

Who's Who in the Megilla

Class #3: Haman and Hashem

HAMAN

1) Megilla, Chapter 3:

After these events, King Ahasuerus promoted **Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite** and advanced him, and placed his seat above all the princes who were with him.

אֲחֵתֶּרָה הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה גָּדַל הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֶחְשׂוּרוֹשׁ אֶת־הֶמָּן בֶּן־הַמִּדְיָא הָאֲגָגִי
וַיִּנְשְׂאֵהוּ וַיֵּשֶׂם אֶת־כִּסֵּאוֹ מֵעַל כָּל־
הַשָּׂרִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ׃

2And all the king's servants who were in the king's gate would kneel and prostrate themselves before Haman, for so had the king commanded concerning him, **but Mordecai would neither kneel nor prostrate himself.**

בְּכֹל־עֲבָדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־בְּשַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ
כָּרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לְהֶמָּן כִּי־כֵן צִוָּה־לוֹ
הַמֶּלֶךְ וּמֶרְדֵּכַי לֹא יִכְרַע וְלֹא יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה׃

3Then the king's servants who were in the king's gate, said to Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's orders?"

גַּוְיָאמְרוּ עֲבָדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר־בְּשַׁעַר
הַמֶּלֶךְ לְמֶרְדֵּכַי מִדֹּעַ אֲתָה עוֹבֵר אֶת
מִצְוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ׃

4Now it came to pass when they said [this] to him daily, and he did not heed them, that they told [this] to Haman, to see whether Mordecai's words would stand up, for he had told them that he was a Jew.

דְּוִיָּהִי כְּאֲמָרָם (בְּאֲמָרָם כְּתִיב) אֵלָיו
יוֹם וַיֹּם וְלֹא שָׁמַע אֲלֵיהֶם וַיִּגִּידוּ
לְהֶמָּן לְרֵאוֹת הַיַּעֲמָדוֹ דְּבָרֵי מֶרְדֵּכַי כִּי־
הִגִּיד לָהֶם אֲשֶׁר־הוּא יְהוּדִי׃

5And when Haman saw that Mordecai would neither kneel nor prostrate himself before him, Haman became full of wrath.

הַוַּיְרָא הֶמָּן כִּי־אֵין מֶרְדֵּכַי כָּרַע
וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לוֹ וַיִּמְלֵא הֶמָּן חֶמָּה׃

6But it seemed contemptible to him to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him Mordecai's nationality, and Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who were throughout Ahasuerus's entire kingdom, Mordecai's people.

וַיִּבְזֶה בְּעֵינָיו לְשַׁלַּח יָד בְּמֶרְדֵּכַי לְבַדּוֹ
כִּי־הִגִּידוּ לוֹ אֶת־עַם מֶרְדֵּכַי וַיִּבְקֹשׁ הֶמָּן
לְהַשְׁמִיד אֶת־כָּל־הַיְהוּדִים אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל־
מַלְכוּת אֶחְשׂוּרוֹשׁ עִם מֶרְדֵּכַי׃

7In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, one cast the pur-that is the lot-before Haman from day to day and from month to month, to the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.

ז בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן הוּא חֹדֶשׁ נִסָּן בְּשַׁנַּת שְׁתַּיִם עָשָׂה לְמֶלֶךְ אַחֲשֵׁרֶשׁ הַפִּיל פּוּר הוּא הַגּוּרָל לִפְנֵי הַמֶּן מִיּוֹם אַלְיוֹם וּמִחֹדֶשׁ לְחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר הוּא חֹדֶשׁ אָדָר :

8And Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and separate among the peoples throughout all the provinces of your kingdom, and their laws differ from [those of] every people, and they do not keep the king's laws; it is [therefore] of no use for the king to let them be.

ח וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּן לְמֶלֶךְ אַחֲשֵׁרֶשׁ יִשְׁנֹו עַם־אֶחָד מִפְּזָר וּמִפְּרֻד בֵּין הָעַמִּים בְּכָל מְדִינֹות מַלְכוּתְךָ וְדַתֵּיהֶם שְׁנוֹת מִכָּל־עַם וְאֶת־דַּתֵּי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵינָם עֹשִׂים וְלְמֶלֶךְ אֵיךְ־שׁוֹה לְהַנִּיחָם :

9If it pleases the king, let it be written to destroy them, and I will weigh out ten thousand silver talents into the hands of those who perform the work, to bring [it] into the king's treasuries."

ט וַאֲם־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב יִכְתֹּב לְאַבְדָּם וְעָשְׂרַת אֲלָפִים כֶּפֶר־כֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁקוּל־עַל־יְדֵי עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה לְהָבִיא אֶל־גִּנְזֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ :

10And the king took his ring off his hand and gave it to Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the adversary of the Jews.

י וַיִּסֶּר הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־טַבַּעְתּוֹ מֵעַל יָדוֹ וַיִּתְּנָהּ לְהַמֵּן בֶּרֶה־מְדַתָּא הָאֲגָגִי צַר־ר הַיְהוּדִים :

11And the king said to Haman, "The silver is given to you, and the people to do to them as it pleases you."

יא וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהַמֵּן הַכֶּסֶף נָתַן לְךָ וְהָעַם לַעֲשׂוֹת בּוֹ כְּטוֹב בְּעֵינֶיךָ :

12And the king's scribes were summoned in the first month, on the thirteenth day thereof, and it was written according to everything that Haman had ordered to the king's satraps and to the governors who were over every province, and to the princes of every people, each province according to its script and each people according to its tongue; it was written in the name of King Ahasuerus, and it was sealed with the king's ring.

יב וַיִּקְרְאוּ סֹפְרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּשִׁלּוּשָׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם בּוֹ וַיִּכְתֹּב בְּכָל־אֶשְׁר־צָוָה הַמֶּן אֶל אַחֲשֵׁד־רַפְּנֵי־הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֶל־הַפְּרָחוֹת אֲשֶׁר אֶל־עַל־מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה וְאֶל־שָׂרֵי עַם וְעַם מְדִינָה וּמְדִינָה כְּכַתְּבָהּ וְעַם וְעַם כְּלִשׁוֹנָו בְּשֵׁם הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֵׁרֶשׁ נִכְתָּב וְנִחְתָּם בְּטַבַּעַת הַמֶּלֶךְ :

13And letters shall be sent by the hand of the couriers to all the king's provinces, to destroy, kill, and cause to perish all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women, on one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and their spoils to be taken as plunder.

**יְגִישְׁלוּחַ סְפָרִים בְּיַד הָרָצִים אֶל־כָּל־
מְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ לְהַשְׁמִיד לְהַרְגַּ וּלְאַבֵּד
אֶת־כָּל־הַיְהוּדִים מִנְעַר וְעַד־זָקֵן טוֹף
וְנָשִׁים בָּיוֹם אֶחָד בְּשִׁלּוּשֵׁה עֶשֶׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ
שְׁנַיִם־עֶשֶׂר הוּא־חֹדֶשׁ אָדָר וּשְׁלָלָם
לְבוֹז :**

14The copy of the writ was for an edict to be given in every province, published to all the peoples, to be ready for that day.

**יִדְפְּטֻשְׁגֹן הַכְּתָב לְהַנְתֹן דָת בְּכָל־מְדִינָה
וּמְדִינָה גְלוֹי לְכָל־הָעַמִּים לְהֵיוֹת
עֵתָדִים לְיוֹם הַזֶּה :**

15The couriers went forth in haste by the king's order, and the edict was given in Shushan the capital, and the king and Haman sat down to drink, and the city of Shushan was perturbed.

**טוֹהַרְצִים יֵצְאוּ דְחוּפִים בְּדַבַר הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְהָדָת נִתְּנָה בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַבֵּיטָרָה וְהַמֶּלֶךְ
וְהַמֶּן יֵשְׁבוּ לְשִׁתּוֹת וְהָעִיר שׁוּשַׁן
נְבוֹכָה :**

2)Rashi, Esther 3:2

would kneel and prostrate themselves: Because he made himself a god; therefore “Mordecai would neither kneel nor prostrate himself.”

3)Aleinu Prayer:

**עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל. לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרָאשִׁית. שְׁלֵא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי הָאָרְצוֹת. וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה. שְׁלֵא
שֶׁם חֲלַקְנוּ כְּהֵם וְגוֹרְלָנוּ כְּכָל הַמוֹנָם : שֶׁהֵם מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לְהַבֵּל וְרִיק וּמִתְפַּלְלִים אֶל אֵל לֹא יוֹשִׁיעַ : וְאַנְחָנוּ כְּנוֹרְעִים
וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא...
וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא...
וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא...**

It is our duty to praise the Master of all, to acclaim the greatness of the One who forms all creation. For God did not make us like the nations of other lands, and did not make us the same as other families of the Earth. God did not place us in the same situations as others, and our destiny is not the same as anyone else's. And **we bend our knees, and bow down, and give thanks, before the Ruler, the Ruler of Rulers, the Holy One, Blessed is God...**

4)Devarim 25: 17-18

You shall remember what Amalek did to you on the way, when you went out of Egypt,

עֲזָכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לְךָ עַמְלֵק
בְּדַרְדֹּךְ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם :

18how he happened upon you on the way and cut off all the stragglers at your rear, when you were faint and weary, and he did not fear God.

וַיֵּאָשֶׁר קָרוֹךְ בְּדַרְדֹּךְ וַיִּזְגַּב בְּךָ כָּל־
הַנְּחֻשְׁלִים אַחֲרֶיךָ וְאַתָּה עֵינֶיךָ וַיִּגָּע
וְלֹא יָרָא אֱלֹקִים :

5)Rashi, Devarim 25:18

קרוך, an expression denoting a chance occurrence (**מקרה**). - [Sifrei 25:167] ... Yet another explanation: an expression denoting heat and cold (**קור**). He cooled you off and made you [appear] tepid, after you were boiling hot, for the nations were afraid to fight with you, [just as people are afraid to touch something boiling hot]. But this one, [i.e., Amalek] came forward and started and showed the way to others. This can be compared to a bathtub of boiling water into which no living creature could descend. Along came an irresponsible man and jumped headlong into it! Although he scalded himself, he [succeeded to] make others think that it was cooler [than it really was]. — [Tanchuma 9]

6)Esther, 4:7

And Mordecai told him all that had befallen him, and the full account of the silver that Haman had proposed to weigh out into the king's treasuries on the Jews' account, to cause them to perish.

וַיִּגְדֹּלּוּ מְרֹדְכֵי אֶת פְּלִאֲשֶׁר קָרְהוּ
וְאֵת אֶת פְּרֻשֵׁת הַכֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר אָמַר הַמֶּלֶךְ
לְשִׁקוֹל עַל־גִּנְזֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ בִּיהוּדִים (כתיב
ביהודיים) לְאַבְדָּם :

7)Esther Rabbah 8:5

Mordechai said to Haach, “Go and tell her that the descendant of “happened” (i.e. Amalek, wh who is described as “happening” upon and attacking the Jewish people in the desert) has come upon us.”

8)Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson:

“The numerical value (gematria) of the Hebrew letters that spell Amalek (240) is equivalent to that of the letters that spell safek, “doubt.” All things holy are certain and absolute... Amalek is doubt; baseless, irrational doubt that cools the fervor of holiness with nothing more than a cynical shrug.”

9)Chulin 139:b

They also asked Rav Mattana: **From where in the Torah** can one find an allusion to the hanging of **Haman**? He replied: The verse states after Adam ate from the tree of knowledge: **“Have you eaten of [hamin] the tree**, about which I commanded you that you should not eat?” (Genesis 3:11). *Hamin* is spelled in the same manner as Haman: *Heh, mem, nun*.

10)Rabbi Akiva Tatz, Worldmask, Targum Press, pp.94-97, based on Rav Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin

The Gemara asks “Haman min haTorah minayin – Where is Haman’s name found in the Torah?” “Hamin ha’etz ... – Did you eat from the tree ...?” Now the word “hamin” is Haman, without vowels, which is the way the Torah is written... This question which God asks man, “Did you eat ...” is an expression of the distance which has come between man and his Creator as a result of man’s transgression. Adam has become so blind to reality, so confused that he tells himself that he can hide from the One Who sees all. Doubt has entered the world. Perhaps it is possible to hide. Perhaps He does not see, perhaps He does not know that man has transgressed. A gap has opened between God and His creation; the gap, the chasm of doubt. And the name of that gap, the name of that doubt that keeps God in hiding is Amalek. The source of Amalek has entered the world; Haman has been born.

11)Shmuel 1: 15:8

And he seized Agag, the king of Amalek, alive; and he completely destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.

וַיִּתְפֹּשׂ אֶת־אֲגַג מֶלֶךְ־עַמְלֵק חָיִּ
וַאֲת־כָּל־הָעַם הַחֲרִים לְפִי־חֶרֶב :

12)Torat Menachem, Sefer Hamaamarim, Moadim, Purim p. 66 ff.

With Amalek rearing its head again in the character of Haman, Mordechai understood that there was only one possible response. Amalek’s cynicism cannot be undone by a devotion to G-d manufactured by human intellect or emotion, because Amalek does not care for reason or love. Its opposition is absolute, fundamental – from the gut. Only with complete and utter submission to G-d, by being a Yehudi – would the Jews withstand Haman’s spiritual assault. That is why Mordechai and his people are not identified by the names of their tribes but by the name Yehudi – one who presents himself to G-d alone.

Why would Haman want to destroy everyone just because of Mordechai?

13)Esther, Chapter 5:

And Haman recounted to them the glory of his riches and the multitude of his sons, and all [the ways] that the king had promoted him and that he had exalted him over the princes and the king's servants.

וַיֹּסֶפֶר לָהֶם הַמֶּן אֶת־כְּבוֹד עֲשָׂרוֹ
וְרַב בְּנָיו וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר גִּדְּלוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ
וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר נָשָׂאוֹ עַל־הַשָּׂרִים וְעַבְדָּי
הַמֶּלֶךְ :

12And Haman said, "Esther did not even bring [anyone] to the party that she made, except me, and tomorrow, too, I am invited to her with the king.

וַיֹּאמֶר הַמֶּן אֶף לֹא־הֵבִיָּאָה
אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה עִם־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶל־
הַמִּשְׁתֶּה אֲשֶׁר־עָשְׂתָה כִּי אִם־אוֹתִי
וְגַם־לְמָחָר אֲנִי קְרוּאָה עִם־
הַמֶּלֶךְ :

13But all this is worth nothing to me, every time I see Mordecai the Jew sitting in the king's gate."

וַיֹּכְלִיָּה אֵינְנוֹ שׁוּה לִי בְכָל־עֵת
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי רֹאֶה אֶת־מָרְדֳּכָי הַיְהוּדִי
יוֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר הַמֶּלֶךְ :

HASHEM:

✓ It is called מגילת אסתר – which means “the scroll of Esther,” AND “revealing the hidden.”

1)Esther, Chapter 6:

On that night, the king's sleep was disturbed, and he ordered to bring the book of the records, the chronicles, and they were read before the king.

אֲבִלְיָה הִהוּא גִדְּדָה שְׁנַת הַמֶּלֶךְ
וַיֹּאמֶר לְהֵבִיָּא אֶת־סֵפֶר הַזְּכָרֹנוֹת
דְּבַרְי הַיָּמִים וַיְהִיו נִקְרָאִים לִפְנֵי
הַמֶּלֶךְ :

2)Rabbi Jacob Halevi Moelin

The reader should raise his voice when chanting this verse, for it is the essence of the miracle.

3)Esther Rabbah 3:10

Rabbi Yudan and Rabbi Levi said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: Everywhere in this scroll that King Achashverosh is stated, Scripture is referring to King Achashverosh. Everywhere that king is stated alone, it can be either sacred [referring to God] or profane [referring to Achashverosh].

4)Esther 1:20

...and all the women shall give (honor to their husbands, both great and small)

הָיָא וְכָל־הַנְּשִׂימַם וְתַנְנֵי

5)Megilla 12b

The king sent out letters to the people of all his provinces, in which it was written: **“That every man shall wield authority in his own house and speak according to the language of his people”** (Esther 1:22). **Rava said: Were it not for the first letters** sent by Ahasuerus, which everybody discounted, **there would not have been left among the enemies of the Jewish people**, a euphemism for the Jewish people themselves, **a remnant or a refugee**. Since these first letters were the subject of ridicule, people didn’t take the king seriously and did not immediately act upon the directive of the later letters, calling for the Jewish people’s destruction.

6)Esther 5:4

...let the king and Haman come today (to the banquet that I have prepared for him.)

...יָבוֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהָמָן הַיּוֹם

7)Talmud, Shabbat 88:a

The Torah says, “And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God; **and they stood at the lowermost part of the mount”** (Exodus 19:17). **Rabbi Avdimi bar Hama bar Hasa said:** the Jewish people actually stood beneath the mountain, and the verse **teaches that the Holy One, Blessed be He, overturned the mountain above the Jews like a tub, and said to them: If you accept the Torah, excellent, and if not, there will be your burial. Rav Aha bar Ya’akov said: From here there is a substantial caveat to the obligation to fulfill the Torah.** The Jewish people can claim that they were coerced into accepting the Torah, and it is therefore not binding. **Rava said: Even so, they again accepted it willingly in the time of Ahasuerus, as it is written:** “The Jews **ordained, and took upon them,** and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them” (Esther 9:27), and he taught: The Jews **ordained what they had already taken upon themselves** through coercion at Sinai.

- ✓ **The Mitzvot of Purim**
- ✓ **The customs of Purim: costumes, hamantashen, graggars**

The Structure of Esther

ונהפוך הוא The Tables Were Turned



J. Grossman and Y. Reiss, Megillat Esther with Illustrative Charts and Graphs, (Hebrew), 2002

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