

Celebrating Purim

# Kids Parsha packet

פֶּסַח לילדים

## Megillat Esther

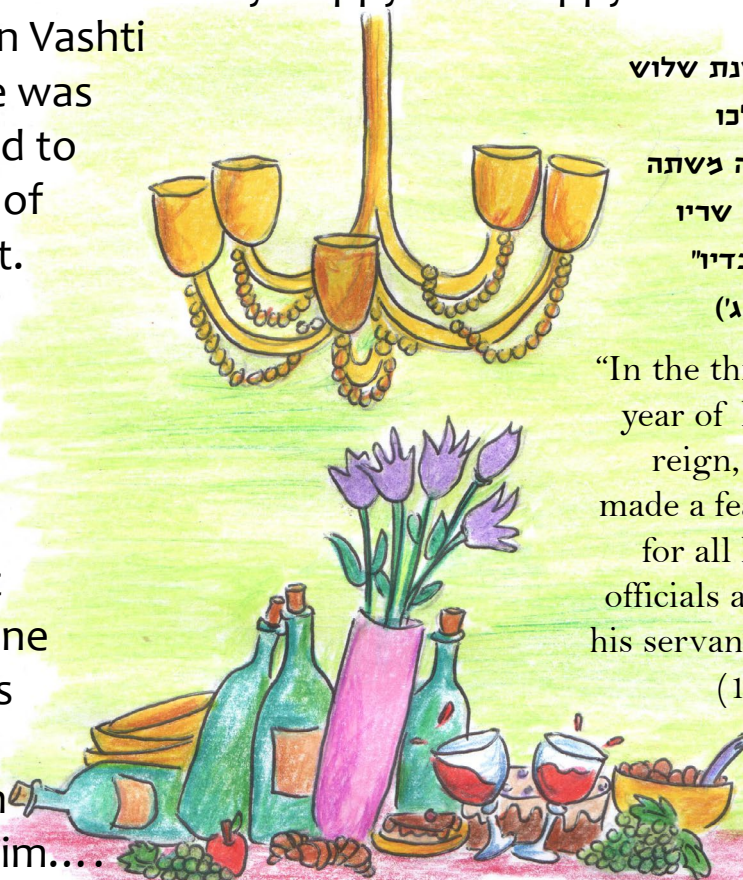


### Wine, wine and more wine!

Imagine an enormous palace adorned in gold, silver, red fabrics and more; special clothes, shiny utensils, butlers, servants, and wine. Lots of wine. King Achashverosh, king of Persia, conquers 127 countries all over the world, and wants to celebrate his achievements. How does a king celebrate such a great accomplishment? With wine, of course. Achashverosh invites distinguished guests from all over the world, and drinks wine with them for 180 days. Can you imagine drinking that much wine? Apparently this was not very difficult for Achashverosh. It even makes him very happy...so happy that he commands his wife, Queen Vashti to leave the party that she was holding for the women and to appear before him and all of the men at the king's feast. Do you think the queen agreed? Of course not! Now Achashverosh isn't very happy anymore. In fact he is quite furious. He becomes so angry that he accepts the advice of one of his advisors and decides to banish Vashti from the kingdom, and maybe even to kill her for disobeying him....

"בשנת שלוש  
לגלכו  
עשה גשתה  
לכל שריו  
ועבדיו"  
(א', ג')

"In the third  
year of his  
reign, he  
made a feast  
for all his  
officials and  
his servants"  
(1,3)



How do you react if someone doesn't do what you ask?

## The New Queen!

The king's banquet has ended, and Achashverosh is not very happy anymore. It turns out that he doesn't like being alone. The king's advisors see how miserable he is and decide to find him a new queen. They send messengers through the entire kingdom to go from one house to the next, searching for all of the unmarried women who might be a good match for King Achashverosh. Shushan, the Persian capital and the city where the royal palace is located, was the home of many Jews who had been exiled after the first Beit Hamikdash was destroyed. The megillah tells us about a small family: Mordechai and his niece Hadassah Esther. Why does the megillah tell us about them? Because any moment now, messengers will come to take Esther to the king's palace where she might become the next queen. Mordechai commands Esther not to tell anyone that she is Jewish, and he promises to come to the palace to see how she is. Esther is taken to the king's palace, where many women are getting ready to meet the king. They put on lots of makeup and use creams and oils to make themselves shine. Esther does not put on anything special. When the king sees Esther, he falls in love with her and chooses her to be his queen! Esther follows Mordechai's instructions and does not tell Achashverosh that she is Jewish.



“וַיֵּאָהֵב הַמֶּלֶךְ  
אֶת אֶסְתֵּר  
מִכָּל הַנָּשִׁים...  
וַיִּשֶׂם כֶּתֶר מַלְכוּת  
בְּרָאשָׁה  
וַיַּגְלִיכָהּ  
תַּחַת וְשֵׁתִי”  
(ב', י"ז)

“The king  
loved Esther  
more than all  
the women...  
so that he set  
the royal crown  
upon her head,  
and made her  
queen in place  
of Vashti”  
(2,17)



Are you able to keep a secret and not tell anyone?

### Activity

“Who's the next queen” - Hold a competition to see who will be the next queen in the family (the boys can dress up as girls). Each player has to convince the others why she deserves to be the next queen.



## To Complicate Matters...

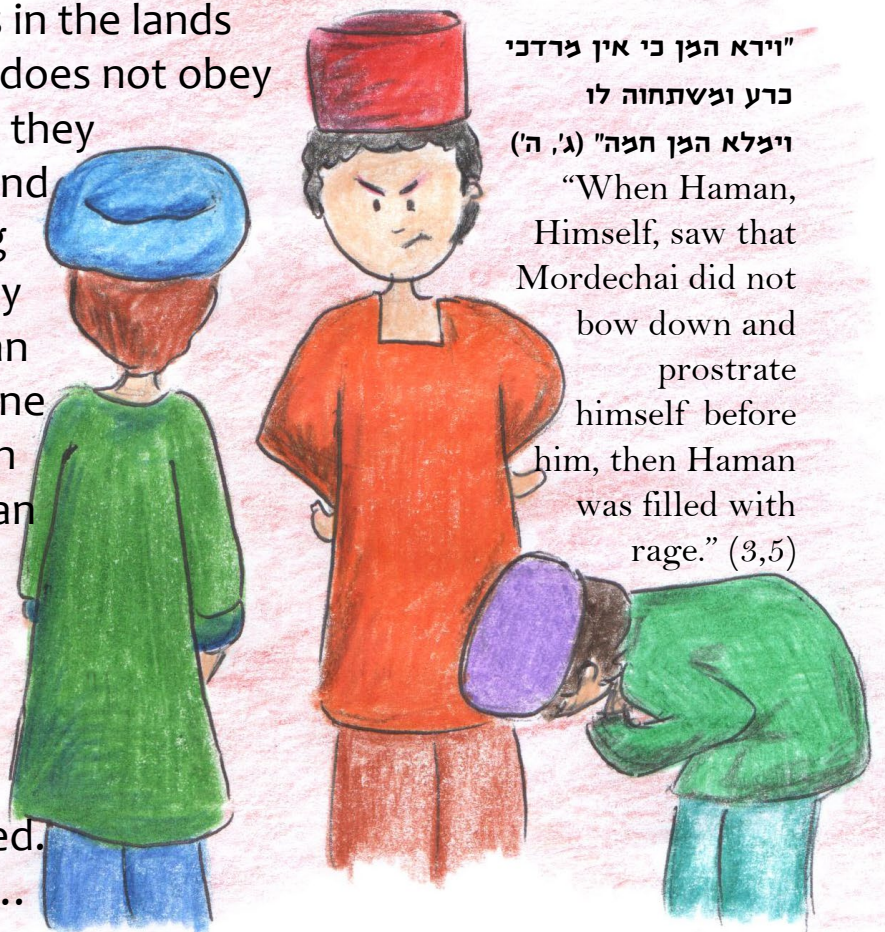
King Achashverosh appoints an important man to work at his side. His name is Haman. Haman wants everyone to bow down to him and honor him, but one person refuses. That person is Mordechai the Jew. Haman notices that Mordechai sees him in the street every day and does not bow down to him. He starts to get upset and tries to find out who this man is. His advisors tell him that the man is Mordechai, a Jew. Haman decides to punish Mordechai and all of the Jewish people. He makes a lottery (or a por, as the megillah says) to choose the best day to kill all of the Jews. The day that comes up in the lottery is the 13th of the month of Adar. Haman cannot make such a big decision alone, he needs the king's permission. He goes to King Achashverosh and tries to persuade him. He tells him that there is a nation who lives in the lands under the king's rule that does not obey the king. Haman says that they are unlike everyone else and they should be killed. King Achashverosh immediately agrees and he gives Haman his special ring, the only one that can be used to seal an official royal decree. Haman does not hesitate. He immediately sends letters all across the world declaring that in less than one year, on the 13th of Adar, all Jews shall be killed. The Jews were in despair...

"וירא הגן כי אין פרדכי

כרע ופשתחוה לו

ויפלא הגן חמה" (ג', ה')

"When Haman, Himself, saw that Mordechai did not bow down and prostrate himself before him, then Haman was filled with rage." (3,5)



Do you like to make noise with your noisemaker when Haman's name is read from the megillah?

### Activity

"Haman" - This of new ways to make noise when you hear Haman's name.

## The Beginning of a Happy Ending...

It's the middle of the night. Achashverosh can't fall asleep. And it turns out that he is not the only one awake. Haman is preparing a tall tree in the middle of the night to hang Mordechai. He's so impatient he can't even wait till the morning! To pass the time, Achashverosh asks his servants to read to him from the royal chronicles. They happen upon a story about Mordechai who once saved Achashverosh from two people who planned to kill him. Achashverosh realizes that he never thanked Mordechai for saving him, and he tries to find a way of showing his appreciation. Achashverosh decides to consult with Haman, who just happens to be right outside in the courtyard... Achashverosh asks Haman how the king should thank a person that he would like to honor. Haman is convinced that the king is referring to him and he suggests that this person be dressed in the king's clothes and seated on a royal horse, while an important person announces that this is how the king honors a person that he appreciates. Achashverosh likes the idea and instructs Haman to do what he described for Mordechai the Jew! How do you think Haman reacted to that? This was the person who Haman wanted to hang! This is the beginning of Haman's downfall and the beginning of the Jewish people's salvation from the harsh decree.



Would you want to ride on a horse and wear royal clothing?

### Activity

"Horse" – Half of the family become horses, and the other half gets to ride on their backs. See who can stay on their horse the longest.

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# Happy Purim!



Pashut for kids





Purim