

U-Esta

INDlovukazi UVashithi Ikhutshwa Ebukhosini

¹ Lokhu yikho okwenzakala ngesikhathi sika-Ahasuweru, owayebusa izifunda ezingaphezu kwekhulu elilamatshumi amabili lasikhombisa (127) kusukela e-Indiya kuze kuyefika eTopiya.

² Ngalesosikhathi inkosi u-Ahasuweru wayebusa esesigodlweni saseSusa, ³ kwathi ngomnyaka wesithathu wokubusa kwakhe, wenzela izikhulu zakhe kanye leziphathamandla zakhe idili elikhulu. Abakhokheli bebutho basePhezhiya labaseMediya, amakhosana, kanye lezikhulu zezifunda zonke zazikhona.

⁴ Okwensuku ezilikhulu lamatshumi ayisificaminwembali (180) watshengisa ubukhulu benotho yombuso wakhe kanye lobucwazicwazi lobukhosi bombuso wakhe.

⁵ Kwathi lezonsuku seziphelile, inkosi yenza idili elikhulu elabakhona okwensuku eziyisikhombisa, endaweni ehonqolozelweyo esigodlweni senkosi, lisenzelwa bonke abantu abaziwayo labantukazana ababesigodlweni saseSusa.

⁶ Egumeni kwakulezilengiso ezimhlophe leziluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka, zibotshelwe emasongweni esiliva ngentambo zelineni elimhlophe lelembu eliyibubende ensikeni zamatshe aqinileyo. Kwakulemibheda yegolide lesiliva phezu kwephansi elaligandelwe ngamatshe aligugu, abomvu, aluhlaza, amhlophe lamnyama lamanye adulayo.

⁷ Iwayini lalinathelwa ezinkezweni zegolide, inye ngayinye yehlukene kwezinye, njalo iwayini lesikhosini lalilinengi, kutshengisa ukukhululeka kwesandla senkosi. ⁸ Ngokulaya kwenkosi, isethekeli sinye ngasinye sasikhululekile ukuthi sinathe ngokwentando yaso, ngoba inkosi yayilaye zonke iziphathamandla ezazisipha iwayini ukuthi ziphe umuntu wonke njengokufisa kwakhe.

⁹ INdlovukazi uVashithi layo yenzela abesifazane ababesigodlweni seNkosi u-Ahasuweru idili elikhulu.

¹⁰ Ngelanga lesikhombisa, inkosi u-Ahasuweru isidakiwe ngenxa yewayini, yalaya abathenwa abayisikhombisa ababeyisebenzela, uMehumani, uBhizitha, uHaribhona, uBhigitha, u-Abhagitha, uZethari loKharikhasi, ¹¹ ukuthi balethe kuyo iNdlovukazi uVashithi ethwele umqhele wakhe wobukhosi ukuze abukise ubuhle bakhe ebantwini kanye lezikhulwini, ngoba wayemuhle kakhulu. ¹² Kodwa kwathi abathenwa beyitshela ngokulaya kwenkosi, iNdlovukazi uVashithi yala ukuya. Ngakho inkosi yathukuthela yavutha ngolaka.

¹³ Njengoba kwakuyinjwayelo ukuthi inkosi icebisane lezingcitshi ezindabeni eziphathelene lemithetho kanye lokwahlulela, yakhuluma lamadoda ahlakaniphileyo ayezwisisa ngomumo walezozikhathi ¹⁴ njalo ayeseduzane kakhulu lenkosi kwakunguKharishena, uShethari, u-Adimatha, uThashishi, uMerisi, uMarisena loMemukhani, izikhulu eziyisikhombisa zasePhezhiya laseMediya ezazilemvumo yokuya

enkosini njalo zilezikhundla eziphakemeyo embusweni.

¹⁵ Yasibuza yathi, “Umthetho uthi kwenziweni eNdlovukazini uVashithi? Phela kayilalelanga umlayo wenkosi u-Ahasuweru awuthumele kuyo ngabathenwa.”

¹⁶ UMemukhani wasephendula phambi kwenkosi kanye lezikhulu zayo wathi, “INdlovukazi uVashithi yonile, hatshi enkosini kuphela, kodwa lasezikhulwini zonke kanye labantu bonke bezabelo zonke zeNkosi u-Ahasuweru. ¹⁷ Phela isenzo seNdlovukazi sizakwazakala kuwo wonke amakhosikazi, abesedelela omkawo esithi, ‘Inkosi u-Ahasuweru yalaya iNdlovukazi uVashithi ukuthi ilethwe phambi kwayo, kodwa yala ukuza.’ ¹⁸ Lamhlanje amakhosikazi aphakemeyo asePhezhiya kanye laseMediya asizwileyo isenzo seNdlovukazi azaphendula izikhulu zenkosi zonke ngendlela efananayo. Kuzakuba khona ukungahloniphi kanye lengxabangxosa.

¹⁹ Ngakho-ke, nxa kulungile enkosini, kakube lomthetho ozaphuma esigodlweni njalo ulotshwe emithethweni yelizwe lePhezhiya leMediya, ongeke uguqulwe njalo, ukuthi uVashithi akumelanga aphinde angene lapho okulenkosi u-Ahasuweru. Njalo inkosi kayiphe isikhundla sayo sobundlovukazi komunye ongcono kulayo. ²⁰ Kuzakuthi nxa umthetho wenkosi umenyazelwa kuwo wonke umbuso wayo omkhulu, abesifazane bonke bazahlonipha omkabo kusukela komncane kusiya komkhulu.”

²¹ Inkosi kanye lezikhulu zayo bathokoza ngalokhu kucebisa, inkosi yasisenza khona lokho uMemukhani akucebisayo. ²² Yathumela izincwadi kuzozonke izabelo zombuso, kuleso laleso sabelo incwadi yaso ngolimi olukhulunywa kuso, kwamenyazelwa ngendimi zazo ukuthi yileyo laleyo ndoda kumele ibuse umuzi wayo.

2

U-Esta Ubekwa Ukuba YiNdlovukazi

¹ Emva kokuba ukuthukuthela kweNkosi u-Ahasuweru sekudedile, yamkhumbula uVashithi kanye lalokho ayekwenzile, lalokho okwakumenyazelwe ngaye. ² Izinceku zenkosi zasezisithi kuyo, “Akudingelwe inkosi amantombazana agcweleyo, amahle. ³ Inkosi kayikhethe iziphathamandla kuzozonke izabelo zombuso wayo ukuthi zilethe wonke amantombazana amahle endlini yabesifazane esigodlweni saseSusa. Bafakwe ezandleni zikaHegayi, umthenwa wenkosi, okhangele abesifazane; zilungiswe kuhle njalo ziphiwe amakha okuziqhola. ⁴ Besekusithi intombi ethokozisa inkosi ibe yiNdlovukazi esikhundleni sikaVashithi.” Iseluleko lesi sayithokozisa inkosi, yasisilandela.

⁵ Kwakukhona esigodlweni saseSusa umJuda owendlu yakoBhenjamini, okwakuthiwa nguModekhayi, indodana kaJayiri, indodana kaShimeyi, indodana kaKhishi, ⁶ owayethunjwe eJerusalema nguNebhukhadineza inkosi

yaseBhabhiloni, kanye loJekhoniya inkosi yakoJuda wayephakathi kwabathunjwayo.

⁷ UModekhayi wayelomzawakhe okwakuthiwa nguHadasa, amondla ngoba engelayise lonina. Intombazana le yayisaziwa langokuthi ngu-Esta, yayibukeka kakhulu, inhle njalo uModekhayi wayeyondle njengendodakazi yakhe ize ifelwe nguyise lonina.

⁸ Kwathi umlayo wenkosi kanye lesimiso sekumenyazelwe, amantombazana amanengi alethwa esigodlweni sas-eSusa afakwa ezandleni zikaHegayi. U-Esta laye wathathwa wasiwa esigodlweni sobukhosi wanikelwa ngaphansi kukaHegayi, owayelinda indawo yabesifazane.

⁹ Intombazana le yamthokozisa wayithanda. Wahle wayinika okokuzilungisa kuhle lamakha okuziqhola kanye lokudla okuhle. Wayipha amantombazana ayisikhombisa okuyisebenzela ayekhethwe esigodlweni senkosi, wayisusa kanye lamantombazana ayo, wabafaka endaweni yabesifazane enhle kakhulu.

¹⁰ U-Esta wayengavezanga ukuthi udabuka ngaphi lembali yemuli yakibo, ngoba uModekhayi wayethe angakwenzi lokho.

¹¹ Insuku zonke uModekhayi wayehamba eduzane leguma lendlu yabesifazane ukuze ezwe ukuba u-Esta uqhuba njani lokuthi uyaphila na.

¹² Intombi yayiqeda izinyanga eziyisithupha igcotshwa, ilungiswa kuhle njalo iqholwa ngamakha njengalokho okwakulungiselelwa abesifazane; izinyanga eziyisithupha igcotshwa ngamafutha emure lezinye eziyisithupha

iqholwa ngamakha lokunye okokuqhola, ingakayi eNkosini u-Ahasuweru.

¹³ Indlela intombi eyayisiya ngayo enkosini yile: loba yini intombi eyayiyifuna yayikuphiwa ukuze ihambe lakho esigodlweni senkosi isuka endlini yabesifazane. ¹⁴ Ntambama yayisiya esigodlweni kuthi ekuseni ibuyele kweyinye indawo yabesifazane iyelondolozwa nguShahashigazi, umthenwa wenkosi owayegcina abafazi beceleni. Wayengabuyeli enkosini ngaphandle kokuba yona ithokoza ngaye njalo imbize ngebizo lakhe.

¹⁵ Kwathi lapho ithuba lika-Esta (intombazana eyayondliwe nguModekhayi, indodakazi kamalumakhe u-Abhihayili) selifikile ukuthi aye enkosini, kacelanga lutho ngaphandle kwalokho okwakukhulunye nguHegayi, umthenwa wenkosi owayelondoloza abesifazane. U-Esta wathakazelelwa yibo bonke abambonayo. ¹⁶ U-Esta wasiwa enkosini ngenyanga yetshumi, inyanga yeThebhehi, ngomnyaka wesikhombisa wokubusa kweNkosi u-Ahasuweru. ¹⁷ Inkosi yakhangwa ngu-Esta kakhulukazi okwedlula abanye bonke abesifazane, njalo yamthakazelela yathokoza ngaye okwedlula zonke ezinye izintombi ezigcweleyo. Ngakho yamethesa umqhele wobukhosi yamenza waba yindlovukazi endaweni kaVashithi.

¹⁸ Inkosi yasisenza idili elikhulu kakhulu, idili lika-Esta, isenzela izikhulu kanye leziphathamandla zayo. Yamemezela usuku

lwekhefu kuzozonke izabelo, yapha lezipho ngesandla esikhululekileyo sobukhosi.

UModekhayi Uvumbulula Icebo Elibi

¹⁹ Kwathi izintombi ezigcweleyo sezihlangene okwesibili, uModekhayi wayehlezi esangweni lenkosi. ²⁰ U-Esta wayekwenze kwaba yimfihlo okwemuli yakhe lalapho adabuka khona njengokutshelwa kwakhe nguModekhayi ukuba akwenze, njalo waqhubeka elandela imilayo kaModekhayi njengalokhu ayekwenza esamkhulisa.

²¹ Ngesikhathi uModekhayi ehlezi esangweni lenkosi, abathenwa benkosi ababili ababelinda emnyango, uBhigithani loThereshi, bathukuthela baceba ukuyibulala inkosi u-Ahasuweru.

²² Kodwa uModekhayi wakuzwa ababekuceba wasetshela iNdlovukazi u-Esta, owabika lokho enkosini, ebabaza isenzo esihle sikaModekhayi.

²³ Kwathi lowombiko usuhlolisisiwe kwatholakala ukuthi uliqiniso, iziphathamandla lezo zombili zalengiswa endaweni yokulenga. Konke lokhu kwalotshwa ogwalweni lwezindaba phambi kwenkosi.

3

Icebo LikaHamani Lokubulala AmaJuda

¹ Ngemva kwalezo zehlakalo, inkosi u-Ahasuweru wenza uHamani indodana kaHamedatha um'Agagi waba lodumo ngokumphakamisa, wamupha isikhundla esiphakemeyo, esihloniphekayo ukwedlula esezinye zezikhulu zonke. ² Zonke

iziphathamandla zesigodlweni esangweni lenkosi zaguqa phansi zamkhothamela uHamani, ngoba inkosi yayilaye lokho ngaye. Kodwa uModekhayi kazange amkhothamele loba amkhonze.

³ Ngakho iziphathamandla zesigodlweni esangweni lenkosi zabuza uModekhayi zisithi, “Kungani ungalaleli umlayo wenkosi?”

⁴ Bakhuluma laye insuku ngezinsuku kodwa wala ukwenza lokho. Ngakho bamtshela uHamani ngalokho befuna ukubona kumbe isenzo sikaModekhayi sasizakwamukeleka, ngoba wayebatshelile ukuthi yena ungumJuda.

⁵ Kwathi uHamani ebona ukuthi uModekhayi kamguqeli njalo kamkhonzi, wathukuthela kakhulukazi.

⁶ Kwathi ngoba esekwazi ukuthi uModekhayi udabuka ngaphi, wawulahla umqondo wokubulala uModekhayi yedwa. Kodwa uHamani wadinga indlela yokubulala bonke abomhlobo kaModekhayi, amaJuda, kuwo wonke umbuso ka-Ahasuweru.

⁷ Ngomnyaka wetshumi lambili wokubusa kuka-Ahasuweru, ngenyanga yakuqala, inyanga ethiwa nguNisani, benza inkatho ethiwa *yiphuri* phambi kukaHamani ukuze bakhethe usuku lenyanga. Inkatho yadla inyanga yetshumi lambili, inyanga ethiwa yi-Adari.

⁸ UHamani wasesithi eNkosini u-Ahasuweru, “Kukhona abantu abathile abahlakazeke basabalala phakathi kwabantu abasezabelweni zonke zombuso wakho abalemikhuba eyehlukene leyabantu bonke, njalo abangalaleli imithetho yenkosi. Inkosi akumelanga

ibayekelele kulokho. ⁹ Nxa lokhu kulungile enkosini, kakube lesimemezelo somthetho wokuba babhujiswe. Mina ngizafaka phakathi kwengcebo yesigodlweni amathalenta esiliva alitshumi lenkulungwane ukuphathisa amadoda azakwenza umsebenzi lo.”

¹⁰ Ngakho inkosi yakhupha indandatho yophawu lwayo emunweni yayipha uHamani indodana kaHamedatha, um’Agagi, isitha samaJuda. Inkosi yathi kuHamani, ¹¹ “Gcina imali le, wenze ebantwini njengokuthanda kwakho.”

¹² Kwathi ngosuku lwetshumi lantathu ngenyanga yokuqala onobhala besigodlweni babizwa. Babhala ngokulotshwa kwesabelo sinye ngasinye njalo ngolimi lwabantu balesosabelo, yonke imilayo kaHamani eyayisiya kuziphathamandla zenkosi, ababusi bezabelo ezehlukeneyo kanye lasezikhulwini ezaziphethe abantu abehlukeneyo. Yayibhalwe ngebizo leNkosi u-Ahasuweru ngokwakhe njalo yadindwa ngophawu lwendandatho yakhe. ¹³ Izincwadi zathunyelwa ngezithunywa kuzozonke izabelo zenkosi kulomlayo wokuba kubhujiswe, kubulawe njalo kutshabalaliswe wonke amaJuda, abatsha labadala, abesifazane labantwana ngelanga elilodwa, ilanga letshumi lantathu lwenyanga yetshumi lambili, enyangeni ethiwa ngu-Adari, njalo lokuphanga impahla yabo.

¹⁴ Amazwi esimemezelo leso ayezakhutshwa abe ngumthetho omisiweyo kuzozonke izabelo,

aziswe bonke abantu bakuzo zonke izizwe ukuze bazilungiselele lolosuku.

¹⁵ Izithunywa zakhuthazwa ngumlayo wenkosi, zaphuma zakhupha umthetho omisiweyo esigodlweni saseSusa. Inkosi loHamani bahlala phansi banatha, kodwa abedolobho laseSusa badideka.

4

UModekhayi Ucela U-Esta Ukuba Asize

¹ Kwathi uModekhayi esezwile ngakho konke okwasekwenziwe, wadabula iziqgoko zakhe, wagqoka amasaka okulila, wazihuka ngomlotha, waphuma wangena phakathi komuzi ekhala kakhulu njalo kabuhlungukazi.

² Kodwa wahamba wayafika esangweni lenkosi, ngoba akulamuntu owayevunyelwa ukungena egqoke amasaka okulila. ³ Kuzozonke izabelo lapho isimiso somthetho lomlayo wenkosi okwafika khona, kwaba lokulila okukhulu kubaJuda, bazila ukudla, bakhala njalo belila. Abanengi balala emlotheni begqoke amasaka okulila.

⁴ Kwathi izinceku zika-Esta kanye labathenwa bakhe befika bemtshela ngoModekhayi, waba lokudabuka okukhulu. Wamthumela izembatho zokuthi agqoke endaweni yamasaka okulila, kodwa wala ukuzamukela.

⁵ U-Esta wasebiza uHathakhi, omunye wabathenwa benkosi owayekhethwe ukuba yinceku yakhe, wamlaya ukuba ayedingisisa lokho okwakukhathaza uModekhayi lembangela yakho.

⁶ Ngakho uHathakhi waya kuModekhayi egcekeni ledolobho phambi kwesango lenkosi.

⁷ UModekhayi wamtshela konke okwakwenzakale kuye, kugoqela inani lemali uHamani ayethembise ukulibhadala lingene enothweni yenkosi kusenzelwa ukubhujiswa kwamaJuda.

⁸ Wamupha njalo amazwi esimemezelo leso ayesekhutshwe aba ngumthetho omisiweyo wokubhujiswa kwabo, owawumenyenzelwe eSusa, ukuze awutshengise u-Esta njalo amchazele ngawo; njalo wamtshela ukuthi amkhuthaze ukuba aye enkosini ukuyacela isihawu sayo encengela abantu bakibo.

⁹ UHathakhi wabuyela wayamtshela u-Esta lokho okwakukhulunywe nguModekhayi.

¹⁰ Yena wasemlaya ukuba athi kuModekhayi,

¹¹ “Zonke iziphathamandla zenkosi kanye labasezigodlweni ezabelweni bayakwazi ukuthi inkosi ilomthetho owodwa zwi kuloba yiphi indoda loba owesifazane osondela enkosini angene endlini ephakathi engabizwanga; kufanele abulawe, ngaphandle kokuba inkosi yelule intonga yayo yegolide imkhombe ngayo ukuze impilo yakhe iphephe. Kodwa, sekwedlule amalanga angamatshumi amathathu selokhu ngacina ukubizelwa enkosini.”

¹² Kwathi amazwi ka-Esta ebikwa kuModekhayi, ¹³ waphendula wathi: “Ungacabangi ukuthi ngoba wena usendlini yenkosi nguwe wedwa kuwo wonke amaJuda ozaphepha. ¹⁴ Nxa ungala uthule ngalesisikhathi, usizo lokukhululwa kwamaJuda kuzavela kwenye indawo, kodwa wena kanye lemuli kayihlo lizabhubha.

Njalo kwazi bani, ukuthi uze kulesi sikhundla sobukhosi ngenxa yesikhathi esinjengalesi na?”

¹⁵ U-Esta wasethumela impendulo le kuMod-ekhayi: ¹⁶ “Hamba uyebuthanisa ndawonye wonke amaJuda aseSusa, lingizilele ukudla. Lingaze ladla loba ukunatha okwensuku ezintathu, ebusuku lemini. Mina kanye lezincekukazi zami sizazila njengani. Nxa lokhu sekwenziwe, ngizakuya enkosini loba nje lokho kungekho emthethweni. Nxa ngisifa, ngiyabe ngifile.”

¹⁷ Ngakho uModekhayi wasuka wayakwenza lokho okwakulaywe ngu-Esta.

5

Isicelo Sika-Esta Enkosini

¹ Ngelanga lesithathu u-Esta waggoka izembatho zakhe zobukhosi wema enkundleni engaphakathi kwesigodlo phambi kwendlu yenkosi. Inkosi yayihlezi esihlalweni sayo sobukhosi endlini yayo, ikhangele emnyango.

² Yathi ibona iNdlovukazi u-Esta imi enkundleni, yathokoza ngaye, yasiselula intonga yayo yegolide eyayisesandleni sayo, yamkhomba ngayo. U-Esta wasesondela wathinta isihloko sentonga.

³ Inkosi yasibuza yathi, “Kutheni Ndlovukazi Esta? Siyini isicelo sakho na? Uzanikwa loba yini, okungafika kungxenye yombuso.”

⁴ U-Esta wathi, “Nxa inkosi ithokoza ngalokhu, bengicela ukuthi inkosi kanye loHamani beze lamhla edilini engililungisele yona.”

⁵ Inkosi yathi, “UHamani keze khathesi, ukuze kwenziwe okucelwa ngu-Esta.” Inkosi loHamani baya edilini elalilungiswe ngu-Esta.

⁶ Kwathi besanatha iwayini, inkosi yambuza njalo u-Esta yathi, “Siyini isicelo sakho? Uzakukwamukeliswa. Kuyini okucelayo na? Uzanikwa loba yini okungafika kungxenye yombuso.”

⁷ U-Esta waphendula wathi, “Isikhalazo sami lesicelo sami yilokhu: ⁸ Nxa inkosi ingamukela ngomusa njalo nxa inkosi ithokoza ngokwamukela isikhalazo sami njalo igcwalise isicelo sami, bengicela ukuthi inkosi kanye loHamani kusasa beze edilini engizabalungisela lona. Kulapho engizaphendula okubuzwe yinkosi.”

UHamani Uthukuthelela UModekhayi

⁹ UHamani wasuka lapho mhlalokho ethabe kakhulukazi. Kodwa uthe ebona uModekhayi esesangweni lenkosi wananzelela ukuthi kamsukumeli loba ukutshengisa ukwesaba phambi kwakhe, wagcwalelana ngokumthukuthelela uModekhayi. ¹⁰ Kodwa wazibamba waya emzini wakhe, wabiza abangane bakhe ndawonye kanye loZereshi umkakhe, ¹¹ uHamani wasezincoma kubo ngenotho yakhe enengi, langamadodana akhe amanengi, kanye lazozonke izindlela inkosi eyayimhlonipha ngazo lokuthi imphakamise yambeka phezu kwezinye izikhulu leziphathamandla.

¹² UHamani wengeza wathi, “Njalo akusikho kodwa lokhu. Yimi ngedwa zwi umuntu omenywe yiNdlovukazi u-Esta ukuba

ngiphelekezele inkosi edilini elenzileyo. Njalo usenginxusile kanye lenkosi kusasa. ¹³ Kodwa konke lokhu akungisuthisi ikakhulu nxa ngilokhu ngibona umJuda loya onguModekhayi ehlezi esangweni lenkosi.”

¹⁴ Umkakhe uZereshi kanye labangane bakhe bonke bathi kuye, “Yenza indawo yokulengisa abantu, ibe zingalo ezingamatshumi ayisikhombisa lanhlanu ubude, ubusucela inkosi ekuseni ukuba ilengise uModekhayi lapho. Ube usuziyela edilini uchelesile.” Umcabango lo wamthokozisa kakhulu uHamani, yasisakhiwa indawo yokulengisa.

6

UModekhayi Unikwa Udumo

¹ Ngalobobusuku inkosi yaswela ubuthongo; ngakho yalaya ukuba kulethwe kuyo ugwalo lwemiLando, imibhalo yombuso wayo, izobalelwa. ² Kwatholakala emibhalweni ukuba uModekhayi wayeveze ukuba uBhigithani loThereshi, abathenwa benkosi ababelinda entubeni, babecebe ukubulala inkosi u-Ahasuweru.

³ Inkosi yathi, “UModekhayi wazuza dumo bani lokwaziwa ngalokhu?” Izinceku zenkosi zathi, “Akulalutho alwenzelwayo.”

⁴ Inkosi yasisithi, “Ngubani osenkundleni na?” UHamani wayesanda kungena enkundleni yangaphandle yesigodlo ezokhuluma lenkosi mayelana lokulengisa uModekhayi endaweni ayeyakhele lokho.

⁵ Izinceku zayo zathi, “UHamani umi enkundleni.” Inkosi yalaya yathi, “Mngeniseni.”

⁶ UHamani esengenile, inkosi yathi kuye, “Kuyini okungenzelwa umuntu inkosi ethokoza ngaye ukuba imuphe udumo?”

UHamani wacabanga ngaphakathi wathi, “Kambe ngubani ongaphiwa udumo yinkosi ngaphandle kwami?” ⁷ Ngakho waphendula inkosi wathi, “Emuntwini inkosi ethokoza ngaye ukuba imuphe udumo, ⁸ kabamlethele isembatho sobukhosi esesake sagqokwa yinkosi kanye lebhiza eselake lagadwa yinkosi, elilomqhele wobukhosi ekhanda lalo. ⁹ Isembatho leso kanye lebhiza kakube sezandleni zesinye sezikhulu zenkosi ezihloniphekayo kakhulu. Umuntu lo inkosi ethokoza ngaye efuna ukumupha udumo kagqokiswe lezozembatho, abesekhokhelwa edabula phakathi kwemigwaqo yedolobho egade ibhiza, kumenyezwe phambi kwakhe ukuthi, ‘Lokhu yikho okwenziwa emuntwini inkosi ethokoza ngaye ukuba imuphe udumo!’ ”

¹⁰ Inkosi yasilaya uHamani yathi, “Hamba khona manje uyethatha izembatho kanye lebhiza wenze njengokucebisa kwakho kuModekhayi umJuda ohlezi esangweni lenkosi. Ungaze watshiya loba yikuphi okuqambileyo.”

¹¹ UHamani wasethatha izembatho kanye lebhiza. Wamngqokisa uModekhayi, wasemkhokhela ephezu kwebhiza, wadabula imigwaqo yedolobho, ehamba ememeza esithi, “Lokhu yikho okwenziwa emuntwini inkosi ethokoza ngaye ukuba imuphe udumo!”

¹² Ngemva kwalokho uModekhayi wabuyela esangweni lenkosi. Kodwa uHamani watshitsha waya ngekhaya, emboze ikhanda ngo-sizi, ¹³ watshela uZereshi umkakhe kanye labangane bakhe bonke ngakho konke ok-wakumehlele. Abeluleki bakhe lomkakhe uZereshi bathi kuye, “Njengoba uModekhayi osuqale ukuwa phambi kwakhe engumJuda ngokwemvelo, awungeke umelane laye, uzatshabalala ngempela.” ¹⁴ Kwathi besakhuluma laye, kwafika abathenwa benkosi bamthatha masinyane ukuya edilini elalilungiswe ngu-Esta.

7

Ukulengiswa KukaHamani

¹ Inkosi loHamani basebesiyakudla leNdlovukazi u-Esta, ² kwathi besanatha iwayini ngalelolanga lesibili, inkosi yabuza njalo yathi, “Ndlovukazi Esta, kuyini okucelayo na? Uzakukwamukeliswa. Kuyini okucelayo na? Uzanikwa loba yini okungafika kungxenye yombuso.”

³ INdlovukazi yaphendula yathi, “Nxa ngifumene umusa kuwe nkosi, njalo nxa inkosi kuyithokozisa, bengicelela ukuphila, yiso isicelo sami lesi. ⁴ Ngoba mina kanye labantu bakithi sithengisiwe ukuze sichithwe njalo sibulawe ukuze singabikhona emhlabeni. Ngabe besimane sathengiswa njengezigqili zesilisa lezesifazane, bengizazithulela, ngoba akulahlupho olunje olungabangela ukuthi inkosi iphanjaniswe.”

5 Inkosi u-Ahasuweru wathi ku-Esta iNdlovukazi, “Ngubani lowo? Ungaphi umuntu obelesibindi sokwenza into enje?”

6 U-Esta wathi, “Isitha lomuntu lolunya nguyenalo uHamani olomona.”

UHamani wasethuthumela phambi kwenkosi lendlovukazi. 7 Inkosi yasukuma igcwele ulaka yatshiya iwayini layo yaya phandle esivandeni sesigodlo. Kwathi uHamani ebona ukuthi inkosi yayisiyenze isinqumo ngempilo yakhe, wasala ngemuva ukuba azincengele impilo yakhe eNdlovukazini u-Esta.

8 Kwathi inkosi isiphendukile esivandeni sesigodlo ingena endlini yedili, yathola uHamani eziphosa esihlalweni lapho u-Esta ayehlezi khona.

Inkosi yababaza yathi, “Kambe ungadlova indlovukazi ngikhonapha endlini na!”

Kwathi ilizwi lelo liphuma emlonyeni wenkosi, bagubuzela ubuso bukaHamani.

9 Kwathi uHaribhona, omunye wabathenwa ababesebenzela inkosi wathi, “Kulensika yokulengisa abantu ephakeme okuzingalo ezingamatshumi amahlanu emiswe eduze lendlu kaHamani. Yena ubeyenzele uModekhayi, owaveza icebo elibi ukusiza inkosi.”

Inkosi yathi, “Mlengiseni kuyo!” 10 Bamlengisa kuleyonsika ayeyilungisele ukulengisa uMod-ekhayi. Ulaka lwenkosi lwaseludeda.

8

Isimemezelo SeNkosi NgabaJuda

¹ Mhlalokho inkosi u-Ahasuweru yanika iNdlovukazi u-Esta impahla kaHamani, isitha samaJuda. UModekhayi weza phambi kwenkosi, ngoba u-Esta wayesechazile ngobuhlobo babo.

² Inkosi yakhupha indandatho yayo yophawu lobukhosi, eyayisiyithathele uHamani, yayipha uModekhayi. U-Esta wamkhetha uModekhayi ukuba aphanthe impahla kaHamani.

³ U-Esta wabuye wancenga enkosini, eziwisela ezinyaweni zayo njalo ekhala. Wayicela ukuba inqabele icebo elibi likaHamani um'Agagi, ayelicebe ngamaJuda. ⁴ Inkosi yasiselulela intonga yayo yegolide ku-Esta owasukuma wama phambi kwayo. ⁵ Wathi, "Nxa kuyithokozisa inkosi, njalo nxa ingamukela ngokuthokoza ibona kuyinto efanele ukwenziwa, njalo nxa ithokoza ngami, akubhalwe umlayo ozachitha izincwadi ezalotshwa nguHamani indodana kaHamedatha, um'Agagi, ezazibhalwe ngezimiso zokuchitha amaJuda kuzozonke izabelo zenkosi.

⁶ Kambe kungavuma njani ukubona incithakalo isehlala abantu bakithi? Kungavuma njani ukuba ngibone incithakalo yemuli yakithi?"

⁷ Inkosi u-Ahasuweru waphendula iNdlovukazi loModekhayi umJuda ngokuthi, "Ngoba uHamani ehlasela amaJuda, sengiphe u-Esta impahla yakhe, njalo sebemlengise esakhiweni sokulengisa.

⁸ Ngakho-ke bhala omunye umlayo ngebizo lenkosi usenzela amaJuda njengokubona

kwakho, ubusuyingcina ngophawu lwendandatho yenkosi, ngoba awukho umbiko olotshwe ngebizo lenkosi wangcinwa ngophawu lwendandatho yayo ongadilizwa.”

⁹ Onobhala besigodlweni bahle babizwa masinyane, ngelanga lamatshumi amabili lantathu ngenyanga yesithathu, inyanga ethiwa nguSivana. Babhala yonke imilayo kaModekhayi kumaJuda, lakuziphathamandla, kubabusi lakuzikhulu kuzozonke izabelo ezilikhulu elilamatshumi amabili lesikhombisa (127) kusukela e-Indiya kuze kuyefika eTopiya. Imilayo leyo yayibhalwe ngombhalo walelo lalelo lizwe ngolimi lwalabobantu njalo lakubaJuda ngombhalo wabo lolimi lwabo.

¹⁰ UModekhayi wabhala ngebizo leNkosi u-Ahasuweru, wangcina izincwadi lezo ngophawu lwendandatho yenkosi, wathuma izithunywa ezazigada amabhiza ayelesiqubu efuyelwe ukusetshenziswa yinkosi.

¹¹ Isimiso somlayo wenkosi sasinika amaJuda kuwo wonke amadolobho imvumo yokuhlangana lokuzivikela; ukuchitha, ukubulala babhubhise yonke impi ehlopileyo eyaloba yisiphi isizwe loba isifunda esasingabahlasela kanye labesifazane labantwana; lokuthi baphange impahla yezitha zabo.

¹² Ilanga elamiswayo ukuba amaJuda enze lokho kuzozonke izabelo zeNkosi u-Ahasuweru lalingeletshumi lantathu ngenyanga yetshumi lambili, inyanga ethiwa ngu-Adari. ¹³ Isimiso somlayo lowo sasizakhutshwa sibe ngumthetho

kuzozonke izabelo, umenyezelwe ebantwini bezizwe zonke ukuze amaJuda ahlale elungele ngalelolanga ukuphindisela ezitheni zawo.

¹⁴ Izithunywa zaphuma ngokuphangisa zigade amabhiza esigodlweni, zifuqwa ngumlayo wenkosi. Isimiso somlayo samenyezelwa edolobheni laseSusa.

Ukunqoba KwamaJuda

¹⁵ UModekhayi wasuka phambi kwenkosi eggoke izembatho zobukhosi ezilombala oluhlaza okwesibhakabhaka lomhlophe, umqhele wegolide omkhulu kanye lesembatho esiyibubende eselembu lelineni elihle. Kwaba ledili lentokozo edolobheni laseSusa.

¹⁶ Kwaba yisikhathi sokuthaba lokuthokoza, injabulo lodumo kubaJuda. ¹⁷ Kuzozonke izabelo lakuwo wonke amadolobho, ingqe lapho isimiso somlayo wenkosi esaya khona, kwaba lentokozo lenjabulo kubaJuda, kwaba lamadili kwadliwa. Abantu abanengi bakwezinye izizwe baba ngabaJuda ngenxa yokwesaba amaJuda.

9

Ukunqoba KwamaJuda

¹ Ngelanga letshumi lantathu ngenyanga yetshumi lambili, inyanga ethiwa ngu-Adari, isimemezelo somlayo wenkosi kwakufanele senziwe. Ngalelilanga izitha zamaJuda zazisithi zizakuwanqoba, kodwa akusayanga njengokucabangela kwabo ngoba amaJuda aba yiwo anqobayo. ² AmaJuda abuthana emadolobheni awo kuzozonke izabelo zeNkosi

u-Ahasuweru ukuhlasele labo ababefuna ukubachitha. Kakho owayengamelana labo, ngoba abantu bezizwe zonke ezinye babebesaba. ³ Ngakho zonke izikhulu zezabelo, iziphathamandla, ababusi kanye lezisebenzi zenkosi bancedisa amaJuda, ngoba besesaba uModekhayi.

⁴ UModekhayi wayesengumuntu omkhulu esigodlweni; udumo lwakhe lwamemetheka kuzozonke izabelo, waba lamandla amakhulu kakhulu.

⁵ AmaJuda acakaza izitha zawo zonke ngenkemba, enza intando yawo ezitheni ezaziwazonda.

⁶ Esigodlweni saseSusa, amaJuda abulala njalo achitha amadoda angamakhulu amahlanu.

⁷ Abulala njalo uPharishandatha, uDalifoni, u-Asiphatha, ⁸ uPhoratha, u-Adaliya, u-Aridatha, ⁹ uPharimashitha, u-Arisayi, u-Aridayi loVayizatha, ¹⁰ amadodana alitshumi kaHamani indodana kaHamedatha, isitha samaJuda. Kodwa abazange bayithathe impango.

¹¹ Inani lalabo ababulawayo esigodlweni saseSusa labikwa enkosini ngalelolanga.

¹² Inkosi yathi eNdlovukazini u-Esta, “AmaJuda asebulale njalo achitha amadoda angamakhulu amahlanu kanye lamadodana kaHamani alitshumi enqabeni yaseSusa. Kuyini asebekwenze kwezinye izabelo zenkosi? Tshono, siyini isicelo sakho? Uzakunikwa. Kuyini okucelayo na? Lakho uzakwenzelwa.”

¹³ U-Esta wathi, “Nxa kuyithokozisa inkosi, phana imvumo kubaJuda abaseSusa ukuthi

benze isimiso somlayo lo kusasa njalo uvumele ukuba amadodana kaHamani alitshumi alengiswe esakhiweni sokulengisa.”

¹⁴ Inkosi yalaya ukuba kwenziwe lokho. Isimiso somlayo samenyazelwa eSusa, alengiswa amadodana kaHamani alitshumi. ¹⁵ AmaJuda aseSusa ahlangu ndawonye ngelanga letshumi lane ngenyanga ethiwa ngu-Adari, abulala amadoda angamakhulu amathathu eSusa, kodwa abazange bayithinte impango.

¹⁶ Kusenjalo, amaJuda ayesele ezabelweni zenkosi ahlangu ukuba azivikele lokuthi athole ukuphumula ezitheni zawo. Abulala izinkulungwane ezingamatshumi ayisikhombisa lanhlanu kodwa kawazange ayithinte impango.

¹⁷ Lokhu kwenzakala ngelanga letshumi lantathu ngenyanga ethiwa ngu-Adari, kwathi ngelanga letshumi lane aphumula alenza ilanga lentokozo ledili.

Idili LePhurimi

¹⁸ AmaJuda aseSusa wona ayehlangene ngelanga letshumi lantathu leletshumi lane, kwathi ngeletshumi lanhlanu aphumula alenza laba lilanga lentokozo lokudla.

¹⁹ Yikho amaJuda ahlala emaphandleni lemizini engelamithangala ethakazelela usuku lwetshumi lane olwenyanga ka-Adari njengelanga lentokozo ledili, ilanga lokuphana izipho.

Ukujeziswa KwePhurimi

²⁰ UModekhayi wabhala ngalezizinto, wasethumela izincwadi kuwo wonke amaJuda kuzozonke izabelo zeNkosi u-Ahasuweru,

eziseduze lezikhathana, ²¹ ukuthi babeledili lokuthokoza minyaka yonke ngamalanga etshumi lane letshumi lanhlanu enyangeni ethiwa ngu-Adari ²² kube yisikhumbuzo sesikhathi lapho amaJuda athola khona ukuphumula ezitheni zawo, njalo kuyinyanga lapho usizi lwaba yintokozo lokulila kwaba lilanga lokujabula. Wawabhalela ukuba akhumbule lawo malanga abe zinsuku zokuthokoza lamadili njalo aphanane izipho zokudla kanye lokupha abayanga izipho.

²³ Ngakho amaJuda avuma ukuqhubeka ngamadili entokozo ayewaqalile, esenza lokho uModekhayi ayewabhalele ngakho.

²⁴ Ngoba uHamani indodana kaHamedatha, um'Agagi, isitha samaJuda wonke, wayecebe ukuwachitha amaJuda njalo wayenze inkatho okuthiwa *yiphuri* eyadala ukubhujiswa lencithakalo yawo. ²⁵ Kodwa kwathi icebo lelo selivelile enkosini, yathumela imilayo ebhaliweyo ukuthi amaqhinga amabi kaHamani ayekade ewamisele amaJuda acine esephendukela yena, njalo yena lamadodana akhe balengiswe endaweni eyakhelwe lokho.

²⁶ (Ngakho amalanga lawo athiwa yiPhurimi, kusuka ebizweni elithi *phuri*.) Ngenxa yakho konke okubhalwe encwadini le lakho konke ababekubonile lokwakwenzakale kubo, ²⁷ amaJuda akwenza umlandu wawo ukuthi aqalise umkhuba wokuthi wona kanye lezizukulwane zawo labo bonke abahlanganyela lawo kumele loba kutheni baphumule ngezinsuku lezi ezimbili minyaka

yonke, ngendlela eyayimisiwe langesikhathi esasiqanjiwe. ²⁸ Amalanga la kumele akhunjulwe njalo alandelwe kuzozonke izizukulwane zezimuli zonke, ezifundeni zonke lemadlobheni wonke. Akumelanga amalanga ePhurimi la ayekelwe ukuthakazelelwa ngamaJuda, loba ukuthi isikhumbuzo sawo sikhohlakale kumbe sitshabalale kuzizukulwane zawo.

²⁹ Ngakho, iNdlovukazi u-Esta, indodakazi ka-Abhihayili, kanye loModekhayi umJuda, babhala ngegunya langamandla amakhulu beqinisekisa incwadi yesibili eyayimayelana lePhurimi.

³⁰ UModekhayi wathumela izincwadi kubo bonke abangamaJuda ezifundeni ezilikhulu elilamatshumi amabili lesikhombisa (127) embusweni ka-Ahasuweru, amazwi okubafisela ukuthula lokubaqinisa, ³¹ ukuba lezinsuku zePhurimi ngezikhathi ezazimisiwe, njengokumemezela kukaModekhayi umJuda leNdlovukazi u-Esta, lanjengalokhu ababeziqalisele khona kanye lezizukulwane zabo mayelana lezikhathi zokuzila lokulila.

³² Isimemezelo sika-Esta saqinisa imithetho le emayelana lePhurimi, kwalotshwa phansi emibhalweni.

10

Ubukhulu BukaModekhayi

¹ Inkosi u-Ahasuweru wenza isinqumo sokuthelisa abantu kuwo wonke umbuso lasemikhunjini ekhatshana. ² Zonke izenzo zamandla akhe amakhulu, kanye lemibhalo

elandisa ngobukhulu bukaModekhayi inkosi eyayimphakamise ngabo, akulotshwanga na egwalweni lwemiLando yamakhosi aseMediya lasePhezhiya? ³ UModekhayi umJuda wayelandela inkosi u-Ahasuweru esikhundleni embusweni, engumhlonitshwa omkhulu phakathi kwamaJuda, njalo eqakathekiswa ngabanengi kubaJuda bakibo, ngoba wayesebenzela ukuphila kuhle kwabantu bakibo njalo wayemela inhlalakahle yawo wonke amaJuda.

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2023-04-13

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