

The Megillah of Esther ends off as follows:

פִּי | מְרַדְכַּי הַיְהוּדִי מִשְׁנֶה לְמִלְךְ אַחַשְׁוֵירוֹשׁ וְגָדוֹל לַיהוּדִים וְרָצוּי לַרֵב אֶחָיו דָּרַשׁ טוֹב
לְעַמּוֹ וְדִבֵּר שְׁלוֹם לְכָל-זַרְעוֹ

“Because Mordechai the Jew was secondary to King Achashveirosh, and great for the Jews, and favored to his abundant brethren. Seeking good for his nation and matters of peace for all his offspring.” (Esther 10:3).

This last perek seems to be superfluous. Why did Mordechai and Esther add these three pesukim? In this pasuk, who was favorable to whom, and whose “offspring” is mentioned? Also, why was he only favored to *rov* - most of his brethren?

The episode appears to end at the end of Perek 8. Haman’s household and holdings were given to Esther. (Ibid 8:1). Haman’s ring and power were transferred to Mordechai. (Ibid 8:2). Thereby, the Megillah already said that Mordechai was “secondary to the king.” A counter order was sent out. (Ibid 8:8). Mordechai left the king’s presence dressed in royalty. (Ibid 8:15). Then there was joy in the land and established a day of celebration and banquet. (Ibid 8:17). The story is over.

Perek 9 is administrative, to cleanly finish up the episode, talk of the aftermath, and then the establishment of the holiday. The Jews destroyed their enemies. (Ibid 9:2). The fear of Mordechai and the Jews fell upon their enemies. (Ibid 9:3). Mordechai was great in the royal court. (Ibid 9:4). Thereby, the Megillah already said “he was great for his brethren.” Shushan was given an extra day. (Ibid 9:14). Mordechai requested that the days of the 14th and 15th be holidays in unwalled and walled cities, respectfully. (Ibid 9:22). The Jews accepted upon themselves not only to celebrate for a few years, but for all time. (9:27-28). What more can be said?

“And Esther’s dictated orders established for all time these matters of Purim, and it was inscribed into this book.” (Ibid 9:32). This is the end of the matter. What is the purpose of this epilogue? Why does it mention Achashveirosh levying a tax (ibid 10:1), that the deeds of the king are recorded in the Median and Persian chronicles (ibid 10:2), and then our pasuk?

The answer is in the final four pesukim of Perek 9. They are so important that an entire three pasuk perek had to be written as an included addendum. Esther felt the need to send out a second letter about Purim the following year – after the first year of the Purim celebration. (Ibid 9:29). Letters were sent out to all 127 provinces (ibid 9:30) to confirm the days of Purim as established (ibid 9:31). Finally, as discussed *supra*, Esther’s order established Purim and the Megillah. (Ibid 9:32).

It is important to note that the first day of rest was a day of celebration and seuda. By themselves, the Jews established meshaloach manos (ibid 9:19). Then Mordechai sent letters establishing the day as a holiday to be kept yearly, and also to

add in gifts for the poor (matono l'evyonim). (Ibid 22). There was no Megillah until Esther established it in her second letter. This explains why Perek 9 is needed, to teach the chronology and who established what part of the holiday. What about Perek 10?

לְקַיֵּם אֶת-יְמֵי הַפְּרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּזִמְנֵיהֶם כְּאֲשֶׁר קָיָם עֲלֵיהֶם מְרֹדֶכַי הַיְהוּדִי וְאֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה וְכַאֲשֶׁר
 לְקַיֵּם אֶת-יְמֵי הַפְּרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּזִמְנֵיהֶם כְּאֲשֶׁר קָיָם עֲלֵיהֶם מְרֹדֶכַי הַיְהוּדִי וְאֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה וְכַאֲשֶׁר
 “To establish these days of Purim in their times, that Mordechai the Jew and Esther the Queen established them, and that they be affirmed on their lives and that of their offspring, matters of the fasts and their crying.” (Ibid 9:31). They are at this point – and forever after – separate. It is now Mordechai as a Jew and Esther as the Queen. Together by their fasting, crying and tefillos, the salvation came. By the time the danger was dispatched to the provinces, it was already over – Haman was defeated. It took Mordechai the Jew and Esther the Queen to bring about the salvation – both equal partners in appealing to Hashem. More than this, there a purpose to this entire episode. On its face, it seems quite childish. The entire danger was a few days, then it was over. The defeat of the enemies (76,000 plus) was way more proportionally than the few days of fear. What was the *purpose* of the entire episode?

It was so that Mordechai *the Jew* and Esther *the Queen* could establish a proper channel for salvation of Jews in exile. “On themselves and their offspring.”

“Because.” Because of this entire episode.

“Mordechai the Jew was secondary to King Achashveirosh and great for the Jews.” Mordechai was a Jew and looked out for the Jews.

“And favorable to his abundant brethren.” It is not to be translated “most” as that does not make sense. Why would there still be Jews that disliked Mordechai? Why mention such a discriminating group? It means “abundant” as in mankind increased on earth. (Bereishis 6:1). The Jews were spreading about and still abundant, despite the exile. They were thriving and Mordechai was needed as a *Jewish* symbol to all his brethren that despite their exile, greatness can be achieved, but with one purpose in mind: staying together as Jews, and keeping their faith and tradition (mesorah).

“He sought good for his nation.” Mordechai sought good for his nation (Jews) and Achashveirosh’s. Good for all could be sold to the king. The king levied a tax and that money went to a good cause.

“And matters of peace.” Peace here is wellbeing of the nation.

“For all his offspring.” This is both the king’s and Mordechai’s. “Offspring” generally, as in 9:31 that we discussed *supra*. Specifically, Mordechai was like Esther’s father. “And Esther the Queen, daughter of Avichayil and Mordechai the Jew, wrote.” (Ibid 9:29). “Wrote” is singular, so it only refers to Esther. Mordechai, adopting her, was like being her father. Her offspring were his. Her and the king’s offspring was Daryavesh - Darius II, who gave permission to the Jews to rebuild the Beis HaMikdash. This is the purpose of Purim. This is what Mordechai was watching out for, as second to the king, he could still influence matters. He was likely not alive much longer for the upbringing of Daryavesh. However, he was able to establish matters to influence the future of his people.

Purim is celebrated to reaffirm that even in exile we know salvation will come!