

Part III - The Theme of the Megilla and its Satire

Considering that Yirmiyahu's seventy years are over and Am Yisrael could have returned to their homeland, why are so many Jews living in Shushan and all over the Persian empire during the time period of Achashveyrosh?!

Based on this historic and prophetic setting (explained above), one could suspect that the impending destruction of Am Yisrael by Haman may be a Divine punishment for their apathy. After all, the Jews living in the Persian empire appear to have:

- ◆ Preferred **Shushan** over **Yerushalayim**;
- ◆ Opted to subjugate themselves to **Achashveyrosh** rather than respond to **God's** call to return to their land;
- ◆ Replaced the **Bet HaMikdash** with the **palace** of Achashveyrosh!

Even though this prophetic message is not explicit in the Megilla, we will now show that it may be hidden in its satire.

[**Note:** Before we continue, it is important to clarify a problematic issue. We are about to relate many elements in the story of the Megilla to a satiric commentary on Persian Jewry. This does not mean that these events did not actually occur. The story of the Megilla is true and based on historic fact. However its prophetic message is conveyed through the use of literary tools, such as satire and irony. Often, criticism is more poignant when delivered implicitly rather than explicitly. (L'havdil, take for example George Orwell's criticism of the Russian revolution in 'Animal Farm'.)]