

ESTHER EXPLAINED

פִּתְרוֹן אֲחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ

PITRON AḤASHWĒROSH



AUTHORED BY

Ḥākhām Ya'aqov ben Re'uvēn
(11th Century CE, Byzantium)

TRANSLATOR AND EDITOR

James E. Walker, II
(*Ya'aqov ben Avrāhām HaDāni*)

THE KARAITE PRESS



ISBN: 978-0-9969657-0-5

© The Karaite Jews of America 2016

Published by The Karaite Press

All rights reserved. The Karaite Jews of America asserts no copyright over the Hebrew text, vocalization, and emendations of *Ya'aqov ben Re'uvēn's* commentary on the Book of Esther.

COVER ART: Shimra Starr

DESIGN & LAYOUT: Raphaël Freeman, Renana Typesetting

About the Translator: James (Ya'aqov) Walker is a married father of two from Charlotte, NC, and is CEO of Informative Technologies, a startup committed to ending the digital divide and improving digital literacy. Mr. Walker is skilled in the digital preservation of rare Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts. In 2014, Mr. Walker was a North American semifinalist in the State of Israel's International Bible Competition. He serves as an active board member for a number of Jewish non-profit organizations from Uganda to Charlotte.

About this Edition: This edition contains the Book of Esther, footnoted in Hebrew and English with *Pitron Ahashwērosh*, literally meaning “Explaining Xerxes/*Ahashwērosh*”. *Pitron Ahashwērosh* is one of the earliest available Jewish commentaries on the Book of Esther, and is part of the Karaite (“Scripturalist”) Jewish scholar *Ya'aqov ben Re'uvēn's* 11th-century biblical commentary *Sefer ha'Osher* [*The Book of Wealth*]. The translation of the Book of Esther is the first known English-language translation of the book by a Karaite, and the translation of *Pitron Ahashwērosh* is the only known English-language translation of the commentary to date. The translator has added biblical citations in parentheses to both the Hebrew and English text of *Pitron Ahashwērosh*. Certain words in *Pitron Ahashwērosh* are written in Judeo-Greek, and the translator has identified those in both the Hebrew and English of the commentary. The reader will notice that the Karaite Jewish convention of preserving the original pronunciation of proper nouns has been

👉 maintained,

maintained, with the accommodation that names more familiar to Western audiences are used once in each chapter.¹ Because every translation is interpretive, readers are encouraged to explore the significance of the Hebrew texts for their own benefit.

About this Manuscript: The text of *Pitron Aḥashwērosh* has been transcribed from folios 309–312 of the manuscript “Recueil de textes karaïtes” (c. 1625 CE) located in Paris at Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des manuscrits, Hébreu 191. Please note that the additional diacritics, formatting, parenthetical remarks, and bracketed terminology shown in the Hebrew side of *Pitron Aḥashwērosh* were added to the original consonantal text for enhanced clarity and accessibility. Similarly, some biblical verses in the manuscript were truncated. Where necessary to assist the reader, the editor has supplied additional words from the verse to both the Hebrew and English text. We have endeavored to provide the most meaningful transcription and translation of the Paris manuscript. We would welcome efforts to bring the entire text of *Sefer ha'Osher* to mainstream audiences.

Acknowledgments: The present accomplishment of introducing modern readers to a Hebrew manuscript that has lain dormant for the last thousand years could not have been achieved without a significant amount of institutional and individual support. I owe the

¹ This edition does not use the Anglicized names for *Estēr* (Esther), *Hāmān* (Haman), *Mordokhai* (Mordecai), and *Washti* (Vashti), as these names are easily recognizable to most readers.

Karaite Jews of America (“κJA”) a debt of gratitude for welcoming my family into the covenant of Sinai, and for underwriting and funding this project. The κJA was established by the generation of Egyptian Karaite Jews who found refuge in the United States from persecution in Egypt during the middle of the last century. To Shawn Joe Lichaa, thank you for your patience, foresight, and your personal investments in ensuring this work meets the highest standards of quality. To the brilliant *Ḥazzān* [Cantor] *Ēli* son of the *Hākhām* [Scholar] *Magdi Shemu’el haLēwi*, thank you for combining your native fluency in modern Hebrew with your expertise in classical Hebrew grammar to review my vocalization and formatting of the original text and commentary. Similarly, I thank the leadership of the Karaite Jewish community of Israel, especially its chairman *Neria HaRo’eh*, J.D., for raising the profile of classic Karaite Jewish works among younger generations. Through it all, my help comes from the One Who made heaven and Earth, much of which was in the form of the daily support provided by my dear wife, Leah, and wonderful children, Naomi and Elijah.

James E. Walker, II (יַעֲקֹב בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם הַדָּנִי)

December 2015 (טֵבֵת ה'תשע"ו)

PROLEGOMENA

Esther as a Victorian Jewish Woman's Guidebook for Empowerment

The Karaite (“Scripturalist”) Jewish approach to *Esther* is one that emphasizes the keen leadership qualities of both the male and female protagonists. This is particularly evident in the Judeo-Arabic translation and commentary on the Book of *Esther* by the 10th century Karaite sage *Ḥākhām Yefet ben ‘Ēli*, who asserts that it was *Esther* who played the leading role in saving the Jewish people and opines that *Esther* herself wrote the initial text of the biblical book which came to bear her name.²

Rarely, however, does one encounter historical *women’s* perspectives on biblical matters. In that regard, the following selections from Grace Aguilar’s 1845 commentary entitled *Women of Israel* are meant to stir readers with the message of a prominent female writer, as well as to revive interest in a brilliant British commentator – sadly forgotten by history. Ms. Aguilar, herself a Sephardic

² A wonderful analysis and translation of *Ḥākhām Yefet ben ‘Ēli’s* work was produced by Dr. Michael G. Wechsler and published by Brill, under the title *The Arabic Translation and Commentary of Yefet ben ‘Eli the Karaite on the Book of Esther*.

Jewish woman, identified as an adherent of “Scriptural Judaism”.³

**Selections from Grace Aguilar’s 1845 Commentary
“Women of Israel” (Vol. II, pp. 113–118)**

*On Queen Esther’s Lasting Influence
Among Political Leaders*

If Mordecai retained so much influence, years after the events which had occasioned his accession to greatness had faded into the past, it is not likely that Esther retained less. Her public and private positions must both have been very much happier than before. Her influence over

3 Writing on the topic of “Jewish Religious Thought in Early Victorian London”, Steven Singer observed the direct link between the Judaism practiced and advocated by Ms. Aguilar and the “Neo-Karaism” of many progressive Torah-observant Jews in England during her time:

“The writings of Grace Aguilar, a leading Anglo-Jewish author of this period, provide a good example of how Neo-Karaite thinking was adopted by the progressives . . . Alarmed by Christian attempts to convert her brethren, she was moved to write a series of books in order to explain Judaism to English-speaking Jews and give Jewish youth pride in their religious heritage . . . In her writings Aguilar continually placed the Bible on a pedestal of unquestioned authority and simultaneously downgraded the Oral Law as having little importance . . . Again she criticized Jews who, ‘earnest in the cause, yet mistaken in the means, search and believe the writings of the Rabbis, take as divine truths all they have suggested, and neglect the Bible as not to be compared with such learned dissertations.’ . . . The views expressed by Aguilar were characteristic of the thinking of other progressives as well. For example, Aguilar developed the idea of a ‘scriptural Judaism’ that would be faithful to the Bible rather than the Oral Law.”

(AJS Review, Vol. 10, No. 2 [Autumn, 1985], pp. 189–191.)

❏ the

the heart of her lordly husband had been acknowledged, by a concession, which, in a Persian Emperor, was as unprecedented as it was extraordinary . . . Besides, he knew her faith, her race, and yet he continued, nay increased, his favor towards her: thus proving forgiveness of her previous silence on that important point. The beloved guardian of her youth was ever near her, second in rank to the king himself; her people honored and protected; and many who had before been heathens, embracing the covenant of the Lord, and swelling the Hebrew ranks; and all this, under the blessing of the Eternal, had been achieved by her conquest over herself, and her influence with the king. Was it likely, with such memories, that Esther would sink into a mere nonentity in the Persian Court? That she would not, even as Mordecai, use all her influence for that holy people to whom her whole heart still clung? And when we think attentively over all this, her character, her eventful history, her power over her husband, may we not, in some degree, be justified in the supposition, that the Artaxerxes who permitted the departure of his favorite Jewish cup-bearer, Nehemiah, and gave him letters to the keepers of the king's forests, and to the governors, &c., in furtherance of the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and to insure the safety of the Jews in Judea, was [of] the same monarch[y], who, under the name of Ahasuerus, had already so favored them in Persia?

*Purim as a Celebration of the Dignity of
Israelite Women in Every Generation*

It was not that Esther was a free agent, or had powers more extended than our own. Though the wife of a mighty monarch, she was captive; and so too are we. We, too, may individually be thrown into positions begirt with sadness, where the rites and ceremonies of our faith must be adhered to in the secrecy of our own hearths and hearts. Yet may we still be ready at the first call to identify ourselves with those who suffer for our faith – still be enabled to serve the good and holy cause . . . We can, each and all, determine to honor our religion ourselves, and so make it honored. We can infuse such seeds into the hearts of our sons, that Judaism may never want defenders, or such representatives as will raise it, even in its captive state, in the respect and consideration of the nations. Yes! though through the infinite mercy of the Eternal, such intercession as Esther's is no longer needed, still let us emulate Esther in the elevation and the acknowledgment of our holy faith – in our individual adherence to its spirit and form through every difficulty and through every woe. Let every returning festival of Purim find us as women, and in our own retired spheres, still loving, still knowing, still working for our holy religion, and determined, through social and domestic conduct, to make its glory, and its comfort, and its beauty, evident to all. We shall not see the fruit of this still and silent working; but we shall feel its efficacy in the calm and tranquil gladness of our hearts and homes.

הקדמת המחבר חכם יעקב בן ראובן על מגלת אסתר

זֶה הַסֵּפֶר יִקְבוּץ ז' עֲקָרִים, וְלָהֶם סֵג תּוֹלְדוֹת [ר"ל 63 תּוֹצְאוֹת]:
(א) לֹא יִתְחַרֶּה בְּרִשָּׁע; (ב) הוּא כִּי יַעֲשֶׂה הָאִישׁ רְצוֹן בְּעַל־דִּינּוֹ
וּמְרִיבוֹ כְּאֲשֶׁר יִכְשֶׁר לוֹ; (ג) שְׂיַחֲכֶה הָאִישׁ וַיִּשָּׂא עַל נַפְשׁוֹ כֹּל
רָעָה שְׂיַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ בְּעַל־דִּינּוֹ; וְהָ(ד) כִּי אִם יִרְאֶה בְּעַל־דִּינּוֹ מִתְגַּבֵּר
עָלָיו, חֲיִב עָלָיו שְׂיִכּוּף רֹאשׁוֹ עָלָיו; (ה) חֲיִב עַל הָאִישׁ, כְּשִׂירְאָה
לְבַעַל־רִיבוֹ כִּי הוּא חֲפֵץ לְהַרְגוֹ בְּחֻמָּס, חֲיִב עָלָיו לְהִתְחַנֵּן אֶל ה'
קוֹדֵם שְׂיִצְיַלְנוּ, וְאַחַר כֵּן יַחֲנֶן אִישׁ שְׂיִצְיַלְנוּ; וְהָ(ו) כִּי אִם יִתְגַּבֵּר
אִישׁ עַל בְּעַל־דִּינּוֹ, לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה בּוֹ כָּל רְעוֹת בְּמַהֲרָה, אֲלָא, יַחֲשׁוּב
בְּדַעַת קוֹדֵם כִּי "אִם אֶעֱשֶׂה־כֵּן, יָבוֹא עָלַי כּוֹ"; וְהָ(ז) שְׂיִנַּיִחַ דְּבַר
שְׂיִהֶיָה זְכָר עָלָיו לְדוֹרוֹת.

א"א [אָחָד אוֹמֵר]: "לְמָה לֹא הִזְכִּיר שֵׁם ה' בְּזֶה הַסֵּפֶר?" נֹאמֵר
כִּי אִם יֵהִיו כּוֹתְבִים בְּמַגְלָה עִם שֵׁם ה', הֵיוּ גַם הַגּוֹיִם, מְלַכֵי מְדֵי
וּפְרָס, יִכְתְּבוּ בְשֵׁם ה' שֵׁם בְּעַל.

[כְּדִי לְהַקֵּל עַל הַקּוֹרֵא לְמִצּוֹא אֶת 63 הָאֲרוּעִים הַנ"ל, הַעוֹרֵף הוֹסִיף
כּוֹכְבִית [*] לִיד הַפְּסוּקִים הַחֲשׁוּבִים בְּיוֹתֵר בְּהַבְנַת הַהֶקְשֶׁר.]

Hākhām Ya'aqov ben Re'uvēn's
Preface to His Commentary on Esther

This book incorporates seven principles, in the form of sixty-three events: *First* of all, do not try to compete with a wicked person. The *second* principle is that a person should do whatever an adversary or rival wants, if it is appropriate for him to do so. *Thirdly*, a person should be patient, and keep in mind all the harm that his adversary might do to him. *Fourthly*, if one sees his adversary gaining power over him, then is it his responsibility to keep a low profile. *Fifthly*, there is a duty for the person who sees that his rival wants to violently kill him; he is obligated before anything else to seek the mercy of God to rescue him, and only afterwards should he beg a man to rescue him. *Sixthly*, if a person gets the upper hand over his adversary, he should not rush to do him any harm; rather, he should think rationally beforehand, along the lines of, “If I do *this*, then *that* will happen to me.” And *seventhly*, one should leave behind a statement that should serve as a record for future generations.

Someone might say, “Why didn’t he mention God’s name in this book?” We would say that if they would have written this scroll with the name of God, then the Gentile emperors of Media/*Māday* and Persia/*Pāras* would replace the name of God with the name of [the deity] *Ba'al*.

[To aid the reader in identifying the 63 events alluded to by the commentator, the translator has suggested 63 key verse numbers with an asterisk (*) throughout the translation.]

א * וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם אֲחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ הוּא אֲחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ הַמֶּלֶךְ מֵהַדּוֹ
וְעַד-כּוֹשׁ שֶׁבַע וְעֶשְׂרִים וּמֵאָה מְדִינָה: **ב** בַּיּוֹם הַהֵם
כְּשֶׁבַת. הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ עַל כִּפְּאֵי מַלְכוּתוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּשׁוֹשַׁן
הַבְּיָרָה: **ג** בְּשָׁנַת שְׁלוֹשׁ לְמַלְכוֹ עָשָׂה מִשְׁתֵּה לְכָל-שָׂרָיו
וְעַבְדָּיו חֵיל. **ד** פָּרַס וּמְדֵי הַפְּרָתִים וְשָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת לִפְנֵיו:
ה בְּהִרְאֹתוֹ אֶת-עֵשֶׂר כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ וְאֶת-יָקָר תַּפְאֲרָת
גְּדוּלָּתוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים שְׂמוֹנִים וּמֵאֵת יוֹם: **ו** * וּבְמָלוּאֵת |
הַיּוֹמִים הָאֵלֶּה עָשָׂה הַמֶּלֶךְ לְכָל-הָעַם הַנִּמְצָאִים בְּשׁוֹשַׁן
הַבְּיָרָה לְמַגְדוֹל וְעַד-קָטָן מִשְׁתֵּה שֶׁבַעַת יָמִים בַּחֲצַר

[א:א] וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם אֲחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ - הוא רביעי לבלשצר (דניאל ה:כב-לא),
ושלישי למלכי פרס (עזרא ד:ה-ו; דניאל ט:א); ואחשורוש הם ב.
[א:א] מֵהַדּוֹ וְעַד-כּוֹשׁ - הוא מן מזרח עד המערב, כי הדו במזרח וכוש
במערב. ד"א [דבר אחר], כמו כִּי-הוּא רִדְהּ | כָּל-עַבְד הַנָּהָר מִתְּפֹסֵחַ וְעַד-
עֲזָה בְּכָל-מַלְכֵי עַבְד הַנָּהָר וְשָׁלוֹם הָיָה לוֹ מִכָּל-עַבְרָיו מִסְבִּיב: (מלכים א' ה:ד).
[א:א] מְדִינָה - כמו ארץ מצרים כלה, [או] ארץ כנען (בראשית מז:ו,כז).
[א:ה] וּבְמָלוּאֵת - אחר מלאת.

1 ^{1:1*} **And so it was in the days of Xerxes/Ahashwērosh** (the *Ahashwērosh* who used to reign from **India/Hoddu to Ethiopia/Kush**: 127 provinces) ^{1:2} that in those days, as Emperor *Ahashwērosh* sat upon his Imperial Throne, which was in Susa/*Shushan* (the capital):

^{1:3*} In the third year of his reign, he held a banquet for all of his governors and staff – the military of Persia/*Pāras* and Media/*Māday*, the nobility, and the provincial governors being before him – ^{1:4} in which he displayed the wealth of his glorious Empire and the grandeur of his expensive decorations for many days: 180 days. ^{1:5*} **And when these days were fulfilled**, the Emperor held a banquet for all the people that were present in *Shushan* (the capital) – from upper to lower [class] – for

^{1:1} **And so it was in the days of Xerxes/Ahashwērosh** – He was the fourth [Emperor] since Belshazzar/*Belshaṣṣar* [the last Emperor of Babylon (Daniel 5:22–31)], and was the third Persian Emperor (Ezra 4:5–6; Daniel 9:1). There were two men by the name of *Ahashwērosh* (Xerxes the Great and Xerxes II).

^{1:1} **From India/Hoddu to Ethiopia/Kush** – [Generally meaning,] “*from the East to the West*,” because India/*Hoddu* is in the east, and Ethiopia/*Kush* is in the west. Alternatively, they were [the actual frontiers], similar to “for he had dominion . . . from Tiphseh/*Tīfseh* to Gaza/*Azzāh*” (1 Kings/*Melākhim* 5:4).

^{1:1} **Provinces** – Just like the entire land of Egypt/*Miṣrayim* (Genesis/*BeRē’shit* 47:6, 27; Exodus/*Shemot* 8:17–18). [Or, a single country like] the land of Canaan/*Kena’an*.

^{1:5} **And when these days were fulfilled** – *After* these days were fulfilled.

גַּנְת בֵּיתֶן הַמֶּלֶךְ: וְחֹדֶר פְּרָפֶס וּתְזֻלַּת אָחוּז בְּחִבְלֵי־בֹיץ
וְאֲרָגְמֹן עַל־גְּלִילֵי כֶסֶף וְעַמּוּדֵי שֵׁשׁ מְטוֹת וְזָהָב וְכֶסֶף
עַל רִצְפַּת בַּהֲטֹשֵׁשׁ וְדָר וְסִחָרֶת: ז וְהַשְּׁקוֹת בְּכָלֵי זָהָב
וְכֵלִים מְכֻלִּים שׁוֹנִים וַיִּין מַלְכוּת רַב כִּיד הַמֶּלֶךְ: ח וְהַשְּׁתִּיָּה
כַּדָּת אֵין אֵינֶם בֵּי־כֶן וְיֶסֶד הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל פֶּלֶאֱרַב בֵּיתוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת
כַּרְצוֹן אִישׁ־וְאִישׁ: ט* גַּם וְשִׁתִּי הַמְלִפָּה עֲשֵׂתָה מִשְׁתָּה

- [א:ה] בַּחֲצֵר גַּנְת - כי עם הארץ היה הרבה, ולא היה יכול להם (ר"ל לא היה יכול להכיל אותם) הבית.
- [א:ו] רִצְפַּת בַּהֲטֹשֵׁשׁ - הסרקע ששלה רצפה כמו מרצפת אבנים עם בהט ושש, והם ממין היקרים שיש להם עינים-עינים.
- [א:ז] שׁוֹנִים - זה מחלף מזה בתואר.
- [א:ח] וַיִּין מַלְכוּת - יקבוצ ד דברים: ה(א) ישן ולא חדש, ב(ב) מבסם וריח טוב, ג(ג) טעמו טוב, ד(ד) עינו טוב.
- [א:ט] כִּיד - ידו היתה משגת.
- [א:יח] כַּדָּת - כמנהג, ד"א [דבר אחר], המלך לא חלפו.
- [א:יח] יֶסֶד - כמו יסודו הבנים את-היכל יהוה ויעמידו הכהנים מלבשים בחצצרות והלויים בני-אסף במצלתיים להלל את-יהוה על-ידי דויד מלך-ישראל: (עזרא ג:י).

seven days **in the courtyard** of the Emperor's Garden Pavilion. ^{1:6} [The interior was decorated with] bleached linen, fine cotton, and sky-blue [fabric], bordered with fine linen and purple cords on silver rods and marble pillars; [and there were] golden and silver beds on a **pavement of alabaster, marble**, mother-of-pearl, and onyx. ^{1:7} Then they served drinks in golden dishes (and dishes of **assorted dishes**) and the **royal wine** was in abundance, as if by the Emperor's own hand. ^{1:8} And the drinking was **legal**, without enforcement (for that is what the Emperor had **established** for every official at his mansion: that each man could do as he desired). ^{1:9*} Queen *Washti* also held a women's banquet at the

1:5 **In the courtyard** – Because the people of the land were so numerous that the interior would not have been able to contain them.

1:6 **A pavement of alabaster, marble** – The ground floor was tiled with alabaster and marble stone, which resemble the types of precious [stones] that give off a reflection.

1:7 **Assorted** – This one was different from that one in appearance.

1:7 **And the royal wine** – This encompasses four things: (1) it was aged and not new, (2) it was spiced and had a good aroma, (3) its taste was good, and (4) it had a good appearance.

1:7 **As if by the Emperor's own hand** – What his hand could reach [*i.e.*, what he could personally afford to spend].

1:8 **Legal** – Customary. Alternatively, [it means] the Emperor did not repeal it.

1:8 **Established** – [This word, יָסַד/*yissad*,] is similar to “and the builders *laid the foundation* of the house” (Ezra 3:10).

נָשִׁים בַּיִת הַמְּלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר לַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֹׁרוֹשׁ: י בַּיּוֹם
 הַשְּׁבִיעִי כָּטוֹב לִב־הַמֶּלֶךְ בֵּינָן אָמַר לְמַהוֹמָן בִּזְתָּא
 חֲרִבוּנָא בְּגִתָּא וְאַבְגָּתָא זֶתֶר וְכַרְפָּס שְׁבַעַת הַסְּרִיסִים
 הַמְּשֻׁרְתִים אֶת־פְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֹׁרוֹשׁ: יא לְהַבִּיא אֶת־
 וְשֵׁתִי הַמְּלַפָּה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּכֶתֶר מַלְכוּת לְהַרְאוֹת הָעַמִּים
 וְהַשָּׂרִיסִים אֶת־יְפִיָּהּ כִּי־טוֹבֶת מְרֹאָה הִיא: יב* וְתַמְאֵן

[א:ט] בית המלכות - לא בחצר, כי אם בהיכלו. א"א [אחד אומר]: "למה
 נסמכה מגלת איכה למגלת אחשורוש [ר"ל למגלת אסתר]?" נאמר כי
 במגלת איכה יזכור צרות ישראל וחרבן המקדש ואיך הגלו בין הגוים,
 וזכר בזה הספר איך עזרם ה' בין הגוים שנדע כי ה' מיסר לישראל על
 דרך תוכחה לא על דרך נקמה. וזה הספר נכתב אחר טו שנה לגזרת
 כורש (עזרא א).

[א:י] למהומן בזתא... שבעת הסריסים - לא סריס; ברבטי [חצרנים
 מזקנים בלטינית, ר"ל שהסריסים ההם היו ממנים שאינם מסורסים].
 [א:יב] ותמאן - א"א [אחד אומר]: "למה מאנה לבוא?" נאמר: פחדה
 שיאמר א' [אחד] מהם כי "בתי... או אשתי יפה ממנה!". ד"א [דבר
 אחר], יראה כי אולי אם יצא יין המלך ממנו וישמע המלך כי ראו אותה
 - יהרגנה, כי יאמר "אני שכור [הייתי] ולמה קבלת ממני?!"

Imperial Mansion – the one belonging to Emperor *Ahashwērosh*.

1:10 On the seventh day, when the Emperor's heart felt good from the wine, he commanded *Mehumān*, *Bizzetā*, *Ḥarvonā*, *Bigtā*, *Avagtā*, *Zētar*, and *Kharkas*, the seven **eunuchs** who served in the presence of Emperor *Ahashwērosh*, 1:11 to bring Queen *Washti* before the Emperor with the Imperial Crown, in order to show off her beauty to the peoples and governors (because she was an attractive woman). 1:12* But Queen *Washti*

1:9 **The Imperial Mansion** – Not in the courtyard, but inside the palace. Someone might say, [by the way,] “Why is the scroll of Lamentations/*Ēkhāh* placed next to the scroll of *Ahashwērosh* (*Estēr*)?” We would say that in the scroll of *Ēkhāh*, one will remember the sorrows of the people of Israel, the destruction of the Temple and how they were exiled among the nations; yet in *this* book he remembers how God helped them while among those nations, so that we would know that God is *disciplining* Israel as a means of chastisement, and not as a means of getting revenge. This book was written about 15 years after the decree of Cyrus/*Koresh* [the Emperor of Persia, allowing the return from Babylon] (Ezra 1).

1:10 **Eunuchs** – Not castrated, [but rather in the sense of the Byzantine rank of] *Barbati* [“bearded-ones” in Latin: a designation for non-castrated senior court officials serving a monarch].

הַמַּלְכָּה וְשִׁתִּי לְבוֹא בְּדַבַּר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר בְּיַד הַסָּרִיסִים
וַיִּקְצֹף הַמֶּלֶךְ מְאֹד וַחֲמָתוֹ בַּעֲרָה בּוֹ: יג וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ
לְחַכְמִים יָדְעֵי הָעֵתִים כִּי־כֵן דְּבַר הַמֶּלֶךְ לִפְנֵי כָּל־יָדְעֵי
דַּת וְדִין: יד וְהִקְרַב יָלְוֵי כְּרִשְׁנָא שִׁתָּר אֲדַמְתָּא תְּרִשִׁישׁ
מָרְס מָרְסָנָא מְמוּכָן שְׁבַעַת שָׂרֵי ו פָּרְס וּמְדֵי רֵאִי פְּנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיְשָׁבִים רֵאשְׁנָה בְּמַלְכוּת: טו כְּדַת מְה־לְעִשׂוֹת
בְּמַלְכָּה וְשִׁתִּי עַל ו אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עֲשִׂתָּה אֶת־מַאֲמַר הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֲחֻשׁוֹרוּשׁ בְּיַד הַסָּרִיסִים: טז* וַיֹּאמֶר מוּמְכָן
[מְמוּכָן] לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַשָּׂרִים לֹא עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ לְבַדּוֹ עֲוֹתָהּ
וְשִׁתִּי הַמַּלְכָּה כִּי עַל־כָּל־הַשָּׂרִים וְעַל־כָּל־הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר

[א:יג] ידְעֵי הָעֵתִים - עֵתֵי הַמַּלְכוּת.

[א:יד] רֵאשְׁנָה בְּמַלְכוּת - מַע' [מַעֲנָה/מִשְׁמַעוֹתוֹ] פֶּעַם רֵאשׁוֹנָה אוֹ כֶּסֶף

רֵאשׁוֹנָה (ר"ל רֵאשׁוֹן) קָרוֹב לְמֶלֶךְ.

[א:טז] וַיֹּאמֶר מוּמְכָן [מְמוּכָן] - י"א [יֵשׁ אוֹמְרִים] הוּא הַמֶּן.

refused to come at the Emperor's word that was by the hand of the eunuchs; and so the Emperor became furious, and his rage burned inside of him. ^{1:13} And then the Emperor said to the scholars who were experts in **current affairs** (because the Emperor's order also went before all legal and judicial experts) ^{1:14} – and next to him were *Karshenā*, *Shētār*, *Admātā*, *Tarshish*, *Meres*, *Marsenā*, and *Memukhān*, the seven governors of *Pāras* and *Māday* who could see the Emperor personally, and **who had first seats** in the Empire ^{1:15} – “Legally, what should we do about Queen *Washti*, as she has not followed Emperor *Ahashwērosh*'s order that was by the hand of the eunuchs?”

^{1:16*} And then *Memukhān* said (in front of the Emperor and the governors):

“Not only has Queen *Washti* offended the Emperor, but also all the governors and nationalities that are in all of the provinces belonging to Emperor

^{1:12} **Refused** – Someone might say, “Why did she refuse to come?” We would say that she was afraid that one of them might say, “My daughter . . .” or, “My wife . . . is more beautiful than she is!” Alternatively, there was concern that, perhaps, if the [influence of] wine might leave the Emperor, and he heard that they were looking at her, that he would have her killed, because he might say, “I was intoxicated, so why did you let me [do that]?”

^{1:13} **Current affairs** – [Literally, “the times”:] The [news, or] current affairs [affecting] the Empire.

^{1:14} **Who had first seats** – Meaning, [sitting] first in respect to time, or the first throne closest to the Emperor's.

^{1:16} *Memukhān* – Some say that this is [another name for] *Hāmān*.

בְּכָל־מְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֹׁדָוֶשׁ: י' כִּי־יֵצֵא דְבַר־הַמֶּלֶכָה
עַל־כָּל־הַנָּשִׁים לְהַבְזֹת בְּעֲלֵיהֶן בְּעֵינֵיהֶן בְּאִמְרוֹם הַמֶּלֶךְ
אַחֲשֹׁדָוֶשׁ אָמַר לְהַבִּיא אֶת־וְשֹׁתֵי הַמֶּלֶכָה לִפְנֵינוּ וְלֹא־
בָּאָה: יח וְהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה תֵּאמְרָנָה ׀ שָׂרוֹת פָּרִס־וּמְדֵי אֲשֶׁר
שָׁמְעוּ אֶת־דְּבַר הַמֶּלֶכָה לְכָל־שָׂרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וּכְדֵי בִּזְיוֹן
וְקִצְף: יט אִם־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב יֵצֵא דְבַר־מַלְכוּת מִלִּפְנֵינוּ
וּכְתַב בְּדַתִּי פָּרִס־וּמְדֵי וְלֹא יַעֲבֹד אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תָבֹא וְשֹׁתֵי
לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֹׁדָוֶשׁ וּמַלְכוּתָהּ יִתֵּן הַמֶּלֶךְ לְרַעוּתָהּ
הַטּוֹבָה מִמֶּנָּה: כ וְנִשְׁמַע פְּתָגָם הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה בְּכָל־
מַלְכוּתוֹ כִּי רַבָּה הִיא וְכָל־הַנָּשִׁים יִתְּנוּ יָקָר לְבַעֲלֵיהֶן
לְמַגְדוֹל וְעַד־קִטָּן: כא וַיִּיטֵב הַדְּבָר בְּעֵינֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַשָּׂרִים
וַיַּעַשׂ הַמֶּלֶךְ כַּדְּבָר מִמּוֹכֵן: כב* וַיִּשְׁלַח סְפָרִים אֶל־כָּל־
מְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה כְּכַתְּבָהּ וְאֶל־עַם וְעַם
כָּל־שׁוֹנוֹ לְהִזְוֹת כָּל־אִישׁ שָׂרָד בְּבֵיתוֹ וּמִדְּבַר כָּל־שׁוֹן עִמּוֹ:
ב אַ אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה כָּשֶׁךְ חֲמַת הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֹׁדָוֶשׁ

Ahashwērosh.^{1:17} For the Queen's statement might spread to all wives, so as to make their husbands contemptible in their eyes, by saying, 'The Emperor, *Ahashwērosh*, ordered Queen *Washti* to be brought in before him, and *she* didn't come...!' ^{1:18} Even today, the first ladies of *Pāras* and *Māday* who have heard of the Queen's statement say so to all of the Emperor's governors – and with excessive contempt and anger! ^{1:19*} If it seems good to the Emperor, let an imperial statement be published by him, and let it be written among the laws of *Pāras* and *Māday* (which cannot be changed) that *Washti* will no longer come before Emperor *Ahashwērosh*, and that the Emperor will grant her royal estate to a better peer than her. ^{1:20} And so the Emperor's decree (which he should make) would be heard throughout his entire Empire – great as it is – and all wives will give their husbands respect: from upper to lower [class]."

^{1:21} And the statement seemed good to the Emperor and the governors; and so the Emperor acted on *Memukhān's* statement. ^{1:22*} He then sent scrolls into all the Emperor's provinces – into each and every province with its own script, and to every nationality with its own language – to make every husband authoritative in his house, while speaking in the manner of his national language.

2 ^{2:1} After these things, when Emperor Xerxes'/*Ahashwērosh's* anger subsided, he remembered *Washti*:

זָכַר אֶת־וְשֵׁתִי וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂתָה וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־נִגְזַר עָלַיָּהּ:
ב* וַיֹּאמְרוּ נַעֲרֵי־הַמֶּלֶךְ מִשְׁרָתֵנוּ יִבְקָשׁוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ נַעֲרוֹת
בְּתוּלוֹת טוֹבוֹת מֵרָאֵה: ג וַיִּפְקֹד הַמֶּלֶךְ פְּקִידִים בְּכָל־
מְדִינֹת מַלְכוּתוֹ וַיִּקְבְּצוּ אֶת־כָּל־נַעֲרֵה־בְּתוּלָה טוֹבֹת
מֵרָאֵה אֶל־שׁוֹשַׁן הַבִּירָה אֶל־בֵּית הַנָּשִׁים אֶל־יַד הַגָּאָה
סָרִיס הַמֶּלֶךְ שֹׁמֵר הַנָּשִׁים וְנִתּוֹן תַּמְרוּקֵיהֶן: ד וְהַנַּעֲרָה
אֲשֶׁר תִּיטֵב בְּעֵינֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ תִּמְלֹךְ תַּחַת וְשֵׁתִי וַיִּיטֵב הַדָּבָר
בְּעֵינֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיַּעַשׂ בָּן: ה אִישׁ יְהוּדִי הָיָה בְּשׁוֹשַׁן
הַבִּירָה וְשֵׁמוֹ מֵרְדֳּכִי בֶן יָאִיר בֶּן־שִׁמְעִי בֶן־קִישׁ אִישׁ
יְמִינִי: ו אֲשֶׁר הִגְלָה מִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִם־הַגְּלָה אֲשֶׁר הִגְלָתָהּ
עִם יְכַנְיָה מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה אֲשֶׁר הִגְלָה נְבוּכַדְנֶאֶצַּר מֶלֶךְ
בָּבֶל: ז וַיְהִי אַמּוֹן אֶת־הַדָּפָה הִיא אֶסְתֵּר בִּתְּדֹדוֹ כִּי אֵין

[ב:א] וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־נִגְזַר עָלַיָּהּ - גְּזֵרַת מוֹת.

[ב:ה] אִישׁ יְהוּדִי - נִקְרָא יְהוּדִי שֶׁהִגְלָה בְּשִׁבְט יְהוּדָה; ד"א [דָּבָר אַחֵר],
בָּזָה הַשֵּׁם נִקְרָאוּ בְּגִלוֹת.

[ב:ז] הַדָּפָה הִיא אֶסְתֵּר - הָיוּ לָהּ ב' שִׁמוֹת, כְּמוֹ: יִסְכָּה = שָׂרִי. א"א [אַחַד
אוֹמֵר]: "לָמָּה לֹא לָקַח מֵרְדֳּכִי לְאֶסְתֵּר? הֲלֹא זֶה מֵתֵר?" נא' [נֹאמֵר]:
הָיָה אִישׁ זָקֵן וְעוֹבֵד לַה' וְלֹא חִפְץ שִׁיקַח נַעֲרָה קְטַנָּה.

both what she had done **and what was decreed against her.** ^{2:2*} Then the Emperor's younger assistants said:

“Let beautiful young virgins be sought out for the Emperor. ^{2:3} Let the Emperor appoint officers in all the provinces of his Empire, and then they will bring all the beautiful young virgins together at Susa/*Shushan* (the capital) into the harem, under the custody of *Hēgē*, the Emperor's eunuch [who is] the women's chaperone. Let cosmetics be given to them, ^{2:4} and may the lady who seems good to the Emperor's eyes become queen instead of *Washti*.”

The statement seemed good to the Emperor, and so he did.

^{2:5} There was a **Jewish/*Yehudi*** man in *Shushan* (the capital) whose name was *Mordokhai*, the son of *Yā'ir*, the son of *Shim'i*, the son of *Qish*, a man from Benjamin/*Yemini*, ^{2:6} who had been exiled from Jerusalem/*Yerushālayim* with the captives who had been carried away with Jeconiah/*Yekhānyāh*, king of Judah/*Yehudāh* (whom Nebuchadnezzar/*Nevukhadnešsar*, the Emperor of Babylon/*Bāvel* had exiled). ^{2:7*} He adopted ***Hadassāh***,

2:1 And what was decreed against her – A death sentence.

2:5 A Jewish/*Yehudi* man – He is called Jewish/*Yehudi* because he was deported from the tribe of Judah/*Yehudāh*; alternatively, they were called by this term in the Exile/*Gālut*.

2:7 *Hadassāh*, who was *Estēr* – She had two names, just as *Yiskāh* was *Sārāi*. Someone might say, “Why didn't *Mordokhai* marry *Estēr*; isn't that allowed?” We would say that he was an elderly man and a servant of God, so he wouldn't marry a young lady [who was a] minor.

לָהּ אָב וְאִם וְהַנְּעֵרָה יִפְתָּהּ אֶל וְטוֹבָת מְרֵאָה וּבְמֹת
 אָבִיהָ וְאִמָּהּ לְקַחְהָ מִרְדֵּכִי לֹא לְבַת: ח וַיְהִי בְּהַשְׁמָע
 דְּבַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ וְדָתוֹ וּבְהַקְבִּיץ נְעָרוֹת רַבּוֹת אֶל־שׁוֹשַׁן
 הַבַּיְרָה אֶל־יַד הַגִּי וְהַלְקֹחַ אֶסְתֵּר אֶל־בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־יַד
 הַגִּי שְׁמֵר הַנְּשִׁימִים: ט* וַתֵּיטֵב הַנְּעֵרָה בְּעֵינָיו וַתִּשָּׂא חֶסֶד
 לְפָנָיו וַיְבַהֵל אֶת־תַּמְרוּקִיָּה וְאֶת־מְנוּתָהּ לְתֵת לָהּ וְאֵת
 שִׁבְעַת הַנְּעָרוֹת הַרְּאִיּוֹת לְתֵת־לָהּ מִבֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁנֶה

[ב:ח] דְּבַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ וְדָתוֹ - כִּי נִשְׁמַע דְּבַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּשׁוֹשׁוֹן וְדָתוֹ בְּשֶׁאֵר הָעָרִים;
 ד"א [דְּבַר אַחֵר], דְּבַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ הוּא גְזָרְתוֹ וְדָתוֹ הוּא הַסֵּפֶר שֶׁכָּתַב; ד"א [דְּבַר
 אַחֵר], דְּבַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּעַד שְׁנֵי קְבוּצִים: רֵאשׁוֹן בִּיד הַפְּקִיד וְשֵׁנִי בִיד הַגָּא;
 ד"א [דְּבַר אַחֵר], דְּבַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּעֲבוּר וְשֵׁנִי, וְדָתוֹ בַּעֲבוּר מַלְכוּתָהּ, אוֹ, וַיִּפְקֹד
 הַמֶּלֶךְ פְּקִידִים (אֶסְתֵּר ב:ג).

[ב:ט] וַיְבַהֵל - זֶה הַגָּא.

[ב:ט] אֶת־תַּמְרוּקִיָּה - שֶׁל אֶסְתֵּר מִנְפָּשׁוֹ.

[ב:ט] תַּמְרוּקִיָּה - פְּשִׁימִיתִיָּאָה [ק] פּוֹרִיָּאָה [בִּיּוֹנִית יְהוּדִית, "אִיפּוֹר
 לְהוֹפְעָה"] שֶׁהֵם יוֹרְקוּ עַל הַפְּגָמִים.

[ב:ט] מְנוּתָהּ - הֵם מְנַחוֹת וּמְאָכְלוֹת טוֹבוֹת [ר"ל טוֹבִים] וּבְגָדִים.

[ב:ט] וְאֵת שִׁבְעַת הַנְּעָרוֹת - הַמְּנַהֵג שִׁיתְגּוֹ לְהֹן ז' נְעָרוֹת מְשֻׁרְתוֹת לָהּ.

[ב:ט] וַיִּשְׁנֶה - הוֹדִיעַ כִּי תַמְרוּקִיָּה וּמְנוּתָהּ וְגַם שֶׁל נְעָרוֹתֶיהָ מְשֻׁנִּים
 לְטוֹב יוֹתֵר.

who was *Estēr* his cousin, because she did not have a father or mother (and the young lady was also shapely and good-looking), so when her father and mother had died, *Mordokhai* took her in as his own daughter. ^{2:8} So it happened, when **the Emperor's statement and his law** were heard, and when many young women were gathered together to *Shushan* (the capital) into the custody of *Hēgai*, that *Estēr* was [also] taken to the Imperial Mansion into the custody of *Hēgai*, the women's chaperone. ^{2:9*} The young lady seemed good to him, and she obtained kindness from him, **and so he rushed to give her: her own cosmetics, her own portions, and seven maids** who were the most fitting to be assigned to her from the Imperial Mansion. **He then**

2:8 The Emperor's statement and his law – Because “the Emperor's statement” was heard in *Shushan*, whereas “his law” was in the rest of the cities. Alternatively, “the Emperor's statement” was his decree, and “his law” was the scroll that he wrote. Or, “the Emperor's statement” was for two groups: the first was through the overseer, and the second was through *Hēgē*. Otherwise, “the Emperor's statement” was regarding *Washti*, and “his law” was for her royal estate, or [the act referred to in] “let the Emperor appoint officers” (*Esther/Estēr* 2:3).

2:9 And so he rushed – This is [referring to] *Hēgē*.

2:9 Her own cosmetics – Those belonging to *Estēr* [came] personally from him.

2:9 Cosmetics – [In Judeo-Greek,] “powdered makeup for showing off”, that they would dab on one's face.

2:9 Her own portions – Those being gifts, good food, and clothes.

2:9 And seven maids – They would customarily grant her seven young women to be her assistants.

וְאֶת־נְעוּרוֹתֶיהָ לְטוֹב בֵּית הַנְּשִׁים: י לֹא־הִגִּידָה אֶסְתֵּר
אֶת־עַמָּהּ וְאֶת־מוֹלַדְתָּהּ כִּי מִרְדְּכָי צִוָּה עָלֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־תִגִּיד: יא* וּבְכַל־יוֹם וַיּוֹם מִרְדְּכָי מִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי חֶצֶר
בֵּית־הַנְּשִׁים לְדַעַת אֶת־שְׁלוֹם אֶסְתֵּר וּמִה־יַעֲשֶׂה בָּהּ:
יב וּבַהֲגִיעַ תּוֹר נְעֻרָה וְנַעֲרָה לָבוֹא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשׁוּרוּשׁ
מִקִּץ הַיּוֹת לֵאמֹר כִּדְת הַנְּשִׁים שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ כִּי כֵן
יִמְלֹאוּ יְמֵי מְרוּקִיהֶן שְׁשֶׁה חֳדָשִׁים בְּשֶׁמֶן הַמֹּר וּשְׁשֶׁה
חֳדָשִׁים בְּבִשְׂמִים וּבַת־מְרוּקֵי הַנְּשִׁים: יג וּבִזְה הַנְּעֻרָה
בָּאָה אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמֶר יִנְתֵּן לָהּ לָבוֹא
עִמָּהּ מִבֵּית הַנְּשִׁים עַד־בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ: יד בְּעָרְבוּ הִיא בָּאָה
וּבְבִקֵּר הִיא שָׁבָה אֶל־בֵּית הַנְּשִׁים שְׁנֵי אֶלְפֵי שֶׁשָּׁנָה
סָרִיס הַמֶּלֶךְ שִׁמְר הַפִּילְגְּשִׁים לֹא־תָבוֹא עוֹד אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ

[ב:יא] וּמִה־יַעֲשֶׂה בָּהּ - מן תּמרוקים; ד"א [דְּבַר אַחֵר]. בְּדִינָהּ וּבְדַתָּהּ.
[ב:יב] וּבַהֲגִיעַ תּוֹר נְעֻרָה - הוֹדִיעַ כִּי לֹא הָיָה מִגִּיעַ תּוֹר נְעֻרָה וְנַעֲרָה לָבוֹא
אֶל הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי אִם אַחַר קֶץ הַיּוֹת לֵאמֹר יִב חֹדֶשׁ. זֶה הַדְּבָר אוֹלֵי הָיָה בְּכָל
פַּעַם וּפַעַם שֶׁל שְׂכִיבָה אַחֵר יִשְׁכַּב עִם הַנְּעֻרָה.
[ב:יד] בְּעָרְבוּ... וּבְבִקֵּר הִיא שָׁבָה - וְהִיתָה עוֹשֶׂה עוֹד יִב חֹדֶשׁ וְעוֹד הִיתָה
הוֹלְכַת אֶל הַמֶּלֶךְ.
[ב:יד] אֶל־בֵּית הַנְּשִׁים שְׁנֵי - הוּא בֵּית שְׁנֵי אֶל שׁוֹמֵר שְׁנֵי.

transferred her and her maids to the best [part] of the harem. ^{2:10} *Estēr* had not disclosed her nationality or her homeland, because *Mordokhai* had instructed her that she should not make it known. ^{2:11*} *Mordokhai* walked every day in front of the courtyard of the harem, to know about *Estēr's* well-being **and what would become of her.**

^{2:12} **And when each young woman's turn** came to go in to Emperor *Ahashwērosh*, after she followed the law for women after 12 months – for this is how the days of their cosmetic treatments were filled: six months with myrrh ointment, and six months with fragrances and feminine cosmetics – ^{2:13} then a young woman would come to the Emperor as follows: whatever she desired was given her to go with her out of the harem into the Imperial Mansion. ^{2:14} In the evening she would enter, **and in the morning she would go back to the second harem**, into the custody of *Sha'ashgaz*, the Emperor's

^{2:9} **He then transferred her** – This informs [us] that her cosmetics and portions – and even those of her maids – would be changed for the better.

^{2:11} **And what would become of her** – With the cosmetics. Alternatively, [this refers to what could be done to her] justly and legally.

^{2:12} **And when each young woman's turn came** – This informs [us] that each lady's turn did not arrive until after the end of her own 12-month [process]. And this was probably the case for each and every conjugal visit, after he started sleeping with her.

^{2:14} **In the morning she would go back** – And then she would take another 12 months, and would visit the Emperor again.

^{2:14} **To the second harem** – That is, a second house with a second chaperone.

כִּי אֶסְחָפֵץ בְּהַמֶּלֶךְ וְנִקְרָאָה בְּשֵׁם: טו וּבְהִגִּיעַ תִּדְרֹ-
 אֶסְתֵּר בַּת־אֲבִיתָיִל דָּד מִרְדְּכָי אֲשֶׁר לָקַח־לוֹ לְבַת לְבוֹא
 אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא בִקְשָׁה דְבָר כִּי אִם אֶת־אֲשֶׁר יֹאמֶר הִגִּי
 סֵרִיס־הַמֶּלֶךְ שֹׁמֵר הַנְּשִׂימִים וְתִהְיֶי אֶסְתֵּר נִשְׂאֵת חֵן בְּעֵינַי
 כָּל־רְאִיָּה: טז וְתִלְקַח אֶסְתֵּר אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֹׁרוּשׁ
 אֶל־בֵּית מַלְכוּתוֹ בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָעֵשְׂרִי הוּא־חֹדֶשׁ טִבַּת
 בְּשַׁנַּת־שֶׁבַע לְמַלְכוּתוֹ: יז וַיֵּאָהֵב הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־אֶסְתֵּר
 מִכָּל־הַנְּשִׂימִים וְתִשָּׂא־חֵן וְחֶסֶד לִפְנֵי מִכָּל־הַבְּתוּלוֹת וַיִּשֶׂם
 כֶּתֶר־מַלְכוּת בְּרֹאשָׁהּ וַיִּמְלִיכָהּ תַּחַת וְשָׂתִי: יח וַיַּעַשׂ
 הַמֶּלֶךְ מִשְׁתֵּה גָדוֹל לְכָל־שָׂרָיו וְעַבְדָּיו אֶת מִשְׁתֵּה

[ב:יר] וְנִקְרָאָה בְּשֵׁם: - "תְּבוֹא פְלוֹנִית עִתָּה!" ; ד"א [דְּבַר אַחֵר], כִּי אִם
 חֶפֶץ בְּהַמֶּלֶךְ לְהַמְלִיכָהּ וְנִקְרָאָה בְּשֵׁם מַלְכָּה. א"א [אֶחָד אֹמֵר]: "הֲלֹא
 ה' לֹא יִנְקֶה עַל עֹבְדֵי ע"ז [עַבְדָּה זָרָה] וְעַל גְּלוּי עֲרִיזוֹת וּשְׂפִיכוֹת דָּמִים,
 וְאִיךָ מְסַרָּה עֲצָמָה לְגוֹי עֲרַל?" נֹאמֵר כִּי יִדְעָה אֶסְתֵּר אִם תִּמְאֹן, יִרַע
 אוֹתָהּ רַע מְזָה, וַיִּצְיָאוּהָ וַיּוֹצִיאוּהָ מִדִּין יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְתַחֲלַל שַׁבָּת וּמוֹעֵד
 וְכָל דְּבַר הַתּוֹרָה.

[ב:טו] לֹא בִקְשָׁה דְבָר - מְרוֹב צְנִיעוּתָהּ וּבּוֹשֶׁת־פָּנֶיהָ.

eunuch, chaperone of the concubines. She would no longer come in to the Emperor, unless she seemed good to the Emperor, **and then she would be called by name.** ^{2:15} Now when the turn had come for *Estēr*, the daughter of *Aviḥayil* the uncle of *Mordokhai* (who had taken her in as his own daughter), to go in to the Emperor, **she did not request anything** except for whatever *Hēgai* (the Emperor's eunuch), the women's chaperone, had advised – and *Estēr* obtained favor in the sight of all those who looked upon her. ^{2:16} And so *Estēr* was taken by Emperor *Aḥashwērosh* into his Imperial Mansion in the tenth month, which is the month of *Ṭēvēt*, in the seventh year of his reign. ^{2:17*} And the Emperor loved *Estēr* more than all the women, and she obtained favor and kindness in his sight more than all the young women; so that he set the Imperial Crown on her head, and made her queen instead of *Washti*. ^{2:18} Then the Emperor held a great banquet for all his governors

^{2:14} **And then she would be called by name** – [For example,] “So-and-so may come in now!” Alternatively, this would only happen if the Emperor wanted to coronate her, and “then she would be called by the title” of Queen. Someone might say, [by the way,] “Isn't it the case that God will not forgive polytheism, sexual immorality, and bloodshed? How, then, could she give herself over to an uncircumcised Gentile?” We would say that *Estēr* knew that if she would have refused, then he would have done something bad to her because of it, and would have forced her to leave the religion of Israel, desecrate every Sabbath/*Shabbāt* and appointed time, and every aspect of the Torah.

^{2:15} **She did not request anything** – Out of an abundance of modesty and embarrassment.

אֶסְתֵּר וְהַנְּחָה לַמְּדִינֹת עֲשֵׂה וַיִּתֵּן מִשְׁאֵת כַּיַּד הַמֶּלֶךְ:
יט וּבְהַקְבִּץ בְּתוּלוֹת שְׁנֵית וּמַרְדֳּכָי יֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ:
כ* אֵין אֶסְתֵּר מִגְּדַת מוֹלְדֹתָהּ וְאֶת־עַמָּהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה
עָלֶיהָ מַרְדֳּכָי וְאֶת־מֵאֲמַר מַרְדֳּכָי אֶסְתֵּר עֲשֵׂה כַּאֲשֶׁר
הִיִּתָּה בְּאִמְנָה אֶתּוֹ: כא* בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם וּמַרְדֳּכָי
יֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ קֶצֶף בְּגָתָן וְתָרַשׁ שְׁנֵי־סָרִיסֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ מִשְׁמֵרֵי הַסֵּף וַיִּבְקֹשׁוּ לְשַׁלַּח יָד בַּמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשׁוּרִשׁ:
כב* וַיִּוֹדַע הַדָּבָר לַמַּרְדֳּכָי וַיִּגְדַּל לְאֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה וַתֹּאמֶר
אֶסְתֵּר לַמֶּלֶךְ בְּשֵׁם מַרְדֳּכָי: כג* וַיִּבְקֹשׁ הַדָּבָר וַיִּמְצֵא

[בייח] וְהַנְּחָה לַמְּדִינֹת - כי לא לקח מהם מס.

וַיִּתֵּן מִשְׁאֵת - הָיָה יִשְׁלַח לְגְדוּלָיו מִתְּנוּת וּלְעַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ.

[בייט] וּבְהַקְבִּץ בְּתוּלוֹת שְׁנֵית - מע' [מענה/משמעותו] נִקְבְּצוּ פַעַם
ראשונה ביד הפקידים בכל מדינות מלכותו עד שושן הבירה; ד"א [דָּבָר
אחר]. בְּתַחֲלָה קִבְּצוּ אוֹתוֹן אֶל שוֹשׁן הַבִּירָה אֶל הַגִּי, וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן קִבְּצוּ אוֹתוֹן
אֶל בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהִבִּיאוּ לְאֶסְתֵּר עִמָּהּ; ד"א [דָּבָר אחר]. שְׁמֵית לְוַשְׁתֵּי.

and his staff: a banquet for *Estēr*! And so he granted a reprieve to the provinces, and gave presents as if by the Emperor's own hand.

2:19 **And when the virgins were gathered together the second time**, *Mordokhai* was sitting at the Imperial Gate. 2:20* *Estēr* had not yet disclosed her homeland or her nationality, as *Mordokhai* had commanded her, because *Estēr* obeyed *Mordokhai* just as when she was adopted by him.

2:21* In those days, while *Mordokhai* was sitting at the Imperial Gate, *Bigtān* and *Teresh* (two of the Emperor's eunuchs guarding the entrance) became disgruntled and planned to assault Emperor *Aḥashwērosh*. 2:22* This matter became known to *Mordokhai*, who informed Queen *Estēr*; and *Estēr* informed the Emperor in *Mordokhai's* name. 2:23* When this matter was investigated, and it was found to be so, they were both

2:18 **A reprieve to the provinces** – Because he did not take a tax from them.

2:18 **And gave presents** – He would send gifts to the nobles and the commoners.

2:19 **And when the virgins were gathered together the second time** – Meaning that they were gathered together first by the officers throughout all his Imperial Provinces to *Shushan* (the capital). Alternatively, they originally gathered them to *Shushan* (the capital) to *Hēgai*, and afterwards they brought the women together at the Imperial Mansion, and made *Estēr* come with them. Alternatively, [the word “second” should be understood as] the “second” [queen instead of] *Washti*.

וַיִּתְּלוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם עַל-עֵץ וַיִּכְתֹּב בְּסֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים לִפְנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ:

ג * א* אַחַר ׀ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה גָּדַל הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשׁוּרוֹשׁ אֶת-
הַמֶּן בֶּן-הַמֶּדְתָּא הָאֲגָי וַיִּנְשָׂאֵהוּ וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת-כְּסָאוֹ מֵעַל
כָּל-הַשָּׂרִים אֲשֶׁר אָתּוֹ: ב וְכָל-עַבְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר-בְּשַׁעַר
הַמֶּלֶךְ כְּרֵעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לְהַמֶּן כִּי-כֵן צִוְּהֵלוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ
וּמַרְדֵּכַי לֹא יִכְרַע וְלֹא יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה: ג וַיֵּאמְרוּ עַבְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֲשֶׁר-בְּשַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְמַרְדֵּכַי מִדּוּעַ אַתָּה עוֹבֵר אֶת
מִצְוַת הַמֶּלֶךְ: ד וַיְהִי בֵּאמֶרס [כְּאֶמְרָם] אֵלָיו יוֹם וַיּוֹם
וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֲלֵיהֶם וַיַּגִּידוּ לְהַמֶּן לְרֹאוֹת הַיַּעֲמָדוֹ דְּבָרֵי
מַרְדֵּכַי כִּי-הִגִּיד לָהֶם אֲשֶׁר-הוּא יְהוּדִי: ה וַיֵּרָא הַמֶּן כִּי-

[ג:ב] כִּי-כֵן צִוְּהֵלוּ - בַּעֲבוּרוֹ. א"א [אֶחָד אֹמֵר]: "לָמָּה נִמְנַע מַרְדֵּכַי
מִלְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְהַמֶּן?" נֹאמַר כִּי כְרִיעָה וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיָּה לֹא יִכְשַׁר לְאָדָם כִּי
[אָם] לֵה'. וְהִשִּׁיבוּ עֲלֵיהֶם: "אֵיךְ אָמַר בְּשֶׁר-חַמְשִׁים וַיִּבֵּא שְׂרֵי-חַמְשִׁים
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַיִּכְרַע עַל-בְּרַכְיֹו ׀ לְנֶגֶד אֵלָיו וַיִּתְחַנֵּן אֵלָיו: (מְלָכִים ב' א:יג), וְאֵיךְ
הִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה יַעֲקֹב לְעֵשָׂו? (בְּרֵאשִׁית ל:ג)" נֹאמַר כִּי הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיּוֹת הֵם ב':
א הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיַת עַבְדָּה, וְהֵב הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיַת כְּבוֹד; וְזוֹ, הִשְׁתַּחֲוִיַת הַמֶּן, אֱלֹהוֹת
הַיָּתֵר, שְׁנֹאמַר: כְּרֵעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לְהַמֶּן (אֶסְתֵּר ג:ב).
[ג:ה] וַיֵּרָא הַמֶּן - הָיָה רוֹאֶה פַעַם אַחֵר פַּעַם.

hanged on a wooden [scaffold]; and it was written in the book of chronicles in the Emperor's presence.

3 ^{3:1*} After these things, Emperor Xerxes/*Ahashwērosh* promoted *Hāmān*, the son of *Hammedātā* the Agagite/*Agāgi*, made him a chief, and placed his throne over all the governors who were with him. ^{3:2} All the Emperor's staff who were at the Imperial Gate used to kneel and prostrate to *Hāmān* (**for so the Emperor had ordered for him**); but *Mordokhai* would not kneel, and would not prostrate. ^{3:3} Then the Emperor's staff who were at the Imperial Gate said to *Mordokhai*, "Why are you disobeying the Emperor's order?" ^{3:4} And so it was, when they spoke to him day by day, and he did not heed them, that they told *Hāmān*, in order to see whether *Mordokhai's* statements would stand (for he had told them that he was a Jew/*Yehudi*). ^{3:5} **When *Hāmān***

3:2 For so the Emperor had ordered for him – On his behalf. Someone might say, "Why did *Mordokhai* refrain from prostrating to *Hāmān*?" We would say that kneeling and prostration is not appropriate for a human – only for God. As a rebuttal, [they might say,] "How is it that [Scripture] said about the captain of fifty, 'And then the third captain of fifty came and he bowed on his knees before *Elijah/Ēlīyāhu* and he begged him,' (2 Kings/*Melākhim* 1:13)?" And how is it that Jacob/*Ya'aqov* prostrated to Esau/*Ēsāw*? (Genesis/*BeRē'shit* 33:3). It is said that there are two kinds of prostration: the first is out of worship, and the second is out of respect; and this prostration to *Hāmān* was a form of deification, as it has been said that "they were bowing down and prostrating to *Hāmān*" (Esther/*Estēr* 3:2).

אֵין מְרַדְּכֵי כְרַע וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לּוֹ וַיִּמְלֵא הַמֶּן חֲמָה: וְיִבְזוּ
בְּעֵינָיו לְשַׁלַּח יָד בְּמֶרְדְּכַי לְבַדּוֹ כִּי־הִגִּידוּ לוֹ אֶת־עַם
מֶרְדְּכַי וַיִּבְקֹשׁ הַמֶּן לְהַשְׁמִיד אֶת־כָּל־הַיְהוּדִים אֲשֶׁר
בְּכָל־מְלָכוֹת אַחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ עִם מֶרְדְּכַי: וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן
הוּא־חֹדֶשׁ נִסָּן בְּשַׁנַּת שְׁתַּיִם עֶשְׂרֵה לַמֶּלֶךְ אַחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ
הַפִּיל פּוֹר הוּא הַגּוֹדֵל לִפְנֵי הַמֶּן מִיּוֹם ׀ לְיוֹם וּמִחֻדָּשׁ

[ג:ו] הפיל פור - הביא איש קוסם שיחשוב השעות של יום, לקח קלפים
וחתיכות, או י קרועים [ר"ל פתקי הגרלה, כעיו "קרעה" בערבית
היהודית] וכתב על אחד ואחד שם היום. והיו ל קלפים, ואחר כן השליך
כלם בכלי אחד והיה מבלבלם ומערבם [ר"ל מבלבל ומערבב אותם],
והיה אומר "הזמן בדי יום הריגתם!" והיה המנחש ישלח ידו בהם,
ואשר היה יבוא בידו זה סימנו. ואמרו כי "בניסן הצילים ה' מן פרעה
(שמות יג); ובאיר עזרם על עמלק (שמות יז); ובסיון על זרח הכושי
(דברי הימים ב' יד); ובתמוז על אדני-בזק (שופטים א); ובאב במלך
ערד (במדבר כא); ובאלול במדין (במדבר לא או שופטים ז) ועמלק
(שמואל א' טו); ובתשרי היתה (ר"ל היה) חדוש מלכותם (דברי הימים
ב' לא, או מלכים א' ח); ובמרחשון שלמו מבנינו (מלכים א' ו); ובכסלו
ובטבת נעזרו בסיחון ו[ב]עוג (במדבר כא); ובשבט נתחדשה גדלתם
(אולי דברים א); ונשאר חדש אדר, ובו מת משה רבינו (דברים לד), ולכן
האבידם ה' בנחושים!" (ראה משלי טז:ג).

saw that *Mordokhai* would not bow down or prostrate, *Hāmān* became full of rage. ^{3:6*} But it was wasteful in his eyes to assault *Mordokhai* alone, as they had notified him of *Mordokhai*'s nationality; and so *Hāmān* planned to annihilate all the Jews/*Yehudim* who were throughout *Aḥashwērosh*'s entire Empire – *Mordokhai*'s nation!

^{3:7} In the first month, which is the month of *Nisān*, in the 12th year of Emperor *Aḥashwērosh*, **they drew the *Pur*, that is, the lottery**, in front of *Hāmān* from day to day,

^{3:5} **When *Hāmān* saw** – He would see this time after time.

^{3:7} **They drew the *Pur*, that is, the lottery** – He brought a magician who would tabulate the hours of the day, [who] took some cards, chips, or ten ballots, and wrote on each one the name of the day. Then there would be 30 cards, which he would toss into one vessel, and would shuffle and mix them around, and would say, “By my hand, set their execution date!” Then the enchanter would reach in, and whatever would fall into his hand would be his sign. And they said, “Because God rescued them from Pharaoh/*Par’oh* in *Nisān* (Exodus/*Shemot* 13); and in *Iyyār*, He helped them against the Amalekites/*Amālēq* (Exodus/*Shemot* 17); and in *Siwān*, against Zerah the Ethiopian/*Zerah HaKushi* (2 Chronicles/*Divrē HaYāmim* 14); and in *Tammuz*, against Adoni-Bezeq (Judges/*Shofetim* 1); and in *Āv*, against the King of *‘Arād* (Numbers/*BeMidbar* 17); in *Ēlul*, against the Midianites/*Midyān* (Numbers/*BeMidbar* 31; Judges/*Shofetim* 7) and the Amalekites/*Amālēq* (1 Samuel/*Shemu’el* 15); and in *Tishrē*, there was a renewal of their kingdom (2 Chronicles/*Divrē HaYāmim* 31; 1 Kings/*Melākhim* 8); and in *Marḥēshwān*, they finished building [the Temple] (1 Kings/*Melākhim* 6); and in *Kislēw* and in *Tēvēt*, they were given help again *Sihon* and *Og* (Numbers/*BeMidbar* 21); and in *Shevāt* their prominence was renewed (see Deuteronomy/*Devārim* 1); and the month of *Adār* is left, the one in which Moses/*Mosheh*

לְחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם-עָשָׂר הוּא-חֹדֶשׁ אֲדָר׃ ח* וַיֹּאמֶר
הַמֶּלֶךְ לְמַלְכֵי אַחֲשׁוּרוֹשׁ יִשְׁנוּ עִם-אֶחָד מִמְּפָזֵר וּמִמְּפָרָד בֵּין
הָעַמִּים בְּכָל מְדִינֹת מְלֻכּוֹתֶיךָ וּדְתִיחֵם שְׁנוֹת מִפְּל־עַם
וְאֶת-דְּתֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵינָם עֹשִׂים וְלַמֶּלֶךְ אֵין-שׁוּה לְהַנִּיחֵם׃
ט אִם-עַל-הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב יִפְתָּב לְאַבְדָּם וְעֲשֶׂרֶת אֲלָפִים
בְּפֶרֶסְפָּ אֲשַׁקּוּל עַל-יְדֵי עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלֶאכָה לְהַבִּיא אֶל-
גְּנֹזֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ׃ י וַיֹּסֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת-טַבַּעְתּוֹ מֵעַל יָדוֹ וַיִּתְּנָהּ
לְהַמֶּן בֶּן-הַמַּדְתָּא הָאֲגָגִי צֶדֶק הַיְהוּדִים׃ יא וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ
לְהַמֶּן הַכֶּסֶף נָתוֹן לָךְ וְהָעֵם לַעֲשׂוֹת בּוֹ כְּטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ׃
יב* וַיִּקְרָאוּ סְפָרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּשָׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר

[גח] מְפָזֵר וּמִמְּפָרָד - לא יתחתנו.

[גח] וְדְתִיחֵם שְׁנוֹת - כמו מילה ושבת וחקים.

[גח] וְאֶת-דְּתֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ - ירמז אל מצותו שישתחוו לו.

[גח] וְלַמֶּלֶךְ אֵין-שׁוּה - אין נכון "להניחם"; ד"א [דָּבָר אַחֲרַי], לא יתחבר עם המלך איש חבר שישנה עמו שיאמר לו "תניחם"; ד"א [דָּבָר אַחֲרַי], "אין שנה" והועלה להניחם.

and from month to month, and chose the 12th month, which is the month of Adār. ^{3:8*} *Hāmān* said to Emperor *Ahashwērosh*, “There is a certain nationality scattered, yet distinct, among the nations in all the provinces of your Empire, and their laws are different from other nations’; yet, they do not keep the Emperor’s laws, so it does not suit the Emperor to leave them alone. ^{3:9} If it pleases the Emperor, let it be written that they should be annihilated; and I will allocate 10,000 bars of silver by the hands of those who are in charge of the Emperor’s affairs, to bring into the Emperor’s treasuries.” ^{3:10} The Emperor took his ring from his hand, and gave it to *Hāmān* the son of *Hammedātā* the *Agāgi* (sworn enemy of the *Yehudim*). ^{3:11} The Emperor said to *Hāmān*, “The silver is given to you, the people also, to do with them as it seems good to you.” ^{3:12*} Then the Emperor’s scribes were called in on the first month, on the 13th day of the

Rabbēnu died (Deuteronomy/*Devārim* 34): therefore, God has brought about their annihilation by divination!” (see Proverbs/*Mishlē* 16:33).

3:8 Scattered, yet distinct – They would not intermarry.

3:8 And their laws are different – Such as circumcision, the Sabbath/*Shabbāt*, and various statutes.

3:8 The Emperor’s laws – Referring to his order that they should prostrate to him.

3:8 It does not suit the Emperor – [Meaning,] it is not right to leave them alone. Alternatively, a man who would become an equal partner with him should not associate with the Emperor who would say to him, “You should leave them alone.” Alternatively, there is no worth or benefit in letting them be.

יוֹם בּוֹ וַיִּכְתֹּב כְּכֹל-אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-אֲחִישֶׁדֶרְפַּיִם הַמֶּלֶךְ
 וְאֶל-הַפַּחֲוֹת אֲשֶׁר וְעַל-מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה וְאֶל-שָׂרֵי עַם וְעַם
 מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה כְּכַתְּבָהּ וְעַם וְעַם כְּלִשְׁוֹנוֹ בְּשֵׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ
 אֲחִישֶׁדֶרְשׁ נִכְתָּב וְנִחַתְּם בְּטַבְעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ: יג וְנִשְׁלַח סְפָרִים
 בְּיַד הָרָצִים אֶל-כָּל-מְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהַשְׁמִיד לְהַרְג
 וּלְאַבֵּד אֶת-כָּל-הַיְהוּדִים מִנְעֵר וְעַד-זָקֵן טַף וְנָשִׁים בְּיוֹם
 אֶחָד בְּשִׁלּוּשֵׁה עֶשֶׂר לְחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם-עָשָׂר הוּא-חֹדֶשׁ אֲדָר
 וְשִׁלְלָם לְבוּז: יד פֶּתֶשְׁגִן הַכְּתָב לְהַנְתֵּן דָּת בְּכָל-מְדִינָה
 וּמְדִינָה גְלוּי לְכָל-הָעַמִּים לְהִיזֹת עֲתִדִים לְיוֹם הַזֶּה:
 טו הָרָצִים יֵצְאוּ דְחוּפִים בְּדַבַּר הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהִדַּת נִתְּנָה בְּשׁוֹשַׁן

[גיב] אֲחִישֶׁדֶרְפַּיִם הַמֶּלֶךְ - אולי הם העומדים בצרכי המלך.
 [גיב] וְאֶל-שָׂרֵי עַם וְעַם מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה כְּכַתְּבָהּ - כי המדינה תקבוצ עמים
 רבים; ד"א [דב"ר אחר], כי המדינה תימון ויכלול ערים הרבה.
 [גיב] וְנִשְׁלַח סְפָרִים - הוא "מצד"ר" "ר"ל "שם הפעל" בערבית יהודית]. "אם
 נפל הניחוש שלו בילג באדר ולמה שלח רצים המון במהרה מן יג בניסוק?"
 נאמר: בעבור שיתקנו הגוים עצמם להרוג לישראל בטוב, ועוד שלא
 ינחם המלך מהר [מאת] הדב"ר.

month; and everything that *Hāmān* commanded was written to **the Emperor's deputies** ([being] the leaders who were over each province) and to **the governors of each nationality: to each province according to its writing**, and to each nationality in their language. It was written in the name of Emperor *Ahashwērosh*, and was sealed with the Emperor's ring. ^{3:13} **Scrolls were sent** by couriers into all the Emperor's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all *Yehudim* in one day: young and old, children and women, on the 13th day of the 12th month, which is the month of *Adār* – and then to loot their property. ^{3:14} A copy of the bill of the decree that was to be given out in every province was published to every nation that they should be ready for that day. ^{3:15} Then the couriers departed with urgency, by the order of the Emperor, and the decree was given out in Susa/*Shushan* (the capital); and so the Emperor

3:12 **The Emperor's deputies** – Perhaps they are those who stand ready for the needs of the Emperor.

3:12 **To the governors of each nationality: to each province according to its writing** – Because each province would contain many peoples. Alternatively, a province was like *Tēmān*, and included many cities.

3:13 **Scrolls were sent** – [This word, וְנִשְׁלְחוּ/*wenishloah*,] is a gerund. [Someone might say,] “If the divination settled on the 13th of *Adār*, then why did *Hāmān* rush to send couriers from the 13th of *Nisān*?” We would say, because the Gentiles prepared themselves to kill Israelites while it was still acceptable, and also so that the Emperor would not quickly relent from the matter.

הַבִּירָה וְהַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּן יִשְׁבוּ לִשְׁתוֹת וְהַעִיר שׁוֹשֵׁן נְבוּכָה:

ד *א ומרדכי ידע את-כל-אשר נעשה ויקרע מרדכי את-בגדיו וילבש שק ואפר ויצא בתוך העיר ויזעק וזעקה גדלה ומרה: ב* ויבוא עד לפני שער-המלך כי אין לבוא אל-שער המלך בלבוש שק: ג* ובכל-מדינה ומדינה מקום אשר דבר-המלך ודתו מגיע אבל גדול ליהודים וצום ובכי ומספד שק ואפר יצע לדבים: ד ותבואינה [ותבואנה] נערות אסתר וסריסה ויגידו לה ותתחלחל המלכה מאד ותשלח בגדים להלביש את-מרדכי ולהסיר שקו מעליו ולא קבל: ה ותקרא אסתר להתך

[ג:טו] נבוכה - מן ואמר פרעה לבני ישראל נבכים הם בארץ סגור עליהם המדבר: (שמות יד:ג). א"א [אחד אומר]: "למה נתחייבו ישראל אבידה באותו הזמן?" נאמר: בעבור כי לא עלו לירושלם, ונתרשלו, ונתעצלו, ולא עלו בשנת א עד שנת יב לאחשורוש. וי"א [יש אומרים] "כי השתחוו לצלם שהקים נבוכדנצר", ולא כן הוא. וי"א [יש אומרים] "שלקחו מבנות הגוים", ולא כן הוא. [ד:] ותתחלחל - כמו על-פן מלאו מתני חלחלה צירים אחוזי בעירי יולדה נעויתי משמע נבהלתי מראות: (ישעיה כא:ג).

and *Hāmān* settled down for a drink – but the city of *Shushan* was in **turmoil**.

4 ^{4:1*} Now when *Mordokhai* found out all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on dusty sackcloth, went out into the midst of the city, and wailed loudly and bitterly. ^{4:2*} He even went in front of the Imperial Gate (for no one is allowed inside the Imperial Gate clothed with sackcloth). ^{4:3*} In every province where the Emperor's order and decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews/*Yehudim*, and fasting, weeping, and wailing; dusty sackcloth was even distributed to the crowds. ^{4:4} Then *Estēr's* maids and eunuchs came and told her this, and **the Queen was filled with revulsion**. She sent clothing to up *Mordokhai* and to replace his sackcloth; but he did not accept it. ^{4:5} Then *Estēr* called

3:15 **Turmoil** – As in, “and Pharaoh/*Par’oh* will say to the Israelites, ‘*they are confused* in the land: the desert has enclosed them!’” (Exodus/*Shemot* 14:3). Someone might say, “Why did Israel have to be destroyed at that particular time?” We would say [this] was because they did not make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem/*Yerushālayim*, became negligent and lazy, and did not go up between the first and twelfth years to Xerxes/*Ahashwērosh*. And there are those who say [this] was because they prostrated before the image that Nebuchadnezzar/*Nevukhadnešsar* erected; but that is not so. And there are those who say that they took [wives] from the daughters of Gentiles; but that is not so.

4:4 **The Queen was filled with revulsion** – As in, “*therefore, my loins are racked with torment*. Pains have taken hold of me, like the pains of a woman in labor. I am in so much pain that I cannot hear. I so am dismayed that I cannot see” (Isaiah/*Yesh’ayāhu* 21:3).

מִסְרִיִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר הָעַמִּיד לְפָנֶיהָ וּתְצֹוּהוּ עַל־מַרְדְּכָי
לְדַעַת מַה־זֶּה וְעַל־מַה־זֶּה: וַיֵּיצֵא הַתֶּךְ אֶל־מַרְדְּכָי אֶל־
רְחוֹב הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר לְפָנָי שַׁעַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ: וַיַּגִּד־לוֹ מַרְדְּכָי
אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר קָרָהוּ וְאֵת פִּרְשַׁת הַכֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר אָמַר הַמֶּן
לְשָׁקוֹל עַל־גִּזְיֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ בִּיהוֹדִיִּים [בִּיהוּדִים] לְאַבְדָּם:
ח* וְאֵת־פֶּתֶשֶׁן כְּתַב־הַדָּת אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן בְּשׁוֹשָׁן לְהַשְׁמִיד־ם
נָתַן לוֹ לְהִרְאוֹת אֶת־אֶסְתֵּר וּלְהַגִּיד לָהּ וּלְצִוּוֹת עָלֶיהָ
לָבוֹא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהִתְחַנֵּן־לוֹ וּלְבַקֵּשׁ מִלְּפָנָיו עַל־עַמָּה:
ט וַיָּבֹא הַתֶּךְ וַיַּגִּד לְאַסְתֵּר אֵת דְּבָרֵי מַרְדְּכָי: וַתֹּאמֶר
אֶסְתֵּר לְהִתֶּךְ וּתְצֹוּהוּ אֶל־מַרְדְּכָי: יא כָּל־עַבְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְעַם־מְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹדְעִים אֲשֶׁר כָּל־אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר
יָבֹא־אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־הַחֲצַר הַפְּנִימִית אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִקְרָא

[ד:ז] פְּרִישֶׁת - כמו וַיִּנְחֹו אֹתוֹ בַּמִּשְׁמֶר כִּי לֹא פָּרַשׁ מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לוֹ: (בַּמִּדְּבָר טו:לד).

[ד:ח] פֶּתֶשֶׁן - הוא טופס. כִּי נִתְּלָה הַמֶּן בַּיּוֹם בְּנִיסָן כִּי הִתְחִילוּ לְצוֹם יוֹם יָד וַיּוֹם טו וַיּוֹם יז, וּלְמַחֵר שֶׁל צוֹם נִתְּלָה, וְהָאֹמֵר כִּי נִתְּלָה בְּסִיּוֹן בְּכַבֵּ אוֹ בְּכַג בּוֹ יַעֲשֶׂה כִּי מִשְׁנִתְּנָה הַדָּת בְּשׁוֹשָׁן עַד שֶׁתָּבוֹא אֶסְתֵּר לְפָנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ עֲבָרוּ עַ יוֹם, וְלֹא יִתְּכוּ כִּי הִנִּיחָה הַדְּבָר בְּזִמְנוֹ רְחוֹק.

for *Hatākh* (one of the Emperor's eunuchs whom he had appointed to attend to her) and commanded him to go to *Mordokhai*, to find out what this was, and why it was. ^{4:6} So *Hatākh* went out to *Mordokhai*, to the city square that was in front of the Imperial Gate. ^{4:7} *Mordokhai* told him of all that had happened to him, and **the exact [sum]** of the silver that *Hāmān* had allocated for the Emperor's treasuries for the annihilation of the *Yehudim*. ^{4:8*} He also gave him a **copy of the bill** of the decree that was given out in Susa/*Shushan* to annihilate them, to show it to *Estēr*, to tell her about it, and to urge her to go in to the Emperor, to beg him, and to submit a request to him on behalf of her people. ^{4:9} And so *Hatākh* returned, and related *Mordokhai's* words to *Estēr*. ^{4:10} Then *Estēr* spoke to *Hatākh*, and made him command *Mordokhai*, ^{4:11} "The Emperor's entire staff and the people of the Emperor's provinces know that any man or woman who comes to the Emperor into the inner court without being called, there is one law for

4:7 **The exact [sum]** – [Compare to how the word for "exact," (*parāshāh*) is used in] "and they placed him in ward, because it was not *explicit* what should be done to him" (Numbers/*BeMidbar* 15:34).

4:8 **A copy of the bill** – That is, a standardized document. So *Hāmān* was hanged on the 17th of *Nisān*, because they began to fast on the 14th, 15th, and 16th days [of the month], and he was hanged on the day after the fast. And whoever says that he was hanged on the 22nd or 23rd of *Sivān* [is wrong], because 70 days would have passed from the giving of the law in *Shushan* until *Estēr* would have come before the Emperor, and it is unlikely that she would have left the matter alone for [such] a long time.

אחת דתו להמית לבד מאשר יושיט לו המלך את-
שרביט הזהב וחייה ואני לא נקראתי לבוא אל המלך
זה שלוש יום: יב ויגידו למרדכי את דברי אסתר:

יג* ויאמר מרדכי להשיב אל אסתר אל תדמי בנפשך
להמלט בית המלך מפל היהודים: יד* כי אם החרש
תחרישי בעת הזאת רוח והצלה יעמוד ליהודים ממקום

[ד:יא] זה שלוש יום - הודיעה [לו] כי "לא אוכל לבוא זולת קריאתו".
וזה שאמרה ואני לא נקראתי. לא, כי לא היה הולך המלך אליה בערב
בביתה, אבל זה היום אמרה אסתר יש לי שלשים יום כי לא נקראתי
לבוא למלך לשבת עמו. ואם יאמר איש: "אמר שהיה המלך הולך אליה
בערב למה שלח מרדכי אליה לבוא אל המלך ביום שתבוא לידי מות
והמלך בערב היה הולך אליה?" נאמר כי חפצה אסתר לבוא אל המלך
ביום ביום.

[ד:יג] אל תדמי בנפשך - אל תשקוטי בנפשך.

[ד:יד] רוח והצלה יעמוד ליהודים - כי יש לה יכולת בכל דבר שיחפוץ; ד"א
[דבר אחר], "ממקום אחר" [ר"ל] ממקום אחריו, והוא בית המקדש.

him: that he should be put to death; only someone to whom the Emperor would extend the Golden Scepter could survive. As for me, I have not been called to come in to the Emperor **for these 30 days.**" 4:12 They told *Estēr*'s words to *Mordokhai*. 4:13* Then *Mordokhai* said in response to *Estēr*, "**Don't imagine to yourself** that you could escape to the Imperial Mansion any more than all the [other] *Yehudim*. 4:14* For if you remain silent now, then **relief and deliverance will come to the *Yehudim*** from another place, but you and your father's household will be annihilated. Yet, **who knows if you haven't**

4:11 **For these 30 days** – She informed [him] that "I cannot come without his invitation". And this is what she meant by "as for me, I have not been called," because the Emperor would not go to her at her home in the evening, but on this day *Estēr* said, "I have gone 30 days without having been called to come sit with the Emperor". And if a person would say, "He said that the Emperor would go to her in the evening, so why did *Mordokhai* send for her to go to the Emperor during the day, risking death, when the Emperor would go to her in the evening?" We would say that *Estēr* wanted to come to the Emperor during daylight.

4:13 **Don't imagine to yourself** – [The verb could also be interpreted as] "do not silence yourself."

4:14 **Relief and deliverance will come to the *Yehudim*** – Because God has the ability to do whatever He desires. Alternatively, [the Hebrew for] "from another place" [means] "a place after this": the [Second] Temple.

אֲחֵר וְאֵת וּבֵית־אָבִיךָ תֹאבְדוּ וּמִי יוֹדֵעַ אֶסְלַעַת בְּזָאת
הַגְעַת לַמְּלָכוֹת: טו* וְתֹאמְרוּ אֶסְתֵּר לְהַשִּׁיב אֶל־מַרְדֳּכָי:
טז* לֵךְ בְּנוֹס אֶת־כָּל־הַיְהוּדִים הַנִּמְצְאִים בְּשׁוֹשָׁן וְצוּמוּ
עָלַי וְאֶל־תֵּאכְלוּ וְאֶל־תִּשְׁתּוּ שְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים לַיְלָה וַיּוֹם
גַּם־אֲנִי וְנִעְרֹתַי אֲצוּם כֵּן וּבִכֵּן אָבֹא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־כָדַת וְכֹאֲשֶׁר אֲבָדְתִי אֲבָדְתִי: יז וַיַּעֲבֹר מַרְדֳּכָי וַיַּעַשׂ
כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־צִוְתָהּ עָלָיו אֶסְתֵּר: **ה** א' וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וְהַלְבַּשׁ אֶסְתֵּר מַלְכוּת וַתַּעֲמֹד בַּחֲצַר בֵּית־
הַמֶּלֶךְ הַפְּנִימִית נֹכַח בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹשֵׁב עַל־כִּסֵּא
מַלְכוּתוֹ בְּבַיִת הַמְּלָכוֹת נֹכַח פֶּתַח הַבַּיִת: ב וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת

[ד:יד] ומי יודע אסלעת בזאת - מענה [משמעותו]: "... אם בזאת
העת, בשנה הבאה, הגעת למלכות?" ; ד"א [דבר אחר], הפחידה ואמר
לה: "אולי לא תשארי עד יג באדר במלכות, כי יעשה ה' עליכם ברוב
תחבולותיו ותמותו אתם קודם שנמות אנחנו"; ד"א [דבר אחר], "כי ה'
היה יודע כי ישך אל יפלו בצרה הזאת והשיג ה' אותך למלוכה שתצילי
לישךאל, ואם לא תעשי, תתחבי".

[ד:טז] וצומו עלי - "ו" יתר [ה]; ד"א [דבר אחר], וצומו עלי ואלתאכלו ולא
אמר ואלתאכלו ואלתשתו שיהיה ביאור וצומו עלי, להודיע כי לא יצומו
זולת שלשת ימים.

[ה:א] והלבש אסתר מלכות - בגדי מלכות.

achieved royalty for such a time as this?” 4:15* Then *Estēr* said in reply to *Mordokhai*: 4:16* “Go, gather together all the *Yehudim* who are present in *Shushan*, and fast for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day. I, and my maids, will also fast likewise. Then I will go in to the Emperor, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish.” 4:17 So *Mordokhai* went his way, and did according to everything that *Estēr* had commanded him.

5 5:1* Now it happened on the third day that *Estēr* dressed royally, and stood in the inner court of the Imperial Mansion, adjoining the Imperial Mansion [itself]. The Emperor was sitting on the throne of his Empire in the Imperial Mansion, next to the entrance of the mansion. 5:2 When the Emperor saw Queen *Estēr*

4:14 Who knows if you haven’t achieved royalty for such a time as this – Meaning, “if at this time, in the next year, you will have achieved royalty?” Alternatively, he was intimidating her by saying to her, “Perhaps you will not remain among royalty to the 13th of *Adār*, because God, in the multitude of His plans, might do something to you all, and you all will die before we do.” Alternatively, “. . . because God knew that Israel/*Yisrā’ēl* would fall into this distress, consequently, God has promoted you to royalty so that you would save *Yisrā’ēl*; but if you will not act, you will be held liable.” 4:16 And fast for me – [The letter] *wāw* [“and”] is superfluous. “And fast for me and don’t eat;” [note that] it did not say, “Don’t eat and don’t drink,” which would be a clarification of “and fast for me.”

4:16 Three days – Because [the general expression] “and fast for me” is independent of the [limit of] “three days.”

5:1 *Estēr* dressed royally – [Wearing her] imperial robes.

הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה עֹמֶדֶת בַּחֲצַר נְשֹׂאָה חֵן בְּעֵינָיו
וַיִּשֶׁט הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאֶסְתֵּר אֶת־שְׂרֵבִיט הַזֶּהָב אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ
וַתִּקְרַב אֶסְתֵּר וַתִּגַּע בְּרֹאשׁ הַשְּׂרֵבִיט: ^ג וַיֹּאמֶר
לָהּ הַמֶּלֶךְ מַה־לָּךְ אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה וּמַה־בִּקְשָׁתְךָ עַד־חֲצִי
הַמַּלְכוּת וַיִּנְתֵּן לָךְ: ^ד וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְתֵּר אֶס־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב
יָבֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּן הַיּוֹם אֶל־הַמִּשְׁתֶּה אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי לוֹ:
^ה וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ מַה־רוּ אֶת־הַמֶּן לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־דְּבַר אֶסְתֵּר
וַיָּבֵא הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּן אֶל־הַמִּשְׁתֶּה אֲשֶׁר־עָשְׂתָה אֶסְתֵּר:
וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאֶסְתֵּר בְּמִשְׁתֶּה הַיּוֹם מַה־שְּׂאֵלָתְךָ
וַיִּנְתֵּן לָךְ וּמַה־בִּקְשָׁתְךָ עַד־חֲצִי הַמַּלְכוּת וַתַּעֲשֶׂשׁ: ^ו וַתַּעַן
אֶסְתֵּר וַתֹּאמֶר שְׂאֵלָתִי וּבִקְשָׁתִי: ^ז אֶס־מְצֵאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶס־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב לָתֵת אֶת־שְׂאֵלָתִי וְלַעֲשׂוֹת
אֶת־בִּקְשָׁתִי יָבֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּן אֶל־הַמִּשְׁתֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֶעֱשֶׂה
לָהֶם וּמִחֵר אֶעֱשֶׂה כְּדַבַּר הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^ח וַיֵּצֵא הַמֶּן בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא
שִׁמְח וְטוֹב לֵב וּכְרֹאוֹת הַמֶּן אֶת־מַרְדֳּכָי בְּשַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְלֹא־קָם וְלֹא־זָע מִזְּמֵנוּ וַיִּמְלֵא הַמֶּן עַל־מַרְדֳּכָי חֲמָה: ^ט
וַיִּתְּאֶפֶק הַמֶּן וַיָּבֹא אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ וַיִּשְׁלַח וַיָּבֵא אֶת־אֱהֵבִיו
וְאֶת־זָרֵשׁ אִשְׁתּוֹ: ^י וַיִּסְפֹּר לָהֶם הַמֶּן אֶת־כְּבוֹד עֲשָׂרוֹ
וְרֵב בָּנָיו וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר גָּדְלוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ

[הי:] וַיִּתְּאֶפֶק - הוא לשון חכוי, כי לא עשה עמו דְּבַר רָע.

standing in the court, he looked upon her favorably, and then the Emperor extended the Golden Scepter that was in his hand to *Estēr*. So *Estēr* approached, and touched the top of the scepter. ^{5:3*} Then the Emperor asked her, “What would you like, Queen *Estēr*? What is your request? It shall be granted to you – up to half the Empire!” ^{5:4*} And so *Estēr* said, “If it seems good to the Emperor, let the Emperor and *Hāmān* come today to the banquet that I have prepared for him.” ^{5:5*} Then the Emperor said, “Bring *Hāmān* quickly, so that it may be done as *Estēr* has said!” So the Emperor and *Hāmān* came to the banquet that *Estēr* had prepared. ^{5:6} The Emperor said to *Estēr* at the wine tasting, “What is your wish? It shall be granted to you. What is your request? Up to half the Empire, and it shall be done!” ^{5:7*} Then *Estēr* answered and said, “My wish . . . and my request . . . is this: ^{5:8*} if I have found favor in the sight of the Emperor, and if it pleases the Emperor to grant my wish and to perform my request . . . let the Emperor and *Hāmān* come to the banquet that I will prepare for them, and I will do *tomorrow* as the Emperor has said.” ^{5:9*} Then *Hāmān* went out that day joyful and glad of heart, but when *Hāmān* saw *Mordokhai* at the Imperial Gate, that he would not stand up or move for him, he was filled with wrath against *Mordokhai*. ^{5:10} Yet, *Hāmān* **restrained himself**, and went home. There, he sent and called for his friends and *Zeresh* his wife. ^{5:11} *Hāmān* recounted to them the glory of his riches, the multitude

^{5:10} **Restrained himself** – The [Hebrew term] is an expression of “holding back,” because he did not do anything bad to him [yet].

וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאַוּ עַל-הַשָּׂרִים וְעַבְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: יב וַיֹּאמֶר
הַמֶּן אַף לֹא-הִבִּיֵּאָה אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה עִם-הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-
הַמִּשְׁתֶּה אֲשֶׁר-עָשְׂתָה כִּי אִסְאוֹתַי וְגַם-לְמַחֵר אֲנִי
קָרוֹא לָהּ עִם-הַמֶּלֶךְ: יג וְכֹל-זֶה אֵינְנוּ שׂוֹה לִי בְכַל-עֵת
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֶת-מַרְדֵּכֵי הַיְהוּדִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ:
יד* וְתֹאמַר לוֹ זָרֵשׁ אֶשְׁתּוֹ וְכֹל-אֲהַבּוֹ יַעֲשׂוּ-עִן גְּבוּהַ
חֲמוּסִים אִמָּהּ וּבְבִקְרָד וְאָמַר לְמֶלֶךְ וַיִּתְּלוּ אֶת-מַרְדֵּכֵי
עָלָיו וּבֹא-עִם-הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל-הַמִּשְׁתֶּה שְׂמֵחַ וַיִּיטֵב הַדָּבָר
לְפָנֵי הַמֶּן וַיַּעַשׂ הָעֵץ:

ו * א בְּלִילָה הַהוּא נִדְדָה שְׁנַת הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר לְהִבִּיא
אֶת-סֵפֶר הַזְכָּרֹת דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים וַיְהִיו נִקְרְאִים לְפָנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ: ב* וַיִּמְצָא כְּתוּב אֲשֶׁר הִגִּיד מַרְדֵּכֵי עַל-בְּגַתְנָא
וְתָרַשׁ שְׁנֵי סְרִיסֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ מִשְׁמָרֵי הַסֵּף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִשּׁוֹ לְשַׁלַּח
יָד בַּמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשׁוּרוּשׁ: ג* וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ מַה-נַּעֲשֶׂה יִקָּר
וְגִדּוּלָה לְמַרְדֵּכֵי עַל-זֶה וַיֹּאמְרוּ נַעֲרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ מִשְׁרָתָיו

[ה:ג] שוה לי - אישיי 777 [לשון "שויון" ביונית יהודית]; ד"א [דבר אחר],
כמו שויתי יהוה לנגדי תמיד כי מימיני בלא אמוט: (תהלים ח:טז). משום "לא
אשונה כבודי אצל מרדכי כיאם מעשה גדול ועדיף מן כבודי".

of his children, all the things in which the Emperor had promoted him, and how he had made him a chief over the governors and staff of the Emperor. ^{5:12} *Hāmān* also said, “Furthermore, Queen *Estēr* let no man come in with the Emperor to the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and tomorrow I am also invited by her together with the Emperor! ^{5:13} But all this **amounts to nothing** to me, so long as I see *Mordokhai* the Jew/*Yehudi* sitting at the Imperial Gate!” ^{5:14*} Then *Zeresh* his wife and all his friends said to him, “Let a 50-cubit-high wooden [scaffold] be made, talk to the Emperor in the morning about hanging *Mordokhai* on it, and then happily accompany the Emperor to the banquet!” This pleased *Hāmān*, so he had the wooden [scaffold] made.

6 ^{6:1*} On that night, the Emperor lacked sleep. He commanded the record book of the chronicles to be brought, and they were read to the Emperor. ^{6:2*} It was found written that *Mordokhai* had told on *Bigtānā* and *Teresh* (two of the Emperor’s eunuchs guarding the entrance), who had tried to assault Emperor Xerxes/*Aḥashwērosh*. ^{6:3*} The Emperor said, “What honor and dignity have been bestowed on *Mordokhai* for this?” And the Emperor’s young assistants said, “Nothing has

^{5:13} **Amounts to** – [In Judeo-Greek,] “*is equal*.” Alternatively, this is [similar to the Hebrew expression for being parallel, as in] “I always *have set* $\Upsilon \cdot \text{H} \cdot \text{W} \cdot \text{H}$ *before me*: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved” (Psalms/*Tehillim* 16:8), in the sense that “my honor will not compare to that of *Mordokhai*, except by an action greater and more preferable than my honor.”

לֹא־נַעֲשֶׂה עִמּוֹ דָּבָר: ד וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ מִי בַחֲצַר וְהַמֶּן
 בָּא לַחֲצַר בֵּית־הַמֶּלֶךְ הַחֲצִיצוֹנָה לֵאמֹר לַמֶּלֶךְ לַתְּלוֹת
 אֶת־מַרְדֳּכָי עַל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־הִכִּין לוֹ: ה וַיֹּאמְרוּ נַעֲרֵי
 הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵלָיו הִנֵּה הַמֶּן עֹמֵד בַּחֲצַר וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ יָבֹוא:
 ו וַיָּבֹוא הַמֶּן וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ מַה־לַּעֲשׂוֹת בְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר
 הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ בִּיקְרוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּן בְּלִבּוֹ לִמִּי יַחֲפֹץ הַמֶּלֶךְ
 לַעֲשׂוֹת יָקָר יוֹתֵר מִמֶּנִּי: ז וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּן אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אִישׁ
 אֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ בִּיקְרוֹ: ח* יָבִיאוּ לְבוּשׁ מַלְכוּת אֲשֶׁר
 לְבִשְׁבוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ וְסוּס אֲשֶׁר רָכַב עָלָיו הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֲשֶׁר נָתַן
 בְּתֵד מַלְכוּת בְּדֹאשׁוֹ: ט וְנָתַן הַלְּבוּשׁ וְהַסּוּס עַל־יַד־
 אִישׁ מִשְׁרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ הַפְּרִתָּמִים וְהַלְּבִישׁוּ אֶת־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר
 הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ בִּיקְרוֹ וְהִרְכִּיבֵהוּ עַל־הַסּוּס בְּרַחוּב הָעִיר
 וְקָדְאוּ לְפָנָיו כְּכֹה יַעֲשֶׂה לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ בִּיקְרוֹ:
 י וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהַמֶּן מֵהֵרָקַח אֶת־הַלְּבוּשׁ וְאֶת־הַסּוּס
 כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ וַעֲשֶׂה־כֵן לְמַרְדֳּכָי הַיְּהוּדִי הַיּוֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר
 הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־תִּפְּל דָּבָר מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ: יא וַיִּקַּח הַמֶּן
 אֶת־הַלְּבוּשׁ וְאֶת־הַסּוּס וַיִּלְבַּשׁ אֶת־מַרְדֳּכָי וַיִּרְכִּיבֵהוּ

[יג:] וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּן בְּלִבּוֹ - זֶה מַעֲשֵׂה הַסּוּפֵר.

been done for him.”^{6:4} Then the Emperor said, “Who is in the courtyard?” (Now, *Hāmān* had come into the outer courtyard of the Imperial Mansion to speak to the Emperor about hanging *Mordokhai* on the wooden [scaffold] that he had prepared for him.)^{6:5} The Emperor’s staff said to him, “Behold, *Hāmān* is standing in the courtyard.” The Emperor said, “Let him come in.”^{6:6*} So *Hāmān* came in. Then the Emperor said to him, “What shall be done for a man whom the Emperor wishes to honor?” (Now, *Hāmān* said in his heart, “Who would the Emperor wish to honor more than me?”)^{6:7*} *Hāmān* said to the Emperor, “For a man whom the Emperor wishes to honor . . .^{6:8*} let royal clothing be brought that the Emperor has worn, and the horse that the Emperor has ridden upon, and on his head place an Imperial Crown.^{6:9} Let the clothing and the horse be delivered to the hand of one of the Emperor’s most noble governors, that they may dress the man whom the Emperor wishes to honor with them, and have him ride on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him, ‘So shall it be done for a man whom the Emperor wishes to honor!’”^{6:10*} Then the Emperor said to *Hāmān*, “Hurry up and take the clothing and the horse, as you have said, and do this for *Mordokhai* the Jew/*Yehudi*, who sits at the Imperial Gate. Let nothing fail of everything that you have spoken.”^{6:11} Then *Hāmān* took the clothing and the horse, and dressed *Mordokhai*, and had him ride

6:6 Now, *Hāmān* said in his heart – This was done by the scribe [or, narrator].

בְּרַחֲבֵי הָעִיר וַיִּקְרָא לְפָנָיו בְּכֹהֵן יַעֲשֶׂה לְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ
חָפֵץ בִּיקְרוֹ: יב וַיָּשָׁב מִדְּרָכֵי אֶל־שַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּן נִדְחָף
אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ אָבֵל וְחַפּוֹי רָאשׁ: יג וַיִּסְפֹּר הַמֶּן לַזֶּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁתּוֹ
וּלְכָל־אֲהָבָיו אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר קָרָהּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ חֲכַמְיוֹ וּזְדִישׁ
אֲשֶׁתּוֹ אִם מִזְרַע הִיהוּדִים מִדְּרָכֵי אֲשֶׁר הִחְלוֹת לַנֶּפֶל
לְפָנָיו לֹא־תוּכַל לוֹ כִּי־נִפּוֹל תִּפּוֹל לְפָנָיו: יד עוֹדֶם מְדַבְּרִים
עָמּוּ וְסָרִיסֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ הִגִּיעוּ וַיִּבְהִלוּ לְהַבִּיא אֶת־הַמֶּן אֶל־
הַמִּשְׁתָּה אֲשֶׁר־עָשְׂתָה אֶסְתֵּר: ז א וַיָּבֵא הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּן
לְשִׁתּוֹת עִם־אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה: ב* וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאֶסְתֵּר
גַּם בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁנִי בַּמִּשְׁתָּה הַזֶּה שְׂאֵלְתֶךָ אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה
וְתַנְתֵּן לִּי וּמַה־בִּקְשָׁתְךָ עַד־חֲצֵי הַמַּלְכוּת וְתַעֲשׂ: ג* וְתַעַן
אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה וְתֹאמֶר אֶם־מְצָאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ הַמֶּלֶךְ

[ויא] וַיִּקְרָא לְפָנָיו - איפר שיגטון [ביונית יהודית, "הוא הציג אותו"].
[ויב] וְחַפּוֹי רָאשׁ: - מכסה ראש, עם חיקו כמו חפה, בבושה וכלמה.

through the city square, and announced in front of him, “So shall it be done for a man whom the Emperor wishes to honor!”^{6:12} Then *Mordokhai* came back to the Imperial Gate, but *Hāmān* hurried to his house, mourning and having his head covered.^{6:13} *Hāmān* recounted to *Zeresh* his wife and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and *Zeresh* his wife said to him, “If *Mordokhai*, before whom you have begun to falter, is from the offspring of the Jews/*Yehudim*, you will not prevail against him, but you will surely fall before him.”^{6:14} While they were still talking with him, the Emperor’s eunuchs came, and hurried to bring *Hāmān* to the banquet that *Estēr* had prepared.

7 ^{7:1} So the Emperor and *Hāmān* came to banquet with Queen *Estēr*. ^{7:2*} the Emperor said again to *Estēr* on the second day, at the wine tasting, “What is your wish, Queen *Estēr*? It shall be granted to you. What is your request? Up to half the Empire – it shall be done!”^{7:3*} Then Queen *Estēr* answered, “If I have found favor in your . . . the Emperor’s . . . sight, and if it pleases the

6:11 And announced in front of him – [In Judeo-Greek,] “he presented him.”

6:12 Having his head covered/*hafuy* – [His] head was hooded, with his chest like a canopy/*huppāh*, out of shame and humiliation.

וְאִם-עַל-הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב תִּנְתֶּן-לִי נַפְשִׁי בְשֵׂאלָתִי וְעַמִּי
בְּבִקְשֹׁתַי: ^ד כִּי נִמְכְּרֵנוּ אֲנִי וְעַמִּי לְהַשְׂמִיד לַהֲרוֹג
וּלְאַבֵּד וְאֵלֹו לְעִבָדִים וּלְשִׁפְחוֹת נִמְכְּרֵנוּ הַחֲדָשְׁתִּי כִּי
אֵין הַצֵּר שׁוֹה בְּנוֹק הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^ה וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֲחֻשׁוּרוֹשׁ וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה מִי הוּא זֶה וְאֵי-זֶה
הוּא אֲשֶׁר-מָלְאוּ לְבוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת כֵּן: ^ו וַתֹּאמֶר-אַסְתֵּר
אִישׁ צֵר וְאוֹיֵב הָמֵן הֲרַע הַזֶּה וְהָמֵן נִבְעֵת מִלִּפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְהַמַּלְכָּה: ז וְהַמֶּלֶךְ קָם בַּחֲמָתוֹ מִמִּשְׁתֵּה הַיַּיִן אֶל-גִּנַּת
הַבֵּיתָן וְהָמֵן עָמַד לְבִקֵּשׁ עַל-נַפְשׁוֹ מֵאַסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה כִּי
רָאָה כִּי-כִלְתָּהּ אֵלָיו הֲרַעָה מֵאֵת הַמֶּלֶךְ: ^ח וְהַמֶּלֶךְ שָׁב
מִגִּנַּת הַבֵּיתָן אֶל-בַּיִת וּמִשְׁתֵּה הַיַּיִן וְהָמֵן נָפַל עַל-הַמַּטָּה

[ג:] תִּנְתֶּן-לִי נַפְשִׁי - הִיא מְנַהֵג הַפְּרָסִים: אָדָם אִם תְּהִיָּה לוֹ שֵׂאלָה לִפְנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ בְּעֵבֹר אַחֵר, יִכָּשֵׁר לוֹ לְדַבֵּר דְּבָרִים בְּעֵבֹר נַפְשׁוֹ קוֹדֵם, וְאַחֵר כֵּן
בְּעֵבֹר אֶהוּבֹו.

[ד:] כִּי אֵין הַצֵּר שׁוֹה - לא יִכָּשֵׁר לְצַר שֵׁישׁוֹה וַיַּעֲשֶׂה בְקִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּזְיַק הַמֶּלֶךְ
לְעַצְמוֹ בְּדָם וְקִיִּים; ד"א [דָּבָר אַחֵר], כִּי אֵין יִתְרוֹן הַצֵּר שׁוֹה בְּנוֹק הַמֶּלֶךְ: כִּי-
אִם נוֹק הַמֶּלֶךְ [עֲדִיף] מִן יִתְרוֹן הַצֵּר; ד"א [דָּבָר אַחֵר], "אִם הֵייגוּ נִמְכָּרִים
לְעִבָדִים וּלְשִׁפְחוֹת הַיִּתִּי אַחֲרֵי שׁ (מַחְרֵי שׁ), כִּי לֹא יִשְׁוֶה זֶה מַעֲשֵׂה הַצֵּר אִם
יִכַּעַס הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלָיו, כִּי כַּעַס הַמֶּלֶךְ גָּדוֹל הוּא וּמְכִירָתוֹ קְלָה."

Emperor . . . **let my soul be granted to me** by my wish, and my nation's by my request! ^{7:4*} For we have been sold, I and my nation, for genocide, for murder, and for annihilation. But if we had been sold for slaves and handmaids, I would have held my peace, **although the oppressor could not match** the damage to the Emperor.”

^{7:5*} Then Emperor Xerxes/*Ahashwērosh* said to Queen *Estēr*, “Who and where is the one who planned in his heart to do this?” ^{7:6*} *Estēr* said, “An oppressive man and an enemy is . . . this despicable *Hāmān*!” And then *Hāmān* recoiled before the Emperor and the Queen. ^{7:7} The Emperor, in his fury, got up from the wine tasting and walked toward the Garden Pavilion. *Hāmān* stood up to beg Queen *Estēr* for his life, for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the Emperor. ^{7:8} Then the Emperor returned from the Garden Pavilion to the venue of the wine tasting. *Hāmān* had fallen upon

7:3 Let my soul be granted to me – There was a custom of the Persians/*Parsiyim*: if a man had a question before the Emperor on behalf of another, it would be appropriate to speak for himself first, and afterward on behalf of his loved one.

7:4 Although the oppressor could not match – [Meaning,] it is inappropriate for the enemy to become an equal, act upon his own request, and cause the Emperor himself harm by the blood of the innocent. Alternatively, [this is like saying,] “Because the enemy’s benefit does not equal the harm [done to] the Emperor; rather, the harm [done to] the Emperor is more than that of the enemy.” Alternatively, “if we had been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept silent, because this act of the enemy would not have been equal to the Emperor’s wrath; as the Emperor’s wrath is a major concern, while our being sold is of lesser concern.”

אֲשֶׁר אֶסְתֵּר עָלֶיהָ וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ הֲגַם לְכַבּוֹשׁ אֶת־
 הַמְּלָכָה עִמִּי בְּבַיִת הַדָּבָר יֵצֵא מִפִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ וּפְנֵי הַמֶּן
 חָפוּ: *ט וַיֹּאמֶר חֲרֻבּוּנָה אֶחָד מִן־הַסְּדֵי־יָסִים
 לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ גַּם הִנֵּה־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה הַמֶּן לְמַרְדְּכָי אֲשֶׁר
 דִּבֶּר־טוֹב עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ עִמּוֹ בְּבַיִת הַמֶּן גְּבוּהַ חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה
 וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ תִּלְהֶו עָלָיו: י וַיִּתְּלוּ אֶת־הַמֶּן עַל־הָעֵץ
 אֲשֶׁר־הֵכִין לְמַרְדְּכָי וַחֲמַת הַמֶּלֶךְ שָׁכְבָה:

ח * אֵין בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נִתֵּן הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֵׁרוּשׁ לְאַסְתֵּר הַמְּלָכָה
 אֶת־בַּיִת הַמֶּן עֲרֹךְ הַיהוּדִים [הַיְהוּדִים] וּמַרְדְּכָי בֶּא

[זח:] הֲגַם לְכַבּוֹשׁ - "לא נשאָר לָהּ כִּי אִם לְהַרוֹג לְאַשְׁתִּי אֲשֶׁר עִמִּי בְּבַיִת,
 כִּי כָל חִפְצֶיהָ נֶעֱשׂוּ, וְלֹא נִשְׁאָר לָהּ כִּי אִם לְכַבּוֹשׁ אוֹתָהּ. הֲגַם לְכַבּוֹשׁ
 לְמַלְכָה לְשִׁפְחָה וְלְהַרְגָהּ?!"; ד"א [דָּבָר אַחֵר], "הֲגַם לְקַרֵב אִישׁ בְּמִטַּת
 הַנְּשִׂים?!"; ד"א [דָּבָר אַחֵר], הֲגַם לְכַבּוֹשׁ וּלְתַפּוֹשׁ בְּגֵדֵי הַמְּלָכָה?!", כִּי
 אִין מְנַהֵג לְתַפּוֹשׁ הַמְּלָכָה וּלְקַרֵב אֶצֶל הַמִּטָּה.

[זח:] בְּבַיִת - מַעֲנֶה [מִשְׁמְעוֹתוֹ] "עִמִּי אַתָּה בְּבַיִת, וְתַעֲשֶׂה כְזֶה לִפְנֵי?!"
 [זח:] חָפוּ - נִתְפָּסוּ מִן הַבוֹשֶׁת; ד"א [דָּבָר אַחֵר], כִּן הָיָה מְנַהֵג בְּעַת
 שְׂיִקְצוֹף הַמֶּלֶךְ עַל אִישׁ, מְבִיאִים בְּגָד וּמְכַסִּים פְּנֵי הָאִישׁ עַד שְׂיִצְוֶה
 לְהַרְגוֹ.

the couch where *Estēr* was, and so the Emperor said, “**Will he even take over** the Queen in front of me at home?!” As the words went out of the Emperor’s mouth, **they covered** *Hāmān*’s face. ^{7:9*} Just then, *Harvonā* (one of the eunuchs) said before the Emperor, “Behold, a 50-cubit-high wooden [scaffold] which *Hāmān* has made for *Mordokhai* – who spoke well of the Emperor – stands by *Hāmān*’s home . . . !” The Emperor said, “Hang him on it!” ^{7:10} So they hanged *Hāmān* on the wooden [scaffold] that he had prepared for *Mordokhai*, and then the Emperor’s wrath was assuaged.

8 ^{8:1*} On that day, Emperor Xerxes/*Aḥashwērosh* gave the house of *Hāmān* (the sworn enemy of the Jews/*Yehudim*) to Queen *Estēr*, and *Mordokhai* came before

7:8 Will he even take over – [As if to say,] “nothing is left for you [to do] except to kill my wife who is with me at home, because all of your desires have been fulfilled, and nothing is left for you [to do] but to conquer her. Is it that [you want] to subject the queen to becoming a slave-girl and then to kill her?!” Alternatively, “. . . and do you also [dare] approach a wife’s bed?!” or, “. . . is it that [you want to] to conquer, and to grab the queen’s garments, as well?!” – because it is unlawful to grasp at a queen or to encroach upon one’s bed.

7:8 At home – Meaning, “you are with me at home, and you are going to act like this in front of me?!”

7:8 They covered – [Or the Hebrew could also mean “his face] was covered out of shame.” Alternatively, such was the custom when the Emperor would become enraged with a person: they would bring a hood and would cover the person’s face until he would give the command to kill him.

לפני המלך כי הגידה אסתר מה הוא לה: ב ויסר המלך
את טבעתו אשר העביר מהמזן ויתנה למרדכי ותשם
אסתר את מרדכי על בית המזן: ג ותוסף אסתר ותדבר
לפני המלך ותפל לפני רגליו ותבך ותתחנן לו להעביר
את דעת המזן האגגי ואת מחשבתו אשר חשב על-
היהודים: ד* וישט המלך לאסתר את שרביט הזהב
ותקם אסתר ותעמד לפני המלך: ה* ותאמר אס-
תה המלך טוב ואסמץאתי חן לפניו וכשר הדבר לפני
המלך וטובה אני בעיניו יפתב להשיב את הספרים
מחשבת המזן בן המדתא האגגי אשר פתב לאבד
את היהודים אשר בכל מדינות המלך: ו פ* איכבה
אוכל וראיתי ברעה אשר ימצא את עמי ואיכבה
אוכל וראיתי באבדן מולדתי: ז ויאמר המלך
אחשורש לאסתר המלכה ולמרדכי היהודי הנה בית-
המזן נתתי לאסתר ואתו תלו על העץ על אשר שלח
ידו ביהודיים [ביהודים]: ח ואתם פתבו על היהודים
פ טוב בעיניכם בשם המלך וחתמו בטבעת המלך כי-
כתב אשר נכתב בשם המלך ונחתום בטבעת המלך
אין להשיב: ט ויקראו ספרי המלך בעת ההיא בחדש
השלישי הוא חדש סיון בשלושה ועשרים בו וכתב

the Emperor, because *Estēr* had told who he was to her.
8:2 And then, the Emperor took off his ring (which he had taken from *Hāmān*) and gave it to *Mordokhai*. *Estēr* set *Mordokhai* over the house of *Hāmān*. 8:3 *Estēr* spoke yet again before the Emperor, and fell down at his feet, and begged him with tears to override the evildoing of *Hāmān* the Agagite/*Agāgi*, and his plot that he had devised against the *Yehudim*. 8:4* Then the Emperor extended the Golden Scepter to *Estēr*. So *Estēr* got up, and stood before the Emperor. 8:5* She said, “If it pleases the Emperor . . . if I have found favor in his sight, and the thing seems right to the Emperor, and I am pleasing in his eyes . . . let it be written to retract the scrolls devised by *Hāmān*, the son of *Hammedātā* the *Agāgi*, which he wrote to annihilate the *Yehudim* who are in all the Emperor’s provinces. 8:6 For how could I bear to see the evil that would come to my nation? How could I endure to see the destruction of my relatives?”

8:7 Then Emperor *Ahashwērosh* said to Queen *Estēr* and to *Mordokhai* the Jew/*Yehudi*, “See, I have given *Estēr* the house of *Hāmān*, and they have hanged him on the wooden [scaffold], because he assailed the *Yehudim*. 8:8 Write what you wish to the *Yehudim* in the Emperor’s name, as well, and seal it with the Emperor’s ring; for a document that is written in the Emperor’s name, and sealed with the Emperor’s ring, may not be reversed by any man.” 8:9 Then the Emperor’s scribes were called at that time, in the third month, *Siwān*, on the 23rd day of the month; and it was written according to all that *Mordokhai* commanded to the *Yehudim*,

כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה מֶרַדְכִי אֶל־הַיְהוּדִים וְאֵל הָאֲחַשְׁדָּרְפָּנִים
וְהַפַּחֲזִים וְשָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת אֲשֶׁר ׀ מֵהָדוּ וְעַד־כּוֹשׁ שִׁבְעַ
וְעֶשְׂרִים וּמֵאָה מְדִינָה מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה כְּכַתְּבָהּ וְעַם
וְעַם כָּל־שָׁנוּ וְאֶל־הַיְהוּדִים כְּכַתְּבָם וְכָל־שׁוֹנֵם: * וַיִּכְתֹּב
בְּשֵׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֹׁוֹרֶשׁ וַיַּחֲתֵם בְּטַבַּעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁלַח
סָפְרִים בְּיַד הָרָצִים בְּסוּסִים רַבִּי הָרַכְשׁ הָאֲחַשְׁתָּרְגָּנִים
בְּנֵי הַרְמָכִים: יא* אֲשֶׁר נָתַן הַמֶּלֶךְ לַיהוּדִים ׀ אֲשֶׁר
בְּכָל־עִיר־וָעִיר לְהַקְהִיל וְלַעֲמֹד עַל־נַפְשָׁם לְהַשְׁמִיד
וְלַהֲרֹג וְלֹא־אָבֵד אֶת־כָּל־חֵיל עַם וּמְדִינָה הָרָצִים אֲתֵם טָף
וְנָשִׁים וְשַׁלְלָם לְבוֹז: יב בְּיוֹם אֶחָד בְּכָל־מְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ
אַחֲשֹׁוֹרֶשׁ בְּשָׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר הוּא־הַחֹדֶשׁ
אָדָר: יג פֶּתִשְׁגָּן הַכְּתָב לְהַנְתֵּן דָּת בְּכָל־מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה

[ח:י] וַיִּכְתֹּב בְּשֵׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֹׁוֹרֶשׁ - דַּע כִּי אָמַר הַמֶּלֶךְ אִיו לְהַשִּׁיב אֶת
הַסָּפְרִים, וְאִיךָ עָשָׂה מֶרַדְכִי וְהַפִּיל זֶה הַגְּזֵרָה? נֶאֱמָרוּ דְבָרִים: (א) כְּתָבוּ
לְשָׂרִים שֶׁל הַמְּדִינֹת כִּי הֵמֹן הִיָּה מִתְחַלָּה אֶהוּב הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְעַתָּה נִתְבָּרַר
כִּי הוּא מוֹרָד; (ב) אוֹ כְּתָבוּ כִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ לְנִסּוֹת הַיְהוּדִים אִם יִבְרָחוּ
מִתַּחַת יַד מַלְכוּתוֹ אוֹ לֹא; (ג) אוֹ כְּתָבוּ כִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ שְׂיִבְחוּ כָּל הַגּוֹיִם
וְ[ה]אֲנָשִׁים הָרָעִים; (ד) אוֹ כְּתָבוּ כִּי טַבַּעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ גָּנַב אוֹתוֹ (אוֹתָהּ) הֵמֹן
וְחָשַׁב לְמָרוֹד בַּמֶּלֶךְ. א"א [אֶחָד אוֹמֵר]: "יִכְשֹׁר זֶה לְמַלְכִים שְׂיֵאמֵר: 'הֲרֹגוּ
אֲנָשִׁים?' " נֶאֱמַר: אָמַר לָהֶם "הֲרֹגוּ זָרַע עַמְלֵק (דְּבָרִים כה:יז-יט) וְאֲנָשִׁי
הֵמֹן שְׂכָלָם יוֹעֲצִים הִיוּ לוֹ לְמָרוֹד!"

and to the deputies, and the leaders and governors of the provinces (which are, from India to Ethiopia, 127 provinces), to each province according to its script, and to every nationality in their language, and to the *Yehudim* in their script and language. ^{8:10*} **He wrote in the name of Emperor *Ahashwērosh***, and sealed it with the Emperor's ring, and dispatched scrolls by courier on horseback, riding on royal horses that were bred from swift steeds. ^{8:11*} In *those* scrolls, the Emperor granted the *Yehudim* who were in every city to gather themselves together, and to defend their life, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish any force from a people or province that would assault them, their little ones, and wives, and to loot their property, ^{8:12} on one day in all the provinces of Emperor *Ahashwērosh*: on the 13th day of the 12th month, which is the month of *Adār*. ^{8:13} A copy of the bill of the decree that should be given out in every province,

8:10 He wrote in the name of Emperor *Ahashwērosh* – Notice that the Emperor did not say to recall the scrolls; so how did *Mordokhai* act to cause this decree to fail? They have made four arguments: (1) that they wrote to the provincial governors that *Hāmān* was originally dear to the Emperor, but now it has become clear that he is a traitor; (2) or, they wrote that the Emperor wants to test whether or not the Jews/*Yehudim* would escape the reach of his Empire, (3) or they wrote that the Emperor wanted to test all evil nations and people; (4) or, they wrote that *Hāmān* stole the Emperor's ring, and thought to rebel against the Emperor. Someone might say, "Is it appropriate for kings to say 'go kill people'?" We would say that he told them to kill the "offspring of *Amālēq*" (Deuteronomy/*Devārim* 25:17–19) and *Hāmān*'s men, as they were all advising him to commit treason.

גְּלוּי לְכֹל־הָעַמִּים וְלֵהִיֹּת הִיהוּדִים עֲתוּדִים [הִיְהוּדִים
 עֲתוּדִים] לַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְהִנָּקֵם מֵאֲבֵיהֶם: יד הַרְצִים רַבְבֵי
 הַרְכֵשׁ הָאֲחֻשְׁתָּרָנִים יֵצְאוּ מִבְּהַלִּים וּדְחוּפִים בְּדַבַּר
 הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהִדַּת נִתְּנָה בְּשׁוֹשָׁן הַבִּירָה:

טו וּמִדָּדָי יֵצֵא ׀ מִלִּפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ בִּלְבוּשׁ מַלְכוּת תִּכְלַת
 וְחֹר וְעֵטְרַת זָהָב גְּדוּלָּה וְתַכְרִיךְ בּוּץ וְאַרְגָּמָן וְהָעִיר
 שׁוֹשָׁן צִהְלָה וְשִׁמְחָה: טז לַיהוּדִים הִיתָה אוֹרָה וְשִׁמְחָה
 וְשׁוֹשָׁן וִיקָר: יז וּבְכָל־מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה וּבְכָל־עִיר וְעִיר
 מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר דִּבְרַת־הַמֶּלֶךְ וְדָתוֹ מֵגִיעַ שִׁמְחָה וְשׁוֹשָׁן
 לַיהוּדִים מִשְׁתָּה וַיּוֹם טוֹב וְרַבִּים מֵעַמֵי הָאָרֶץ מִתִּיהוּדִים
 כִּי־נִפְלַ פָּחַד־הִיְהוּדִים עֲלֵיהֶם: טח א וּבִשְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ
 הוּא־חֹדֶשׁ אֲדָר בְּשָׁלוֹשָׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם בּוֹ אֲשֶׁר הִגִּיעַ דְּבַר־

[ח:טו] תִּכְלַת - בֵּינִיטוֹן [בִּינוּיִת יְהוּדִית "כָּחוֹל וְנִצְיָאֲנִי" וּבִשְׁמֵעוּתוֹ "גִּוּוֹ
 כְּחִלְחַל כְּעֵין הַיָּם הַתִּיכוֹן"].

[ח:טו] וְחֹר - לָבוֹן.

[ח:טו] וְעֵטְרַת - הִיתָה הָעֵטְרַת עַל (הַ) לְבוּשׁ) שְׁלוֹ וְאִין הוּא כְּתָר מַלְכוּת.

[ח:טו] וְתַכְרִיךְ בּוּץ - הוּא מְעִיל שֵׁשׁ. בּוּץ הוּא שֵׁשׁ מְשֻׁזָּר לָבוֹן. וְכַרְמִיל הוּא
 תוֹלַעַת שְׁנִי. וְתַכְרִיךְ בּוּץ הוּא לָבוֹן טוֹב מִן חוֹר. אוֹ יְהִיָּה וְתַכְרִיךְ צְבִיעָה כְּמוֹ
 כְּרַמִּיל, אָבֵל בּוּץ הוּא לָבוֹן.

[ח:טו] וְאַרְגָּמָן - הוּא אִישׁ טוֹ רֹדִיזוֹנְדָא [בִּינוּיִת יְהוּדִית "כְּעֵין רְמוֹן"];
 לֹא אָדוּם לְגַמְרִי וְלֹא שְׁחוֹר לְגַמְרִי.

was published to all nationalities, that the *Yehudim* was to be ready for that day to avenge themselves of their enemies. ^{8:14} So the couriers who rode on royal horses went out urgently and were pressed on by the Emperor's order. The decree was given out in Susa/*Shushan* (the capital).

^{8:15} *Mordokhai* went out of the presence of the Emperor in royal clothing of **blue and white linen, and a large golden garland, and a wrap of fine linen and purple**; and the city of *Shushan* shouted and was glad. ^{8:16} The *Yehudim* experienced light, gladness, joy, and honor. ^{8:17*} In every province, and in every city, wherever the Emperor's order and decree came, the *Yehudim* had gladness, joy, a feast, and a holiday. Many from among the peoples of the land became Jewish/*mityahadim*, because a reverence for *Yehudim* had come over them.

9 ^{9:1} Now in the 12th month, which is the month of *Adār*, on the 13th day of the month, when the Emperor's

^{8:15} **Blue**/*tekhēlet* – [In Judeo-Greek,] “Venetian blue/aquamarine.”

^{8:15} **And white linen**/*hur* – [A shade of] white.

^{8:15} **And a large golden garland** – The garland was a part of his robe; this was not the royal crown.

^{8:15} **And a wrap of fine linen**/*buṣ* – That is, a linen/*shēsh* cloak. Fine linen/*buṣ* is white, twisted linen/*shēsh*. “A wrap of fine linen” is better than that of “white linen/*hur*.” Otherwise, “and a wrap of” refers to something that has been dyed, such as crimson, except that fine linen/*buṣ* is white.

^{8:15} **And purple**/*argāmān* – That is, [in Judeo-Greek,] “like a pomegranate”: not entirely red, and not entirely black.

הַמֶּלֶךְ וּדְתוֹ לְהַעֲשׂוֹת בַּיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר שָׁבְרוּ אֲבֵי הַיְהוּדִים
לְשָׁלוֹט בָּהֶם וּנְהַפֹּךְ הוּא אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁלְטוּ הַיְהוּדִים הַמָּה
בְּשִׁנְאֵיהֶם: ב* נִקְהְלוּ הַיְהוּדִים בְּעָרֵיהֶם בְּכָל־מְדִינֹת
הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשׁוּרוֹשׁ לְשַׁלַּח יָד בַּמִּבְקָשִׁי רַעְתֶּם וְאִישׁ
לֹא־עָמַד לְפָנֵיהֶם כִּי־נִפְלַ פְּחָדִם עַל־כָּל־הָעַמִּים: ג וְכָל־
שָׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת וְהָאֲחֻשְׁדָּרָפְנִים וְהַפְּחוֹת וְעֹשֵׂי הַמְּלֶאכֶה
אֲשֶׁר לַמֶּלֶךְ מִנְּשָׂאִים אֶת־הַיְהוּדִים כִּי־נִפְלַ פְּחָד־מִרְדֵּכִי
עֲלֵיהֶם: ד כִּי־גָדוֹל מִרְדֵּכִי בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְשָׁמְעוּ הוֹלֵךְ
בְּכָל־הַמְּדִינֹת כִּי־הָאִישׁ מִרְדֵּכִי הוֹלֵךְ וְגָדוֹל:

ה וַיָּבֹאוּ הַיְהוּדִים בְּכָל־אֲבֵיהֶם מִכַּת־חֶרֶב וְהָרָג וְאֲבָדָן
וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְּשִׁנְאֵיהֶם פְּרָצוֹנִים: ו וּבְשׁוֹשָׁן הַבִּירָה הָרְגוּ
הַיְהוּדִים וְאֵפֶד חֲמִשׁ מְאוֹת אִישׁ:

- | | |
|-------|-------------------------|
| וְאֵת | פְּרִשְׁנֵדָא |
| וְאֵת | דִּלְפוֹן |
| וְאֵת | אֶסְפֵּתָא: |
| וְאֵת | פּוֹרְתָא |
| וְאֵת | אֲדֵלְיָא |
| וְאֵת | אֲרִידָתָא: |
| וְאֵת | פְּרַמְשָׁתָא |
| וְאֵת | אֲרִיסִי |
| וְאֵת | אֲרִדִי |
| וְאֵת | וִיזְתָּא: |
| וְאֵת | עֲשָׂרָת * ^ו |

order and decree drew near to be put in effect; on the day that the enemies of the Jews/*Yehudim* hoped to conquer them, but which had been changed to a day when the *Yehudim* conquered those who hated them, ^{9:2*} the *Yehudim* gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the Emperor Xerxes/*Aḥashwērosh*, to assail those who wanted to harm them. No one could stand up to them, because the fear of them had fallen on all the people. ^{9:3} All the governors of the provinces, the deputies, the leaders, and those who handled the Emperor's affairs helped the *Yehudim*, because the fear of *Mordokhai* had fallen on them. ^{9:4} For *Mordokhai* was great within the Imperial Mansion, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces; because that [very] man, *Mordokhai*, grew greater and greater. ^{9:5} The *Yehudim* struck all their enemies with the edge of the sword, by slaughter and destruction, and did what they wished to those who hated them. ^{9:6} In Susa/*Shushan* (the capital) the *Yehudim* killed and destroyed 500 men. ^{9:7} They killed *Parshandātā*, *Dalphon*, *Aspātā*, ^{9:8} *Porātā*, *Adalyā*, *Aridātā*, ^{9:9} *Parmashtā*, *Arisay*, *Ariday*, and *Wayzātā*, ^{9:10*} **the ten sons of *Hāmān*** the son of

9:10 **The ten sons of *Hāmān*** – [Ten,] beyond the [aforementioned] 500.

בְּנֵי הַמֶּזֶן בֵּין־הַמְדַתָּא עָרַר הַיְהוּדִים הָרְגוּ וּבִבְזָה לֹא
שָׁלְחוּ אֶת־יָדָם: יא בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא בָּא מִסְפָּר הַהֲרוּגִים
בְּשׁוֹשַׁן הַבֵּיירָה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ: יב וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ
לְאַסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה בְּשׁוֹשַׁן הַבֵּיירָה הָרְגוּ הַיְהוּדִים וְאַבְד
חֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וְאֵת עֶשְׂרֵת בְּנֵי־הַמֶּזֶן בְּשָׂאֵר מְדִינֹת
הַמֶּלֶךְ מִה עָשׂוּ וּמִה־שָׁאַלְתֶּךָ וַיִּנְתֶּנּוּ לָךְ וּמִה־בִּקְשָׁתֶךָ
עוֹד וַתַּעֲשׂ: יג* וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְתֵּר אֶסְתֵּר אִם־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב
יִנְתֶּנּוּ גַם־מִחֹר לַיְהוּדִים אֲשֶׁר בְּשׁוֹשַׁן לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּדַת
הַיּוֹם וְאֵת עֶשְׂרֵת בְּנֵי־הַמֶּזֶן יִתְּלוּ עַל־הָעֵץ: יד וַיֹּאמֶר
הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהַעֲשׂוֹת כֵּן וַתִּנְתֶּנּוּ דַת בְּשׁוֹשַׁן וְאֵת עֶשְׂרֵת
בְּנֵי־הַמֶּזֶן תִּלּוּ: טו וַיִּקְהָלוּ הַיְהוּדִים [הַיְהוּדִים] אֲשֶׁר־
בְּשׁוֹשַׁן גַּם בַּיּוֹם אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר לְחֹדֶשׁ אֲדָר וַיְהִי־גֹו בְּשׁוֹשַׁן
שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וּבִבְזָה לֹא שָׁלְחוּ אֶת־יָדָם: טז* וּשְׂאֵר
הַיְהוּדִים אֲשֶׁר בְּמְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ נִקְהָלוּ וְעָמַד עַל־נַפְשָׁם
וְנוֹחַ מֵאִיבֵיהֶם וְהָרַג בְּשִׁנְאֵיהֶם חֲמִשָּׁה וּשְׁבַעִים אֶלֶף
וּבִבְזָה לֹא שָׁלְחוּ אֶת־יָדָם: יז* בַּיּוֹם־שְׁלֹשָׁה עָשָׂר לְחֹדֶשׁ
אֲדָר וְנוֹחַ בְּאַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר בּוֹ וַעֲשָׂה אֹתוֹ יוֹם מְשֻׁתָּה

[ט:י] עֶשְׂרֵת בְּנֵי הַמֶּזֶן - זולת החמש מאות [איש] [הנזכרים בפסוק ה'].
[ט:יז] ובבזה לא שלחו את ידם - כי הגביאים הזְהִירוּם, ואולי ראשיהם או
מְרַדְכֵי כְּתָב אֲלֵיהֶם שְׁלָא יִשְׁלְלוּ, כִּי־אִם לְמֶלֶךְ יִתְּנוּם. הפורים: ד דְּבָרִים
חִבְבִּים - ה(א) מִשְׁתָּה, שְׁלָא יִצְוִמוּ שׁוּם אִישׁ; (ב) שְׁמַחָה, שְׁלָא יִבְכָּה אִישׁ
בו; (ג) וּמְשֻׁלוֹחַ מְנוֹת; וְה(ד) וּמִתְּנוֹת לְאֲבִיוֹנִים.

Hammedātā (the sworn enemy of the *Yehudim*), **but they did not go for the loot.** ^{9:11} On that day, the number of those who were slain in *Shushan* (the capital) was brought before the Emperor. ^{9:12} Then the Emperor said to Queen *Estēr* “In *Shushan* (the capital), 500 men and *Hāmān*’s ten sons were slain! What then would they have they done in the rest of the Emperor’s provinces? Now, what is your petition? It shall be granted you. What is your further request? It shall be done.” ^{9:13*} Then *Estēr* said, “If it pleases the Emperor, let it be granted to the *Yehudim* who are in *Shushan* to do tomorrow also according to this day’s decree, and let *Hāmān*’s ten sons be hanged on the wooden [scaffold].” ^{9:14} The Emperor commanded this to be done. A decree was given out in *Shushan*; and they hanged *Hāmān*’s ten sons. ^{9:15*} The *Yehudim* who were in *Shushan* gathered themselves together on the 14th day also of the month of *Adār*, and killed 300 men in *Shushan*; but they did not go for the loot. ^{9:16} The other *Yehudim* who were in the Emperor’s provinces gathered themselves together, defended their lives, had rest from their enemies, and killed 75,000 of those who hated them; but they did not go for the loot. ^{9:17*} This was done on the 13th day of the month of *Adār*;

9:10 But they did not go for the loot – Because the prophets warned them, and perhaps their leaders or *Mordokhai* wrote to them that they should not go looting, but should give them to the Emperor. Moreover, the commandments of *Purim* [establish] four necessary things: (1) *feasting*, so that no one should fast; (2) *festivity*, so that no one should cry on it; (3) *sharing* portions; and (4) *gifts* for the poor.

וְשִׁמְחָה: יח וְהִיהוּדִים [וְהִיהוּדִים] אֲשֶׁר־בְּשׁוּשָׁן נִקְהְלוּ
 בְּשִׁלְשָׁה עָשָׂר בּוֹ וּבְאַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר בּוֹ וְנֹחַ בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר
 בּוֹ וַעֲשָׂה אֹתוֹ יוֹם מְשֻׁתָּה וְשִׁמְחָה: יט עַל־כֵּן הִיהוּדִים
 הַפְּרוּזִים [הַפְּרוּזִים] הֵיטְבִים בְּעָרֵי הַפְּרוּזוֹת עֹשִׂים אֵת
 יום אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר לְחֹדֶשׁ אֲדָר שִׁמְחָה וּמְשֻׁתָּה וְיוֹם טוֹב
 וּמְשֻׁלוֹחַ מְנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ:

כ וַיִּכְתֹּב מְרַדְכֵי אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיִּשְׁלַח סְפָרִים
 אֶל־כָּל־הִיהוּדִים אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל־מְדִינוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֻׁרוּשׁ
 הַקְּרוּבִים וְהַרְחֹקִים: כא לְקִיָּם עֲלֵיהֶם לֵהֵיוֹת עֹשִׂים
 אֵת יוֹם אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר לְחֹדֶשׁ אֲדָר וְאֵת יוֹם־חֲמִשָּׁה
 עָשָׂר בּוֹ בְּכָל־שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה: כב כִּימִים אֲשֶׁר־נָחוּ בָהֶם
 הִיהוּדִים מֵאוֹיְבֵיהֶם וְהַחֹדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר נֶהְפְּךְ לָהֶם מִיָּגוֹן
 לְשִׁמְחָה וּמֵאֵבֶל לְיוֹם טוֹב לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתָם יְמֵי מְשֻׁתָּה
 וְשִׁמְחָה וּמְשֻׁלוֹחַ מְנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ וּמִתְּנוּת לְאָבִיוֹנִים:
 כג וְקִבַּל הִיהוּדִים אֶת אֲשֶׁר־הִחֲלוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־
 כָּתַב מְרַדְכֵי אֲלֵיהֶם: כד כִּי הָמָן בֶּן־הַמְּדֵתָא הָאֲגָגִי צִוָּר

[ט:כג] וְקִבַּל הִיהוּדִים - טענה [משמעותו] עם היהודים.

[ט:כג] אֵת אֲשֶׁר־הִחֲלוּ - הוא שהתחילו לעשות משתה ושמחה.

[ט:כג] וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר־כָּתַב מְרַדְכֵי - משלוח מנות. ד"א [דבר אחר], אֵת אֲשֶׁר־
 הִחֲלוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת מִנְפֶשֶׁם בְּשָׁנָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה. וכן קבלו מאשר כתב מרדכי
 עליהם.

and on the 14th day of that month they rested and made it a day of feasting and gladness. ^{9:18} But the *Yehudim* who were in *Shushan* assembled together on the 13th and 14th days of the month; and on the 15th day of that month, they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. ^{9:19} Therefore, the *Yehudim* of the villages, who live in unwalled cities, make the 14th day of the month of *Adār* a day of gladness and feasting, a holiday, and a day of sending presents of food to one another. ^{9:20} *Mordokhai* wrote these things, and sent scrolls to all the *Yehudim* who were in all the provinces of the Emperor *Ahashwērosh*, both near and far, ^{9:21} to enjoin them that they should keep the 14th and 15th days of the month of *Adār* yearly, ^{9:22} as the days in which the *Yehudim* had rest from their enemies, and the month which was turned to them from sorrow to gladness, and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, and of sending presents of food to one another, and gifts to the needy. ^{9:23} **The *Yehudim* accepted what they had begun to do, as *Mordokhai* had written to them;** ^{9:24} because *Hāmān* the son of *Hammedātā*, the Agagite/*Agāgi* (sworn enemy of all the *Yehudim*), had plotted against the *Yehudim* to annihilate

9:23 **The *Yehudim* accepted** – Meaning, the *Yehudim* as a people.

9:23 **What they had begun to do** – [Meaning,] that which they started doing: feasting and making festivity.

9:23 **As *Mordokhai* had written to them** – [Regarding] the sending of portions. Alternatively, “that which they had begun to do” was from among themselves in the first year, and so they accepted what *Mordokhai* wrote concerning them.

כָּל־הַיְהוּדִים חָשַׁב עַל־הַיְהוּדִים לְאַבְדָם וְהַפִּיל פּוֹר
הוּא הַגּוֹרֵל לְהִמָּם וּלְאַבְדָם: כה וּבְבֹאֶה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ
אָמַר עַם־הַסֵּפֶר יָשׁוּב מִחֲשִׁבְתּוֹ הֲרַעָה אֲשֶׁר־חָשַׁב
עַל־הַיְהוּדִים עַל־דְּאִשׁוֹ וְתָלוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו עַל־הָעֵץ:
כו עַל־כֵּן קָרְאוּ לַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה פּוֹרִים עַל־שֵׁם הַפּוֹר
עַל־כֵּן עַל־כָּל־דְּבָרֵי הָאֲגֵרָת הַזֹּאת וּמֵה־רְאוּ עַל־כִּכָּה
וּמֵה הִגִּיעַ אֲלֵיהֶם: כז* קִיְמוּ וּקְבַל [וְקִבְלוּ] הַיְהוּדִים ו

[ט:כה] וּבְבֹאֶה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ - וְהַכְנִיסָה לְמַרְדֳּכָי. לִפְנֵיו, צִוָּה הַמֶּלֶךְ לְכַתּוּב
כִּן מְרַדְּכֵי [אֵת] כָּל מָה שִׁיחֲפוּץ, וְאַחַר כֵּן הַכְנִיסוּ הַכְּתָבִים לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ,
וְקָרָא אוֹתָם הָאוֹמֵר לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ. וְזֶה שֶׁאָמַר ...

[ט:כה] וְאָמַר עַם־הַסֵּפֶר - הוּא הַקּוֹרָא עִם הַסֵּפֶר.

[ט:כו] וְעַל־כֵּן קָרְאוּ לַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה פּוֹרִים - וְלִמְעַן הִגִּיעַ אֲלֵיהֶם סִפְרִים שֶׁל
הַמֶּן לְאַבְדָם [ר"ל לְאַבֵּד אוֹתָם בַּיּוֹם] יֵג לְאַדָּר.

[ט:כו] עַל־כֵּן עַל־כָּל־דְּבָרֵי הָאֲגֵרָת הַזֹּאת - בְּעֵבֹר הַדְּבָרִים הַכְּתוּבִים בְּזוֹ
הַמְּגִלָּה.

[ט:כו] וּמֵה־רְאוּ - וּמֵה צָרָה רְאוּ עַל־כִּכָּה.

[ט:כו] וּמֵה הִגִּיעַ - וּמֵה שֶׁשׁוּן הִגִּיעַ אֲלֵיהֶם; ד"א [דְּבָר אַחַר], אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ
וְהַתְּבוֹנְנוּ בְּדַעְתָּם לְנוּחַ בֵּיד לְאֶכּוֹל וּלְשִׁתּוֹת, וּמֵה הִגִּיעַ אֲלֵיהֶם כְּתַב מְרַדְּכֵי
לְקִיָּם גַּם אֵת יוֹם הַיּוֹם; ד"א [דְּבָר אַחַר], מַעֲנֶה [מִשְׁמַעוֹתוֹ] וְלִמְעַן רָאוּ
עַל כִּכָּה כִּי הַפִּיל פּוֹר לְהִמָּם.

them, and had cast *Pur*, that is the lottery, to overwhelm them, and to annihilate them; ^{9:25} **but when she came before the Emperor, he said with the scroll** that his evil plot, which he had devised against the *Yehudim*, should return on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the wooden [scaffold]. ^{9:26} **Therefore, they called these days *Purim***, from the word *Pur*. Therefore, **because of all the words of this letter, and what they had seen** concerning this matter, **and what had come to them**, ^{9:27*} the *Yehudim* had established and imposed this upon themselves, their descendants,

9:25 **But when she came before the Emperor** – She was brought in to *Mordokhai*. In his presence, the Emperor commanded *Mordokhai* to write everything that he desired, and afterwards, they brought the documents before the Emperor, and he read them before the Emperor. And this is what he said . . .

9:25 **He said with the scroll** – [He, as in] the herald, with the scroll.

9:26 **Therefore, they called these days *Purim*** – And thus, the scrolls of *Hāmān* [meant] for their destruction arrived on the 13th day of the month of *Adār*.

9:26 **Because of all the words of this letter** – On account of the words written in this [very] scroll.

9:26 **And what they had seen** – The *danger* that they had seen in [all] this.

9:26 **And what had come to them** – “And what *joy* had come to them.” Alternatively, [this is about] “what they had seen” and perceived in their mind to rest on the 14th in order to eat and drink, and “what came had come to them” was that *Mordokhai* wrote to them to make the 15th day official as well. Alternatively, this means “and therefore they saw what happened,” that the lot/*pur* was cast to destroy them.

עֲלֵיהֶם ׀ וְעַל־זָרְעָם וְעַל כָּל־הַנְּלוּיִם עֲלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יַעֲבֹד
לְהִיּוֹת עֲשִׂים אֶת שְׁנֵי הַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה כְּכַתְּבָם וְכִזְמוֹנָם
בְּכָל־שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה: כח וְהַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה נְזָכְרִים וְנַעֲשִׂים
בְּכָל־דָּוָר וְדָוָר מִשְׁפָּחָה וּמִשְׁפָּחָה מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה וְעִיר
וְעִיר וַיָּמִי הַפְּוֹרִים הָאֵלֶּה לֹא יַעֲבְרוּ מִתּוֹךְ הַיְּהוּדִים
וְזָכְרָם לֹא־יִסּוּף מְזָרְעָם: כט* וְתַכְתֵּב אֶסְתֵּר
הַמְּלֻכָּה בֵּת־אֲבִיחַיִל וּמְרַדְכֵי הַיְּהוּדִי אֶת־כָּל־תְּקוּף לְקַיָּם
אֶת אַגְרַת הַפְּוֹרִים הַזֹּאת הַשְּׁנִית: ל וַיִּשְׁלַח סְפָרִים אֶל־
כָּל־הַיְּהוּדִים אֶל־שֶׁבַע וְעֶשְׂרִים וּמֵאָה מְדִינָה מְלָכוֹת
אֲחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ דְּבָרֵי שְׁלוֹם וְאַמֶּת: לא לְקַיָּם אֶת־יָמֵי הַפְּרִים
הָאֵלֶּה בְּזִמְנֵיהֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר קָיָם עֲלֵיהֶם מְרַדְכֵי הַיְּהוּדִי

[ט:כז] ועל כל-הנלוים עליהם - הם הגרים.

[ט:כח] לא יעברו מתוך היהודים - בימי הגולה.

[ט:כח] לא-יִסּוּף מְזָרְעָם - בימי המשיח ובגין המקדש.

[ט:כט] אֶת־כָּל־תְּקוּף - גבורות ה' שעשה עמָהֶם.

[ט:ל] דְּבָרֵי שְׁלוֹם - מה שעבר עליהם מן השלום שנתן ה' להם.

[ט:ל] וְאַמֶּת - חייב עליהם שישבחו לה' ויקימו תורתו.

and everyone who has joined themselves to them, so that it should not pass away, that they would keep these two days according to what was written, and according to its appointed time, every year; ^{9:28} and that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that these days of *Purim* **should not pass away from among the *Yehudim***, nor should their commemoration cease from [among] their offspring.

^{9:29*} Then Queen *Estēr*, the daughter of *Avihayil*, and *Mordokhai* the Jew/*Yehudi*, wrote **with all authority** to confirm this second letter of *Purim*. ^{9:30} He sent letters to all the *Yehudim*, to the 127 provinces of the Empire of Aḥashwērosh, with **words of peace and truth**, ^{9:31} to confirm these days of *Purim* in their appointed times, as *Mordokhai* the *Yehudi* and Queen *Estēr* had decreed, and as they had imposed upon themselves

^{9:27} **And everyone who has joined themselves to them** – These are the sojourners/*gērim*.

^{9:28} **Should not pass away from among the *Yehudim*** – During the days of being in the Exile.

^{9:28} **Cease from [among] their offspring** – [Even] in the days of the anointed one/*māshiah* and the rebuilding of the Temple.

^{9:28} **With all authority** – The mighty acts of God that He performs among them.

^{9:30} **Words of peace** – What had passed over them was from the peace/*shālom* that God gave to them.

^{9:30} **And truth** – They must praise God and uphold His *Torāh*.

וְאַסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה וְכַאֲשֶׁר קִיְמוּ עַל-נַפְשָׁם וְעַל-זְרַעָם
דְּבַרֵי הַצְּמוֹת וְזַעֲקָתָם: לֵב וּמֵאֲמַר אֶסְתֵּר קִיֵּם דְּבַרֵי
הַפָּרִים הָאֵלֶּה וּנְכַתֵּב בַּסֵּפֶר:

י א וַיִּשֶׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ [אַחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ] מִסַּעַל-הָאָרֶץ
וְאֵיִי הַיָּם: ב וְכָל-מַעֲשֵׂה תִקְפוֹ וּגְבוּרָתוֹ וּפְרִשְׁתֵּי גְדֻלַּת
מְרַדְּכַי אֲשֶׁר גָּדְלוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַלְוֵאִים כְּתוּבִים עַל-סֵפֶר
דְּבַרֵי הַיָּמִים לְמַלְכֵי מְדֵי וּפְרָס: ג כִּי ו מְרַדְּכַי הַיְּהוּדִי

[ט:לא] דְּבַרֵי הַצְּמוֹת - מַעֲנֶה [מִשְׁמַעוֹתוֹ] בְּעִבּוֹר הַגְּרַמַּת הַצְּמוֹת נוֹשְׁעוֹ,
וּבְעִבּוֹר זַעֲקָתָם הַצֵּלְחוֹ.

[ט:לב] וּמֵאֲמַר אֶסְתֵּר - שְׂבָאָה וְהַתְּחַנְנָה לִפְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ.

[ט:לז] וּנְכַתֵּב בַּסֵּפֶר - זֶה אַחַשְׁוֵרֶשׁ הַעֲתִיק לְמַגְלָה שֶׁתְּהִיָּה לִפְנֵיו; ד"א
[דְּבַר אַחֵר], נְכַתֵּב בַּסֵּפֶר עַל יְדֵי הַנְּבִיאִים.

[יא:א] מִסַּע - אוֹלֵי לְכַד מְזִינּוֹת [בְּעֵת] שֶׁלְקַח לְאַסְתֵּר וּלְגַדְל לְמְרַדְּכַי.

[יא:ב] עַל-הָאָרֶץ - הִרְאָה כִּי הַשָּׁנִים לֹא לָקַח מִנְחָה, בְּלוֹ, וְהִלֵּךְ [ר"ל מִסַּע]
אֲשֶׁר, מִסַּע מְכַסֵּס, וּמִסַּע מְעַבֵּר], וְעוֹד שָׁב, בְּשָׁנַת יָב לְמַלְכוּתוֹ, וְשָׁם מִסַּע.

[יא:ג] וְכָל-מַעֲשֵׂה תִקְפוֹ - הֵם בֵּית יַעֲרֵר הַלְּבָנוֹן שֶׁהָיוּ מְגַנְּבִים וְחָרְבוּת עָרֵי
מַלְחָמָה.

and their descendants in **the matter of the fasts** and their lamentations. ^{9:32} *Estēr's* decree confirmed these matters of *Purim*; and it was written in **The Scroll**.

10 ^{10:1} Emperor *Ahashwērosh* levied a tax on the land, and on the islands of the sea. ^{10:2} **And all the acts of his power** and of his might, and the full account of the greatness of *Mordokhai*, to which the Emperor advanced him, aren't they written in the book of the chronicles of the Emperors of Media/*Māday* and Persia/*Fārās*? ^{10:3*} For *Mordokhai* the Jew/*Yehudi* was second to Emperor *Ahashwērosh*, **a hero among the**

^{9:31} **The matter of the fasts** – Meaning that it was on account of taking the fasts seriously that they were saved, and on behalf of their outcry that they prospered.

^{9:32} *Estēr's* decree – That she came and implored before the Emperor.

^{9:32} **And it was written in The Scroll** – This *Ahashwērosh* copied the scroll so that it would be before him. Alternatively, it was written in a book by the hands of the prophets.

^{10:1} **A tax** – Perhaps he took over additional provinces during the time that he married *Estēr* and promoted *Mordokhai*.

^{10:1} **On the land** – Which shows that for five years, he did not exact a tribute, an excise tax, or a toll, and furthermore, in the 12th year of his reign, he returned, and levied a tax.

^{10:2} **And all the acts of his power** – These [include] the mansion of Lebanese cedar forest that they [surrounded with] shields, and ruins of militarized cities.

מִשְׁנֵה לַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשׁוּרוֹשׁ וְגָדוֹל לַיהוּדִים וְרָצוּי לַרַב אַחִיו
דִּרְשׁ טוֹב לְעַמּוֹ וְדַבֵּר שְׁלוֹם לְכָל־זֵרְעוֹ:

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם אָמֵן וְאָמֵן:

(תהלים פט:נג)

נכתב על ידי יוסף צדיק
מלמד וחזן בכנסת הקראים פה קונשטנדינא.
יום ד, טו לאול השפ"ה

(17 בספטמבר 1625 למנין הגוים)

[יג] וגדול ליהודים - גם היה גדול בעיני היהודים.
[יג] ורצוי לרב אחיו - ולא אמר לאחיו, הודיע כי היה רצוי, ואהוב, וכשר
לכל אחיו הקשרים.
[יג] ודבר שלום - דברי שלום.
[יג] לכל-זרעו - ולא לרב זרעו, כי-אם לכל-זרעו.

Jews/*Yehudim*, and accepted by the multitude of his brothers for seeking the good of his people and for speaking peace to all his offspring.

Y·H·W·H is Forever Blessed. Amen and Amen.

(Psalms/*Tehillim* 89:53)

This has been written down by the hand of Yösēf Şaddiq,
an educator and cantor at the
Karaitesynagogue here in Constantinople.
Fourth Day [of the Week], 15 *Elul* 5385
(Wednesday, September 17, 1625 CE)

10:3 **A hero among the Jews/*Yehudim*** – He was also great in the eyes of the Jews/*Yehudim*.

10:3 **And accepted by the multitude of his brothers** – Yet it did not say *to* his brothers, but it informs that he was desired, beloved, and accepted by *all* of his *worthwhile* brothers.

10:3 **For speaking peace** – Words of peace/*shālom*.

10:3 **To all his offspring** – [Note:] not to the *multitude* of his offspring, but to *all* of his offspring.