)) of [heaven](heaven.html). And with that came [redemption](redemption.html).

\* \* \*



# XIV. Pedigrees

Lets look at the pedigree of some of the players in the [Purim](Purim.html) story:

***Esther 2:5-7*** *Now there was in the citadel of Susa a* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html) *of the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*, named Mordecai son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, Who had been carried into* [*exile*](galuyot.html) *from* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *by Nebuchadnezzar king of* [*Babylon*](bavel.html)*, among those taken captive with Jehoiachin king of Judah. Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This girl, who was also* [*known*](daat.html) *as Esther, was lovely in form and features, and Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter when her father and mother died.*

***Sh’muel (II Samuel) 16:5-13*** *As King David approached Bahurim, a man from the same clan as Saul’s family came out from there. His* [*name*](name.html) *was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out. He pelted David and all the king’s officials with stones, though all the troops and the special guard were on David’s right and left. As he cursed, Shimei said, “Get out, get out, you man of* [*blood*](body.html)*, you scoundrel!* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *has repaid you for all the* [*blood*](body.html) *you shed in the* [*household*](househld.html) *of Saul, in whose place you have reigned.* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *has handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom. You have come to ruin because you are a man of* [*blood*](body.html)*!” Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, “Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and cut off his* [*head*](body.html)*.” But the king said, “What do you and I have in common, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said to him, ‘Curse David,’ who can ask, ‘Why do you do this?’“ David then said to Abishai and all his officials, “My son, who is of my own flesh, is trying to take my life. How much more, then, this Benjamite! Leave him alone; let him curse, for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *has told him to. It may be that* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will see my distress and repay me with good for the cursing I am receiving today.” So David and his men continued along the road while Shimei was going along the hillside opposite him, cursing as he went and throwing stones at him and showering him with dirt.*

***Sh’muel (II Samuel) 19:15-23*** *Then the king returned and went as far as the* [*Jordan*](stages.html)*. Now the men of Judah had come to Gilgal to go out and meet the king and bring him across the* [*Jordan*](stages.html)*. Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, hurried down with the men of Judah to meet King David. With him were a thousand Benjamites, along with Ziba, the steward of Saul’s* [*household*](househld.html)*, and his* [*fifteen*](fifteen.html) *sons and* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *servants. They rushed to the* [*Jordan*](stages.html)*, where the king was. They crossed at the ford to take the king’s* [*household*](househld.html) *over and to do whatever he wished. When Shimei son of Gera crossed the* [*Jordan*](stages.html)*, he fell prostrate before the king And said to him, “May my lord not hold me guilty. Do not remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*. May the king put it out of his mind. For I your servant* [*know*](daat.html) *that I have sinned, but today I have come here as the* [*first*](one.html) *of the whole house of* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *to come down and meet my lord the king.” Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said, “Shouldn’t Shimei be put to death for this? He cursed* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s anointed.” David replied, “What do you and I have in common, you sons of Zeruiah? This day you have become my adversaries! Should anyone be put to death in Israel today? Do I not* [*know*](daat.html) *that today I am king over Israel?” So the king said to Shimei, “You shall not die.” And the king promised him on oath.*

***Megilah 12b*** *There was a certain* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html) *in Shushan the castle, etc. a Benjamite.[[38]](#footnote-38) What is the point of this verse? If it is to give the pedigree of Mordecai, it should trace it right back to* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*! [Why then were only these specified?] — A Tanna* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: All of them are designations [of Mordecai]. ‘The son of Jair’ means, the son who enlightened [he’ir] the* [*eyes*](body.html) *of Israel by his* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*. ‘The son of Shimei means, the son to whose* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *God hearkened [shama’]. ‘The son of Kish’ indicates that he knocked [hikkish] at the gates of mercy and they were opened to him. He is called ‘a* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)*’ [Yehudi] which implies that he came from [the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of] Judah, and he is called ‘a Benjamite’, which implies that he came from* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*. [How is this]? — R. Nahman said: He was a man of distinguished character. Rabbah b. Bar Hanah said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Joshua b. Levi: His father was from* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html) *and his mother from Judah. The Rabbis, however, said: The* [*tribes*](tribes.html) *competed with* [*one*](one.html) *another [for him]. The* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of Judah said: I am responsible for the* [*birth*](thebirth.html) *of Mordecai, because David did not kill Shimei the son of Gera, and the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html) *said: He is actually descended from me. Raba said: The* [*community*](community.html) *of Israel explained [the* [*two*](two.html) *designations] in the opposite sense: ‘See what a Judean did to me and how a Benjamite repaid me!’ What a Judean did to meviz., that David did not kill Shimei from whom was descended Mordecai who provoked Haman. ‘And how a Benjamite repaid me’, viz., that Saul did not slay Agag from whom was descended Haman who oppressed Israel. R. Johanan said: He did indeed come from* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*. Why then was he called ‘a* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)*’? Because he repudiated* [*idolatry*](idolatry.html)*. For anyone who repudiates* [*idolatry*](idolatry.html) *is called ‘a* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)*’, as it is written, There are certain* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *etc.*

King David spared Shimei, and Mordecai descended from him.

Mordechai and Esther were descendents of King Saul, whose error in keeping the [Amalekite](amalek.html) king Agag (Haman’s grandfather) alive for [one](one.html) night caused great suffering to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. Therefore, Mordechai and Esther had to rectify this mistake of their ancestor.

[Purim](Purim.html) is celebrated in [Adar](feasts.html) and points plainly at Binyamin. Mordecai, a major participant in the story, was a Benjamite:

***Esther 2:5*** *[Now] in Shushan the palace there was a certain* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)*, whose* [*name*](name.html) *[was] Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;*

Haman, the enemy of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) in the book of Esther, was the descendant of an [Amalekite](amalek.html) who was supposed to be slain by a Benjamite. His [name](name.html) was King Saul:

***1 Shmuel (Samuel) 9:21*** *And Saul answered and said, [Am] not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the* [*tribes*](tribes.html) *of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?*

***1 Shmuel (Samuel) 15:7-8*** *And Saul smote the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *from Havilah [until] thou comest to Shur, that [is] over against Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.*

Mordechai refused to bow down (he was from the [tribe](tribes.html) of Binyamin). In fact, he always stood.

Because Mordechai was always by the gate, he was constantly aware of the goings on by the palace. On [one](one.html) occasion, he overheard [two](two.html) of the king’s officers plotting to assassinate Achashverosh. These officers [spoke](mashal.html) in a language that they assumed Mordechai would not understand. However, because Mordechai was a member of the Sanhedrin, the highest [Jewish](gen-jew.html) court, he [knew](daat.html) [seventy](seventy.html) languages, including the [one](one.html) the officers [spoke](mashal.html). He immediately informed Esther of the plot, who related the story in Mordechai’s [name](name.html) to the king. Achashverosh had the [two](two.html) officers executed, and Mordechai’s deed was recorded in the king’s book of chronicles.

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) confirms this:

***Megillat 13b*** *In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king’s gate, Bigthan and Teresh were wroth. R. Hiyya b. Abba said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Johanan: The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, [once] caused a master to be wroth with his servants in order to fulfill the* [*desire*](needs.html) *of a righteous man, namely* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*, as it says, And there was with us there a young man, a* [*Hebrew*](hebrew.html)*, etc.; and servants with their master in order to perform a miracle for a righteous man, namely, Mordecai, as it is written, ‘And the thing was* [*known*](daat.html) *to Mordecai etc. ‘R. Johanan said: Bigthan and Teresh were* [*two*](two.html) *Tarseans and conversed in the Tarsean language. They said: From the day this woman came we have been able to get no* [*sleep*](mashal.html)*. Come, let us put poison in the dish so that he will die. They did not* [*know*](daat.html) *that Mordecai was* [*one*](one.html) *of those who had seats in the Chamber of Hewn Stone, and that he understood* [*seventy*](seventy.html) *languages. Said the other to him, But are not my post and your post different? He replied: I will keep guard at my post and at yours. So it is written, And when inquisition was made, he was found, that is to say, they were not [both] found at their posts.*

Mordechai was truly the [flower](flower.html) of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) culture - a member of the Sanhedrin, a polyglot, a noble descended from a line of kings (evidently he is from the family of King Saul). It also appears that he was the chief Rabbi of Shushan.

Let’s look at Haman’s pedigree:

***Esther 3:1-2*** *After these* [*events*](feasts.html)*, King Achashverosh honored Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles. All the royal officials at the king’s gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor.*

***Sh’muel (I Samuel) 15:1-9*** *Samuel said to Saul, “I am the* [*one*](one.html)[*HaShem*](hashem.html) *sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen now to the message from* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. This is what* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *Almighty says: ‘I will punish the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up* [*from Egypt*](thebirth.html)*. Now go,* [*attack*](attacks.html) *the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.’“ So Saul summoned the men and mustered them at Telaim--*[*two*](two.html) *hundred thousand* [*foot*](heel.html) *soldiers and* [*ten*](ten.html) *thousand men from Judah. Saul went to the* [*city*](city.html) *of* [*Amalek*](amalek.html) *and set an ambush in the ravine. Then he said to the Kenites, “Go away, leave the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *so that I do not destroy you along with them; for you showed kindness to all the Israelites when they came up* [*out of Egypt*](thebirth.html)*.” So the Kenites moved away from the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html)*. Then Saul attacked the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *all the way from Havilah to Shur, to the* [*east*](east.html) *of Egypt. He took Agag king of the* [*Amalekites*](amalek.html) *alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword. But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs--everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed.*

So, king Saul spared Agag and now we have Haman. The Hakhamim believe that Agag fathered a son during the [time](time.html) he was Saul’s captive. Haman, of course, was a descendant of [Esav](edom.html).

The question: Why do we make noise every [time](time.html) Haman’s [name](name.html) is mentioned in the Megillah?

The answer: Haman was an [Amalekite](amalek.html) (The root of the “[Amalek](amalek.html)” is amal - labor.), from that people which embodies evil and which the Torah [commands](cmds613.html) us to obliterate:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 25:19*** *When* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land he is giving you to possess as an* [*inheritance*](inherit.html)*, you shall blot out the memory of* [*Amalek*](amalek.html) *from under* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*. Do not forget!*

By blotting out Haman’s [name](name.html) we are symbolically wiping out the [Amalekites](amalek.html) and evil.

I heard that the Vilna Gaon (Rav Eliyahu Kremer of Vilna, c. 1750), was asked, “Where is it hinted in the Torah that we should make noise when the [name](name.html) of Haman is mentioned during the reading of the Megillat Ester on [Purim](Purim.html)?” He answered, “It says in the Torah, ‘Vehaya Im Bin Hakot Harasha’ [if the evildoer deserves to be hit] (Devarim 25:2).”

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 25:1-3*** *When there will be a quarrel between men, they shall approach the justice, who will judge them. They will prove the righteousness of the* [*one*](one.html) *who is righteous and the evil of the* [*one*](one.html) *who is evil. And “if the evildoer deserves to be hit”, the judge shall throw him down and flog him as befits his* [*wickedness*](wicked.html)*. He shall be flogged* [*forty*](forty.html) *times...*

Said the Gaon, “The last [letters](letters.html) of the [first](one.html) [three](three.html) [Hebrew](hebrew.html) words in this verse spell out the [name](name.html) ‘Haman.’ The following [two](two.html) [Hebrew](hebrew.html) words read as, ‘hit the evildoer!’ (This hints that when Haman is mentioned, we hit or bang on the nearest object in order to demonstrate our distaste for [hearing](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\mashal.html) the mention of his [name](name.html).)” (Rav Tzvi Shlez, in “Nifloat Mitorat [HaShem](hashem.html),” Warsaw 1879)

The verse that we have been discussing (“...if the evildoer deserves to be hit...”) that spells out Haman’s [name](name.html), is exactly the [eighteenth](eighteen.html) verse from the [command](cmds613.html) to destroy [Amalek](amalek.html) at the end of the Parashah, counting backwards. According to the Targum, in Megillat Ester, Haman was exactly the [eighteenth](eighteen.html) [generation](toldot.html) after [Amalek](amalek.html)[[39]](#footnote-39). Perhaps this verse is hinting that after [eighteen](eighteen.html) [generations](toldot.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) will cause [Amalek](amalek.html)’s plans to wipe out the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people to be *reversed* (i.e. to backfire). As it says in Megillat Esther, “It was *reversed*, so that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were the ones who had power over their enemies”[[40]](#footnote-40). In the [Purim](Purim.html) story the plans of Haman, [Amalek](amalek.html)’s descendant, were reversed. The day that Haman had set aside for the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) became instead the day the [Jews](gen-jew.html) saw victory against Haman. This is why the Torah hints at the downfall of Haman [eighteen](eighteen.html) verses back from the verse that tells us to destroy [Amalek](amalek.html)!

There is another place in the Torah where the war between [Amalek](amalek.html) and the [Jews](gen-jew.html) who left Egypt is discussed. This passage is earlier in the Torah, in Parashat Beshalach (Shemot 18:16). Is there any hint to the destruction of Haman [eighteen](eighteen.html) verses before the mention of the destruction of [Amalek](amalek.html), there? Let us examine the verse that is exactly [eighteen](eighteen.html) verses before that:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 16:35*** *And the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html)[*ate*](eating.html) *“HaMan” [= the Manna]* [*forty*](forty.html) *years, until they reached settled land. They* [*ate*](eating.html) *“HaMan”* [*forty*](forty.html) *years, until they reached the edge of the land of Canaan.”*

The verse not only hints to Haman, but it mentions his [name](name.html) twice in the verse itself! The verse suggests that Haman was [*eaten*](eating.html) by the [Jews](gen-jew.html). Being [*eaten*](eating.html) is, of course, a metaphor for being consumed, or destroyed, as in *Devarim 7:16*, “You will [*eat*](eating.html) all the [nations](nations.html) [of Canaan] that [HaShem](hashem.html) delivers into your [hands](fourteen.html).” Similarly, the verse that discusses the Manna that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) [ate](eating.html) in the wilderness, hints at the destruction (= [eating](eating.html)) of Haman. The [Jews](gen-jew.html) devoured Haman, destroying him totally!

Rashi makes an interesting comment on the above verse in Shemot. He writes that there are [two](two.html) dates that are mentioned in the verse as marking the day upon which the [Jews](gen-jew.html) finished [eating](eating.html) the Manna. These [two](two.html) dates, says Rashi, are the [seventh](seven.html) day of [Adar](feasts.html) and the sixteenth day of [Nisan](feasts.html). According to our [new](new.html) interpretation, that the verse hints at the destruction of Haman, the [two](two.html) dates are especially appropriate. As we shall see, it was [HaShem](hashem.html)’s reversal of Haman’s fortune on those very [two](two.html) dates, that turned [Purim](Purim.html) into a victory for the [Jews](gen-jew.html).

Haman drew lots in order to decide which month would be best for his decree to kill the [Jews](gen-jew.html) (Esther 3:7). We learn from the [Gemara](orallaw.html)[[41]](#footnote-41) that when Haman saw that the lots chose the month of [Adar](feasts.html) he was tremendously happy.” He felt that since [Adar](feasts.html) was the month in which Moshe died (Moshe passed away on the [seventh](seven.html) of [Adar](feasts.html)), [Adar](feasts.html) would be a successful month in which to exterminate the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. However, concludes the [Gemara](orallaw.html), Haman didn’t realize that although Moshe passed away on the [seventh](seven.html) of [Adar](feasts.html), that was also the date on which Moshe was born. (Therefore, instead of being a day of loss for the [Jews](gen-jew.html), it was a month reserved for [redemption](redemption.html) and [salvation](salvation.html).) The [seventh](seven.html) of [Adar](feasts.html) was the day that originally encouraged Haman to bring about the destruction the [Jews](gen-jew.html). But [HaShem](hashem.html) *reversed* the outcome of that day and made it into the opposite, into a [sign](signs.html) of the triumph of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people over their enemies!

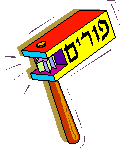
The second date referred to in the verse was the sixteenth of [Nisan](feasts.html). According to the [Gemara](orallaw.html)[[42]](#footnote-42), the day that Haman built his gallows and came to tell the King to hang Mordechai (in Megillat Esther 6:4), was the sixteenth day of [Nisan](feasts.html). Of course, at the end of that day it was not Mordechai who was hanged, but rather Haman himself was hanged from that very tree. The sixteenth of [Nisan](feasts.html), too, marks the *reversal* of Haman’s evil plans.

As we learned above, that verse in *Shemot 16:35*, which is [eighteen](eighteen.html) verses before the story of [Amalek](amalek.html), hints at the reversal of [Amalek](amalek.html)’s fortune after [eighteen](eighteen.html) [generations](toldot.html) (in the [time](time.html) of Mordechai and Haman). Now we see that the verse in Shemot not only hints at the destruction of Haman. It also refers to the [two](two.html) days that saw the reversal of his fortune!

[**Future**](future.html)[**Festivals**](festivals.html)

“All the [festivals](festivals.html) will be annulled in [future](future.html) [time](time.html), except for [Purim](Purim.html)“[[43]](#footnote-43) The [future](future.html) revelation of Divinity will be so intense that the revelation currently evinced by the [festivals](festivals.html) will be as insignificant as a midday candle. [Purim](Purim.html), however, will be the exception, because the [Purim](Purim.html) miracle was called forth by the year-long self-[sacrifice](korbanot.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people of that [time](time.html). (They could have averted Haman’s decree by apostasy.) Their mesirus nefesh evoked a Divine reaction so sublime that even in the [future](future.html) [time](time.html) it will never be annulled.[[44]](#footnote-44)

# XV. [Purim](Purim.html) Customs



**Sephardim** (From The Ben Ish Chai):

The story of how our Holy Torah and the good therein triumphed over the forces of evil is recounted in the reading of the Megillah, on [Purim](Purim.html).

When the [wicked](wicked.html) Haman, the [seed](flower.html) of [Amalek](amalek.html) (may his [name](name.html) and memory be erased), sought to annihilate the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, the [Jews](gen-jew.html) realized that they had only [one](one.html) weapon, but it was a formidable [one](one.html), their Torah.

Through his egotistical pride and hatred for Mordechai the [Jew](gen-jew.html), Haman gave the order in the [name](name.html) of King Achashverosh to destroy every [Jew](gen-jew.html), both young and old and women and children. Throughout [one](one.html) hundred and [twenty](twenty.html)-[seven](seven.html) provinces from India to Ethiopia the order was received to exterminate them, on [one](one.html) day, on the [thirteenth](thirteen.html) of [Adar](feasts.html).

The [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People [prayed](prayer.html) and fasted for [three](three.html) days and nights in order to rectify the [three](three.html) types of wrongs they may have committed, by their actions, speech and thought. And in the end their [prayers](prayer.html) were answered. The evil are elevated to eminence to show how great their fall and this was the case with the [wicked](wicked.html) Haman. From being the most powerful man in the kingdom, second only to the king himself, he was hung in total disgrace, as were all his sons, on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordechai the [Jew](gen-jew.html).

The [Sabbath](sabbath.html) before [Purim](Purim.html) is [known](daat.html) as [Shabbat](sabbath.html) Zakhor ([Shabbat](sabbath.html) ‘Remember’) as the portion “Remember what ‘[Amalek](amalek.html) did unto you” is read. It is important for all to hear this. It is customary, on this [Shabbat](sabbath.html) as well as on [Purim](Purim.html) itself, to sing Shbahoth (songs of praise) such as “Simeni Rosh ‘Al Kol Oybai” (Place me above all my enemies).

The day before [Purim](Purim.html) is called the Fast of Esther, as we fast in memory of the [three](three.html) day fast of our forefathers. The fast is broken after the Megillah reading. When the Megillah is read on Motzi [Shabbat](sabbath.html) (Saturday night after [Shabbat](sabbath.html)) and Sunday morning, the fast is held on the preceding Thursday.

**HALACHOT (**[**LAWS**](law.html)**)**

**OF THE FAST OF ESTHER**

1) The fast begins at dawn (“Alot Hashachar”) and ends after nightfall (“Tzait Hakochavim”).

2) No [eating](eating.html) or drinking is permitted. Though other aspects -- like wearing shoes and washing -- are permitted.

3) Since this is not a major fast, pregnant or nursing women are exempt from the fast, as are moderately ill people. If [one](one.html) is otherwise healthy but has a headache and finds it difficult to fast, he may [eat](eating.html), but is obligated to “make up” the fast another [time](time.html). In all cases, a competent rabbi should be consulted.

4) If the 13th falls on [Shabbat](sabbath.html), we don’t fast that day, due to the honor of [Shabbat](sabbath.html). The fast is not even held on Friday, since this would adversely affect [Shabbat](sabbath.html) preparations. Rather, we observe the fast on Thursday, the 11th of [Adar](feasts.html).

5) It is customary to extend the fast until after the Megillah is read. (Except in walled cities, where the Megillah is read on the night of the 15th.)

6) During the afternoon Mincha [prayers](prayer.html), the paragraph of Aneinu is added to the silent [Amidah](amida.html), during the blessing of [Shema](shema.html) Koleinu. In both Shacharit and Mincha, the chazan inserts Aneinu as a separate blessing between Geulah and Refuah.

7) As on other public fasts, the Torah reading of Vayechal Moshe ([Exodus](exodus.html) 32:11-14, 34:1-10) is read both at Shacharit and Mincha.

8) If a [Brit Mila](circumcz.html)h falls on the Fast of Esther, the Seudat [Mitzva](cmds613.html) should be postponed until the evening. The father, mother, and Sandek may even [eat](eating.html) during the afternoon of the fast day, since it is considered like their “[holiday](festival.html).” (Sha’ar HaTziun 686:16)

9) Avinu Malkeinu is said only in Shacharit, but not in Mincha. (An exception is if [Purim](Purim.html) falls on Sunday and the fast is observed on Thursday, then Avinu Malkeinu is in fact said in Mincha.)

Both men and women are obligated to hear the Megillah reading. [One](one.html) who does not have a Kosher Megillah must hear every word read by the Chazzan. Prior to the reading, the Chazzan unfolds his Megillah like a [letter](letters.html), but the congregation read theirs like [one](one.html) would read a Sefer Torah. This is the most common custom among Sephardim.

The Minhag is to stand for the Berachoth of the Megillah reading at night include the blessing of Shehekeyanu, but in the morning it is omitted.

It is the custom in some [communities](community.html) for the children to dress up in special costumes. In many Sephardi [communities](community.html), however, this custom was either never adopted or forgotten entirely.

The general noise making at every mention of Haman’s [name](name.html) throughout the reading poses problems in many [synagogues](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\synagog.html), as we are obligated to hear every word of the reading. It is appropriate, therefore, to limit this to banging [one](one.html)’s [foot](heel.html) at the [first](one.html) and last mention of Haman’s [name](name.html) and the names of his sons.

On [Purim](Purim.html), everyone is obligated to give [two](two.html) gifts to at least [two](two.html) poor people. This should not be confused with the giving of the Mahasith Hasheqel (half Sheqel) prior to [Purim](Purim.html).

During the day both men and women must send Mishloah Manoth – [two](two.html) types of [food](food.html) to [one](one.html) adult friend. Men should send to men and women to women. There is no need to send to all ones acquaintances. A mourner who is in his [twelve](twelve.html) months of [mourning](mourning.html) should only send to [one](one.html) person and others should not send to him.

Sephardim traditionally send delicacies such as Baqlawa, Sambusak and Halwah. It is the tradition among Ashkenazim to [eat](eating.html) “‘Oznai Haman” (lit. Haman’s [ears](body.html), Hamantaschen in Yiddish, on [Purim](Purim.html). It is a Mitsvah to have a festive meal at which [one](one.html) [eats](eating.html) and drinks well. It must be [eaten](eating.html) during the day. If it is [eaten](eating.html) at night, [one](one.html) has not fulfilled [one](one.html)’s obligations.

Sephardim [eat](eating.html) this meal earlier than do Ashkenazim and must finish before sunset. If a Sephardi is [eating](eating.html) in a home where the meal ends when it is no longer still day, he may not include the portion of ‘Al Hannisseem in the Birkath Hammazon.

It is good to [eat](eating.html) [foods](food.html) containing Qitniyoth (pulses) on [Purim](Purim.html) in memory of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and ‘Azariah who, for reasons of Kashrut, [ate](eating.html) only these in the palace of [Babylon](bavel.html). And in memory too of Queen Esther who did the same.

And it is appropriate on this day, to refrain from work and to dress up in [one](one.html)’s [Shabbat](sabbath.html) clothes: “Like those days whereon the [Jews](gen-jew.html) had rest from their enemies and the month was changed unto them from sorrow to joy and from [mourning](mourning.html) into a feast day; to make them days of entertainment and joy and sending portions [one](one.html) to the other and gifts for the needy”. (Esther 9:22).

Taken from the writings of Hakham Ya’aqov Menashe.

[**Laws**](law.html) **of the Megillah Reading[[45]](#footnote-45)**

*“A person is obligated to hear the reading of the Megillah once at night and again the next day.”*

- Shulchan Arukh (Code of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [Law](law.html)) 687:1

Of the [forty](forty.html)-[eight](eight.html) men and [seven](seven.html) women who prophesied in Israel, none added to or detracted from any of the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) in the Torah. The sole exception was the [mitzva](cmds613.html) of reading the Megillah.

**1)** Men, women, and children (who have reached the age of education – age 6) are required to hear the Megillah.

**2)** The Megillah is so important that even Torah [study](study.html) is deferred to hear the reading.

**3)** The Megillah is read twice – [first](one.html) at night, then the next day. The [time](time.html) for the night reading is from nightfall (“Tzais Hakochavim”) until dawn (“Alos Hashachar”). Some authorities permit, even in the case of a mild [illness](ilness.html), to read the Megillah [one](one.html) and a quarter hours before night fall.

**4)** The [time](time.html) for the daytime reading is from sunrise to sunset. Post facto, the daytime reading may be read even after sunset (as long as the reading is concluded before nightfall), though the blessings may not be recited.

**5)** Because of the concept of “B’rov Am Hadras Melech” - with the multitude of the [nation](nations.html) is the King honored (Mishlei - *Proverbs 14:28*) - it is preferable to hear the Megillah at a [synagogue](synagog.html) with a large [number](nchart.html) of people. If, however, there may be difficulty in properly [hearing](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\mashal.html) the Megillah because of the crowd, in that case it is preferable to attend a smaller [synagogue](synagog.html).

**6)** Immediately before the blessings are recited, an announcement should be made that the reader should have in mind to be motzie the congregation, and they should have in mind to be yotzai.

**7)** Those listening to the Megillah can sit throughout. Though when read in public, the Baal Koreh (person actually reading the Megillah) must be [standing](mashal.html). In private, the Baal Koreh may read either [standing](mashal.html) or [sitting](mashal.html).

**8)** The Megillah, which is called an “Iggeres” (a [letter](letters.html)), is folded open before being read.

**9)** We say [three](three.html) blessings before reading:

1) “al Mikra Megillah,”

2) “She’asa Nissim,” and

3) “Sheh-hecheyanu.”

If a woman reads the Megillah, she should say as the [first](one.html) blessing, “lishmo’ah Mikrah Megillah.” The blessings should be said [standing](mashal.html), even when reading for an individual. If [one](one.html) accidentally omitted the blessings, he has still fulfilled his obligation to hear Megillah.

**10)** When the “Sheh-hecheyanu” blessing is said in the daytime, [one](one.html) should have in mind that it includes the [mitzvot](cmds613.html) of Matanot La’evyonim, Mishloach Manot, and Seudat [Purim](Purim.html).

**11)** The entire Megillah must be read from a kosher parchment, written with proper ink, markings (“sirtut”), etc. [One](one.html) who recites the Megillah by [heart](body.html) has not fulfilled his obligation.

**12)** The custom is to make noise at the mention of Haman’s [name](name.html), to comply with the [command](cmds613.html) to wipe out the remembrance of [Amalek](amalek.html)[[46]](#footnote-46). Parents should be careful that children do not make so much noise that others are unable to properly hear the Megillah reading.

**13)** If at all possible, every word of the reading should be from a kosher Megillah. Therefore, the reader should wait for the noise to subside after reading Haman’s [name](name.html) before continuing.

**14)** Their are [four](four.html) verses of [redemption](redemption.html), which the congregation traditionally reads aloud: “Ish Yehudi,” “Mordechai yatza,” “LaYehudim haysa ora,” and “Ki Mordechai HaYehudi.” Since every word of the reading should be from a kosher Megillah, the reader must repeat these verses after the congregation.

**15)** The Pri Megadim says that where possible, it is preferable for those listening to have their own kosher Megillah to follow from.

**16)** Unless [one](one.html) is following from a kosher Megillah, he may not read along with the reader but should listen quietly and follow in a printed book. Of course, it is forbidden to [speak](mashal.html) during the reading.

**17)** Post facto, if a word or sentence is not heard, it may be read from a printed book or said by [heart](body.html).

**18)** The [Talmud](orallaw.html) says that the names of all [ten](ten.html) sons of Haman (and the following word, “aseres”) should be read audibly in [one](one.html) breath. The custom is also to include “500 ish” in the [one](one.html) breath, if possible. According to the Rogachaver Gaon (19th century Europe), each individual should read this verse in [one](one.html) breath, since the Baal Koreh cannot be motzi others in the requirement of “[one](one.html) breath.”

**19)** The [four](four.html) phrases in which [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html) is hidden should be read on a higher key, and emphasized: “levado avsa Vashti hamalka” (1:16), “he, vechol hanashim yitnu” (1:20), “yavo hamelech vahaman hayom” (5:4), “ze aynenu shoveh li” (5:13).

**20)** When the reader reaches the verse “Nad’da shnas hamelech” (and the King’s [sleep](mashal.html) was interrupted (6:1), he should raise his voice since this essentially was the miracle. The reader should raise his voice as well for the verse 2:17, since this was the catalyst for the miracle.

**21)** The following verses should be read with the tune of Eicha [Lamentations] (rather than the normal tune for Esther), to signify the sad or tragic implications of these verses: 2:6, 3:15, 4:1, the last half of 4:3, and 7:4.

**22)** Some have the custom to shake the Megillah when saying the words “ha-iggeres hazot” (this [letter](letters.html)).

**23)** After the Megillah reading, we say the blessing “Harav es riveinu,” thanking [HaShem](hashem.html) for saving us. This blessing should only be said with a minyan. (If there is no minyan, it may be said without [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html).) After the night reading, we also say “Uva Li-Tzion,” “Aleynu,” “Kaddish,” and “Shoshanas [Yaakov](israelja.html).” On Saturday night, we also say “Vee-hee Noam.”

**24)** Someone who will be on a voyage, and will not have available a Megillah, may read as early as the 11th of [Adar](feasts.html) (and some say even from [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html) [Adar](feasts.html).)

[**Mitzvot**](cmds613.html)

1. The [mitzva](cmds613.html) of sanctifying the [festival](festival.html) (KEDUSHAH):

2. The custom of setting a festive table and holding special meals during the day as well as at night. [PURIM](Purim.html) SE’UDAH - [Purim](Purim.html) feast).

Feasting on [Purim](Purim.html) is considered a virtue. “Each family gathers and [eats](eating.html) and drinks together” (Rashi, Esther IX:28). A man must rejoice on [Purim](Purim.html) and enjoy all kinds of drinks and delicacies. Generally it is the custom to spread a sumptuous feast, light candles and celebrate from late afternoon into the night. Only when [Purim](Purim.html) falls on Friday the celebration starts earlier in honor of the [Sabbath](sabbath.html).

Among the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [communities](community.html) in the Arab countries and in Spain the feast started on the [first](one.html) night after the reading of the Megillat and the ending of the Fast of Esther and continued all night until daybreak. Then it started again and lasted until nightfall. The [Jews](gen-jew.html) of Yemen conducted a special [Purim](Purim.html) feast different from other [holiday](festival.html) feasts. The Yemenites prepared a kind of feast of King Solomon. It was the [one](one.html) day of the year on which they served together all kinds of dishes of meat and fish with wine and arak. The Arabs of Yemen called [Purim](Purim.html) “Or Kraker”, which means “Feast of the Wine Cup”, because the [Jews](gen-jew.html) drank so much on that day. During the feast they sang all the songs of the other holidays, as well as a special [Purim](Purim.html) song. (The song “Shoshanat Yaacov“, “The Lily of [Jacob](israelja.html) rejoiced and was glad”, so well-[known](daat.html) to the [Jews](gen-jew.html) of Europe, was not [known](daat.html) in Yemen). At the feast they read the Megillat especially for the women who could not hear it in the [synagogue](synagog.html).

During the [Purim](Purim.html) feast troupes of actors would visit the homes of the wealthy and present [Purim](Purim.html) plays. They were paid in money and in [holiday](festival.html) goodies. In the Sephardic [communities](community.html) they sang “Complatim” (groups of songs) about [Purim](Purim.html), recited ballads, parodies and jokes from the book “Allegory of [Purim](Purim.html)”. Several would dress up and present “The [Wedding](wedding.html) of Haman and Zeresh”.

3. The [mitzva](cmds613.html) of [hearing](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\mashal.html) the readings of the Megillat (MEGILLAT ESTHER - the Book of Esther) and reciting the proper blessings (3).

[Purim](Purim.html) in the [synagogue](synagog.html): The Book of Esther (the Megillat) is read with a special cantillation both on the Eve of [Purim](Purim.html) and on the [holiday](festival.html) itself. This is the only [time](time.html) during the year when there is a reading from the Torah to the congregation in the evening. Before the reading [three](three.html) blessings are recited: “On the reading of the Megillat”, “Who performed miracles for our [fathers](fathers.html)”, and “Who has kept us alive”.

4. The [mitzva](cmds613.html) of saying the SHEHECHIYANU blessing (1 of the 3).

5. The [mitzva](cmds613.html) of reciting BIRKAT HAMAZON with the additional blessing AL HANISSIM (on the saving miracles of [Purim](Purim.html)).

6. Attend services on [Shabbat](sabbath.html) ZACHOR (the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) of Remembrance), [one](one.html) week prior to [Purim](Purim.html), Remember the evil ones who sought to destroy the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. Contribute or work to stop anti-Semitism and in particular, neo-Nazism.

**There are** [**four**](four.html) **basic things to do on** [**Purim**](Purim.html) **and they begin with “M”:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Meaning** | **Description** |
| **Megilah** | Hear every word from the book of Esther. | The book of Esther is read **twice**, once in the evening and again in the morning. |
| **Mishloach Maanot** | Sending [food](food.html) to our friends. | We send [two](two.html) different potions of [food](food.html) to our friends |
| **Matanot Le’evyonim** | Giving money to poor persons | We give charity to needy people. |
| **Mishteh** | Having a good drinking party. | We have a festive meal during the day, replete with great wine! |

THE HALACHOT

OF GIVING GIFTS ON [PURIM](Purim.html)

**1)** Mishloach Manot is fulfilled by sending [two](two.html) types of ready-to-[eat](eating.html) [food](food.html) to at least [one](one.html) friend. This [mitzva](cmds613.html) should be performed on [Purim](Purim.html) day itself.

We have the Mishloach Manot, those delightful packages of goodies. They range from a sandwich bag with raisins, cookies and a drink to a [three](three.html)-[foot](heel.html)-high wicker basket filled with aged-wine and elegant treats. There are numerous differences in packaging, price and products, but, once again, all shalach manot have [one](one.html) thing in common: they foster unity. Unity not just because we feel good when we give and when we receive. But unity also because we customarily give the shalach manot through a messenger--we involve another person in the [mitzva](cmds613.html). When giving the shalach manot we connect not only with the person to whom we are giving, but to a [third](three.html) person as well. And the messenger can be anyone--young or old, friend or stranger, [male](male+female.html) or [female](male+female.html).

The distributing of [Purim](Purim.html) gifts (“Mishloah Manot”) and presents to the paupers on the day of the celebration is an ancient custom in Israel. In the Book of Nehemiah it is written that on the [first](one.html) day of Tishrei Nehemiah said to the people, “Go your way, [eat](eating.html) the fat and drink the sweet and send portions unto him for whom nothing is prepared”. Therefore, when the practice of celebrating [Purim](Purim.html) with a feast was established the ancient custom of sending gifts to the paupers was also practiced. The custom spread throughout the Diaspora, different versions developing and varying from [community](community.html) to [community](community.html).

Our sages determined the expression as the “distributing of gifts” and “gift”. Therefore, at least [two](two.html) gifts should be sent to a person. Maimonides (the Rambam) wrote ([Mishna](orallaw.html) Torah, Customs of the Megillat) “It is better for a man to increase gifts to the poor than to enlarge his feast and to increase gifts to his friends. For there is no greater and more wonderful joy than to make happy the hearts of the poor, the orphans, the widows and the strangers, for he who uplifts the hearts of the unfortunate is like unto the Divine Presence”.

For “Mishloah Manot” the women of Israel used to prepare pastries in the shape of different animals, percussion instruments for “beating Haman”, soldiers, heroes of the Megillat, etc. These were made of sweet dough and colored sugar. There were also cakes filled with poppy-[seed](flower.html), honey, fruit or meat, and of course, Hamantashen.



In the Ashkenazi [communities](community.html) it was the custom to put these presents on a large or deep dish and to cover it with a white napkin, the ends of which were folded under the dish and held by the messenger. They were careful to send a generous gift to the rabbi of the [community](community.html), the other religious functionaries, and the teachers of the children. In many towns there were special men who were paid to carry the gifts from house to house as instructed.

There was a pleasant custom according to which bridegrooms sent gifts -- gold and silver jewelry, elaborate clothing, etc., -- to their brides; and the brides sent a Megillat written on parchment in a silver case, or a gold watch, spices, religious books, etc., to the groom. In the Sephardi [communities](community.html) the groom would send the jewels to his bride on a metal tray nicely arranged with “Pastorale” cakes and adorned with leaves of the aromatic herb rue -- which had been cast in the form of a [hand](fourteen.html) with [five](five.html) [fingers](body.html) to bring good luck and ward off the evil eye. A woman acting as a special messenger would bring the present accompanied by another woman beating a drum and singing [wedding](wedding.html) songs to publicize the [event](feasts.html). The bride and her friends, singing and dancing, would go out to meet them.

The custom of “Mishloah Manot” exists today in practically every [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [community](community.html). In Israel it is observed in both the Sephardi and Ashkenazi [communities](community.html). A very special kind of “Mishloah Manot” exists in many kibbutzim. In order to preserve full equality also in regard to Mishloah Manot there are special practices. Thus, for example, each family brings gifts to a designated place. There a [number](nchart.html) is attached to each [offering](korbanot). A lottery is conducted and according to the results the children distribute the gifts on the eve of [Purim](Purim.html). In other cases a veteran family invites a young family or a single person, or the young invite the veterans (as determined in advance). Each prepares presents and these are exchanged when they get together for tea or coffee the day before [Purim](Purim.html). In other places a lottery is conducted and slips are drawn on which are written the names of a family or single person in the kibbutz.[[47]](#footnote-47)

**2)** There is a custom to send Mishloach Manot through a [third](three.html) person, since the word “Mishloach” is related to the word for messenger, “Shaliach.”

**3)** Matanot La’evyonim is fulfilled by giving money to at least [two](two.html) poor people on the day of [Purim](Purim.html). The gift should at least equal the value of a fast-[food](food.html) meal.

**4)** This is not a “family” obligation, but rather each person should perform the [mitzva](cmds613.html) themselves.

**5)** The money needn’t be given directly to a poor person, but can be given to a [community](community.html) representative - as long as the money is actually distributed to the poor on [Purim](Purim.html) day.

**6)** Matanos La’evyonim is a special [mitzva](cmds613.html), not to be included in the amount of money a person sets aside for charity during the rest of the year.

**7)** Maimonides writes that it is inappropriate to buy expensive Mishloach Manot, if this will come at the expense of larger gifts to the poor.

[**Laws**](law.html) **of the** [**Purim**](Purim.html) **Feast**

**1)** The [Purim](Purim.html) Seudah (feast) is held during the daytime. It is also customary to extend the meal until after dark. (Even if the meal finishes after dark, we still include the paragraph of “Al HaNissim in [Grace](grace.html) After Meals.)

**2)** If [Purim](Purim.html) falls on Friday, the festive meal is held in the morning, so that the meal ends in plenty of [time](time.html) to finish preparations for [Shabbat](sabbath.html).

**3)** It is also appropriate to have a “more festive than usual” dinner on [Purim](Purim.html) night. Some also have custom of [eating](eating.html) a bread in the morning.

**4)** If a person has limited funds, it is better to limit [one](one.html)’s spending on the [Purim](Purim.html) Seudah, and to increase [one](one.html)’s gifts to the poor.

**The Fast of Esther**

The custom of fasting on the day preceding [Purim](Purim.html) (TASANIT ESTHER - the Fast of Esther) to share in the heroic, but anguished, deed that Esther did for her people.

Every year, the “Fast of Esther” is held [one](one.html) of the days prior to [Purim](Purim.html). What is the source of this fast?

In the [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[48]](#footnote-48), Esther agrees to see the King uninvited, and asks the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People to fast for [three](three.html) days beforehand.

Why did she call for a fast? To lower the volume on our [physical](physical.html) pursuits in order to focus more acutely on our [spiritual](physical.html) selves. This facilitates the process of “teshuva” - literally “return.” We return to our essential state of [purity](purity.html). Esther called for a fast, knowing that through soul-searching the [Jews](gen-jew.html) would forge a [spiritual](physical.html) [connection](connection.html) necessary to make her mission successful. (And it paid off!)

This is not a fast of sadness. Rather, the purpose of the fast is elevation and inspiration.

Similarly, there was another fast during the [Purim](Purim.html) story: The [Jews](gen-jew.html) fasted and [prayed](prayer.html) on the 13th of [Adar](feasts.html) in preparation for their defense against Haman’s decree. The Torah prescribes that whenever a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) army goes to war, the soldiers should spend the previous day fasting. This is in stark contrast to a secular army which spends the day preparing weapons and armaments. A [Jew](gen-jew.html)’s best weapon is the recognition that strength and victory come only through [HaShem](hashem.html).[[49]](#footnote-49)

The fast before a war helps us to focus on the fact that our success or failure is in the [hands](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html). Additionally, the fact that we are [physically](physical.html) weakened when the battle begins, assures us that any victory cannot be attributed to our [physical](physical.html) prowess. Mortals have limits, but [HaShem](hashem.html) can achieve the impossible. (Case in point: the [Six](six.html) Day War.) As Mark Twain wrote, “All things are mortal but the [Jew](gen-jew.html); all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the [secret](sod.html) of his immortality?” It is actually this pre-battle fast that we commemorate every year before [Purim](Purim.html). In honor of the [Purim](Purim.html) heroine, the fast is called “Taanit Esther.”

The halachot ([laws](law.html)) of Taanit Esther:

**1)** The fast begins at dawn (“Alot Hashachar”) and ends after nightfall (“Tzais Hakochavim”).

**2)** No [eating](eating.html) or drinking is permitted. Though other aspects - like wearing shoes and washing - are permitted.

**3)** Since this is not a major fast, pregnant or nursing women are exempt from the fast, as are moderately ill people. If [one](one.html) is otherwise healthy but has a headache and finds it difficult to fast, he may [eat](eating.html), but is obligated to “make up” the fast another [time](time.html). In all cases, a competent Rabbi must be consulted.

**4)** If the 13th falls on [Shabbat](sabbath.html), we don’t fast that day, due to the honor of [Shabbat](sabbath.html). The fast is not even held on Friday, since this would adversely affect [Shabbat](sabbath.html) preparations. Rather, we observe the fast on Thursday, the 11th of [Adar](feasts.html).

**5)** It is customary to extend the fast until after the Megillah is read. (Except in walled cities, where the Megillah is read on the night of the 15th.)

**6)** During Mincha, the paragraph of “Aneinu” is added to the silent [Amidah](amida.html), during the blessing of “[Shema](shema.html) Koleinu.” In both Shacharit and Mincha, the chazzan inserts “Aneinu” as a separate blessing between “Geulah” and “Refuah.”

**7)** As on other public fasts, the Torah reading of “Vayechal Moshe” ([*Exodus*](exodus.html) *32:11-14, 34:1-10*) is read both at Shacharit and Mincha.

**8)** If a [Brit Mila](circumcz.html)h ([circumcision](circumcz.html)) falls on Taanit Esther, all guests may [eat](eating.html) from the Seudat [Mitzva](cmds613.html). The father, mother, and Sandek need not make up the fast, but other guests must make up the fast.

**9)** “Avinu Malkeinu” is said only in Shacharit, but not in Mincha. (An exception is if [Purim](Purim.html) falls on Sunday and the fast is observed on Thursday, then “Avinu Malkeinu” is in fact said in Mincha.)

**The custom of wearing costumes.**

The custom of wearing costumes is generally not observed among the Sephardim.

When someone is dressed up in a costume or mask, his identity is concealed. Rich or poor, smart or average, pretty or homely, we no longer perceive the [physical](physical.html), economic, or intellectual differences that often separate us. Yes, [one](one.html) costume is expensive, another more original, and there are hundreds of Queen Esthers. But it’s obvious that these are just externals. They aren’t the person inside the costume. On a very basic level, when we dress up on [Purim](Purim.html) our superficial differences are, for the moment, concealed. In the Megillat Esther, [HaShem](hashem.html) is concealed. The commentators point out that many [Jews](gen-jew.html), though they attended Achashverosh’s feast, did so as only an exterior display of support for the King. They didn’t really endorse the “feast of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) defeat,” they just gave the appearance. As a measure-for-measure punishment, [HaShem](hashem.html) gave these [Jews](gen-jew.html) a tremendous scare through Haman’s plot. [HaShem](hashem.html) “didn’t really mean it,” He just gave the appearance. This is [one](one.html) of the reasons why we wear masks and costumes on [Purim](Purim.html) – in keeping with the theme of “external appearance.”

**Drinking wine**

[One](one.html) is obligated to drink until he can no longer distinguish between “Arur Haman” and “Baruch Mordechai.”

However, [one](one.html) should not become so drunk that he will be negligent in performing [mitzvot](cmds613.html) – e.g. Netilat Yadayim (washing [hands](fourteen.html) before bread), saying the blessings of “HaMotzi” and [Grace](grace.html) After Meals, and [praying](prayer.html) Mincha and Maariv. It is improper to say [Grace](grace.html) After Meals or [pray](prayer.html) if a person is so drunk that he is “unfit to stand before the King.”

In contrast to the approach taken by the Palestinian sources, the [Talmud](orallaw.html) records the famous dictum of the noted sage Rava[[50]](#footnote-50): “A man is obligated to get drunk on [Purim](Purim.html) to the point where he can no longer distinguish between Cursed is Haman’ and `Blessed is Mordecai.’“

Later authorities had trouble accepting the ruling at [face](body.html) value. For an arch-rationalist like Maimonides it was unimaginable that the halachah could be condoning such actions; hence he reinterpreted the ruling to refer to drinking only enough to fall [asleep](mashal.html). Some authorities understood that the statement was rejected by the [Talmud](orallaw.html), a view which it indicates by juxtaposing to it an incident wherein Rabbah slaughters Rabbi Zera while under the influence (Rabbah is able to revive his colleague, though the latter politely refuses an invitation to the next year’s festivities).[[51]](#footnote-51)

**L.** Sending gifts to the poor (Matanos L’Evyonim)Another [commandment](cmds613.html) incumbent upon us is Matanos L’Evyonim,” gifts to the poor. As by Shalach manot, this [commandment](cmds613.html) has to be done on [Purim](Purim.html) day. This means that the money has to be distributed to the poor on [Purim](Purim.html), and therefore, if [one](one.html) gives money to someone on or before [Purim](Purim.html) to distribute to the poor, they should be sure that the money will be distributed to the poor on [Purim](Purim.html). Matanos L’Evyonim can be done with either money or [food](food.html). The accepted minimum amount is the cost of [one](one.html) inexpensive meal (approx. US$2.00). [One](one.html) has to give to [two](two.html) poor people this amount. The Chafetz Chayim quotes the Rambam who says that it is better to give more gifts to the poor than it is to have a bigger Seudah or give more Shalach Manot. The reason for this is that the biggest joy on [Purim](Purim.html) is gladdening the hearts of the poor. There is beautiful a custom before reading the Megillah in shul, to contribute [three](three.html) half-dollar coins (or their equivalent) to charity. This symbolizes the half-shekel which every [Jew](gen-jew.html) used to give as dues to the [Temple](temple.html) in [Jerusalem](city.html)[[52]](#footnote-52). The commentators ask: Why does the Torah specify a half-shekel instead of a whole? The answer is that by giving a half, each [Jew](gen-jew.html) realizes that he’ll never become a “complete” shekel unless he becomes part of the larger [community](community.html). Furthermore, the [halacha](walking.html) states that everyone – rich or poor – was to give no more and no less than a half-shekel. This is to [teach](teacher.html) that every [Jew](gen-jew.html) is equally important to our mission. Just as removing [one](one.html) [letter](letters.html) invalidates a [Torah Scroll](letters.html), so too the loss of [one](one.html) [Jew](gen-jew.html) hinders our destiny. Sometimes it is through our enemies that we come to realize: Every [Jew](gen-jew.html) is precious and integral to the [future](future.html) of our [nation](nations.html). The [Talmud](orallaw.html) says that the biggest problem of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People at the [time](time.html) of Mordechai and Esther was a lack of unity. It was the [wicked](wicked.html) Haman who reminded us that we stand together as [one](one.html) people: In plotting genocide, he referred to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People as “Am Echad” — and planned that they should literally “hang together.” In modern times as well, we’ve seen that the anti-Semite doesn’t distinguish between assimilated and Chasidic [Jews](gen-jew.html). It is particularly meritorious to send to someone you need to make up with. Just as we would never consider distancing ourselves from a good friend based on our disagreements, so too we should never consider distancing ourselves from any [Jew](gen-jew.html) (or group of [Jews](gen-jew.html)) based on our differences. In fact, the [Talmud](orallaw.html) says that the antithesis of evil in this [world](worlds.html) - [Amalek](amalek.html) - was born out of a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) refusal to accept others lovingly. Haman is a direct descendent and [spiritual](physical.html) heir to [Amalek](amalek.html). The [Talmud](orallaw.html) says that “Kol Yisrael Araivim” - each [Jew](gen-jew.html) is responsible [one](one.html) for the other. If the boat is sinking, we’re all going down. But when there is love and unity amongst us, even the wrongdoers become righteous and our enemies cannot harm us! For this reason, on [Purim](Purim.html) we give charity to anyone who asks, without investigating the validity of their need. (In contrast to the rest of the year, when we are obligated to ensure that our Tzedakah money is being disbursed most properly.[[53]](#footnote-53)) On [Purim](Purim.html), every [Jew](gen-jew.html) is worthy without question. [HaShem](hashem.html) treats us as we treat others. On [Purim](Purim.html), if we give others the “benefit of the doubt” and don’t check their worthiness, then [HaShem](hashem.html) doesn’t “check for worthiness” either. [Purim](Purim.html), therefore, is an auspicious [time](time.html) to ask - for closeness, unity and a speedy [redemption](redemption.html) for the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People.

# XVI. [Purim](Purim.html) [Events](feasts.html)

Before the outbreak of the Gulf War, the Rebbe stated, and repeated these statements throughout the war, that Israel is the safest place in the [world](worlds.html) based on [HaShem](hashem.html)’s promise that He is constantly watching the Holy Land. During and after the war, people everywhere agreed that the failed attempts of the SCUDs to destroy [Jewish](gen-jew.html) life was nothing less than miraculous. The war officially ended on [Purim](Purim.html).

In the [haggada](haggada.html), on the second night of [Passover](passover.html), we read of some [Purim](Purim.html) related [events](feasts.html) that occurred on the second night of [Passover](passover.html):

## It came to pass at midnight

He who caroused from the holy vessels (Belshazzar) was slain on that same night.

From the lions’ den was rescued he who interpreted the meaning of the terrors of the night.

Haman bore hatred in his [heart](body.html) and wrote proscriptions at night.

## In the [Triennial](shmita.html) Torah Lectionary

**Torah**: Vayiqra (Lev.) 16:1-34

**Ashlamatah**: Isaiah 6:1-8 + 8:10-11

[**Psalms**](psalms1.html): [Psalm](psalms1.html) 80:1-20

Our Torah portion speaks of [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im and the service of the [High Priest](priests.html). Yom HaKipurrim, according to our sages, can be divided as *Yom Ki* [*Purim*](Purim.html): *A Day like* [*Purim*](Purim.html). We are reading this on Shushan [Purim](katan.html) katan, in 5774. In the [bimodal](bimodal.html) Torah readings, we read this on the [first](one.html) [Sabbath](sabbath.html) after Yom Kipurim and the high Holy days. In a non-leap year we read this on the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) closest to [Purim](Purim.html). However, 5774 is a leap year[[54]](#footnote-54) so we are reading it on [Purim](katan.html) katan II. Our Ashlamata speaks of Yom Kipurim as it takes place in the ‘upper’ [Temple](temple.html) in [heaven](heaven.html). Thus we have connections between the [time](time.html) of the year and the Torah, the Ashlamata, and the [Psalm](psalms1.html).

# XVII. Tehillim ([Psalms](psalms1.html)) 30

| **Rashi** | **Targum** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. A [psalm](psalms1.html); a song of dedication of the House, of David. | 1. A praise song for the dedication of the [sanctuary](mikdash.html). Of David. |
| 2. I will exalt You, O Lord, for You have raised me up, and You have not allowed my enemies to rejoice over me. | 2. I will praise you, O LORD, for you made me stand erect, and did not let my enemies rejoice over me. |
| 3. O Lord, I have cried out to You, and You have healed me. | 3. O LORD my God, I [prayed](prayer.html) in Your presence and You healed me. |
| 4. O Lord, You have brought my soul from the grave; You have revived me from my descent into the Pit. | 4. O LORD, You raised my soul out of Sheol; You preserved me from going down to the pit. |
| 5. Sing to the Lord, His pious ones, and give thanks to His holy [name](name.html). | 5. Sing praise in the LORD's presence, you His devotees; and give thanks at the invocation of His holy [one](one.html). |
| 6. For His wrath lasts but a moment; life results from His favor; in the evening, [weeping](mashal.html) may tarry, but in the morning there is joyful singing. | 6. For His anger is but a moment; [eternal life](eternal.html) is His good pleasure. In the evening [one](one.html) goes to bed in [tears](mashal.html), but in the morning [one](one.html) rises in praise. |
| 7. And I said in my tranquility, "I will never falter." | 7. And I said when I dwelt in trust, I will never be shaken. |
| 8. O Lord, with Your will, You set up my mountain to be might, You hid Your countenance and I became frightened. | 8. O LORD, by Your will You prepared the mighty mountains; You removed Your presence, I became afraid. |
| 9. To You, O Lord, I would call, **and to the Lord I would supplicate**. | 9. In Your presence, O LORD, I will [cry](mashal.html) out; **and to You, O my God, I will** [**pray**](prayer.html)**.** |
| 10. "What gain is there **in my** [**blood**](body.html), in my descent to the grave? Will [dust](rock.html) thank You; will it recite Your truth? | 10. And I said, What profit is there **in my** [**blood**](body.html), when I descend to the grave? Can those who descend to the [dust](rock.html) praise You? Will they tell of Your faithfulness? |
| 11. Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me; O Lord, be my helper." | 11. Accept, O LORD, my [prayer](prayer.html), and have mercy on me; O LORD, be my helper. |
| 12. You have turned my lament into dancing for me; You loosened my sackcloth **and girded me with joy**. | 12. You turned my lament into my celebration; You loosened my sackcloth **and girded me with joy**. |
| 13. So that my soul will sing praises to You and not be silent. O Lord, my God, I will thank You forever. | 13. Because the nobles of the [world](worlds.html) will give You praise and not be silent, O LORD my God, I too will give You praise. |
|  |  |

**Rashi’s Commentary for:**[**Psalm**](psalms1.html) **30:1-13**

**1 A song of dedication of the House** which the Levites will say at the dedication of the House in the days of Solomon.

**2 I will exalt You, O Lord, for You have raised me up** Heb. דליתני , You have lifted me on high.

**and You have not allowed my enemies to rejoice over me** Heb. לי , like עלי , over me, for they would say, “David has no share in the [world](futures.html) to come,” but when they saw that the doors opened for the [Ark](ark.html) because of me, then they [knew](daat.html) that the Holy [One](one.html), blessed be He, had forgiven me for that [sin](sin.html), and the faces of David’s enemies became as black as the bottom of a pot.

**3 and You have healed me** That is the forgiving of iniquity, as (in Isa. 6:10), “and he repent and be healed.”

**4 from my descent into the Pit,** etc. Heb. מירדי , like מִיְרִדָתִי , from my descent into the Pit, that I should not descend into Gehinnom.

**5 Sing to the Lord, His pious ones** about what He did for me, because you can take refuge in Him, and He will benefit you; and even if you are experiencing pain, have no [fear](fear.html).

**6 For...but a moment** [For] His wrath lasts but a short [moment]; life results from His favor, there is long life in appeasing and placating Him.

**7 And I said in my tranquility**In my tranquility, I thought that I would never falter. However, the matter is not in my power, but in the power of the Holy [One](one.html), blessed be He. With His will, He set up my mountain, my greatness to be [my] mightbut when He hid His countenance from me, I was immediately frightened.

**9 To You, O Lord, I would call**I would call to You and supplicate constantly, saying before You: “What gain is there in my [blood](body.html), etc.,” and You heard my voice and turned my lament into dancing for me.

**12 You loosened** Heb. פתחת , alachas in Old French, to release, like (Gen. 24:32): “and he untied (ויפתח) the camels.” Our Sages, however, explained the entire [psalm](psalms1.html) as referring to Mordecai, Esther, and Haman, in Pesikta Zuta.

**and I said in my tranquility** Haman said this.

**To You, O Lord, I would call**Esther said this etc. until “be my helper.”

**You turned my lament into dancing for me** Mordecai and all Israel said this.

# XVIII. [Purim](katan.html) Katan (Little [Purim](Purim.html))

The day of [Purim](katan.html) Katan (the 14th of [Adar](feasts.html) I) should be viewed as a precious guest. In the 19-year [cycle](cycles.html) of regular years and leap years we have 19 [Purims](purims.html), but only 7 [Purim](katan.html) Katans, according to our [calendar](calendar.html).

“[Purim](katan.html) Katan” is also called the “[fourteenth](fourteen.html) of the [first](one.html) [Adar](feasts.html)” in the [Gemara](orallaw.html). Therefore, when we choose to use the term “[Purim](katan.html) Katan,” we are emphasizing that it has an aspect in which it is “smaller” than [Purim](Purim.html).

In the case of [Purim](Purim.html) the following day is Shushan [Purim](Purim.html), and in the case of [Purim](katan.html) Katan it is Shushan [Purim](katan.html) Katan.

[Purim](Purim.html) Kattan is a microcosm of the larger [Purim](Purim.html). It comes exactly 30 days before the “big” [Purim](Purim.html) and serves as an official reminder that it is [time](time.html) to begin preparing ourselves for the upcoming [holiday](festival.html). In essence, we have 30 extra days to put ourselves in the [holiday](festival.html) spirit.

There is a strong [connection](connection.html) between [Purim](Purim.html) and [Purim](Purim.html) Kattan. As the [Mishna](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html):

***Megillah 6b*** *‘There is no difference between the* [*fourteenth*](fourteen.html) *of the* [*first*](one.html)[*Adar*](feasts.html) *and the* [*fourteenth*](fourteen.html) *of the second* [*Adar*](feasts.html)[*save*](salvation.html) *in the matter of reading the Megillah and gifts to the poor’.*

In all other matters it would appear that both [Purims](purims.html) are the same, with [Purim](katan.html) Katan retaining the quality of being [first](one.html)!

It is customary to *recognize* the 14th of [Adar](feasts.html) I as “[Purim](katan.html) Katan“. This is done by making meals of a festive nature, not delivering eulogies and not fasting.

\* \* \*

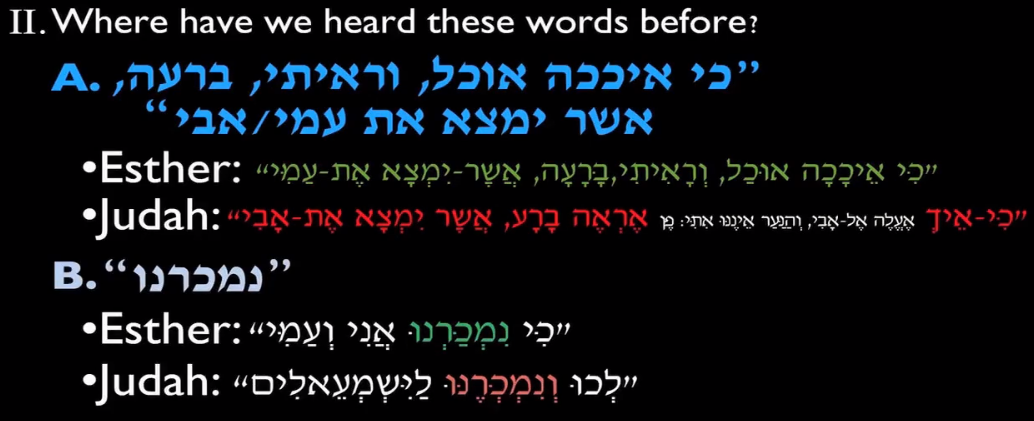
“All prophetic books and the sacred writings will cease (to be recited) during the Messianic era, except the Book of Esther. It will continue to exist, just as the [Five](five.html) Books of the Torah and the [Oral Torah](orallaw.html) that will never cease.” (Rambam, Megillah 2:18)

“All the holidays will cease except [Purim](Purim.html), as it says: *And its memory will not cease from their descendants”* (Esther 9:28) ([Midrash](orallaw.html), Yalkut Shimoni, Mishlei 9)

\* \* \*

Esther appears to have in mind the sale of [Yosef](joseph.html) when she goes to King Achashverush and pleads for her people. The [first](one.html) example, below, is a verbal tally consisting of a sentancve which which are eerily familiar. In the second example, Esther uses a a unique word which is found in only [one](one.html) other place, in the story of [Yosef](joseph.html).

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|  |  |
| כִּי אֵיכָכָה אוּכַל, וְרָאִיתִי, בָּרָעָה, אֲשֶׁר-יִמְצָא אֶת-עַמִּי; וְאֵיכָכָה אוּכַל וְרָאִיתִי, בְּאָבְדַן מוֹלַדְתִּי. | **Esther 8:6** for how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?' |
|  |  |
| לד כִּי-אֵיךְ אֶעֱלֶה אֶל-אָבִי, וְהַנַּעַר אֵינֶנּוּ אִתִּי: פֶּן אֶרְאֶה בָרָע, אֲשֶׁר יִמְצָא אֶת-אָבִי. | **Genesis 44:34** For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? lest I look upon the evil that shall come on my father.' |
|  |  |
| ד כִּי נִמְכַּרְנוּ אֲנִי וְעַמִּי, לְהַשְׁמִיד לַהֲרוֹג וּלְאַבֵּד; וְאִלּוּ לַעֲבָדִים וְלִשְׁפָחוֹת נִמְכַּרְנוּ, הֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי--כִּי אֵין הַצָּר שֹׁוֶה, בְּנֵזֶק הַמֶּלֶךְ | **Esther 7:4** for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my peace, for the adversary is not worthy that the king be endamaged.' |
|  |  |
| לְכוּ וְנִמְכְּרֶנּוּ לַיִּשְׁמְעֵאלִים, וְיָדֵנוּ אַל-תְּהִי-בוֹ, כִּי-אָחִינוּ בְשָׂרֵנוּ, הוּא; וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ, אֶחָיו | **Genesis 37:27** Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our [hand](fourteen.html) be upon him; for he is our brother, our flesh.' And his brethren hearkened unto him. |
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What we learn is that just as Yehudah saved Binyamin when he was threatened by Paro’s second in [command](cmds613.html), [Yosef](joseph.html), so Binyamin’s descendent, Esther, saved Yehuda when he was threatened by Haman’s decree.

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1. Talmud - Berachoth 33b [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. It would not be called cutting at all. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Why then should it be repeated in the present [Mishnah](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\orallaw.html)? [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Does he not accept the force of this argument? [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Not merely permitted. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Deut. XVI, 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Num. XXIX, 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Megilla 12a; Esther Rabba 2:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Rashi 5:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. p. 155 sefer Bnei Issachar teachings of Rebbe Tzvi Elimeilech of Dinov. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid. III, 11. Heb. המן The first word can be read as Haman, and the second can refer to the tree or gallows upon which Haman was hanged; cf. Esther 7:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:18. The second word is very like the name Esther, both in spelling and in sound. The verse in general foretells the many evils and troubles that shall befall Israel when they forsake the ways of God, and this was the case at the time of Esther, cf. Meg. 12a. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Shemot (Exodus) 30:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The aramaic translation of Onkelos renders the Hebrew by xxxx, which words both in spelling and in sound resemble: Mordecai. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Chullin 139b [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Haman was an Agagite who was a descendant of Amalek. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Bechorot 5b [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Rashi [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Bamidbar 21:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Rashi [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Shemot (Exodus) 30:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Megillat 10b [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Most of this study comes from “The ArtScroll Tanach Series”, “The Megillath - The Book of Esther [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The Nazarean Codicil is a more accurate way of describing the collection of oral Torah known commonly as the New Testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Which he held in the reigns of Belshazar, Darius and Cyrus. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Shabbat 88a [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. [Talmud](file:///F:\Word\PURIM\orallaw.html), Megillah 15b [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Sanhedrin 20b [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. See also Maimonides, Laws of the Temple 6:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. From Mesorah Publications, Esther. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. [Midrash](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\orallaw.html) Rabbah - Esther IX:2 Another explanation: NOW IT CAME TO PASS ON THE THIRD DAY, Israel are never left in dire distress more than three days. For so of Abraham it is written, On the third day [Abraham](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\avraham.html) lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off (ib. XXII, 4). Of Jacob’s sons we read, And he put them all together into ward three days (ib. XLII, 17). Of Jonah it says,  And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights (Jonah II, 1). The dead also will come to life only after three days,4 as it says,  On the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His presence (Hos. VI, 2). This miracle also [of Mordecai and Esther] was performed after three days of their fasting, as it is written, Now IT CAME TO PASS ON THE THIRD DAY, THAT ESTHER PUT ON HER ROYAL APPAREL, and she sent and invited Haman to the banquet on the fifteenth of Nisan.

    Rashi also indicates that the third day of the fast was the first day of Pesach. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. From Luke 6:1

    Strong’s number 1207 deuteroprotos, dyoo-ter-op’-ro-tos; from 1208 and 4413; second-first, i.e. (spec.) a designation of the Sabbath immediately after the Paschal week (being the second after [Passover](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\passover.html) day, and the first of the seven [Sabbaths](file:///D:\Word\PURIM\sabbath.html) intervening before Pentecost):-second...after the first. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Ezekiel [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Yaaros Devash [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Esther 3:9 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Megillah 13b [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Megillah 13b [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Esther. II, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Targum 5:1; Targum Sheni 3:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Megillat Ester 9:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Megillat 13b, Ester Rabba 7:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Megillah 16a, see Rashi s.v. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Midrash Mishlei 9:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Sefer HaMaamarim 5626, p. 34 [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Aish HaTorah’s Calendar Series [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Devarim - Deuteronomy 25:17-19 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. submitted by the Pedagogical Center, Kiryat Moriah, Department of Education, WZO. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Megillah 4:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Exodus 17:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Megillat 7b [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Davidson, Parody in Jewish Literature, New York 1907. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. see *Exodus 30:11-16* [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. See Jerusalem Talmud, Megillah 4:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. In seven out of nineteen years we add an additional month as part of the month of Adar. This means that in a leap year Adar is 60 days long instead of the normal 29 and a half days. In a leap year, Purim is pushed to the second Adar so that it is always 30 days before Passover. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)