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In reading the Megillah today, it occurred to me that there is in the Megillah a remarkable phenomenon of duplication. The repetition of certain things twice seems to crop up all through the work

Thus: There are two drinking parties, one for the nobility and one for the masses. There are two parties, one for Vashti, and one for Esther.

More to the point, because they are inherently inexplicable (for which reason the Sages and Commentaries offer a variety of explanations) such as: A gathering of the maidens at a beauty contest to choose a queen twice--even though Esther had been chosen after the first one; Esther invites the king and Haman twice--even though she could have accused Haman at the first party; the legislation of two days of Purim, one for closed cities and one for open cities--a distinction which has no parallel elsewhere in the Torah and which defies easy explanation; and Mordechai and Esther twice legislate the reading of the Megillah and the attendant mitzvot on Purim--even though once would have sufficed.

How to explain all this?

Perhaps it is a subtle reaction against the dominant Persian religion. It has been commented often that Megillot Esther goes out of its way not to emphasize Jewish religion; thus, there is no mention of the name of G-d. The references to Him are vague and indirect. This is so, apparently, because the writers of the Megillah are still in exile, and must not upset the local authorities and masses who would not want the Jewish G-d to be credited with their redemption.

For the same reason, the authors included subtle attacks, sardonic and satiric and humorous in nature, against the dualism of ancient Persian religion. By emphasizing the number 2 in the story of Jewish redemption, they mean to emphasize that the very number that characterizes the Persian religion is the characteristic number whereby the Children of Israel won their triumph against the Persians.