ESTHER 3:8. The story of two edicts

Cyrus' Edict (538 BCE)

The last book of or Tanakh (=the Hebrew Bible) is the book of Dibre haYamim, or chronicles. It ends with a very special declaration. The announcement of Cyrus, the first Persian emperor. It says in Dibre haYamim II, 36:22-23, the verses which close the Tanakh. "In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia… HaShem moved the spirit of King Cyrus to issue a proclamation throughout all his realm by word of mount and in writing. "Thus said King Cyrus of Persia: HaShem, God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and has charged me with building for Him a Sanctuary in Jerusalem, which is in Judea (=Israel). Any one of you, of all His people, may HaShem God be with him and let him ascend [to Israel. In the original Hebrew, *veya'al*, "he should make Aliya"]" .

During the wars and invasions of the Assyrians and Babylonians hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed . Finally, in 586 BCE Nebukhadnezzar, the Babylonian emperor, destroyed the Temple of Jerusalem and 70,000 Jewish captives (the survivors) were exiled to Babylonia.

In 538 BCE the Persians conquered Babylon and, in what is nothing short of a nes galui, a a public open miracle, HaShem moved the spirit of Cyrus, and he decides to invite the Jewish people to come to Israel and rebuild the city!

More than 42,000 Jews went back to Israel and began the construction of the second Bet haMiqdash.

Haman's edict (ca. 474 BCE)

Haman was the Primer Minister and most trusted man of the fourth Persian emperor, Ahashverosh (Xerxes 486- 465 BCE). He planned to kill the Jews and to that effect he said to King Ahashverosh, 'There is a certain people, dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom, who keep themselves separate. Their customs are different from those of all other people, and they do not obey the king's laws; it is not in the king's best interest to tolerate them. If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and

I will confiscate ten thousand talents of silver for the king's royal treasury [the King agreed and]…on the thirteenth day of the first month of, on the 12th year of Ahashverosh, the royal scribes were summoned. They wrote out in the script of each province and in the language of each people all Haman's orders…these documents were written in the name of King Ahashverosh himself and sealed with his own ring. Dispatches were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces with the order to exterminate, kill and destroy all the Jews, young and old, women and children, on a single day… a copy of the text of the edict was to be issued as law in every province, and made known to the people of every nationality, so they would be ready for that day.". (Esther, Chapter 3). It is important to remember that the Persian Empire at the time of Ahashverosh was the largest Empire in human history. And all the Jews in the world, including those who came to Israel 64 years ago invited by Cyrus, lived in it. The decree of Haman would not have affected just the Jews of Shushan, the Persian empire's capital, but the entire Jewish people. As we all know, Haman's decree was reversed and the Jews were saved by HaShem, through Mordekhay and Queen Esther.