

# PURIM - HAMAN, ACHMENIJAD, AND THE PALESTINIANS

## Background

The Gemara tells us that Achashverosh was as much of an anti-Semite as Haman. He hated the Jews and was directly involved in the plot to annihilate them. When Haman came out with the decree to kill the Jews, it was an accepted fact that the Jews would be wiped out. This Gemara is telling us that Esther wanted to insure that the Jewish people would turn to HASHEM only and they wouldn't rely on Esther, their "sister in the palace," as the source of their salvation.

תלמוד בבלי מסכת מגילה  
דף טו/ב

תנו רבנן מה ראתה אסתר  
שדימנה את המן  
רבי נחמיה אומר כדי שלא  
יאמרו ישראל אחות יש לנו  
בבית המלך ויסיחו דעתן  
מן הרחמים

*Why did Esther see fit to invite Haman (to the party with Achashverosh)?*

*Rebbe Nechamiah answers, "In order that the Jewish Nation shouldn't say, 'We have a sister in the palace,' and thereby cease relying on HASHEM's mercy."*

## Questions

How could the Jews realistically depend on Esther? First of all, who says that she still identified as a Jew? She had been the Queen of Persia for five years by that time. But even if she still remained loyal, why would anyone assume Achashverosh would listen to her? He might kill out the Jews anyway, and perhaps even kill her. We see from earlier in the Megillah that he wasn't averse to killing his own wife. So why was Esther afraid that the Jews would turn away from HASHEM and rely on her?