

"Esther, Mordecai, & What Happens When Jews Really Do Control the Media"

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Source Sheet by Esther Kustanowitz

Clarifying Unclear Communication: A Case Study (Esther 1:10-22)

On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded **the seven chamberlains** that ministered in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to show the peoples and the princes her beauty; for she was fair to look on. But the queen Vashti refused to come **at the king's commandment by the chamberlains**; therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him. Then the king said to the wise men, who knew the times—for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment; [...] 'What shall we do unto the queen Vashti **according to law, forasmuch as she hath not done the bidding of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?**' (16) And **Memukhan** answered before the king and the princes: 'Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the peoples, that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus. For this deed of the queen will come abroad unto all women, to make their husbands contemptible in their eyes, when it will be said: The **king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti** the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not. And this day will the princesses of **Persia and Media** who have heard of the deed of the queen say the like unto all the king's princes. So will there arise enough contempt and wrath. If it please the king, let there **go forth a royal commandment from him**, and **let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered**, that Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus, and that the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she. And when **the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his kingdom**, great though it be, all the wives will give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.' And the word pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memukan; for **he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language**, that every man should bear rule in his own house, and speak **according to the language of his people**. [Abbreviated from Esther 1:10-22]

How a Holiday Becomes a Law (Esther 9:20-32)

(20) **And Mordecai wrote these things**, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both nigh and far, [...] (23) And the Jews took upon them to do as they had begun, and **as Mordecai had written unto them**; (26) Wherefore they called these days Purim, after the name of pur. Therefore because of all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and that which had come unto them, (27) the Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such as joined themselves unto them, so as it should not fail, that they would **keep these two days according to the writing thereof**, and according to the appointed time thereof, every year; (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 fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them perish from their seed. (29) Then **Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote down all the acts of power**, to confirm this second letter of Purim. (30) **And he sent letters** unto all the Jews, to the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, with words of peace and truth, (31) to confirm these days of Purim in their appointed times, according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had ordained for themselves and for their seed, the matters of the fastings and their cry. (32) And **the commandment of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written** in the book.

Are We Safe in the King's Palace? (Esther 4:13-14)

(13) Then Mordecai bade them to return answer unto Esther: 'Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. (14) For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then will relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy father's house will perish; and who knoweth whether thou art not come to royal estate for such a time as this?'

"Top AP Headlines in History," by Benji Lovitt (excerpt, from Times of Israel)
October 23, 2014

Yesterday, a Palestinian terrorist drove his car into a crowd of people waiting for a train. A three-month old baby was killed. A police officer shot the fleeing murderer. The Associated Press (AP) found it appropriate to report the story with the following headline:

Israeli Police Shoot Man in East Jerusalem

Israeli police say they have shot a man whose car slammed into a crowded train stop in east Jerusalem, in what they suspect was an intentional attack.

Article then proceeds to list other "top AP headlines," such as "Noah Abducts Entire Animal Kingdom," and "Abraham Lincoln Interrupts Play."

Moses & Mordechai - Soul Brothers? (Esther Rabbah 6:2)

...The term "man" indicates that Mordechai was equivalent in his generation to Moses in his generation...Just as Moses taught you decrees and ordinances (as it is written in Numbers 4), see I have taught you decrees and ordinances, as it is written (Esther 9:30), "Dispatches were sent to all the Jews...with words of peace and truth." And it is written (Proverbs 23:23), "Purchase truth; do not sell it."]

- Excerpts from Esther Rabbah 6:2, translation by Artscroll, w/tweaks by EstherK.

Berachot 5b (Artscroll Schottenstein edition)

Rabbi Yochanan said [to the Tanna], It is understandable that [studying] Torah and bestowing kindness [cause one's sin to be forgiven]. "Kindness" this is [a reference to] bestowing kindness, as it is stated, One who pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness and honor. "Truth" - this [is a reference to studying] Torah, as it is stated, "Purchase truth [Torah] and do not sell."

"If it pleases the king, let it be recorded that they are destroyed." - Esther 3:9

Reish Lakish said: When the wicked Haman said to Achashverosh, "Come and let us exterminate the people of Israel from the world," Achashverosh said to him, "You will not be able to overcome them because their God never completely forsakes them." [...] Nevertheless, the wicked Haman bothered Achashverosh regarding this matter constantly, and [Haman] advised [the king] to execute all sorts of evil schemes against the people of Israel. Achashverosh said to him, "Since this is the case, that you will not leave the matter alone, let us consult with the wise men and the diviners."

[...] Haman thereupon said [to those wise men], "The God who drowned Pharaoh in the sea and did all those miracles and mighty acts for the people of Israel about which you have heard is already old and cannot do anything anymore. For you see that Nebuchadnezzar has gone up and destroyed His Temple, and burnt His Sanctuary and has exiled the people of Israel and scattered them among the nations."

[...] They promptly accepted his words and they agreed to destroy the people of Israel, and they wrote letters to that effect and they sealed them. And this is what they wrote in those letters. [...]:

"Haman has made a small and easy request of us regarding a certain nation among us, the most contemptible of all nations, who are arrogant people who wish us evil. [...] Come and see that this is so from the example of poor Pharaoh. What did [the Jews] do? When they went down to Egypt, [Pharaoh] welcomed them with open arms and settled them in the best part of the land of Egypt and sustained them during years of hunger. [...] The Israelites came with a pretext and said to Pharaoh, "Let us go to bring offerings to our God for a three-day journey (Exodus 5:3), and afterward we will return." If it is your desire to do so, lend us silver vessels, gold vessels and garments (12:35). So the Egyptians lent them their silver and their gold and all their fine garments, and each one of the Israelites loaded up an innumerable number of their donkeys with items that they borrowed from the Egyptians until they emptied out Egypt. And they fled. Now, when Pharaoh heard that the Israelites were fleeing, he went after them to retrieve his money. What did the Israelites do to Pharaoh? They had with them a certain man named Moses son of Amram, and through his magical actions he took a certain staff, recited an incantation over it, and hit the sea with it until it dried up. Then the Israelites all entered into the sea on dry land and they all passed through. And I (Haman) do not know by what means they passed through the sea and by what means they pushed him into the sea, but that is what happened and he and all his army were drowned in the sea. And thus [the Israelites] did not remember the benevolence that [Pharaoh] had shown them. Do you not understand [from this story] that the Jews are ungrateful people?"

[...] Now if [the Israelites] acted this way toward the Egyptians, who did for them so many favors, how much more so can we expect that they will do so toward the other nations of the world?"

Esther Rabbah, Parashah 7, Section 22 (translation - Artscroll Kleinman Edition)

"...exactly as Haman had commanded"

It is written in Scripture: one who raises up his doorway is asking to be broken. This means One who "raises up the doorway" of his mouth, the Holy One, blessed is He, breaks him, and in the very pot that he used for "cooking," he himself will be "cooked."

