

*Ahasuerus's counselors ("wise men [chachamim]"—Esth 1:13) could lament the rebellious female population of the country and how Queen Vashti will start an insurrection in every home. A national domestic revolt is imminent, right in homes of the nation! These wise men could sing, "It's a scandal! Things are getting out of hand... Queen Vashti refuses to come at the king's command!" (see Esth 1:12).<sup>4</sup> Purim is to be a time of joy (simcha) and feasting and gladness and yontef (holiday) and a time to send gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor (Esth 9:22). Saddam Hussein, dictator of Iraq, boasted that his scud missiles would burn half of Israel, but then he should have studied the whole megilah of Esther because then he would have understood why his elite Republican Guard tank divisions would suffer a "turkey shoot" from the air and be defeated on Thursday, February 28, 1991 (5751), Adar 14, the very day of Purim (Esther 9:19), proving that any Haman who threatens to destroy Israel can still be brought down by the G-d of Esther. G-d, Whose Name is never mentioned in the text of Esther, is nevertheless a presence felt in every chapter of the story, just as He was a presence felt by that disciple of Amalek, Stalin, Hitler, and Haman—Saddam Hussein—on Purim Day, 1991 (but ironically not on many so-called American believers who are not at all grieved over the ruin of Joseph (Am 6:6), not at all gladdened over the reading of this whole Hebrew megilah, not at all aware of what the G-d of Israel is doing, even now under our own noses, even, in the case of the U.S. military and Purim, 1991.*

## ESTER

**1** Now it came to pass in the yamim of Achashverosh, (this is Achashverosh which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces;)  
 |2| That in those yamim, when HaMelech Achashverosh sat on his kisse malkhut (royal throne), which was in the [Persian] capital, Shushan,  
 |3| In the shnat shalosh (third year) of his reign, he gave a mishteh (feast, banquet) unto all his sarim (princes) and his avadim (officials); the might of Persia and Media, the nobles and sarim (princes) of the provinces, being before him;  
 |4| When he displayed the osher kavod malkhut (riches of the glorious kingdom) of his and the yekar (honor [see 1:20]) of his tiferet gedulah (glorious majesty) yamim rabbim, even a hundred and eighty days.  
 |5| And when these yamim were expired, HaMelech gave a mishteh (feast) unto all the people that were present in the capital of Shushan, both gadol (great) and katan (small), shivat yamim (seven days), in the khatzer (courtyard) of the garden of the palace of HaMelech,  
 |6| Where were white and blue linen curtains, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to rings of silver and pillars of marble; the mittot (couches) were of zahav and kesef, upon an inlaid floor of purplish-red exquisite stone and mother-of-pearl and marble.  
 |7| And they gave them drink in vessels of zahav, the vessels being different one from another, and yayin malkhut (royal wine) in abundance, according to the [bountiful] yad HaMelech.

|8| And the drinking was according to the dat ein ones (rule [which was] not compulsory, restricting); for so HaMelech had ordered all the wine stewards in his bais, that they should serve kirtzon ish va'ish (according to the good pleasure of each man).  
 |9| Also Vashti HaMalkah gave a mishteh (feast, banquet) for the nashim (women, wives) in the Beit HaMalkhut (the royal palace) which belonged to HaMelech Achashverosh.  
 |10| On the yom hashevi'i, when the lev of HaMelech was tov with yayin, he commanded Mehuman, Bizta, Charvona, Bigta, and Avagta, Zetar, and Carkas, the shivat hasarisim (the seven eunuchs) that served in the presence of HaMelech Achashverosh,  
 |11| To bring Vashti HaMalkah before HaMelech with the keter malkhut (royal crown), to show the people and the sarim (princes) her beauty, for she was lovely to behold.  
 |12| But HaMalkah Vashti refused to come at the devar HaMelech at the agency of his sarisim (eunuchs); therefore HaMelech became furious, and his wrath burned in him.  
 |13| Then HaMelech said to the chachamim, which had da'as of the times; for so was the custom of HaMelech toward all the meyvinim (experts) in dat (law) and din (judgment),  
 |14| And the next unto him was Carshena, Shetar, Admata, Tarshish, Meres, Marsna, and Memuchan, the shivat sarim (princes) of Persia and Media, which had access to HaMelech and which ranked rishonah (highest) in the Malkhut (kingdom);  
 |15| What shall we do unto the Malkah Vashti according to dat (law),