

The Aramaic Bible


Volume 18

The Two Targums of Esther

Translated, with Apparatus and Notes

BY

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CHAPTER 1

1. It happened during the days of the wicked^{a1} Xerxes, the Xerxes in whose days (the decree allowing) work on the house of the^b great God was revoked. It remained revoked until the second year of Darius² on the advice of the sinful Vashti,³ daughter of Evil Merodakh, son of Nebukhadnezzar.⁴ Because she did not permit the rebuilding of the Temple, it was decreed she be executed in the nude.⁵ And because Xerxes listened to her advice, his life was shortened and his kingdom was split up. Previously all peoples, nations, and (speakers of various) languages, and provinces⁶ were under his rule, but now⁷ they were no longer subjected to him.⁸ In view of this fact,

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^a F alone has: "wicked king."

^b RB has: "our."

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¹The characterization of Xerxes as "wicked" is widely reflected in Rabbinic literature, for which cf. b. Meg. 11a; Esth. Rab. 1:1, 2; Gen. Rab. XXXVII: 2; and Shoh. Tob CV: 2, p. 449.

The consensus of modern scholars is that Ahasuerus is to be identified with Xerxes I (485–465 B.C.E.) on the basis of both linguistic and archeological evidence. For a detailed discussion, see C. A. Moore, *The Anchor Bible: Esther* (New York: Doubleday, 1971), pp. xxxv–xl, and 3–4. However, according to the Septuagint, the Peshitta, Josephus, and some Rabbinic traditions (e.g., Esth. Rab. 1:3), this king is Artaxerxes, who, according to one scholar, may very well be Artaxerxes II (Mnemon), who ruled during the period 404–358 B.C.E. See the chart in Moore's work, pp. xlii–xliii.

²Xerxes' revocation of the decree allowing the rebuilding of the Temple is also present in a number of Rabbinic texts, for which cf. Esth. Rab. 1:1; b. Meg. 11b–12a; cf. also Agg. Esth. 1:1, p. 1; PA II, p. 56; and Leq. Tob I:1, 2, p. 89.

³Vashti's part in the revocation is specifically spelled out in Esth. Rab. V:2. Cf. also PA II, p. 61.

⁴Vashti's lineage is here traced to Nebukhadnezzar via her father Evil Merodakh, similarly so in Targum Sheni (1:12). However, according to the Babylonian Talmud (Meg. 12b), the Midrash (Esth. Rab. Proem:12 and PA II, p. 60), she was Nebukhadnezzar's granddaughter via her father Belshazzar; according to another Midrash (AG I, p. 15), she was the daughter of Nebukhadnezzar's daughter; and still another Midrash (Agg. Esth. 1:1, p. 3) identifies her as the daughter of Nebukhadnezzar's son.

⁵Vashti's execution due to her disobedience is reflected in Esth. Rab. V:2; cf. also Agg. Esth. II:1, p. 16. That she was to be executed in a state of nudity is implied by the statement in the Midrash (AG II, pp. 17 f.)—"because you requested that she appear before you unclad, but she did not come." Cf. also PA II, p. 61; PRE XLIX; Leq. Tob II:1, p. 94.

⁶The Aramaic 'prky' (singular 'prk') is a Greek loan word from ἑταρχος, for which see S. Krauss, *Griechische und Lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum II* (Berlin, 1899), p. 115; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1964.

⁷The term used here (k'n) is very common in Biblical Aramaic, for which cf. Dan. 2:23; 3:15; 4:34; 5:12, 16; 6:9; Ezra 4:14, 21; 5:16; 6:6, as well as the related form k'nt (Ezra 4:10, 11; 7:12). It occurs in Egyptian Aramaic documents of the fifth century B.C.E., for which see P. Leander, *Laut- und Formenlehre des Agyptisch-Aramäischen* (Göteborg, 1928; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1966) #61, p. 120, for the exact papyri references.

The form continues into Qumran Aramaic, where it occurs in 11QTg Job, Col. 15, l. 4; 4QEnGiants, No. 16, l. 14; 1QT Lev., No. 20, frg. 3, l. 2; 1Qap Gen., frg. 1, Col. 1, l. 4; and 1Qap Gen., frg. 1, Col. 5, l. 9, for which cf. J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts*, Biblica et Orientalia 34 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), pp. 22, 74, 80, 100, 106. It is also widely used in Targum Onkelos.

⁸The rebellion against Xerxes is likewise reflected in certain Rabbinic texts, for which cf. PA II (pp. 56, 58); Agg. Esth. (1:3, p. 10); and AG I (p. 8).

and subsequently, when it was revealed before the Lord that Vashti would be killed and that he was destined to marry Esther, who was a descendant of Sarah, who lived 127 years, he was given an extension⁹ and he ruled 127 provinces, from India to Western¹⁰ Ethiopia.^c 2. It was in those days that King Xerxes wished to sit¹¹ on the royal throne of Solomon,^d which was captured from Jerusalem by Shishak, King of Egypt, and from Egypt it was captured by Sennacherib. From Sennacherib it was captured by Hezekiah and returned to Jerusalem, and then again captured from Jerusalem by Nebukhadnezzar^e and brought down to Babylonia. When Cyrus the Mede conquered Babylonia, he brought it down^f to Elam. Thereafter Xerxes ruled, and wished to sit upon it but was not able to, so he ordered that architects be brought from Alexandria to produce one like it but they were unable; instead, they made another one inferior to it. They were busy for two years with it. In the third year of his reign he sat on it, on that very throne of his kingdom which the architects designed

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^c So also E and S, while RB has the more elaborate: "from Greater India to Ethiopia, that is from Eastern Greater India to Ethiopia"; M and O have the even longer: "from Greater India to Ethiopia, that is from Eastern Greater India to Western Ethiopia"; while P, F, B, and C have: "from Greater India to Western Ethiopia."
^d RB only has: "Solomon's kingdom."

^e So also E, S, B, P, and F, whereas R, B, M have instead: "by Pharaoh the Lame, king of Egypt, and from Egypt it was captured by Nebukhadnezzar"; O and C have: "by Pharaoh the Lame, king of Egypt."

^f R, alone, here uses the root 'ty rather than *nh*, used by all other witnesses.

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⁹For Rabbinic parallels highlighting the relationship between Esther and her ancestor Sarah, as well as the common denominator of the figure 127 in their lives, see Esth. Rab. I:8; PRE XI; Agg. Esth. I:1, p. 7; PA II, p. 56; and Leq. Tob. I:1, p. 89, as well as Tg. Sheni to I:2.

¹⁰An addition also present, though slightly different, in Tg. Sheni. The Talmud (b. Meg. 11a) cites the following debate about this area: "From *Hodu* to *Cush*' (Esth. 1:1). Rab and Samuel, one said: *Hodu* is at one end of the world and *Cush* at the other end of the world; the other said: *Hodu* and *Cush* existed next to each other, just as he ruled over *Hodu* and *Cush*, so he ruled from one end of the world to the other." In his commentary on the First Targum to Esther (*Magen David* [Krakow, 1644], pp. 2-4), David ben Yehuda poses the question in referring to this Talmudic debate: "How can there be such a divergence of opinion as to the distance between *Hodu* and *Cush*? Why not go out and determine for oneself? He therefore concludes that there existed two separate *Hodu-Cush* areas; in one, *Hodu* was located far away from *Cush*; in the other, they were located in proximity to each other. According to him, from the Tg. Rishon to the present verse it appears that Xerxes ruled over the *Hodu-Cush* area in which these two sites were far away from each other on the basis of the Targumic expansion "from east of Greater *Hodu* to west of *Cush*," i.e., from east to west is identical to the Rabbi who says that *Hodu* was at one end of the world and *Cush* at the other.

David ben Yehuda obviously possessed a Tg. I text which was identical to that of O, and L (see note c in Apparatus) that read: "from Greater India (*Hodu*) to Ethiopia (*Cush*), that is from Eastern Greater India to Western Ethiopia." He thus argued that since the Aramaic says *mdnh' dhndy'*... and *m'rb' dkwš'* (lit. "east of *Hodu*... west of *Cush*" rather than the reverse "*Hodu* of the East... *Cush* of the West"), it indicates that he reigned over India and Ethiopia proper, as the designation "between East and West" mentioned in the Targum means from the east side of India to the west side of Ethiopia, thus including the extensive area of India and Ethiopia proper. This interpretation seems forced and is especially questionable in view of the wording in Tg. Sheni: "from India of the West to Ethiopia of the East" (according to the text in David, Cassel, and Munk). However, one may simply explain Rab and Samuel's dispute in the Talmud (b. Meg. 11a) as dealing with the problem of distance. The standard Biblical approach when employing the terms "east" and "west" as measuring terms is to point out great distances in terms of remoteness, as in Ps. 103:12: "as far as the east is from the west."

¹¹Lit. "sought to sit," a paraphrase of the Hebrew infinitive *ksbt*, "while sitting."

for him¹² in the fortress of Susa. 3. In the third year of his reign,⁸ he made a great¹³ banquet for all his princes and his servants, the Persian and Median troops, the garrisons and the nobles who were appointed over¹⁴ the provinces, (those came) wrapped in wool garments (and) dressed in purple; they ate, drank and rejoiced¹⁵ in his presence. 4. After they ate and drank and delighted themselves,¹⁶ he showed^h them¹⁷ his wealth, which was left to him by Cyrusⁱ the Mede. Even Cyrus found that wealth when, upon capturing Babylonia, he dug in the bank of the Euphrates and discovered there 680^j copper vessels filled with pure gold, sparkling gems, yellow em-

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⁸ RB and H have: "Xerxes' reign," as against Madrid and all the other witnesses, which have a literal rendering of the Hebrew.

^h Employing the *Aphel* of the root *hzy*, as do E, S, B, L, C, M, RB, and F, whereas O and P use the root *hwy* (also in the *Aphel*), yet retaining the same meaning.

ⁱ So also virtually all the other witnesses, except for R which has: "Darius."

^j C, O, and M have: "180" instead, as against all the other texts which reflect the reading of our manuscript.

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¹² Rabbinic literature is replete with legendary material about Solomon's throne. Of special note is Esth. Rab. I:12—"On the throne of his kingdom (*malkūtō*)"—Esth. 1:2. Rabbi Cohen said in the name of R. Azariah: The word *malkuto* is written defectively—he wanted to sit on the throne of Solomon, but was not permitted. They said to him: No king who is not ruler of the world can sit on it. He, therefore, made himself a throne of his own similar to it."

It is related that when Solomon died, Shishak, king of Egypt, came up and took it from them, "taking it in lieu of my daughter's marriage contract. He made war on Zerah the Ethiopian who took it from him. Then Asa fought Zerah the Ethiopian, conquered him and (in turn) took it from him . . . Asa and all the kings of Judah sat upon it, and when Nebukhadnezzar came up and sacked Jerusalem, he carried it off to Babylon . . . Nebukhadnezzar sat on it. Cyrus sat on it; Xerxes wanted to sit on it, but was not permitted. They said to him: No one who is not ruler over the whole world can sit on it. He, accordingly, made one for himself, for which he paid, hence it is written 'On the throne of his kingdom'—*malkūtō*, the (latter) word being written defectively."

The historical route of the throne as outlined here differs somewhat from that given in the Targum. Hezekiah, Sennacherib, and the Pharaoh Necco are not mentioned at all. Instead, the Judaeen king Asa and the Pharaoh Zerah (Osorkon) the Ethiopian are said to have possessed it at one time. The Midrash AG (I, pp. 2ff.) is much closer to the description in the Targum with the exception of Cyrus, who is replaced by Darius. Furthermore, the Midrash Leq. Tob (I:2, p. 89) adds the additional information that Xerxes sent away for artisans to be brought from Alexandria, Egypt, for the purpose of duplicating Solomon's throne. For more details about the adventure of Solomon's throne in the hands of various ancient rulers, as well as elaborate descriptions of the throne itself, see the following Rabbinic texts: Lev. Rab. XX:1, p. 444; Num. Rab. XII:17; Deut. Rab. V:6; Eccl. Rab. IX:1; PRK *Wayehi beyôm kallôt mōseh*, p. 7b; Mid. Shir Ha-Shirim III:1, p. 31b; Agg. Esth. 1:2, p. 8; PA I, p. 45; II, pp. 57f. For very elaborate discourses on the throne itself, see Tg. II on this verse, as well as BHM vol. II, pp. 83–86; and BHM vol. V, pp. 34–39.

¹³ An addition not found in the Hebrew text. It is also present in the Vg. (*grande*) and the Syr. (*rb'*). It is likely that the addition was in reference to the end of v. 4 below, where the length of the banquet was said to have been 180 days.

¹⁴ This inserted phrase, detailing the association of the nobles to the provinces, is merely explanatory. Cf. likewise 8:9 below, as well as Tg. Onq. to Exod. 14:7, where it is inserted within the phrase "warriors over them."

¹⁵ The insertion of these words was meant to supply a syntactic gap which existed in the Hebrew verse in that the phrase "in his presence" appears to be isolated and unconnected with what precedes; one would have expected "who were sitting." Cf. for instance the end of v. 14 below. The LXX omits "in his presence" here.

¹⁶ This phrase was inserted to function as a bridge between the end of the preceding verse, which described their feasting, and the beginning of the present verse. It is also interpretive in nature, explaining that the display of Xerxes' wealth followed the feasting rather than having gone on during it. See Paton's interesting remarks on the Hebrew (*The Book of Esther*, International Critical Commentary [New York: Scribner, 1908], p. 135).

¹⁷ The plural for the Hebrew singular "him" indicates a possible Heb. Vorlage *bēhar'ōtām* instead of MT *bēhar'ōtō*; the LXX also has the plural in αὐτοῖς.

eralds, and other types of gems;¹⁸ and through that wealth, his glory intensified,^k and the power of his kingdom grew,¹⁹ so he made a banquet and drinking parties for all his servants¹²⁰ for many days, for 180 days." 5. When the days of the drinking party²¹ were finished, the king made for the entire people of the House of Israel who were found guilty²² in the fortress of Susa who were counted among the uncircumcised inhabitants of the land,²³ both great and small, a drinking party for seven days

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^k O and M have: "and on that day his wealth and his glory intensified."

¹ RB is corrupt here, omitting the following: "and the power of his kingdom grew, so he made a banquet (for)."

^m So also E and S, whereas P and F have: "a banquet for his servants (for) many days, and a drinking party for his servants (for) 180 days"; R is similar but pluralizes "drinking party," and O, M, C are virtually identical except for having "nobles" instead of the second "servants."

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¹⁸ Rabbinic literature reflects a similar notion concerning the origin of Xerxes' wealth—it was nothing more than the sunken treasure of Nebukhadnezzar, discovered earlier by Cyrus, for which cf. Esth. Rab. II:1, as well as AG I, pp. 8–9, and Leq. Tob I:4, pp. 89–90.

¹⁹ The Hebrew *yēqār tip'eret gēdūlātō*, "the abundant glory of his greatness," contains the two terms *yēqār* and *tip'eret*, both meaning "glory." Here occurring in juxtaposition to each other, they form a hendiadys translating into "abundant glory." In fact, the Complutensian Polyglot and Ginsburg's Hebrew Bible have *yēqār* with a *patah* (as against *yēqār* with *qames* in MT), which opts even more for a hendiadys translation here. The LXX in translating τὴν δόξαν τῆς εὐφροσύνης ("the abundant glory") understood this combination in the same way.

The Targum, however, translates both *yēqār* and *tip'eret* here as "power," perhaps on account of the genitive *gēdūlātō* that follows. The latter, literally "his greatness," is translated "his kingdom" instead, as "power of his kingdom" makes better sense than "power of his greatness." The LXX similarly departs from rendering *gēdūlātō* literally, instead translating "his wealth" (τοῦ πλοῦτος αὐτοῦ). A third meaning of *gēdūlātō* is supplied by the Vg., which translates the entire phrase *ac magnitudinem atque iactantiam potentiae suae*, "and the greatness and boasting of his power," thus "power," the very meaning that the Targum supplies to *yēqār* and *tip'eret*.

However, the language of this entire verse appears exaggerated, and 4b seems to repeat 4a, which makes the former redundant as well. According to S. Alkabez (*Menot Halevy* [Venice, 1590]; rpt. Antwerp, 1976, p. 31b), this redundancy resulted in the following Rabbinic interpretation (b. Meg. 12b): "as he displayed the great wealth of his empire" (Esth. 1:4a). Said R. Jose b. Hanina: This showed that he arrayed himself in the priestly robes; here (4b) it is written 'the abundant glory of his greatness' and there (Exod. 28:2, 40) it is written 'for glory and for beauty.' The "inference of analogy" (*gezērāh šāwāh*) implies the redundancy."

²⁰ The insertion of this phrase was meant to resume the thought of the beginning of v. 3, "he made a banquet for all his officials and courtiers," which is here resumed again by the apparently isolated phrase "(for) many days, 180 days," which supplies the deviation of the affair.

²¹ An addition clarifying the vagueness of the Heb. phrase "these days," a point which is also the focus of a debate in the following Midrash (Esth. Rab. II:5) between Rab and Samuel: "One said: It means seven besides the hundred and eighty, whereas Samuel said: It means seven included in the hundred and eighty."

²² This Aggadic addition is widely reflected in Rabbinic literature, the most pronounced text being the following in the Babylonian Talmud (b. Meg. 12a): "Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai was asked by his disciples, 'Why were the enemies of Israel (euphemism for Israel itself) in that generation deserving of extermination?' He said to them: 'You give the answer.' They said: 'Because they partook of the feast of the wicked one (Xerxes).'" Cf. also Agg. Esth. I:5, 6, p. 11; and Esth. Rab. *ibid.* Yet, one text attempts to excuse their act in that they were compelled to do so (AG I, p. 9): "Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai said: From here we may deduce that they (the Israelites) ate dishes prepared by gentiles forcibly."

²³ The Hebrew text states that the king had made a seven-day banquet for all the people who were present (lit. "to be found"), which the Targum here interprets to mean not only those from the House of Israel but the gentiles as well. This, according to Samuel ben Phinchas Makshan Katz (*Tēhilat Dibre Šēmū'el*, op. cit., p. 16), is due to the Rabbinic association of the word 'am with the wicked, as can be seen from the Midrash-Sifre on Numbers

in the courtyard of the inner²⁴ garden of the king, in which were planted fruit-bearing trees and spices, half overlaid with fine gold and finished with a setting of gems covering them from above;²⁵ but Mordekhai and his associates were not there.²⁶ 6. From (every) tree hung²⁷ white, sapphire-like,²⁸ greenish and blue-colored linen curtains²⁹ secured³⁰ with purple-colored silken³¹ ropes hanging³² overhead upon rods and revolving silver beams," fastened to red, green, flame-colored yellow, and

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²⁴ The manuscript has: *wbsryn*, as do E and S, whereas P, RB, F, M, B, C, and O have: *wdšryn*. If we read *bšr* here, the only sensible way to explain it would be as a scribal error for *kšr*, "beam" (cf. Jastrow, M. p. 675, though Jastrow himself understood it as *dšryn* < *dš*, "door" (p. 326, s.v. *dš*). The mistake is logical, with *k* read as *b*, and *š* read as *s*, a common confusion in Square Hebrew script. The Hebrew simply has *gēlilē kēsep*; the Targum understood *gēlilē* not as a noun but as an adjective and accordingly translates it *sēgalgalin*. This then called for the presence of a noun, which

the Targum supplied in the form of rods and beams (*qlwwn wbsryn*). This reading appears to make more sense than *dšr* < *dš* ("doors"), as decorative ropes are more likely to be draping over rods and beams than over doors. An attractive theory is advanced by the author of the Esther Targum I commentary *Tēhilat Dibre Šēmū'el* (Prague, 1601, p. 17), who understood *wdšryn* to involve the plural noun *šryn* ("rings"), as in TO to Num. 31:50 for Heb. *š'dh*. This is indeed the reading of R—*wdy šyyryn sglglyn dksp*.

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(*Bēha'ālōiēkā* LXXXV, p. 84) on Num. 11:1: "So when the people complained"—The word 'the people' refers exclusively to the wicked, as it says (Exod. 17:4) 'What should I do to this people'; (Num. 14:11) 'How long will this people provoke me?'; (Jer. 13:10) 'This evil people, which refuses to hear my words' (*ibid.*, 14:10) (and) 'Thus said the Lord to this people, thus have they loved to wonder'; but when He calls them "My people," it refers exclusively to righteous, as it says (Exod. 7:16) 'Let my people go so that they may serve me'; (Micah 6:3) 'O my people, what have I done to you, and wherein have I wearied you?'; (and *ibid.*, 5) 'O my people, remember what (Balaq king of Moab) devised'. Thus, *'ām* used in the present verse refers to the wicked of Israel. However, the gentiles are also implied by the word *'ām*, as can be seen from the debate between Rab and Samuel in the Talmud (b. Meg. 12a), which focuses only on the point whether Xerxes entertained those of his own city or his distant subjects first. Yet they both agree that it is the gentiles who were invited.

²⁴ The Hebrew *bīṭān*, a rare word found only in Esther and generally rendered "pavilion," a colonnaded open hall (cf. C.A. Moore, *Esther: The Anchor Bible*, p. 7), is here translated "inner" in agreement with R. Judah's opinion in Esth. Rab. (II:6): "In the court of the garden of the king's *bīṭān*' (Esth. 1:5), R. Judah and R. Nehemiah debated the matter here. R. Judah said that the garden was without and the court within (the palace), whereas R. Nehemiah said that the garden was within and the court without."

²⁵ This rather lengthy addition describing the royal courtyard of the inner garden was meant to be an amplification of the preceding word "king," which, according to E. Rothenburg (*Gē'ūlat Ha-Gēr* [Prague, 1618], p. 2) appears redundant. This detailed description then depicts the garden that was reserved exclusively for the use of the king.

²⁶ A similar statement concerning the absence of men like Mordekhai at the banquet is found in the Midrash Leq. Tob 1:5, p. 90: "Rabbi Ḥanina bar Papa said: This teaches us that the greats of that generation fled but did not eat there, except for those who were present, because of dishes prepared by gentiles." Cf. also AG I, p. 9.

²⁷ The Hebrew verse here starts abruptly, creating the impression that it is syntactically unrelated to the preceding verse. The Targum takes the word "tree" from the addition at the end of the preceding verse as the starting point for the connecting phrase between the two verses, adding the predicate "hung" and the preposition "from" to complete the phrase. The LXX similarly supplies a predicate in *κεκοσμημένη* ("decorated"); the Vg., like the Targum, adds *pendebant* ("hanging"), and the Syr. *wngydn wē'lē* ("and curtains were drawn") approximates the Targum here.

²⁸ The Aramaic *sappirīn* is a Greek loan word from *σάπφειρος*, for which cf. S. Krauss, *op. cit.*, p. 398f.

²⁹ An addition necessitated by the absence of a noun modified by the numerous preceding adjectives.

³⁰ Plural for Hebrew singular (*'āhūz*). The LXX and the Syr. likewise have the plural here.

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which had a strong aroma and sweet taste.³⁹ There was no shortage;⁴⁰ rather there was as much as was required by the king. 8. The drinking was itself according to the custom of the law;⁴¹ none was compelled. For so he decreed⁴² to everyone whom the king appointed administrator⁴³ over his household to do according to the desire of each Israelite man and according to the desire of each man of any nation and tongue.⁴⁴ 9. Also the wicked⁴⁵ Queen Vashti made a feast for the women in the royal palace, in the place of the bedroom⁴⁶ of King Xerxes. 10. Now the righteous

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³⁹ So also S and E, whereas P, R, F, C, B, O, M, RB, and H have: "For that was what the king decreed to everyone who was appointed administrator."

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down in celebration before him. . . . So he made them a separate banquet. . . ." Cf. also b. Meg. 11b; AG I, p. 9; Agg. Esth. I:4, p. 10; PRE XLIX; and Leq. Tob I:7, p. 90. The Targum Sheni also mentions it here.

Concerning the change of appearance to lead that the vessels underwent, the following Midrash likewise reflects this Aggadah—PRE XLIX: "All the vessels used by Xerxes were not vessels of silver but vessels of gold. He brought out the Temple vessels and all the vessels of his palace were changed in appearance, so that they looked as dull as lead, as it is said, 'The vessels being diverse from one another' (Esth. 1:7)."

³⁹ The Hebrew "wine of royalty" is here paraphrased "wine fit for a king to drink," with the further addition that it was new wine with a strong aroma and a sweet taste. In contrast, Targum Sheni states that the wine was forty years old.

⁴⁰ The Hebrew has literally "abundant according to the king's bounty," which the Targum renders literally, but expands the thought by adding "there was no shortage."

⁴¹ An explanatory paraphrase for the somewhat vague Hebrew "according to the law." The Hebrew *dāt* ("law") derives from Old Persian *dāta* and occurs some nineteen times in Esther as well as once in Ezra (8:36) and once in Deuteronomy (33:2) meaning "royal decree." However, in the Aramaic portions of Ezra and Daniel it designates both the law of the king as well as the law of God (e.g., Ezra 7:12). The Targum accordingly explains "law" here to mean "custom of the law," i.e., the law of the king. This interpretive rendering finds a parallel in the following Midrash: Esth. Rab. II:13: "And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel" (Esth. 1:8). It varied according to the law (i.e., custom) of the place involved. There are some places where they drink and then eat. It was all according to the custom of each people."

⁴² The unusual meaning "to enjoin" that Hebrew *ysd* has here (in fifteen of its seventeen Biblical occurrences in the *piel* and *pual* forms, its usual meaning is "to establish") is emphasized by the Targum's use of *šyt t'm* ("decree"/"enjoin"). The only other Biblical parallel is 1 Chr. 9:22, where *ysd* is rendered *tqn* ("decree") by the Targum. In contrast, one Rabbi understood *ysd* in this verse as "establish," as can be seen from his statement in the following Midrash—Esth. Rab. II:13: "For so the king had *yissad*" (Esth. 1:8). R. Samuel b. Naḥman said: 'From this you may judge the prosperity of that evil man, for his house was founded (*mēyūssad*) on precious stones and pearls.'"

⁴³ An expanded paraphrase of Hebrew *rab*, which the Targum explains to refer to a person who was appointed to be in charge of others (here, pertaining to all members of his household). Such a responsible person is here designated by the Greek loan word *apaṭrôpôs* < ἐπίτροπος, for which cf. Krauss, *op. cit.*, pp. 103f. A similar situation occurs in Gen. 39:4, 5; 41:34, 35 in Tg. Ps.-Jon.

⁴⁴ The Hebrew has "of each man," which is here expanded to apply to Jews and gentiles alike, a notion also contained in the following Midrash—PRE XLIX: "Every people who ate its food in purity (Israelites), had its food provided in purity; and every people who ate its food in impurity (gentiles), had its food provided in impurity, as it is said: 'That they should do according to every man's pleasure' (Esth. 1:8)."

⁴⁵ The addition of the pejorative adjective for infamous personalities in Jewish tradition is standard, because Vashti, already termed "the sinful (one)" in 1:1 above, here makes her initial appearance in the Hebrew text. Subsequent mentions of her name do not contain this adjective. For similar cases involving Xerxes, Haman, Zeresh, Amaleq, Agag, and Nebukhadnezzar, see my *Concordance of the First Targum to the Book of Esther*, SBL Aramaic Studies 5. (Scholars Press, 1984), p. 111. This practice is no doubt associated with the Midrashic interpretation of Prov. 10:7b, for which see Midrash Samuel I:2, p. 42 (Buber edition). See also Tg. Sheni, chap. IV, n. 1.

⁴⁶ The notion that Vashti's feast was conducted in Xerxes' bedroom, here translated *qytwn*, a Greek loan word from

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Mordekhai had been praying to the Lord since the first day of the feast until the seventh day, the Sabbath; he ate no bread and drank no water.⁴⁷ Then on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath day, his complaint and the complaint of the Sanhedrin came up before the Lord.⁴⁷ When the king's heart became cheerful through wine, the Lord incited against him the angel of confusion to confound their festivities,⁴⁸ and thus⁴⁹ he said to Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas. Mehuman, who was appointed over trouble; Biztha, shame of the house; Harbona, I will destroy his house; Bigtha and Abagtha, the Master of the Universe is going to squeeze you like a man who squeezes his grapes with a wine-press twice, and He is going to destroy and crush these⁵⁰ seven princes who attended King Xerxes during these seven days.⁵¹ 11. The king then ordered these seven princes⁵² to bring Queen Vashti in the nude. Because she used to make Israelite girls work in the nude and made them beat wool and flax on the Sabbath day, therefore⁵³ it was decreed upon her to be brought (out) in the nude.⁵⁴ However, the crown of royalty was on her head⁵⁵ because of the merit of her father's father,⁵ Nebukhadnezzar, who dressed

Apparatus, Chapter 1

⁵ So also P, C, E, S, B, F, and RB, while O and M have: "her father," and R: "his father," the latter a

probable error for an original 'bwy d'bw'h', with the latter omitted.

Notes, Chapter 1

χοιτών (cf. Krauss, *op. cit.*, p. 528), is also reflected in Midrashic literature, for which cf. Agg. Esth. I:9, p. 13; Leq. Tob I:9, p. 91; PA II, pp. 59–60; AG I, p. 13.

⁴⁷This Aggadic addition is not reflected in any known Rabbinic text. Yet the author of *Tēhilat Dibrē Šēmū'el* (pp. 21f.) attempts to justify it on the basis of the redundancy of the phrase "on the seventh day." He explains Mordekhai's prayer here to be for Vashti's downfall at this feast. It was Vashti (as seen from v. 1 above) who did not permit the rebuilding of the Temple, and it was Vashti (as seen from v. 11 below) who humiliated Israelite girls and made them work on the Sabbath day. Now, in view of the purpose of this feast, which was to keep the Temple from being rebuilt permanently, as evidenced by the use of Temple vessels during the feasting, Mordekhai prayed for her downfall. This prayer was accepted by God on the seventh day—ironically enough the Sabbath day—on which her fate was sealed, a notion also reflected in Rabbinic literature, for which see Esth. Rab. III:11 (R. Joshua b. Levi's opinion) and b. Meg. 12b (Raba's statement).

⁴⁸This phrase forms the connecting link to the preceding Aggadic addition, according to which the prayer of Mordekhai and the Sanhedrin came before God, and what follows, which describes the plan to confuse Xerxes. It states God's decision to react positively to the prayer before him and in what manner. The Aramaic word for "confusion"—šygwš'—is Eastern Aramaic as opposed to 'rbby in Western Aramaic, for which cf. G. Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch* (Leipzig, 1905), p. 50.

⁴⁹A syntactic addition supplying a linking adverb.

⁵⁰This entire Aggadah is partially (Bigtha and Abagtha are the exceptions) reflected in Rabbinic texts, for which cf. especially Esth. Rab. III:12 (R. Johanan's and R. Simeon b. Jannai's statement), as well as AG I, p. 14; Agg. Esth. I:10, p. 13; and Leq. Tob I:10, p. 92.

⁵¹An addition, perhaps to underscore the importance of this day, for which see n. 47 above.

⁵²An addition to serve as a lead-in for the infinitive which abruptly starts the verse. In the Hebrew the infinitive takes up the statement contained in v. 10b: "He said to Mehuman . . . who attended King Xerxes." In the Targum this statement is replaced by Aggadic paraphrasing, hence the need to restate it at the beginning of v. 11.

⁵³The Aramaic term *bgyn kn*, used here, is Western Aramaic, as opposed to 'l *kn*, the Eastern Aramaic equivalent, for which cf. Dalman, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁵⁴Vashti's recompense as a divine *lex talionis* for having disgraced Israelite girls is explicitly reflected in the following Talmudic text: b. Meg. 12b—" . . . the wicked Vashti used to take the daughters of Israel, strip them bare, and make them work on the Sabbath. Therefore, it was decreed that she should be killed unclad on the Sabbath. So it is written, 'After these things when the wrath of King Xerxes abated, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what was decreed against her' (Esth. 2:1). As she had done so it was decreed against her." Cf. also PRE XLIX; and Agg. Esth. I:10, p. 13.

⁵⁵The apparently redundant prepositional phrase "on her head," also present in Targum Sheni, is undoubtedly re-

Daniel in purple. For that reason, it was decreed that she come before him⁵⁶ with the crown of royalty to show the nations and the princes her beauty, since she was good-looking. 12. Queen Vashti, however, refused to come according to the decree of the order of the Lord⁵⁷ and the king,⁵⁸ as ordered by⁵⁸ the princes. Whereupon the king became extremely angry and his fury burned in him.⁵⁹ 13. Then the king spoke to the wise men, the descendants of Issakhar⁵⁹ who were wise in the knowledge of periods and seasons found in the book of the Torah, as well as in astronomical calculations;⁶⁰ for so it was proper⁶¹ for the decree of the king to be spoken before one who is wise and knows⁶⁰ the Torah and the Law. 14. But the descendants of Issakhar refused to render that judgment. However, they prayed before the Lord and said: Master of the Universe, confound their feasts and remember the righteous who sacrificed to You in Your Temple, year-old lambs and two turtledoves⁶² upon the earthen altar through the high priest, who wore a breastplate which was sea-green in color, and the majority of the priests would stir and mix the blood, and arrange before the Shew-Bread.⁶² Therefore the king went round and asked advice from⁶³ his

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⁵⁶ So also S, C, R, E, M, B, O, F, and RB, whereas P omits it.

⁵⁷ So also S, E, and F, whereas P, and C simply have: "the decree of the king," and M, O, B, R, and RB have: "the decree of the order of the king."

⁵⁸ So also S, E, R, F, M, C, O, P, and B, whereas RB has: "two-year-old doves (and) turtledoves."

⁵⁹ So also S, E, B, F, R, and P, while O, C, M, and RB have: "continued asking."

Notes, Chapter 1

lated to the following Rabbinic texts, which imply that Vashti was to appear totally in the nude but with the crown on her head—

Esth. Rab. III:13: "... They replied, 'Yes, but she must be naked.' 'Very well,' he said to them, 'let her be naked.' R. Pinhas and R. Hama b. Guria in Rab's name said: She asked permission to wear at least as much as a girdle, like a harlot, but they would not allow her. He said to her: 'It must be naked.' She (then) said: 'I will come in without a crown.' (He replied): If so, they will say: 'She is a maidservant ...' Cf. also b. Meg. 12b.

⁵⁶ For Hebrew "the king," which already occurs in the Targumic addition at the beginning of this verse; thus here the pronoun occurs instead.

⁵⁷ This insertion, which attributes the decree to God as well as to the king, is no doubt related to v. 10 above, which describes God's active participation in this plot.

⁵⁸ Insertion of a verbal phrase understood in the Hebrew.

⁵⁹ The identification of the wise men with the descendants of Issakhar is also made in the Midrash (Esth. Rab. IV:1): "Then the king said to the wise men who knew the times" (Esth. 1:13): Who were they? Rabbi said: These were of the tribe of Issakhar, as it says: 'And of Issakhar's descendants, men that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do' (1 Chr. 12:33). Rabbi Tanhuma said: 'This means fixing the calendar.' Rabbi Jose ben Kazzrath said: 'For intercalation ... the heads of them were 200' (*ibid.*)—these are the 200 presidents of the Sanhedrin which the tribe of Issakhar produced ... They replied: Your majesty, when we were in our own land we used to inquire of the Urim and Thummim but now we are tossed about." Cf. also AG I, p. 16; and Leq. Tob I:13, p. 92.

⁶⁰ The Hebrew *yōdē'ē* ("those who had knowledge of") is rendered by the Targum "those who were wise (*hikymyn*) in knowledge (*bmnd*). Now the noun *bīnāh* ("knowledge") exists in parallelism to the noun *leqah* in Isa. 29:24, the latter *mnd* or *mdd* by the Tg. to Prov. 9:9 and 1:5, respectively. Thus the association of the noun *mdd*/*mnd* ("knowledge") with the *nomen agentis* *yōdē'ē* made by the Targum here.

⁶¹ The Aramaic *hykdyn* rendering the Hebrew *kn* ("so") is Western Aramaic, in contrast to *kdyn* in Eastern Aramaic; for which cf. Dalman, *op. cit.*, p. 46. Yet the "so" is vague; consequently the Targum adds "it was proper" for the sake of explicitness.

⁶² This Aggadic supplement is not reflected in any known Rabbinic text and appears to be primary in this Targum.

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that⁷ their cosmetic ointments be given (to them). 4. The maiden who will be pleasing before⁸ the king shall come in to take possession of the kingdom⁹ in place of Vashti; and the thing pleased the king and he did so.¹⁰ 5. There was in the fortress of Susa a pious man who prayed before God for his people;¹¹ he was called by the name of¹² Mordekhai because he was comparable to pure myrrh,¹³ the son of Jair, the son of Shimi,¹⁴ the son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin,¹⁵ that is Shimi who insulted David and whom Joab wanted to kill but he (David) did not let him (do it) because he consulted the spirit of prophecy and foresaw^f that Mordekhai and Esther the redeemers will descend from him. So when Shimi ceased to procreate, David ordered his son Solomon to kill him.¹⁴ 6. Who went into exile from Jerusalem with the

Apparatus, Chapter 2

^e P has: "son of Gera," as do RB, B, F, R, not in the Hebrew, whereas O, M, C, S and E parallel Madrid in their omission of it.

^f The Eastern Aramaic root *hzy* is used here and in R, as well as in E, whereas F, P, RB, M, B, C, and O have: *hmy*, the Western Aramaic form. S omits it altogether.

Notes, Chapter 2

⁷ A paraphrastic expansion of the Hebrew infinitive absolute, *nāṭōn*, used in late Biblical Hebrew to continue the tense-value of the action described by the preceding verb.

⁸ See above, ch. 1, n. 69.

⁹ The Hebrew "let her be queen" is here paraphrased, unlike v. 17, where the Hebrew is similar but where it is literally rendered. The Targum appears to be making a more decisive statement on Esther's succession of Vashti. Esther would not merely reign in her place but would actually take over in a very assuming manner—"enter to take possession of the kingdom." In fact, for v. 17 the following Midrash exists—Esth. Rab. VI:11: "... and made her queen instead of Vashti" (Esth. 2:17). Until Esther became queen, the portrait of Vashti remained in its place. When he married Esther and found her wellborn and of noble descent, he said: 'Let Vashti come down and Esther go up'; that is why it says: 'and made her queen instead of Vashti.'"

¹⁰ For this Aggadic expansion, a parallel exists in the following Midrash—Agg. Esth. (II:2, p. 17): "There was a man, a Jew in the fortress of Susa" (Esth. 2:5), that is what is meant when Scripture says (Prov. 17:17) 'and a brother is born for adversity'; when the Israelites were confronted by those difficult tribulations, the righteous Mordekhai begged for mercy upon them and a miracle came about through him, therefore it says 'a man, a Jew' (*ibid.*)."

¹¹ An expansion of the Hebrew *ws'mw*—"and his name (was)."

¹² The etymology of Mordekhai's name, here provided in the form of a *notarikon* *mr=myr* ("myrrh") and *dky=dky* ("pure"), hence *mrdky=myr' dky* ("pure myrrh"), is also reflected in Rabbinic texts, as can be seen by the Babylonian Talmud, which, in fact, cites a Targumic translation—b. Meg. 12b: "'shall come up the cypress' (Isa. 55:13), this is Mordekhai, who was called the chief of all spices, as it is said, 'And you take for yourself the chief spices, flowing myrrh' (Exod. 30:23), which we translate (*wmtgrmynn*) *mry dky* ('pure myrrh')." Cf. also Agg. Esth. II:5, p. 17 and PRE L.

¹³ An explanatory paraphrase of the Hebrew *'iš yēmīnī* ("a Benjaminite"), which, as Paton (*op. cit.*, p. 172) correctly pointed out, is an abbreviation of *'iš ben yēmīnī* of 1 Sam. 9:1. It also occurs in 2 Sam. 20:1.

¹⁴ This elaboration concerning Shimi's background, connecting him genealogically to Mordekhai and Esther, is also reflected in the following Rabbinic texts:

a) b. Meg. 12b—"... The tribe of Judah said: 'I am responsible for the birth of Mordekhai, because David did not kill Shimi the son of Gera.'"

b) *Ibid.* 13a—"that David did not kill Shimi, from whom Mordekhai was descended."

c) Agg. Esth. II:5, p. 18—"David foresaw that a perfectly righteous man would be descended from him, so he ordered his son and said to him: 'When Shimi will cease to procreate, slay him so he should arrive in the World to Come as acquitted; and who would come from his loins? Mordekhai!'"

d) Tosephta—Targum to 1 Kgs. 2:36 (A. Sperber, *Bible in Aramaic*, Vol. II., p. 218): "The king (Solomon) then sent for Shimi and said to him: 'My son, go to the House of Study in Jerusalem, and there remain with the students; do not leave to go hither or thither until a son is begotten by you, from whom will descend two redeemers for the House of Israel during the kingdom of Media, as my father commanded me by the spirit of prophecy.'"

exile which was banished with Jeconiah, king of Judah, whom Nebukhadnezzar the king of Babylonia exiled, *but when Cyrus and Darius captured Babylon, Mordekhai left Babylonia with Daniel, and the entire community of Israel which was there in Babylonia and went up with King Cyrus to live in the fortress of Susa.*¹⁵ 7. And he brought up Hadassah, that is Esther, the daughter of his father's brother;¹⁶ now why did they call her Hadassah? Because she was a righteous woman and the righteous ones are compared to the myrtle;⁸ they called her Esther after the shining star which the Greeks called Astirah;^h they called her Esther because she was concealed in the home of Mordekhai for seventy-five years, where she saw no man's face except that of Mordekhai, who became her nursing father;¹⁷ and at the time of the death of her father she was still in her mother's womb; and as soon as her mother gave birth to her,

Apparatus, Chapter 2

⁸ The text word is *hds*; so also in S, whereas P, R, F, RB, M, B, C, O, and E have 's', the Aramaic word, in contrast to *hds*, which is Hebrew. See below, ch. 2, note o.

^h An addition present only here and in the other Spanish mss.—E and S of Tg. Rishon—as well as in Tg. Sheni. Cf. b. Meg. 13a, where it is explained by Rabbi Nehemiah.

Notes, Chapter 2

In this Aggadic supplement a discrepancy exists as far as the identity of the person who sought to kill Shimi is concerned. The Targum says it was Joab, while the Biblical text (2 Sam. 16:9; 19:22) says it was Abishai. B. Schmerler, in his commentary to the Targum I of Esther-Megillah 'Apha (in *Ahavath Yonathan: Leviticus*. Bilgoraj, 1935, pp. 235f.), attempts to resolve the issue by arguing that Abishai was only the spokesman for the Zeruya clan, who were all present, including his brother Joab. He supports this line of argument by citing David's reply, which was directed at a plural audience of Zeruya, when saying (2 Sam. 16:10; 19:23): "What do you and I have in common, you sons of Zeruya?"

¹⁵ According to this Aggadic supplement, Mordekhai's presence in Susa was a result of voluntary exile. On the one hand, there appears to be Rabbinic support for it from the Talmud—b. Meg. 13a: "Who had been exiled from Jerusalem" (Esth. 2:6), Raba said: "He went into exile of his own accord." On the other hand, the self-inflicted exile is explained by Rashi (on b. Meg. 13a) as having occurred from Judah to Babylon. He further explains that Mordekhai was eventually ordered by God to return to Jerusalem (a state of affairs reflected in Targum Sheni, where we are told that Mordekhai returned for the purpose of helping rebuild the Temple). He was subsequently exiled a second time by Nebukhadnezzar, this time involuntarily, as seen from the following Midrash—Agg. Esth. II:6, p. 19: "He was exiled with Jehoiacin, then returned to Jerusalem, whence Nebukhadnezzar exiled him a second time with the second deportation. Therefore it says (Esth. 2:6): 'With Jehoiacin, king of Judah, whom Nebukhadnezzar exiled.'" Cf. also PA II, p. 63.

¹⁶ The Hebrew "his uncle" (*dôdô*) is here, as in Targum Sheni, precisely defined as "his father's brother" (*hbwv*), thus making Esther his first cousin, in that Abihayil, Esther's father (Esth. 2:15; 8:29) and Ya'ir, Mordekhai's father (Esth. 2:15), were brothers. This translation of "uncle" is in line with the standard Targumic rendering of this Hebrew word (*dôd*), which occurs twenty times throughout the Biblical text (cf. for instance Tg. Onq. to Exod. 6:20; Lev. 10:4; 18:14; 20:20[2]; 25:49[2] and Num. 36:11; Tg. Neb. to 1 Sam. 10:14, 15, 16; 14:50; 2 Kgs. 24:17; Jer. 32:7, 8, 9, 12; and Tg. Ket. to 1 Chr. 27:32. An alternative meaning "beloved one" (*hbybh*) occurs in the Tg. Ket. to Cant. (where it occurs thirty-four times) and the Tgs. Neof. and Ps. Jon. to Exod. 6:20; Lev. 10:4; Num. 36:11; as well as the former to Lev. 18:14; 20:20 and m. Neof. to Exod. 6:20; Lev. 25:49; Num. 36:11. Still a third meaning "kinsman" (*qryb*) occurs once in the Tg. Neb. to Amos 6:10. Yet, by referring to Esther as "the daughter of the brother of his father," i.e. Mordekhai's first cousin, the Targum is in direct contradiction to 7:6 below, where Esther, referring to Mordekhai, describes him as "the brother of my father," which would make her his niece and not his cousin. The Vg.'s rendering of Hebrew *dôd* here as *fratris* ("brother"), also paralleled in the Vetus Latina, is in agreement with that of the Targum in 7:6 below.

¹⁷ The elaboration on the etymology of the names Hadassah and Esther finds numerous parallels in Rabbinic literature, a few of which follow:

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her mother died¹⁸ and Mordekhai took her into his house and called her¹⁹ daughter.¹
 8. When the king's public²⁰ proclamation and his decree were heard, and when many maidens were assembled to the fortress of Susa, to the custody of Hegai,

Apparatus, Chapter 2

¹ P alone has: "my daughter."

Notes, Chapter 2

Hadassah

b. Meg. 13a: "It was taught, Rabbi Meir said: 'Esther was her name, then why was she called Hadassah? After the designation of the righteous who are called myrtles, for so it says: 'And he stood among the myrtle trees' (Zech. 1:8)." So also Targum Sheni here, as well as PA II:2, p. 63; Agg. Esth. II:7, pp. 19f. and Yalq. Shim. #1053.

Esther

PA II:2, p. 63: "Esther hid herself, and was not seen by anyone for four years . . . until he found Esther hidden from the eunuchs. Now the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to her: 'You have hidden yourself, (therefore) only you will enter (into) royalty'—'and Esther was taken to King Xerxes.' (Esth. 2:16)."

In this Midrash, the concealment was Esther's idea and lasted four years, in contrast to the situation described in the Targum, where it was Mordekhai's idea and lasted seventy-five years. Cf. also Agg. Esth. II:2, p. 20 and Yalq. Shim. #1053.

Esther's age given here as seventy-five is also the opinion reflected in Gen. Rab. (XXXIX:13, p. 378): "The Rabbis said (she was) seventy-five . . . the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Abraham: 'You left your father's home at age seventy-five; I swear by your life that the redeemer whom I shall raise from you will be seventy-five years, according to the (Gematriah) number of Hadassah.'" Cf. also AG II, p. 18 and Yalq. Shim. #1053.

The statement here that "they called her Esther after the shining star which the Greeks called Astirah" only exists in the Spanish manuscripts, which are, besides the Madrid, Escorial and Salamanca, for which see Apparatus, note h. This Aggadah is reflected in the following Babylonian Talmud passage—b. Meg. 13a: "R. Nehemiah says: 'Hadassah was her name. Why then was she called Esther? All peoples called her so after Istahar.'" The Targum Sheni also contains this etymology among others on this verse. Krauss (*op. cit.*, II, p. 98) derives 'styr' < Greek ἀστήρ ("star"), then adds "especially the planet Venus." Jastrow (*op. cit.*, p. 98) also renders this word "Venus," "the bright," as Venus was considered to be one of the most brilliant ones in the sky. Thus, a Greek etymology for the name Esther may now be added to the previous Persian for the word "star," for which cf. A. S. Yahuda, "The Meaning of the Name Esther," *JRAS* (1946) 174–178, and the Babylonian one deriving the name from the Babylonian goddess of love, Ishtar, for which cf. P. Jensen, "Elamitische Eigennamen. Ein Beitrag der elamitischen Inschriften," *WZKM* 6 (1892) 70; cf. also P. Haupt, "The name Ishtar," *AJSL* 28 (1907) 112ff.

¹⁸ The Hebrew text "at the time of her father's and mother's death" is somewhat vague. Did they die simultaneously or sequentially? Furthermore, the preceding statement "for she had neither a father nor a mother" is also problematic. Why was her parentage concealed? The latter question troubled the Rabbis, and their explanation, contained in a variety of Rabbinic texts, is also reflected in the Targumic rendering here: her father died while her mother was pregnant with her, and her mother's death took place after she gave birth to her, for which cf. Esth. Rab. VI:9, and b. Meg. 13a, as well as Lam. Rab. V:3, p. 155, and Agg. Esth. II:7, p. 20.

In the Targum, "at the time of the death of" is prefaced to "her father," to which then was appended the phrase "she remained in the womb of her mother," the entire sequence becoming an independent statement detached from "her mother." The latter phrase, too, is no longer the genitive of the earlier construct "the death of" but the subject of another independent statement, "and as soon as her mother gave birth to her, her mother died."

¹⁹ The Hebrew "for himself as a daughter" is here expanded, resulting in the paraphrase "into his house and called her daughter." The introduction of the element "house" (*byt*) in addition to the existing "daughter" (*bt*), an obvious play on words, is also reflected in the following Talmudic exposition of this verse—b. Meg. 13a: "'When her father and mother died, Mordekhai took her for his own daughter.' A Tanna taught in the name of R. Meir: Read not 'for a daughter' but 'for a house.' Similarly, it says: 'But the poor man had nothing except for one little ewe lamb, which he had brought up and reared; and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of its own morsel, and drink of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter' (2 Sam. 12:3). Because it lay in his bosom, was it like a daughter to him? Rather what it means is like a wife; so here, too, it means like a wife." This

feast for all his princes and his servants, and they called it⁴⁵—Esther's feast; he then granted the respite of tax release⁴⁶ to the provinces, and he gave her⁴⁷ gifts and a portion⁴⁸ in accordance with the state of the king. 19. And when the virgins were gathered together a second time, Mordekhai continued praying²⁹ while sitting at the king's gate. 20. With the passing of each day the king asked her from which nation are you⁴⁹ (descended), but Esther did not relate (the identity of) her birthplace and her people as Mordekhai had ordered her, and Mordekhai's order Esther obeyed; Sabbaths and Festivals she would observe; during the days of separation she watched herself, cooked dishes and wine of the nations⁵⁰ she did not taste, and all the religious precepts which the women of the House of Israel⁵¹ were commanded, she observed by order of Mordekhai, just as she observed⁵⁰ (them) when she grew up with him. 21. In those days, while Mordekhai sat among the Sanhedrin which Esther set up for him⁵¹ at the king's gate; and when the two officers saw^f this,^s they became agitated and got

Apparatus, Chapter 2

⁴⁵ So also E and S, whereas all the other mss. and editions have: "gentile nations."

⁴⁶ B has: "Judah (and) Israel," whereas R omits "the women of the house of"; the other witnesses all parallel Madrid here.

⁴⁷ So also F, R, E, S, RB, M, B, C, O, and H, whereas P omits it.

Notes, Chapter 2

the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti' (Esth. 2:17). Until Esther became queen, the portrait of Vashti remained in its place; when he married Esther and found her well-bred and of noble descent, he said: 'Let Vashti come down and Esther go up. That is what is meant by 'And he made her queen instead of Vashti.'" Cf. also Agg. Esth. II:17, p. 23; AG II, p. 19; PA II, p. 65; and Leq. Tob. II:17, p. 96.

⁴⁵ The Targum merely supplies a predicate clause for the object phrase "Esther's banquet," which in the Hebrew stands in apposition to the preceding "great banquet."

The Hebrew *hanahāh* is a hapax, a causative infinitive from *nwh* ("to give rest" or "to give a release"); some take it as a release from work, others as a release from prison (amnesty), as in PR XLII, p. 177a (*wh' pqd 't shr*), whereas the Targum renders it as a release from taxes, an interpretation which finds its parallel in the Babylonian Talmud (Meg. 13a), "... he remitted taxes."

⁴⁶ The Aramaic *dly krg'* used here is the identical expression used in the Babylonian Talmud.

⁴⁷ This insertion, according to which the vagueness of the Hebrew text—to whom did he give presents (?)—is resolved, is reflected in the Talmud (*ibid.*)—"he sent her gifts but she still did not tell him."

⁴⁸ A doublet in translation of Hebrew *ms't*, as can be seen from the translation of Tg. Neb. to Jer. 40:5 and the Tgs. Onq., Ps.-Jon., and Neof. to Gen. 43:34; the latter contain *hwlg* ("shares"), the former, *mtnn* ("gifts").

⁴⁹ An addition for the purpose of serving as a lead-in to the opening statement of the text that Esther did not reveal the identity of her birthplace or people, which is rather abrupt.

⁵⁰ An Aggadic supplement for the preceding clause "and Mordekhai's instructions Esther obeyed," which apparently does not refer to Esther's not revealing the identity of her birthplace or people as that was already covered by the following verse, "as Mordekhai commanded her." Thus the present supplement was meant to elaborate on Mordekhai's instructions, which are here tied to her religious observance of the Sabbaths and Festivals, Family Purity and Dietary Laws. This Aggadah is reflected in b. Meg. 13a: "... and the seven maidens' (Esth. 2:20)—Raba said: She used to count the days of the Sabbath by them ... 'and her maidens' (*ibid.*)—Rab said: He gave her Jewish food to eat ... 'For Esther did the commandment of Mordekhai' (*ibid.*)—R. Jeremiah said: She used to show the blood of her impurity to the Sages." Cf. also Agg. Esth. II:20, p. 24; Leq. Tob. II:20, p. 96; Yalq. Shim. #1053; and PRE L. Cf. also Targum Sheni and the Greek Additions to Esther (Addition C: The Prayer of Queen Esther, v. 28) concerning her observances of the dietary laws.

⁵¹ This insertion is also reflected in the following Rabbinic texts, according to which Mordekhai was a member of the Sanhedrin—b. Men. 65a: "... that is indeed what we have learned in the Mishna (Sheq. V:1), 'Petahia was in

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came known to Mordekhai because he was well-versed in speaking seventy languages,⁵¹ and he related (it) to Queen Esther; so Esther notified the king, and it was recorded⁵⁶ in Mordekhai's name. 23. The matter was then investigated and the truth⁵⁷ was discovered, so they were both hanged on the gallows;⁵⁸ and the matter was recorded in the books⁵⁹ of the chronicles which was⁶⁰ constantly read⁶¹ before the king.

CHAPTER 3

- ⑤ → 1. After these things, the attribute of justice entered before the Master of the World^a and thus it said: Did not the wicked Haman descend and go up^b from Susa to Jerusalem to abolish the rebuilding of the Temple;¹ and now King Xerxes has pro-

Apparatus, Chapter 2 (Cont.)

^a Aramaic *qys'* as in P and S, whereas H has *šlyb'*. See also ch. 7, note *bb* and especially ch. 5, note *x* below.

^b P has the singular, as do RB, M, O, S, B, R, and C. I was unable to make out the reading in E here; the Hebrew is singular.

^c The reading, though singular, is grammatically wrong here, as this manuscript, in contrast to all other witnesses, pluralizes the antecedent "books."

Apparatus, Chapter 3

^a F, P, M, B, C, and O have the plural, while RB and H have the singular, as do E, S, and R.

^b P has only: "went up," while M, C, O, RB, and H have only: "descend," and B, F, R, as well as E

and S, agree with our manuscript in having a conflation of both variants.

^c RB, P, M, C, B, F, R, and O have: "your," whereas E and S are identical with Madrid.

Notes, Chapter 2 (Cont.)

The second target of the conspiracy was (according to the Heb. text it was the *only* target) Xerxes, whom they planned to slay by sword, according to the Targum. This is reflected in the opinion of Rab (cited above in Genesis Rabba), who states that they planned to accomplish their act by means of a short dagger. The Targum adds "in his bedroom," indicating that the execution was to take place there. The act of killing by sword had to be done by surprise while the king was asleep, and since they were the king's chamberlains, they knew his sleeping habits quite well and thus planned to murder him in his own bed. This opinion is peculiar to Targum Rishon and is not reflected anywhere else in Rabbinic literature.

⁵⁶ The Targum here adds "while it was recorded" (not in the Heb. text), perhaps in anticipation of Esth. 6:2, where it is explicitly stated that this particular deed was recorded in writing, whereas here the transmission in the name of Mordekhai appeared to be oral only. Although in the following verse it states "it was recorded in writing," there is no mention of any credit to Mordekhai.

⁵⁷ The Targum here inserts "the truth" (not in the Heb. text) in order to supply the suspended predicate *wymš'* with a subject. The preceding *hdb'* being the direct object of *wybgš'*, the necessity presented itself to supply *wymš'* with its respective implicit object, which in this case, in view of the events of the preceding verse, relating Esther's report of the attempted conspiracy to the king, would naturally be "the truth." See, however, Tg. Sheni for this chapter, note *jjj*. Cf. also Deut. 17:4, where a similar word association exists.

⁵⁸ This insertion actually interrupts the sequence "and it was inscribed in the book of the chronicles in the presence

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moted Haman, son of Hammedatha, who is descendant from Agag,² son of the wicked Amalek,³ and has appointed him chief over everything⁴ and established⁵ his throne over those of all the princes that are with him. Replied^d the Master of the World^e and said as follows: I do not wish to destroy him from the world as long as he is not (yet) known in the world; let go of him until he will become great and known among all nations, then will I punish him for all the oppression that he and his ancestors have done to the people of the House of Israel.¹ 2. Now all the king's servants that were at the king's gate^f bowed down^g to the image which he^h set up on his chest⁶ and prostrated themselves to Haman, for that is what the king had commanded concerning him; Mordekhai, however, would not bow downⁱ to the image,⁶ nor pros-

Apparatus, Chapter 3

^d R only has: "arose" instead here.

^e So also F, R, E, S, M, B, C, O, and RB, while P alone has the plural here as well. See note a above.

^f So also M, C, B, O, S, E, and F, while P has: "palace gate," with palace designated by *pltryn*, whereas H, which also has "gate," designates palace by *byt mlk'*. See my *First Targum to Esther* (New York: Sepher Hermon Press, 1983), p. 112, n. 5, and Table B on the following page.

^g Using the root *ghn*, so also M, E, S, O, B, RB, F, and H, while R uses *hmt*, "kneel, prostrate," and P has a conflation of both Aramaic roots. See below, note i.

^h P, F, and R have: "Haman" instead of the pronoun used here and by M, B, C, O, RB, E and S.

ⁱ Employing Aramaic *ghn*, as do RB, E, S, F, C, M, and B, while P and R use *hmt*. See above, note g.

Notes, Chapter 2 (Cont.)

of the king," to point out, and correctly so, that it was not recorded in his presence. By inserting "which were read" at this point, the Targum merely reflects the last part of Esth. 6:1, where it specifically states "and they were read before the king." The Tg. further adds "continually," for which see my *First Targum to Esther*, pp. 109f., n. 43.

Notes, Chapter 3

¹ This Aggadic supplement, describing Haman's part in obstructing the progress of rebuilding the Temple, is also reflected in Esth. Rab. VII:2—"... So the Holy One, Blessed be He, said: 'Should Haman be slain when he goes down and advises Xerxes to stop building the Temple, no one will know who he was. Let him therefore become great and afterwards be hanged.'" According to this Midrash, Haman's promotion was only accomplished in preparation for his fall, a point which is clearly stated in the Targum at the end of this verse. Cf. also AG III:1, p. 20; PA II, p. 66; and Leq. Tob III:1, p. 97.

² The Hebrew suffix *-i* on *'Agagi* is explained in the Targum to refer to genealogy rather than just being a gentile suffix. The lineage is expressed by the Aramaic *zr'yt* ("family") or *yphws* ("genealogy"), as in 8:35 and 9:24 below.

³ This Aggadic addition, also in Tg. II, is paralleled in Rabbinic traditions, for which cf. Soferim XIII:6; PR *minni epraim* XIII:4, p. 53b and 54b; Agg. Esth. III:1, p. 26; y. Yeb. II:6, p. 4a; Leq. Tob III:1, p. 97.

⁴ An explanatory paraphrase of the somewhat vague Hebrew "and he promoted him." Cf. also 9:3 below.

⁵ A more precise term for the Hebrew "placed."

⁶ This Aggadic insert is reflected in Rabbinic literature as follows:

a) Esth. Rab. VII:6—"What did Haman then do? He attached an embroidered image to his garment upon his chest and everyone who bowed down to Haman bowed down to the image."

b) b. Meg. 19a—"What reason did Mordekhai have to be hostile to Haman, 'because of this,' in that he considered himself an idol." See also Tg. Sheni 6:1, n. 4a.

trate himself to Haman,^j because he was his working slave who was sold to him for a loaf of bread.⁷ 3. So the king's servants^k who were at the gate of the king's palace^l said to Mordekhai: Why is it that you disobey the king's command? 4. As⁸ they spoke to^m him day after dayⁿ and he did not listen to them, they informed Haman in order to see^o how Mordekhai's deeds would hold up, for he would not bow down to Haman because he was his slave who sold himself to him for a loaf of bread,⁷ and to the image which he set up in his chest he would not bow down,⁶ because he was a Jew, and Jews did not pay homage or bow^p down to him.⁷ 5: When Haman saw^o that Mordekhai would not bow down to the^p image⁶ nor pay homage to him, Haman became filled with anger against Mordekhai. 6. However, it was derisive to him¹⁰ to stretch out a^q hand to kill¹¹ just Mordekhai alone, for they had told him that Mordekhai was descendant from Jacob, who took away the birthright and the blessing from Esau, his paternal grandfather, and the Jews¹² (were) the people of Mordekhai; and so Haman sought to wipe out all the Jews throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes, the people of Mordekhai.⁷ 7. In the first month, which is the month of

Apparatus, Chapter 3

^j M and O have: "to him" instead of the proper name used here and by all the other witnesses.

^k M, O, and C have: "young men" ('wlymy) as against 'bdy, used here and in S, E, R, F, and RB, as well as B, in literal translation of the Hebrew.

^l So also P, H, R, F, RB, E, S, C, and B, whereas O and M simply have: "king" here.

^m Thus also P, E, S, RB, B, C, F, and R in literal translation of the Hebrew, while O and M have: "with."

ⁿ Lit.: "today and tomorrow"; all the other witnesses

are virtually identical with only slight variations, while L has the literal: "day (after) day," which duplicates the Hebrew ywm ywm.

^o Using the root hzy, as do E, S, M, O, C, F, B, and RB, while R and P employ hmy. Cf. above, ch. 2, note f.

^p So also F, R, E, S, H, and RB, while C, B, O, M, and P have: "his."

^q Likewise P, R, F, E, S, M, O, B, and C, precisely reflecting the idiom of the Hebrew, while RB has: "his."

Notes, Chapter 3

⁷ This Aggadic supplement finds a parallel in the following Rabbinic texts—b. Meg. 15a-b: "R. Papa said: 'They called him (Haman) the slave who sold himself (to Mordekhai) for loaves of bread.'" Cf. more elaborate accounts in Yalq. Shim. #1056 and Agg. Esth. V:9, p. 54, both of which are cited in full in my *First Targum to Esther*, pp. 114f., as well as the Jerusalem Targum Tosephta which forms part of the Targum Rishon and Tg. Sheni according to Paris Heb. 110 of Esth. 3:2 *ibid.*, pp. 49ff.

⁸ The Targumic *kd* here indicates a Hebrew *Vorlage* *k'mrm*, which is here the *Qere* in contrast to the *Ketib* *b'mrm*.

⁹ An elaboration on the preceding clause.

¹⁰ Paraphrase using *qdm* of the Hebrew figure of speech "it was contemptuous in his eyes." Cf. above ch. 1, n. 69.

¹¹ This insertion further elaborates on the preceding "to stretch out a hand," explaining it to mean "to kill" and not merely "to harm." As this infinitive takes the direct object, the Targum transformed the Hebrew indirect object preposition *b* ("against") into the accusative particle *yt*. The same procedure is followed in Esth. 6:2 and 9:2 below, in contrast to Esth. 9:10, 15, 16 and Exod. 22:1, where the sequence "to stretch out a hand against" does not denote an act of killing but merely harming, as a result of which the insertion "to kill" is not made in the Targum.

¹² The Heb. text, "the people to whom Mordekhai belongs," is vague, prompting the Targum to elaborate on Mordekhai's ethnic origin from Jacob, as well as Haman's from Esau, then relating the incidents concerning the birthright and blessing, and placing this entire narrative into the mouths of those who were the servants of the king. Thus, they connected the Jews with Mordekhai and identified them as his people. A similar connection between Haman and Esau is found in the following tradition—Esth. Rab. VII:11: "But it seemed contemptible in his eyes to lay hands on Mordekhai alone." He was a contemptuous man like his ancestor (Esau) before him. Elsewhere it is written, 'So Esau despised his birthright' (Gen. 25:34), and here it is written, 'It was contemptible in his eyes.'"

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④ → which is the month of Adar, he said: they are swallowed up in my hand like the fish of the sea; he did not realize that the descendants of Joseph are compared to the fish of the sea, for so it is written: "and like the fish of the sea they will increase among mankind on earth" (Gen 48:16).¹³ 8. Then Haman said to King Xerxes: There is a certain people scattered and distinct among the nations; some of them live¹⁴ throughout all the provinces of your^{cc} kingdom; the decrees of their Law¹⁵ are different from those of every nation;^{dd} our bread and our cooked dishes they do not eat,^{ee} our wine they do not drink, our festivals they do not celebrate, and our customs they do not observe;^{ff}¹⁶ they do not observe^{gg} the decrees of the king's statutes, and the king has no profit from them; what benefit does he have from them if he lets them (live) on the face of the earth?¹⁷ 9. If it please the king, let it be recorded in writing that they be destroyed; and I shall give you for each and every one of them one hundred Zuz, the sum total of their ancestors when they went out of Egypt was six hundred thousand (men and the sum total of six hundred thousand) Zuz^{hh} is ten thou-

Apparatus, Chapter 3

^{cc} R, B, and H alone have: "the," as against the other manuscripts, which, like Madrid, agree with the Hebrew text.

^{dd} So also C, P, E, B, R, and F, whereas M, O, S, have: "all nations."

^{ee} So also B, E, and S, while F, P, R, RB, and C have: "taste," while O and M omit.

^{ff} O and M omit, while E, S, R, RB, F, R, C, and B equal our manuscript here.

^{gg} So also E and S, while RB, C, O, M, P, B, F, and R have: "carry out," lit. "do."

^{hh} R is the only witness that omits it; all the others agree with Madrid.

Notes, Chapter 3

¹³ The Hebrew has "that is the lot, in Haman's presence (to determine) the precise day and month, (the lot indicating) the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar." This lengthy Aggadic supplement is paralleled in Rabbinic literature but with some variation, for which cf. Tables C1 and C2 of my *First Targum to Esther*, pp. 123 ff. and pp. 119–122 for a discussion of them. The Targum adds that it was Shimshai the scribe rather than Haman himself who cast the lots, thus making him the subject of the verb *hippil*. This individual is identified as Haman's own son in the Midrash PA II (p. 55): "he was the scribe Shimshai, son of Haman." A scribe Shimshai, who is not favorably disposed toward the Jews, is mentioned in Ezra 4:8 as denouncing them before the Persian king. A Midrash (Esth. Rab. Proem:5) identifies this Shimshai from Ezra's time with Haman's son by the same name: "for so it is written (Ezra 4:8) 'Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe—the latter being the son of Haman.'" The Targumic statement that it was Shimshai who cast the lots is not reflected in Rabbinic literature.

¹⁴ This explanatory insertion was designed to clarify the syntactical difficulty of the Hebrew—"scattered yet separated among the nations throughout the provinces of your kingdom." Was this nation scattered yet separated, among the nations or throughout the provinces of the kingdom? By way of this insertion, the one clause is separated into two, each supplied with its own predicate; thus the answer is "scattered yet separate among the nations."

¹⁵ For Hebrew "their laws," for which see my note 22 in *The First Targum to Esther*, pp. 126ff., including the accompanying Table D.

¹⁶ The Targum here spells out precisely what is meant by the preceding clause: "the decrees of their Law are different from those of other nations" in that they do not eat or drink our food nor celebrate our anniversaries nor observe our laws. This supplement is reflected in the following Rabbinic literature—b. Meg. 13b: "Their laws are diverse from those of every other people—they do not eat our food . . . 'Neither do they obey the king's laws'—they bring out (i.e., they waste) the whole year with (excuses like) 'Today is Sabbath, today is Passover.'" Cf. also Leq. Tob III:8, p. 99; Yalq. Shim. #1054; and Agg. Esth. III:8, p. 30, which has "they do not eat nor drink with us."

¹⁷ The Hebrew "it is not worth for the king to leave them" is concise and therefore paraphrased "there is no value whatsoever from them." It is then further elaborated on as follows: "what benefit does he derive from them if he were to leave them (alive) on the face of the earth," in order to supply a link between what precedes and the following verse, in which Haman specifies the financial benefit to the king if he indeed would not permit them to live.

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people who dwell in²³ the king's provinces are aware that there is one final judgment for every man and woman who enters the king's inner courtyard without having been summoned on *Haman's order*²²—the decree of his sentence is but one—(he is) to be put to death, except to whom the king were to extend the golden scepter so that he may live. Now I have not been summoned to come in to the king 8 for a period of²⁴ thirty days. 12. When the wicked¹ Haman saw^m Hatakh, whose name was Daniel, entering and leaving from Esther, he became furious at him and killed him; whereupon the angel Michaelⁿ appeared there²⁵ and related to Mordekhai Esther's words. 13. Then Mordekhai told Michaelⁿ²⁵ to reply to Esther: Thus you shall say to her.²⁶ Do not plan for yourself to be saved in the king's house more than the rest of the Jews. 14. Because if you continue to remain silent at this time and you would not intercede for the Jews,²⁷ relief and deliverance will proceed for the Jews from another source on account of the merit of the Patriarchs of the world, and the Lord of the Universe will deliver them from (the hands of) their adversaries,²⁸ and you as well as your paternal family²⁹ will perish for that guilt,³⁰ and

Apparatus, Chapter 4

¹ R omits.

^m Using Aramaic *hz'* as do E, S, O, B, C, and RB, whereas P and R have *hm'*.

ⁿ So also E and S, whereas P, RB, R, M, O, B, and C have: "and Gabriel."

Notes, Chapter 4

²³The Hebrew "and nation of the king's provinces" is difficult and calls for clarification. Consequently, the Targum first pluralizes the singular "nation," then adds the appropriate plural predicate "who live" and the indirect object preposition *b* prefix before "the king's provinces," thus dissolving the difficult genitive Hebrew construction.

²⁴The Targum makes this insertion to clarify the concise idiomatic Hebrew, where it is understood. This is a common Targumic translational technique, for which cf. further Tgs. Onq. and Ps.-Jon. to Gen. 7:4, 10, and Tg. Neb. to 1 Sam. 25:38 and the Tg. Ket. to 2 Chr. 21:19 and 29:17 for additional examples.

²⁵The Aggadic supplement is partially reflected in the following Midrashim:

Agg. Esth. IV:13, p. 43: "And Mordekhai said to reply to Esther: The Sages said: When Haman saw Hatakh enter and leave among them (Mordekhai and Esther) he struck him and he died, since you do not find mention of him anymore. Said the Holy One, Blessed be He: Since he killed him, I will act as mediator between them, as it says 'And Mordekhai said to reply to Esther.'"

AG IV, p. 36 (essentially the same as Agg. Esth. with a slightly different phrasing, as follows): "... The Holy Spirit will be used between them." Cf. also PA II, p. 70; Leq. Tob IV:10, p. 103; PRE L; and Yalq. Shim. #1056.

According to Targum Sheni, after the death of Hatakh by Haman (4:11), written messages were sent by Esther to Mordekhai (4:12):

4:11 "and because Hatakh was the messenger between Esther and Mordekhai, Haman's anger intensified and he killed him."

4:12 "So they informed Mordekhai in writing of Esther's words."

According to the first Midrash cited above, it was God who took Hatakh's place as intermediary between Mordekhai and Esther. Our Targum names the archangel Michael as the mediator, whereas other manuscripts read "Michael and Gabriel," for which see note *n* in the Apparatus of the present chapter.

²⁶A mere explanatory insertion.

²⁷This addition is reflected in the following Rabbinic text—Esth. Rab. VIII:6: "For if you altogether hold your peace, if you keep silent now and refrain from pleading for your nation."

²⁸An addition to further define the preceding phrase, "another source." No known Rabbinic parallels exist.

²⁹The Hebrew has "the house of your father" (*byt 'abyk*), for which the Targum appears to have a doublet in trans-

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who is so wise as to know³¹ if you will come to take possession of³² the kingdom next year at this time.³³ 15. Thereupon, Esther told Michael³⁴ to reply to Mordekhai: 16. Go and gather all the Jews who are to be found in Susa, and fast with^o me; do not eat or drink for three days and pray before the Lord of the Universe³⁵ day and night. Also I, as well as my maidens, will fast in this manner, and thereafter I will go in to the king even though it is against the law; and just as I became lost from the house of the women and was forcibly taken from you,³⁶ so too will I be lost from (the)

Apparatus, Chapter 4

^o So also E and S, while B, R, P, F, M, O, C, and RB have the literal 'l with suffix.

Notes, Chapter 4

lation, employing *byt* ("family") as well as the Greek loan word *gnyst* < γένος ("family"). That this is the case can be seen in Exod. 12:3, where the similar Hebrew *byt* 'abwt is rendered *byt* 'b' by Tg. Onq. and the PT Geniza Fragment G23, *byt* 'bhtm by Tg. Neof., but *byt gnyst* by Tg. Ps.-Jon. See further my note (15) in *First Targum*, pp. 174f., on this subject, as well as 8:6 below, where the Aramaic is similar.

³⁰This addition was designed to stress the exact reason for the destruction of Esther and that of her paternal family: that it was precisely for keeping silent at a time she should have spoken up on behalf of her people.

³¹The Hebrew "who knows" is here paraphrased. The association of Hebrew *yd'* ("know") with *hkm* ("wise") is a natural one, and their close relationship is seen from Eccl. 8:1, where the Hebrew "who is wise and who knows" is rendered by the Tg. Ket. "who is wise . . . to know," Eccl. 3:21, where the rhetorical question in the Hebrew "who knows" is rendered "who is wise (enough) that he knows" by the Tg. Ket., shows a further step in the development of this Targumic treatment of the rhetorical question in the Hebrew text, which is again reflected in the Targum to our verse. Cf. further Tg. Onq. to Gen. 3:5, the Tg. Ket. to 2 Chr. 8:18, and Tg. I to Esth. 1:13, where Hebrew *yd'* is rendered *hkm* by the respective Targum in the sense of "expert knowledge."

³²An explanatory insertion to clarify the somewhat concise Heb. "came to royalty," i.e., to the possession of royalty (= the throne).

³³The Targum here attempts to facilitate an understanding of the idiomatic Heb. expression "such a time as this" by rendering it "in the coming at a time like this." The expression *l't kz't* is to be compared with the expression *k't hyh*, which occurs either by itself (Gen. 18:10) or in combination with *lmw'd* (Gen. 18:14; 2 Kgs. 4:16, 17). In Gen. 18:10, Ps.-Jon. renders *k't hyh* as *lšt' d'ty' w'twn gymym*, whereas in Gen. 18:14 the Hebrew *lmw'd k't hyh* is rendered by that Targum *b'yd'n' hdy'n d'twn gymyn* indicates that Heb. 't has three possible Targumic equivalents: the literal 'ydn', the equally literal š't', and the not so literal š't'. The term *š't'* occurs in Tg. Neof. to Gen. 18:14, which has *bš't' hd'* in the main text, while a marginal variant reads *b'ydnh hdy'n*, and Gen. 18:10, where Tg. Neof. has *bš't'*, while Tg. Onq. and the Frg. Tg. have *k'dn* and *k'ydn*, respectively. In Josh. 11:6 *k't hyh* is rendered *k'dn' hdy'n* in the Tg. Neb. Accordingly, the translation of the Targum *lšt' d'ty' b'yd'n' hd'* here may very well be a conflation of two variant renderings combining *lšt' d'ty'* with *b'yd'n' hd'*.

³⁴For this addition see n. 25 above.

³⁵Whereas the Heb. contains only the order of fasting, the Targum adds "praying" as well, in the addition "and pray before the Lord of the Universe." This Aggadic supplement has no parallels in known Rabbinic literature and is peculiar to Targum Rishon. The addition is a natural one, since it is assumed that prayer accompanied the act of feasting, for which there exist many Biblical parallels; cf. Dan. 9:3; Neh. 1:4; Ps. 35:13; Ezra 8:21, to cite only a few. Indeed, the Prayer of Mordekhai, one of the apocryphal Additions to Esther, follows closely the end of this chapter in the Apocrypha.

³⁶These expansions of the Hebrew "and just as I became lost, so too will I be lost" are partially reflected in the following Rabbinic texts—b. Meg. 15a: "And if I perish, I perish" (Esth. 4:16). As I am lost to my father's house, so I shall be lost to you." Similarly, Agg. Esth. IV:16, p. 44, and the Midrash Leq. Tob IV:16, p. 103: "just as I was lost from you and became separated from you, so shall my soul also perish." The Midrash Leq. Tob appears closer to our Targum.

the scepter. 3. The king then said to her: What do you need,¹¹ Queen Esther, and what is your request? Even if you were to ask for¹² half of my kingdom, I would give it¹³ to you; except (the request for the re-) construction of the Temple, which is located within the border of half of^k my kingdom I shall not grant you, for thus I have pledged in oath to Geshem the Arab, to Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite slave, not to let it be (re-) built (again), for I fear the Jews lest they revolt against me; this request^l I shall not grant you, whereas (any) other thing you request of me I shall decree it be promptly carried out, and your wish shall be granted to you.¹⁴ 4. When Esther heard these words, she trembled;¹⁵ and Esther said: I want nothing from you except¹⁶ if it please the king, let the king and Haman come today to the drinking party^m that I have prepared for him." 5. Said the king: Bring Haman immediately in order to carry out the order of Esther; so the king and Haman came to the meal which Esther had prepared.⁹ 6. Then said the king to Esther during the wine party: What is your request, and it will be granted to you; and what is your plea? If you were to ask, your plea would be granted;¹⁷ except (the request for the re-) construction of the Temple, which is located within the border of half of my kingdom, I shall not grant to you, for thus I have pledged in oath to Geshem the Arab, to Sanballat the Horonite, and to Tobiah the Ammonite slave, not to let it^o be (re-) built again, lest the Jews revolt against me.¹⁴ 7. So Esther replied and said: Neither do I seek half your kingdom¹⁸ in my request, nor the (re-) construction of the Temple¹⁸ in

Apparatus, Chapter 5

^k So also E, S, F, R, RB, and B, whereas C, O, and M have: "within my border."

^l So also E, S, P, RB, R, F, P, B, whereas M and O have: "matter."

^m So also E, S, P, R, F, C, O, and M (B has the plural), whereas H and RB have: "meal."

^o So also all the other manuscripts in literal translation of the Hebrew, whereas RB and H have: "you" (m. pl.).

⁹ Spelled *yr*; also P, E, S, RB, F, C, M, B, and O, whereas R has: "the Temple."

Notes, Chapter 5

¹¹ The Targum paraphrases the idiomatic Hebrew, lit. "what is to you?"

¹² An explanatory paraphrase, expanding on the concise Hebrew.

¹³ Conversion of the Hebrew passive without a subject into an active supplied with a subject.

¹⁴ This Aggadah is partially reflected in b. Meg. 15b: "... even to half of his kingdom, it shall be given (to you)!"—'Half the kingdom' but not the whole kingdom, and not a thing that would divide the kingdom. What could that be? The building of the Temple." Cf. also Agg. Esth. V:3, p. 51; and Yalq. Shim. #1056.

¹⁵ An insertion in view of Xerxes' revelation to her that he would not rebuild the Temple, for which see the preceding note.

¹⁶ An insertion to point out Esther's indignant reaction to Xerxes' refusal to rebuild the Temple, a request she had not really made of him, as seen from the Targum to v. 7 below.

¹⁷ See n. 12 above, where the Hebrew has "(up to) half the kingdom," which the Targum reflects there. Here, however, although the Hebrew is identical, our manuscript omits it; P, however, has it here as well.

¹⁸ The Hebrew text is here somewhat vague and abrupt: "Esther replies and says my request and my petition." One is left in suspense as to what exactly these consist of until the following verse, when Esther formulates her invitation to the king and Haman for a second party. The vacuum created by the Hebrew text is here filled by the Targum; the request is said to refer to the granting of half the kingdom, the request which Esther refuses, and the petition to the rebuilding of the Temple, which she likewise rejects.

my plea.¹⁸ If I have found *compassion*¹⁹ in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my request and to *fulfill*²⁰ my plea, then let the king and Haman come to the meal which I prepared for them *in the evening*²¹ and tomorrow I will do according to the *ordered decree*²² of the king.¹⁹ That day Haman left (the presence) of the king²³ happy and cheerful,²⁴ but when Haman perceived²⁵ Mordekhai and the children who were occupied in (the study of) the words of the Law among the Sanhedrin which Esther established for them²⁵ at the king's gate, and Mordekhai neither standing up in respect for his image²⁶ nor trembling in his presence except to stretch out his right foot and to point to the sales contract that he sold himself to him for a loaf of bread in the letter that was written in his legging opposite his ankle,²⁷ immediately his anger kindled,²⁸ and Haman became filled with anger toward Mordekhai.¹⁰ Still Haman restrained himself and went home; then he sent and called for²⁹ his friends and his wicked³⁰ wife Zeresh, the daughter of Tattenai, the governor of (the province) across the river.³¹ 11. And Haman told them of his

Notes, Chapter 5

¹⁹See above, ch. 2, n. 40.

²⁰Lit., "do."

²¹The Targum inserts "in the evening" to indicate the precise time of the meal, which is really not stated in the Hebrew text. This interpretation would thus place the exact time of it "in the evening" of the next day, because the following word is "the next day," while all of this took place during the course of the present day. The need to clarify this situation in the text was also felt by the LXX, which inserts αὔριον ("tomorrow") after "let the king and Haman come" earlier in the verse, whereas the Hebrew text has "tomorrow" only toward the end of the verse, which the LXX also renders by αὔριον. The Peshitta, too, in its reading of the Hebrew *wmhr* as *mhr* without the conjunction, and the subsequent omission of a translation for the second *sh* ("I will make") in the Hebrew text, attempted to clarify this somewhat confusing situation.

²²See above, ch. 1, n. 76.

²³The Targum here inserts "from the king" in order to clarify from where Haman went out. The verb *ys'* is, more commonly than not, followed either by the preposition *mn* to indicate the origin of the place from where one "departed" (Gen. 4:16; 28:10; 31:33; 41:46; 44:28; 47:10; Exod. 8:8, 26; 9:33; 10:6, 18; 11:8; 18:7) or by the prepositions *l*, *l*, or *lqr't* to show the direction or purpose for which one "departed" (Gen. 14:17; 24:63; 34:6; Num. 20:20; 21:23, 33, 36; Deut. 1:44; Josh. 21:4; Judg. 3:10; 20:20). In the present verse neither preposition is present in the Hebrew text—thus the Targumic insertion "from the king" containing the preposition *mn* to show the origin of Haman's departure.

²⁴Lit. "happy and (feeling) good at heart." The Targumic rendering here centers on the Hebrew connotation of "good" in this particular context, for a discussion of which see my *First Targum to Esther*, pp. 148f., n. 24.

²⁵See above, ch. 2, n. 51.

²⁶See above, ch. 3, n. 6.

²⁷See my n. 10 in *First Targum to Esther*, pp. 116f.

²⁸See above, ch. 2, n. 1.

²⁹An interpretive translation for the Hebrew "brought"; the LXX ἐκάλεσε and Vg. *convocavit* are similar.

³⁰The Targum characterizes Zeresh as wicked, a description that does not exist in the Hebrew text. This opinion is reflected in the following Midrash—Agg. Esth. V:10, p. 55: "What is meant by 'and he brought his friends and his wife Zeresh'? Whenever he would go to the king's palace, she would go to her lovers, so he proceeded to call for her, and concerning her the proverb is said: 'If your husband left for the country, it is time for you to visit the market-place,' to teach you that all idolaters are promiscuous." Cf. also PA II, p. 72. Furthermore, the Targum was prompted by no more than Zeresh's suggestion to Haman to hang Mordekhai in order to characterize her as wicked.

³¹The Targum here adds the information that Zeresh was "the daughter of Tattenai the governor of Trans-Euphrates," an Aggadic supplement which is original to this Targum and not reflected in Rabbinic literature. Commenting on this addition, the author of the work *Magen David*, p. 14, explains that the Targum felt compelled to add this bit of information on Zeresh's lineage in order to justify Haman's summoning just Zeresh more than any of his

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CHAPTER 6

- 11 → 1. That night the outcry^a of women from the House of Israel ascended heaven and their voice^b was heard before the Lord of the Universe like the voice of young goats until all the supreme beings^c from on high were shattered.^d So they arose in agitation, saying to each other: Perhaps the time has come for the world to be destroyed. Thus they assembled and came^e before the Lord of the Universe. The Master of the Universe replied and said to them: What is this voice of young goats that I hear? Then the attribute of compassion^f replied, saying as follows: It is not the voice of young goats that you^h hear but the voice of women from the House of Israel who are destined to be killed upon the decree of the wicked Haman. Immediately thereupon the Lord of the Universe became filled with compassion and goodness for his people and ordered to tear up the seal which was seen worn by the House of Israel,ⁱ and he commanded the angel who was in charge of disturbance to descend and disturb King Xerxes; whereupon^j the sleep of the king became unrestful, and he rose in the morn-

Apparatus, Chapter 6

^a So also all the other manuscripts, except for R, which has: "voice."

^b So also E and S, whereas M, O, C, B, F, R, and P have: "it."

^c The Aramaic noun here 'y'ly (< 'ly) is rare. The reading is also to be found in E, S, and B, whereas P, R, F, M, O, and C have the equally rare Aramaic 'ly'ngly ("angels").

^d Using the root *tbr*. So also S, E, F, whereas R, P, O, M, C, and B have: "shaken up" (*ndd*).

^e So also P, S, E, F, R, and B, whereas M, O, and C have: "went."

^f So also P, E, S, F, and B, whereas R adds: "entire."

^g So also S, E, F, C, B, O, M, and R, whereas P has: "justice (and) compassion."

^h So also S, F, R, B, and P, while E, C, M, and O have: "I."

ⁱ So also P, E, S, R, F, and B, whereas C, M, and O have: "them."

Notes, Chapter 6

¹ Parts of this supplement are also reflected in the following Rabbinic literature:

b. Meg. 15b: "'On that night the sleep of the king was disturbed.' R. Tanhūm said: The sleep of the King of the Universe was disturbed . . . 'he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles and they were read.' This indicates that they were read of themselves. 'And it was found written.' It should say 'a writing was found.' This shows that Shimshai kept on erasing and Gabriel kept on writing."

Esth. Rab. X:1: "'On that night the sleep of the king was shaken,' the heavens, the throne of the Supreme King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, were shaken when He saw Israel in such distress."

AG VI, p. 38: "'On that night the sleep of the king was shaken.' At that time Gabriel went down to Xerxes and shook his sleep from his eyes . . . 'he ordered that they bring the book of records.' Said R. Johanan: Shimshai, son of Haman, would read and when he would get to Mordekhai's merit he would roll (the scroll past that place) but the columns would roll (back) by themselves. Others say: the letters cried out by themselves—and they said that what Mordekhai related concerning Bigthan and Theresh, as it says 'and they were read (by themselves) before the king.'"

Cf. also PA II, pp. 74f.; Leq. Tob VI:1, 2, p. 106; Agg. Esth. VI:1, 2, pp. 59f.; PRE L; and Yalq. Shim. #1057 as well as BHM VI, pp. 56–57.

The statement that Israel's cry sounded like that of young goats is reflected in the following Midrash:

Yalq. Shim. #1057: "About two hours into the night they cried and the prayers of the ancestors were heard in heaven. Said the Holy One, Blessed be He: Angels of Presence! I hear the cry of young ones, like that of young goats and young lambs (and like that of young people). Said Moses before the Holy One, Blessed be He: It is not that of young goats, nor that of young lambs, but that of the young ones of your people Israel, who are sitting in

ing troubled in appearance.¹ So he ordered Shimshai¹¹ to bring the book of the chronicles before him. When Shimshai, the scribe, perceived^k that which Mordekhai related concerning Bigthan and Theresh, he turned over the pages of the book and did not wish to read, but on account of the desire from before the Lord of the Universe, the pages^l unfolded before the king.¹² 2. And it was found recorded in the book² that Mordekhai related (information) about Bigthan and Theresh, the two officers of the king who were palace guards,^m that they sought to stretch out a hand in order to kill³ King Xerxes in his bedchamber.⁴ 3. So the king asked:⁵ What great honor was bestowed on Mordekhai for this? To which the king's servants, his attendants, replied:⁵ Nothing whatsoever has been doneⁿ with him. 4. The king then asked⁵ who is the man that⁶ is standing in the courtyard, since Haman had just entered the outer courtyard of the king's palace to ask the king (permission) to hang Mordekhai on the gallows he had prepared for him. 5. Whereupon the king's servants told him: Haman is standing in the courtyard; so the king said: Let him enter. 6. Upon Haman entering, the king said to him: What is proper⁷ to be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor; Haman then thought⁸ to himself, saying: On whom does the king wish to bestow an honor more than on myself? 7. So Haman said to the king: (Concerning) the man whom the king wishes to honor: 8. *Let the*

Apparatus, Chapter 6

¹ F and P add: "the scribe" (*spr'*); R has *spr'* (with *s/s* interchange); and C has *s'r'* (obviously an error for *spr'*). B, S, E, O, and M equal Madrid.

^k The Aramaic here is *h'z'*, as it is in E, S, B, M, O, and F, in contrast to the Western Aramaic *hm'* in P and R.

^l S and E equal Madrid, while P and F add: "and their words," adding further: "and the words read by themselves." M, O, and C have instead: "and

the pages unfolded themselves from their words."

R has: "Now the pages unfolded by themselves, and the words read by themselves from the pages."

^m So also all the manuscripts except H and RB, which have: "guarding the palace."

ⁿ So S, E, F, R, P, and B, whereas RB, O, M, and C add: "so far" (*'d kdwn*).

Notes, Chapter 6

fast today already for three days and three nights and bound in fetters and chains, and tomorrow they will be slaughtered like young goats and young lambs . . . immediately thereupon the Holy One, Blessed be He, mercy was moved towards them and he broke the seals, tore up the letter, destroyed his scheme, and returned Haman's plot upon his own head."

² The addition of this prepositional phrase in the Targum (Tg. II has the slightly longer "in the book of records") is merely a syntactic device to supply the standard preposition *b*, which usually follows this passive participle, at times alternating with *l*, for which cf. Deut. 28:61; Josh. 1:8; 1 Kgs. 21:11; Jer. 25:13 (for some examples of *b*); and Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18; 2 Kgs. 22:13; 2 Chr. 34:21 (for some *l* examples).

³ See above, ch. 3, n. 11.

⁴ See above, ch. 2, n. 55.

⁵ Lit. "said."

⁶ Syntactical addition to supply a concrete verbal predicate.

⁷ This addition was made in order to accentuate the modality of "should" implied in the Hebrew infinitive "(what) to do," i.e., what *should* be done, with the idea being that it is *fit/proper* to be done. The same situation holds true for the Targumic treatment of the verb *'sh* ("to do") in the *Niphal*, with the negative expressing a notion of "it should not/it is not proper that it be done," for which cf. Tgs. Onq., Ps.-Jon., and Neof. to Gen. 20:9; 29:26; 34:7; Lev. 4:2, 13, 22, 27; 5:17, where the Targumic *kšryn* is the relevant addition.

⁸ By this paraphrase of the Hebrew "and Haman said in his heart," the Targum clearly expresses the idiom implying "thought" (= Aramaic *hšb*). Tg. II is identical here.

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12 → cally³³ at the decree,^j and the ordinance was issued in the fortress of Susa. 15. Now, Mordekhai went out from the king's presence in royal dress and fine wool, a necklace^k of superior gold, as well as a linen garment of fine³⁴ purple wool, while the city of Susa was rejoicing in happiness.¹⁶ The Jews, moreover, had permission to occupy themselves with (the study of) the Law, to observe the Sabbaths and Festivals, to circumcise the foreskins of their sons, and to put on the phylacteries upon their hands and their heads.³⁵ 17. Similarly, in every province and in every city where the royal decree³⁶ and the (judicial) sentence³⁷ reached, the Jews had joy and cheerfulness of heart,³⁸ feasting and holiday. Furthermore, many of the pagans were converting,³⁹ for the fear of the Jews had fallen upon them.

CHAPTER 9

1. Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month of Adar, on its thirteenth day, when the king's decree and his sentence of judgment¹ drew near to be carried out, on the day when the enemies of the Jews^a had schemed^{b2} to have power over them,^c

Apparatus, Chapter 8 (Cont.)

^j So also S, whereas RB, P, R, F, B, C, O, and M have: *gzyrt dyn* ("the decree of the law").

^k So also E, S, F, R, B, C, O, M, and P, using *hmnyk*, whereas RB uses *šyr* instead, with the same meaning.

Notes, Chapter 8 (Cont.)

³³ See above, ch. 3, n. 32.

³⁴ An addition, also in Targum Sheni, further defining the quality of the purple wool.

³⁵ This Aggadah is reflected in the following Rabbinic literature—b. Meg. 16b: "To the Jews there was light and joy, rejoicing and honor." Rab Judah said: 'Light' means the Torah, and so it says, 'For the commandment, is a lamp and the Torah is light' (Prov. 6:23). 'Joy' means a feast day, and so it says: 'And you shall rejoice in your feast' (Deut. 16:14). 'Rejoicing' means circumcision, and so it says: 'I rejoice at your word' (Ps. 119:62). 'Honor' means the phylacteries, and so it says: 'And all the people of the earth shall see that the name of the Lord is called upon you, and they shall be afraid of you' (Deut. 28:10), and it has been taught: Rabbi Eliezer the Great says: that this refers to the phylactery of the head." Cf. also Leq. Tob VIII:16, p. 109; and Yalq. Shim. #1059.

³⁶ See my *First Targum to Esther*, ch. 1, n. 36, Table A, p. 86.

³⁷ See *ibid.*, ch. 3, n. 22, Table D, p. 127.

³⁸ See above, ch. 5, n. 24.

³⁹ The Targum here, as does Targum Sheni, employs an interpretive translation "(were) converting" < *gwr* for the Hebrew "became Jews" < *yhd*, as this verbal form of the root *yhd* occurs only this once throughout the Biblical text.

Apparatus, Chapter 9

^a So also S, F, R, P, B, and RB, whereas O, M, and C omit it.

^b So also S, P, F, R, RB, and B, using *hšb*, whereas

M, O, and C have: "hoped" (Aramaic *sbr*), as does the Hebrew.

^c S, P, F, R, RB, and B are identical, whereas C, O, and M add: "on that day."

Notes, Chapter 9

¹ See above, ch. 8, n. 36 and n. 37.

² An interpretive translation for the Hebrew verb *sbr*. This verb, occurring seven times throughout the Biblical text is rendered *sbr* four of the times (Isa. 38:18; Pss. 104:27; 145:15; 146:5), meaning "to hope" (also used here by Tg.

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(13) → struck all their enemies" a fatal¹¹ blow by the sword, by stoning,¹¹ and by destruction of life,¹² and they treated their^o enemies as they saw fit.¹³ 6. In the fortress of Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men, all of whom were military tribunes, from the house of Amalek.¹³ 7. Also Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha. 8. Also Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha. 9. Also Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Wayezatha. 10. The ten sons of Haman, son of Hammedatha, the oppressor of the Jews, they killed, but they did not lay a hand on their spoil. 11. That same day the number of those killed in the fortress of Susa came to the attention of¹⁴ the king. 12. Then the king said to Queen Esther: In the fortress of Susa, the Jews killed and destroyed^p five hundred men,^q and the ten sons of Haman; remaining¹⁵ in all¹⁶ the provinces of the king; what have they done? What is (now) your request and it will be granted to you, and what is your plea even now, and it will be done. 13. Said Esther: If it pleases the king, let permission¹⁷ be granted tomorrow as well to the Jews who are in Susa to make holiday and rejoicing,¹⁸ as it is

Apparatus, Chapter 9

^o O, M and C have: "killed Amaleq's descendants," whereas S, P, R, F, and RB are identical to our manuscript, as is B, which has "the" instead of "their."

^q M, O, and C add: "remaining," not present in P, S, E, RB, F, R, and B.

^p So also S and RB (except that the latter uses *gmr* in place of *'bd*) in literal translation of the Hebrew; P, R, and B, however, omit it; M, O, and C have instead: "from the descendants of Amaleq and destroyed."

^q S is identical here, whereas P and RB add: "military tribunes from the descendants of Amaleq."

Notes, Chapter 9

¹¹An insertion (the Aramaic being *qlylt*) for the Hebrew *mkt hrb* ("blow by the sword") to point out that the blow by the sword was of the fatal variety. The Targum, however, also inserts *qlylt* before the next word (Hebrew *hrg*) in addition to the word *gwlpyln* ("stoning"), which appears in direct opposition to the following Mishnah, where *hrg* is associated with decapitation—m. Sanh. VII:3: "The ordinance of those that are to be beheaded [*hnhrgym*] was—they used to cut off his head with a sword."

¹²An amplification of the enigmatic Hebrew "destruction" (*'bdn*).

¹³An addition in the Targum. The term *rwpylyn* also occurs in the Targum to Ruth 1:2 and is a Latin loan word < *rufulus* ("military tribune"), for which see S. Krauss, *op. cit.*, p. 578. According to the author of *Magen David*, p. 17b, the entire addition was included in the Targum to justify the king's silence when the Jews killed five hundred men in Susa, since they were "all descendants of Amalek," which did not bother the king.

¹⁴Lit. "before."

¹⁵The Hebrew "in the remaining provinces of the king" is syntactically difficult here, especially with the clause which precedes it, itself a syntactical problem. The Ancient Versions, especially the LXX and Vg., also had problems, the former paraphrasing both clauses: ἐν δὲ τῇ περιχώρῳ πῶς οἱ ἐχρήσαντο—"and how, do you think, have they used them in the rest of the country"; the latter virtually follows the LXX here, while the Syriac renders Hebrew *bs'r* ("in the remaining") as *bs'rb* ("with regard to"), also indicating a problem in the Hebrew syntax. The Targum, in dealing with this difficulty, referred the Hebrew back to the preceding clause and converted the noun *s'r* into a passive verbal form. Thus, it became a relative clause referring to the preceding "ten sons of Haman," in contrast to the Hebrew, where it is linked to what follows "in the remaining provinces."

¹⁶See above, ch. 8, n. 14.

¹⁷An addition designed to provide the direct object for the associated verb "be granted," whereas in the Hebrew the idiom stands without it.

¹⁸The Hebrew "according to this day's edict" could imply that Esther is requesting permission from the king for the Jews of Susa to engage in killing on the morrow as well. The Targum, therefore, renders "to make holiday and rejoicing," which delineates her request as being something solemn rather than barbarous in nature. Cf. S. Posner, *Das Targum Rishon zu dem Biblischen Buche Esther* (Breslau, 1896), pp. 56f.

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Mordekhai had written down^{kk} for their sake. 24. For Haman, son of Hammedatha, of the lineage²⁸ of Agag, the oppressor of all Jews, schemed against the Jews to destroy them and cast the lot, which^l was the ballot, to confound them and to destroy them. 25. So when Esther²⁹ came before the king, the king said to her:³⁰ Let his evil scheme which he designed to be carried out³¹ against Mordekhai³² and against the Jews be reversed upon his own head^{mm} and let them hang him and his sons on the gallows. 26. Therefore, they call these days Purim because of the lot,ⁿⁿ on account of which they observe it annually so that they would publicize the days of the miracle and the words of this scroll,^{oo} to be made known to all of the people of the House^{pp} of Israel; that they may know why it was proper^{qq} to establish these days of Purim,^{rr} because on them a miracle was performed for Mordekhai and Esther,^{ss} and that they may be aware of the deliverance which happened to them.³³ 27. The Jews estab-

Apparatus, Chapter 9

^{kk} So also P, F, R, B, E, C, M, O, and B, whereas RB has: "decreed (and) written down."

^l Likewise RB, P, S, F, R, and B, while O, M, and C have: "he cast."

^{mm} Thus also the Hebrew F, S, E, O, M, C, and RB, whereas P, B, and R omit it.

ⁿⁿ So also P, E, S, RB, B, and R, whereas M, O, and C add: "and because of the trouble that befell them."

^{oo} P, E, R, RB, F, S, and B read likewise, while M, O, and C have: "therefore it is written explicitly in this scroll."

^{pp} P, E, S, B, and RB are identical here, whereas R omits "house."

^{qq} P, E, S, RB, B, and R also have it, whereas M, O, and C have inserted here: "(for) our ancestors."

^{rr} So also E, S, RB, P, B, and R, whereas M, O, and C omit it.

^{ss} So also E, S, RB, R, B, and P, while M, O, and C have instead: "for the miracle which the Master of Heaven performed for them." P omits "Esther"; otherwise it parallels Madrid entirely.

³³ E, S, RB, R, B, and P read likewise, while M, O, and C have: "this was done so that their descendants should know what happened to them."

Notes, Chapter 9

²⁸ See above, ch. 3, n. 2.

²⁹ An addition identifying the subject of the verb *bw'*. Similarly Tg. II, the Vg., and the Syr., whereas the LXX has εἰσηλθὲν, which may refer to Haman.

³⁰ Further expansion of the Hebrew text in keeping with the earlier insertion of the name Esther. Furthermore, the Targum here omits translating the difficult Hebrew phrase *'m hsp'r*, which resulted in the suspended predicate *'mr* ("said"). The Targum consequently added the subject and indirect object.

³¹ As in 7:5 above, where the idea of "scheming" is represented in the Hebrew text by the sequence "scheme to do," so likewise here the Targum adds "to do."

³² This addition is no doubt associated with 3:6 above representing Haman's original plan.

³³ The sequence *'l kn 'l kl* in the Hebrew text is syntactically difficult. Consequently, the Targum inserts "they observe it annually, so that miraculous days would become known" after *'l kn* ("on account of which") so as to supply the consequence. It then ignores *'l kl* of the Hebrew text, which leaves the Hebrew "this letter" suspended in context. This problem is remedied by the addition "to be made known to all the people of Israel." Next, the Hebrew phrase *wmh r'w* ("and what did it perceive") appears to be contextually in suspense. This situation is resolved by the placement of the phrase "that they may know" before the Aramaic equivalent for *wmh r'w* as a lead-in to the latter phrase. This phrase is then in turn expanded by the addition "to establish these days of Purim, because on them a miracle was performed for Mordekhai and Esther." This still leaves the Hebrew *wmh hgy' lyhm* isolated. This difficulty was resolved by the prefacing of the phrase "that they may be aware of the deliverance" and the avoidance of a translation for Hebrew *wmh*.

The other ancient major versions apparently did not understand the Hebrew construction of this verse either, attempting in various ways to supply different predicates after the conjunction *'l kn*. For a synopsis of these attempts see L. B. Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 269f. and 299.