



Megillat Mitzraim

More than once upon a time, in far-away lands, evil villains have plotted to destroy all the Jewish people. Any community lucky enough to escape has celebrated a “Little Purim”, reading a megillah about its own rescue, and celebrating with noise and laughter. Here’s a story about a “Little Purim” that happened in Egypt almost 500 years ago.

Egypt was then one of many lands ruled by Sultan Suleiman II. Suleiman lived in a golden palace. He wore each caftan only once. His right pocket was always filled with twenty gold ducats and his left pocket was filled with one thousand silver pieces. Despite his great wealth, Sultan Suleiman II was a fair and honest ruler. He picked his advisors only by their talents, and he rewarded each person fairly for his or her work.

A governor helped Sultan Suleiman II rule each land. The governor of Egypt in those days was ambitious and sly. He wanted as much power and wealth as the Sultan. He told the people of Egypt, “We don’t need Sultan Suleiman II. He is too busy counting his golden ducats! I will rule Egypt. Everyone will do exactly as I say!”

The Jewish people knew that Suleiman II was fair, and didn’t judge people by how they looked or their religion, so they did not listen to the evil Governor. The Governor had a tantrum and locked all the leaders of the Jewish community up in jail. Then he chose the 28th day of Adar as the day that all the Jews of Egypt would be killed. “Ha! That will teach you!” he cried.



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Although the Governor didn't know it, Nachman, one of his advisors, was Jewish. Nachman was well liked by the other members of the cabinet, so they listened to him when he spoke.

"Our Sultan is fair. He listens only to what a person does, and is not impressed by how he looks or his religion," said Nachman. "We would be better off with the Sultan leading us, not the Governor!"

"You are right!" the other advisors agreed, and they planned a surprise for the Governor.

On the 28th day of Adar, the Governor met with his advisors. "The Jews are not loyal to me, their leader!" he said. "Let's punish them by cutting off their heads!" "We agree," said the advisors. "That is the proper punishment for someone who is not loyal to his leader. So it is a fitting punishment for you, who are trying to steal this land from Sultan Suleiman II." Instead of the Jewish people, the Governor was punished. And to this day, the 28th day of Adar is celebrated as a 'Little Purim' by the Jews of Egypt.



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