

1. Background - Short Summary of Chapter 6

- king can't sleep
- finds out that he never paid Mordechai back for saving his life
- king asks Haman (who has come to ask the king to hang Mordechai) what should be done to honour someone
- Haman, thinking the king refers to him, tells the king to parade him around in fancy clothing on the king's horse
- Haman is forced to do this to Mordechai
- Haman and Mordechai go home - Mordechai returns to fasting and mourning, Haman is told by his family that he will fall to the Jews, and leaves to the king's party

2. Selections from Talmud Bavli, Megillah 15b-16a (Davidson Edition translation)

בלילה ההוא גנדה שנת המלך אמר רבי תנחום גנדה שנת מלכו של עולם...

The verse states: "On that night the sleep of the king was disturbed" (Esther 6:1). Rabbi Tanḥum said: The verse alludes to another king who could not sleep; the sleep of the King of the universe, the Holy One, Blessed be He, was disturbed....

וחמת המלך שככה שתי שכיכות הללו למה אחת של מלכו של עולם ואחת של אחשורוש...

The verse states: "Then the king's wrath was assuaged [shakhakha]" (Esther 7:10). The Gemara asks: Why are there two assuagings here? The term shakhakha is used rather than shaka and indicates doubled wrath. There was one assuaging of the wrath of the King of the universe, and one of the wrath of Ahasuerus...

כי נמכרנו אני ועמי וגו' אין הצר שוה בנזק המלך אמרה לו צר זה אינו שוה בנזק של מלך איקני בה בושתי וקטלה השתא איקני בדידי ומבעי למקטלי. ויאמר המלך אחשורוש ויאמר לאסתר המלכה ויאמר למה לי אמר רבי אבהו בתחלה על ידי תורגמן כיון דאמרה ליה מדבית שאול קאתינא מיד ויאמר לאסתר המלכה...

During the banquet Esther said to Ahasuerus: "For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to be annihilated. But if we had been sold merely for bondmen and bondwomen, I would have held my tongue, since the affliction [tzar] would not have been worth [eino shoveh] the damage to the king" (Esther 7:4). The Gemara explains that she said to him: This adversary [tzar] is not concerned [eino shoveh] about the damage that he is constantly causing to the king. First he was jealous of Vashti and killed her, as it has been explained that Memucan, who suggesting killing Vashti, was Haman; now he is jealous of me and desires to kill me. The verse states: "Then said the king Ahasuerus and said to Esther the queen" (Esther 7:5). The Gemara asks: Why do I need it to say "said" and again "said"? Rabbi Abbahu said: At first he spoke to her through the translator, who would interpret on his behalf, because he thought that she was a common woman of lowly ancestry. Once she told him that she came from the house of Saul, immediately it says: "And said to Esther the queen." Ahasuerus himself spoke to her, as if she had royal lineage, she was a woman befitting his status...

ותאמר אסתר איש צר ואויב המן הרע הזה אמר ר' אלעזר מלמד שהיתה מחווה כלפי אחשורוש ובא מלאך וסטר ידה כלפי המן...

The next verse states: "And Esther said: An adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman" (Esther 7:6). Rabbi Elazar said: This teaches that she was in fact pointing toward Ahasuerus, indicating that in fact he was an adversary and enemy, and an angel came and pushed her hand toward Haman...

3. Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer 50:10 (Friedlander translation)

והמלך קם בחמתו ממשטה היין ונכנס בגינת הביתן, מה עשה מיכאל התחיל מקצץ נטיעות לפניו, וראה המלך כן, אמר לו מה זה, אמר לו אני מבניו של המן שכך צוני אבא, מיד וחמתו בערה בו, ונבער חימה על חימה, ושב מגינת הביתן, מה עשה מיכאל המלאך הגביה את המן מעל אסתר כאילו רוצה לבא עליה, אמר המלך הרשע הזה לא דיו שקנה את אשתי להשמיד ולהרוג ולאבד אלא רוצה לבא עליה, הגם לכבוש את המלכה עמי בבית, ושמע המן את הדבר הזה ונפלו פניו, שנאמר לפני המן חפו, וצוה המלך לתלותו על העץ, באותה שעה מה עשה אליהו זכור לטוב נדמה לחרבונא אחד מסריסי המלך, אמר לו אדני המלך יש עץ בביתו של המן מבית קדשי הקדשים, שנאמר ויבן

את בית יער הלבנון ויעש את אולם העמודים חמשים אמה ארכו ושלוש אמות רחבו, מיד צוה המלך לתלותו, וכת' ויתלו את המן, לקח המלך את כל אשר להמן ונתן למרדכי ולאסתר, לקיים מה שנאמר וביתיה נוולי יתעבד על דנא, וצוה המלך ואמר כתבו על היהודים כתוב בעיניכם בשם המלך, וכתבו וחתמו אגרות פתקים ושלחו בכל המדינות להשמיד להרוג ולאבד את כל שונאי היהודים בלשלושה עשר לחדש אדר ביום השלישי במזל אריה, מה הארי הזה מלך על כל החיות וכל מקום שהוא רוצה הוא הופך את פניו, והוא חשב והפך להשמיד להרוג ולאבד את כל היהודים נהפוך הוא על שונאיהם, שנאמר ונהפוך הוא אשר ישלטו היהודים המה בשונאיהם.

"The king arose in his wrath" (ibid. 7). What did the angel Michael do? He began to cut down the plants in his presence. Intense wrath was kindled within him, and the king returned from the palace garden to the place of the banquet of wine. What did the angel Michael do? He lifted up Haman from Esther. The king exclaimed: As for this villain, he is not satisfied with having purchased the people of Esther to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, but he must needs come upon her! "Will he even force the queen before me in the house?" (ibid. 8). Haman heard this word and his countenance fell, as it is said, "They covered Haman's face" (ibid.). And the king commanded that he should be hanged on the gallows. What did Elijah, his memory be a blessing, do? He assumed the guise of Harbonah, one of the chamberlains of the king. He said to him: My lord, O king! There is a tree in Haman's house (taken) from the Holy of Holies, fifty cubits high. Whence do we know that it was from the Holy of Holies? Because it is said, "And he built the house of the forest of Lebanon" (1 Kings vii. 2). Forthwith the king commanded that he should be hanged thereon, as it is said, "And (the king) said, Hang him thereon" (Esth. vii. 9), so as to fulfil that which is said, "Let a beam be pulled out from his house, and let him be lifted up and fastened thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this" (Ezra vi. 11). And it says, "So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai" (Esth. vii. 10). The king took all that belonged to Haman and gave it to Mordecai and to Esther. He said to them: Write concerning the Jews as seems good in your eyes in the name of the king. They wrote official letters, and they sent throughout all the provinces to destroy, to slay, and to cause all the enemies of the Jews to perish on the thirteenth of the month of Adar, on the third day in the constellation of Leo. Just as the lion is the king over all the beasts, and he turns his gaze towards any place as he wishes; likewise did he think fit, and he turned his face to destroy and to slay all the enemies of Israel, as it is said, "In the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have rule over them" (ibid. ix. 1).

4. Mishlei 11:8 (Alhatorah translation)

צָדִיק מִצָּרָה נִחְלָץ וְיָבֵא רָשָׁע תַּחֲמוּיוֹ:

The righteous is delivered out of trouble, And the wicked cometh in his stead.

5. Ibn Ezra to Esther 1:12, 7:8, 7:9

וטעם הדרש שבא גבריאל והוסיף לה זנב, פ"י כמו בועה פרה על בשרה או על פניה, שהשם שמה מאוסה בעיניו כאלו היא בהמה שיש לה זנב. וסמכו המעשה לגבריאל כי כל מעשה השם על יד המלאכים. והזכיר גבריאל בעבור שהוא עוזר את ישראל ככתוב בספר דניאל
And regarding the understanding of the Midrashic opinion that Gavriel came and appended a tail to Vashti – this can be explained as a pimple that sprouted on her skin or on her face, that G-d made her disgusting in his eyes, as if she was an animal that had a tail. And they attributed this action to Gavriel since all of G-d's actions are through the angels. And it mentioned Gavriel specifically since he helped the Jews, as is written in the Book of Daniel.

והמלך שב מגנת וגוי' והמן נפל על המטה – יש אומר שהמלאך דחפו ונפל וי"א כל נפל על פניו לפניו והנכון כי בראותו המלך ששב נפל מרוב פחדו

“And the king returned... and Haman was falling on the bed” – some say that the angel pushed him, and he fell on Esther, and some say that he fell on his face in front of her [to plead?], and the correct understanding is that when he saw that the king had returned he fell over from his great fear.

ויאמר חרבונה – דברי יחיד כי חרבונה הוא אליהו ז"ל, ולפי דעתי שהטעם שזוה הסריס הוא הנזכר בתחלת הספר כי הוא מהז' הסריסים עשה טובה לישראל ובאה ישועה על ידו כאלו אליהו ז"ל היה שהוא הבשר בבוא הישועה.

And Charvona said – it is a single opinion that Charvona was Eliyahu Hanavi (z"l), and according to my understanding, the reason for it is that this officer was mentioned at the beginning of the book as one of the seven officers [who were evil], and he did good for the Jewish people, and a salvation came through his actions, as if he was Eliyahu Hanavi (z"l), who will be the one to alert us as to the coming of the salvation.