

**The two stories below tell two very different versions of the relationship between Haman and Mordechai:**

<p><b>ז פרשה (וילנא) רבה אסתר</b> <b>ה</b> אחר הדברים האלה גדל המלך אחשורוש את המן בן המדתא האגגי וינשאהו וצוה המלך שיהו כורעים ומשתחוים לו, מה עשה המן עשה לו צלם מרוקם על בגדיו ועל לבו וכל מי שהיה משתחוה להמן היה משתחוה לעבודת כוכבים .</p>	<p><b>Esther Rabbah 7</b> 5. "After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and the king ordered all to bow down and prostrate themselves before him. [The Rabbis teach in a midrash]: What did Haman then do? He attached an embroidered image to his garment upon his breast, and everyone who bowed down to Haman bowed down to the image [which would be a form of idol worship!].</p>
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**Talmud Bavli Megillah 15a-15b**

[R. Papa said]: They also called him, The slave who is purchased for a loaf of bread.

**Here is a Rabbinic story based on this line from the Talmud:**

Once the king [Ahashverosh] issued money and dispatched it to the heads of armies in order to help the armies conquer the provinces. Haman took half of this money and spent it on himself, and when he needed it for the soldiers he did not have enough left. He approached Mordecai because Haman knew that Mordechai had money. In fact, the money was in Mordechai's hand just as the king had issued it to him. Haman said to Mordecai: Lend me from this money which is in your hand. Mordechai said to him: I will not lend it to you unless you sell yourself to me as a slave. Haman accepted this upon himself and they both agreed to the loan. Mordechai wrote in the contract, "Haman, the slave of Mordechai, sold himself for a loaf of bread". From this point onwards, Mordechai considered Haman to be his slave and even his property. Later, when Haman got promoted by the king and asked Mordechai to bow down to him, Mordechai refused because he still considered Haman to be his slave.

## נהפוך הוא/Nahafoch hu

<p><b>אסתר ט: א</b> וּבְשָׁנִים עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ הוּא-חֹדֶשׁ אָדָר, בְּשִׁלּוֹשֶׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם בּוֹ, אֲשֶׁר הִגִּיעַ דְּבַר- הַמֶּלֶךְ וְדָתוֹ, לְהַעֲשׂוֹת: בַּיּוֹם, אֲשֶׁר שָׁבְרוּ אֹיְבֵי הַיְהוּדִים לְשָׁלוֹט בָּהֶם, וְנִהְפָּךְ הוּא, אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁלֹטוּ הַיְהוּדִים הַמָּה בְּשָׁנָאֵיהֶם .</p>	<p><b>Esther 9:1</b> On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, the edict commanded by the king was to be carried out. On this day the enemies of the Jews had hoped to overpower them, but now <i>nahafoch hu</i> and the Jews dominated those who hated them.</p>
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1. What do you think “v’nahafoch hu” mean in this verse in the megillah?

### **Rabbi David Aaron, *Endless Light*, pp. 81–82**

We eat *hamantaschen* on Purim, a sweet cookie named after the bitter Haman, to symbolize the *v’nahafoch hu* -- the “turnabout”-- of how Haman and his evil actions turned into the source of sweetness and nourishment for Jewish survival.

### **V’nahafoch hu, Torah.org**

The Purim expression, "v'nahafoch hu," it was turned about, reminds us that God can bring about a stunning reversal of a nation's destiny in the blink of an eye. [On Purim] we are commanded to drink wine, so much wine that we can no longer differentiate between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordechai."

2. According to these texts and other Purim traditions, how do you think *nahafoch hu* plays a role in Purim celebrations?