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תוכריכין קודם הקריאה

(Blessings for the Megillah)

אנא דאן קא אלמיני נאנאנד
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192 Praise! art thou, Eternal our God,
king of the world, who has hallowed us by
his commandment that we should read
to read the Megillah.

193 Praise! art thou, Eternal our God,
king of the world, who has done wonders
for our fathers in those days at this time.

194 Praise! art thou, Eternal our God,
king of the world, who has preserved our life
and health and has let us arrive unto this time.

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made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to king Ahasverus. On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Bizthaa, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasverus the king. To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people 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 his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him. Then the king said to the wise men, that knew the times, (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment: And the next unto him was Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsene, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and which sat the first in the kingdom;) What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasverus by the chamberlains? And Memucan 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 people that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasverus. For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported. The king Ahasverus commanded Vashti

יבתי ליה איתא יחזקיהו המלך לישעיהו בן אמה:
 ויום יום אדמלא שחם פסודי אשח
 אגמי אקדוק המלך לל שרי המלך וכו'
 ויחזקיהו המלך ארץ ארץ וכו'
 וכל מלכיהו ישתק בעת פקדו ימדי אלה
 רוב עממיה לא ידעו וכו'
 ושהאמר כל מלכה וכו'
 הנמנה וכו' וכו'
 וכל מלכה היא וכו'
 לעבדיו וכו' וכו'
 חסדו וחסדו חסדו וכו'
 חלש ושלח ספרים וכו'
 וכו' וכו' וכו'
 שיאמר וכו' וכו'
 חסדו וכו' וכו'
 שח אהי וכו' וכו'
 זמר אהי וכו' וכו'
 תרשמשו וכו' וכו'
 זאר מרה: וכו'
 נוכל מלכיהו וכו'
 אש וכו' וכו'

the queen to be brought in before him, but
 she came not. Likewise shall the ladies of
 Persia and Media say this day unto all the
 king's princess, which have heard of the deed
 of the queen. Thus shall there arise too much
 contempt and wrath. If it please the king,
 let there go 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
 Ahasverus; and let 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
 empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall
 give to their husbands honour, both to great
 and small. And the saying pleased the king and
 the princess; and the king did according to the
 word of Memucan: 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 that
 it should be published according to the language
 of every people. 2. After these things, when
 the wrath of king Ahasverus was appeased, he
 remembered Vashti, and what she had done,
 and what was decreed against her. Then said
 the king's servants that ministered unto him.
 Let there be fair young virgins sought for the
 king: And let the king appoint officers in all
 the provinces of his kingdom, that they may
 gather together all the fair young virgins unto

Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hegai the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women; and let their things for purification be given them: And let the maiden which pleaseth, the king be queen instead of Vashti. And the thing pleased the king; and he did so. Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite; Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter. So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women. And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens, which were meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he preferred her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women. Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai had charged her

gates, said unto Mordecai. Why transgressedst thou the king's commandment? Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew. And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasverus, even the people of Mordecai. In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasverus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is the month Adar. And Haman said unto king Ahasverus. There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries. And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedath the Agagite, the Jew's enemy. And the king said unto Haman, The silver is

and his decree came, there was great mourning, among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told it her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: but he received it not. Then called Esther for Hatach, one of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was. So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which was before the king's gate. And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasures for the Jews, to destroy them. Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people. And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai. Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai. All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden scepter,

that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days. And they told to Mordecai Esther's words. Then Mordecai commended to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed, and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer. Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commended him. 5. Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request?

prepared but myself; and to morrow am invited
 unto her also with the king. Yett all this availeth
 me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew
 sittng at the king's gate. Then said Zeresh
 his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a
 gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to
 morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai
 may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily
 with the king unto the banquet. And the thing
 pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to
 be made. 6. On that night could not the king
 sleep, and he commaunded bring the book of
 records of the cronicles; and they were read
 before the king. And it was found writen, that
 Mordecai had told of Bigtana and Teresh, two
 of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the
 door, who sought the lay hand on the king
 Athasverus. And the king said, What honour and
 dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?
 Then said the king's servants that ministered
 unto him, There is nothing done for him. And
 the king said, Who is in the court? Now Haman
 was come into the outward court of the king's
 house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai
 on thy gallows that he had prepared for him.
 And the king's servants said unto him, Behold,
 Haman standeth in the court. And the king
 said, Let him come in. So Haman came in. And
 the king said unto him, What shall be done
 unto the man whom the king delighteth to
 honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, To
 whom would the king delight to do honour more
 than to myself? And Haman answered the

king. For the man whom the king delighteth to honour: Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him. Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour. Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate; let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him. Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour. And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered. And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends every thing that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him. And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto

And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good, for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified. ¶ On that day did the king Ahasverus give the house of Haman the Jew's enemy unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was unto her. And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman. And Esther spake yett again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews. Then the king held out the golden scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king. And said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be writtten to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces: For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred? Then the king Ahasverus said unto Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew,

the fear of Mordecai fell upon them. For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces; for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater. Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did what they would unto that hated them. And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men. And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha. And Poratha, and Adlida, and Arisba. And Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha. The ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha the enemy of the Jews, slew they; but on the spoil laid they not their hand. On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace was brought before the king. And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further? and it shall be done. Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to morrow also according unto this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows. And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons. For the Jews that were in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the

unto them. Because Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that is, the lot, to consume them, and to destroy them. But when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. Wherefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur. Therefore for all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this matter, and which had come unto them. 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 their appointed time every year. 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. Then Esther the queen the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority, to confirm this second letter of Purim. And he sent the letters unto all the Jews, to the hundred twenty and seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasverus, with words of peace and truth. To confirm these days of Purim in their times appointed, according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for themselves and for

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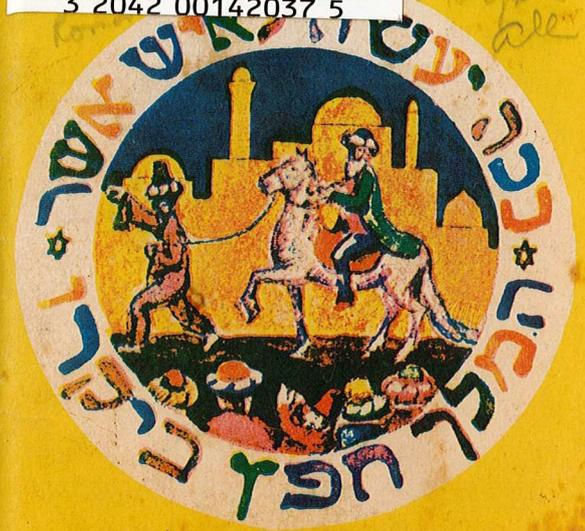
decai the Jew; accursed be Zeresh, the wife of him that terrified me; blessed be Esther my protectress, and may Han-bonah also be remembered for good.

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