

לְמַנְצֶה עַל־אֵילַת הַשָּׁמַר מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:

[Psalm 22] For the **victor at the time of the deepest night**

^a A psalm of David.

אֵלֵי אֱלֹהֵי לָמָּה עָזַבְתָּנִי רְחוֹק מִיִּשְׁוֹעָתִי דַבְּרֵי שְׁאֲגָתִי:

My God, my God,
why have You abandoned me;
why so far from delivering me
and from my anguished roaring?

אֱלֹהֵי אֲקַרְא יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה וְלֹא־תִמְנָה לִי:

My God,
I cry by day—You answer not;
by night, and have no respite.

וְאַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל:

But You are the Holy One,
enthroned,
the Praise of Israel.^{-b}

בְּךָ בָּטְחוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּטָחוּ וְתִפְלְטֵמוּ:

**In You our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and You rescued them.**

אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְנִמְלָטוּ בְּךָ בָּטְחוּ וְלֹא־בָּשׁוּ:

To You they cried out
and they escaped;
in You they trusted
and were not disappointed.

אִישׁ יְהוּדִי הָיָה בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַבֵּיכָרָה וּשְׁמוֹ מֶרְדֵּכַי בֶּן יָאִיר בֶּן־שִׁמְעִי בֶן־קִישׁ אִישׁ יְמִינִי:

[Esther Chapter 2] In the fortress Shushan lived a Jew by the name of Mordecai, son of Jair son of Shimei son of Kish, a Benjaminite.

אֲשֶׁר הִגְלָה מִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִם־הַגָּלוּהַ אֲשֶׁר הִגְלָתָה עִם יְכִנְיָה מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה אֲשֶׁר הִגְלָה נְבוּכַדְנֶצַּר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל:

had been exiled from Jerusalem in the group that was carried into exile along with King Jeconiah of Judah, which had been driven into exile by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

וַיְהִי אִמּוֹן אֶת־הַדֹּסָה הִיא אֶסְתֵּר בַּת־דָּדוֹ כִּי אִין לָהּ אָב וְאֵם וְהַנְּעֻרָה יָפֶת־תֵּאֵר וְטוֹבַת מְרָאֶה וּבָמֹת אֲבִיהָ וְאִמָּהּ לְקַחָהּ מֶרְדֵּכַי לֹו לְבַת:

He was foster father to **Hadassah—that is, Esther—his uncle’s daughter, for she had neither father nor mother.** The maiden was shapely and beautiful; and when her father and mother died, Mordecai adopted her as his own daughter.

[Esther Chapter 4] When Mordecai was told what Esther had said,

וַיֹּאמֶר מֶרְדֵּכַי לְהָשִׁיב אֶל־אֶסְתֵּר אֶל־תְּדַמִּי בְּנִפְשֶׁךָ לְהַמְלִיט בֵּית־הַמֶּלֶךְ מִכָּל־הַיְּהוּדִים:

Mordecai had this message delivered to Esther: “Do not imagine that you, of all the Jews, will escape with your life by being in the king’s palace.

כִּי אִם־הִתְקַרֵּשׁ תִּתְּרִישִׁי בְּעַת הַזֹּאת רַחֵם וְהַצִּלָּה יֵצֵמּוּד לַיהוּדִים מִמָּקוֹם אֲחֵר וְאַתָּה וּבֵית־אָבִיךָ תֵּאֲבָדוּ וּמִי יוֹדֵעַ אִם־לִעֲת כָּזֹאת תִּגְעַתָּ לְמַלְכוּת:

On the contrary, if you keep silent in this crisis, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another quarter, while you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows, **perhaps you have attained to royal position for just such a crisis.**”

וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְתֵּר לְהָשִׁיב אֶל־מֶרְדֵּכַי:

Then Esther sent back this answer to Mordecai:

לֵךְ כְּנֹס אֶת־כָּל־הַיְּהוּדִים הַנִּמְצָאִים בְּשׁוּשַׁן וְצוּמוּ עָלַי וְאֶל־תֵּאֲכְלוּ וְאֶל־תִּשְׁתּוּ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים לַיְלָה וַיּוֹם גַּם־אֲנִי וְנַעֲרֹתַי אֲצוּם כֶּן וּבְכֶן אֲבֹא

אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־כָדָת וְכֹאֲשֶׁר אֲבַדְתִּי אֲבַדְתִּי:

“Go, assemble all the Jews who live in Shushan, and fast in my behalf; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens will observe the same fast. Then I shall go to the king, though it is contrary to the law; and **if I am to perish, I shall perish!**”