Similarities between Esther and Joseph

I Verbal parallels

בראשית – סיפורי יוסף	מגילת אסתר
וַיַּרְכֵּב אֹתוֹ בְּמִרְכֶּבֶת הַמִּשְׁנֶה אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ וַיִּקְרְאוּ לְפָנָיו אַבְרֵדְּ!	וַיִּקַּח הָמָן אֶת-הַלְּבוּשׁ וְאֶת-הַסּוּס וַיַּלְבֵּשׁ אֶת-מְרְדֶּכִי וַיַּרְכִּיבֵהוּ בִּּרְחוֹב הָעִיר וַיִּקְרָא לְפָנָיו כָּכָה יֵעָשֶׁה לָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ בִּיקָרוֹ.
He had him ride in the second chariot he had, and they called in front of him "Abrek!" (41:43).	Haman took the garments and the horse and <u>he clothed</u> <u>Mordecai</u> . <u>He had him ride</u> in the city square <u>and he</u> <u>called in front of him</u> , "This is what shall be done to the one whose honor the king desires!" (6:11)
וּיָסַר פַּרְעֹה אֶת-טַבַּעְתּוֹ מֵעַל יָדוֹ וַיִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ עַל-יַד יוֹסֵף וַיִּלְבֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ.	וַיָּסַר הַמֶּלֶךְּ אֶת-טַבַּעְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱבִיר מֵהָמָן וַיִּתְנָהּ לְמָרְדֶּכָי.
Pharaoh <u>removed his ring</u> from his hand and <u>gave it to</u> <u>Joseph</u> , and <u>he clothed him</u> (41:42).	The king removed his ring which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai (8:2).
וַיְהִי כְּדַבְּרָהּ אֶל-יוֹסֵף יוֹם יוֹם וְלֹא-שָׁמַע אֵלֶיהָ	וַיְהִי כְּאָמְרָם אֵלָיו יוֹם וָיוֹם וְלֹא שָׁמֵע אֲלֵיהֶם
When she continued to speak to him day after day, he refused to listen to her (39:10).	When they continued to talk to him day after day, he refused to listen to them (3:4).
יַעשֶׁה פַרְעֹה וְיִפְקֵד פְּקָדִים עַל הָאָרֶץ וְחִמֵּשׁ אֶת אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּשֶׁבַע שְׁנֵי הַשָּׁבָע, וְיִקְבְּצוּ אֶת כָּל אֹכֶל הַשָּנִים הַטֹּבוֹת הַבָּאֹת הָאֵלֶה וְיִצְבְּרוּ בָר תַּחַת יַד פַּרְעֹה אֹכֶל בֶּעָרִים וְשָׁמָרוּ.	וְיַפְקֵד הַמֶּלֶךְ פְּקִידִים בְּכָל מְדִינוֹת מַלְכוּתוֹ וְיִקְבְּצוּ אֶת כָּל נַעֲרָה בְתוּלָה טוֹבַת מַרְאֶה אֶל שׁוּשֵׁן הַבִּירָה.
Let Pharaoh appoint officials on the land, and take a fifth of the [produce of the] land during the seven years of plenty, and collect all the food of these upcoming good years, and store the grain under the control of Pharaoh – food in the cities, let them guard (41:33-34).	Let the king appoint officials in all the provinces of his kingdom, and collect every beautiful virgin girl to the fortress of Shushan (Esther 2:3).
פִּי-אֵיךּ אֶעֱלֶה אֶל-אָבִי וְהַנַּעַר אֵינֶנוּ אָתִּי פֶּן אֶרְאֶה בָרָע אֲשֶׁר יִמְצָא אֶת-אָבִי	כִּי אֵיכָכָה אוּכַל וְרָאִיתִי בָּרָעָה אֲשֶׁר-יִמְצָא אֶת-עַמִּי וְאֵיכָכָה אוּכַל וְרָאִיתִי בְּאָבְדַן מוֹלְדְתִּי
For how can I go back to my father if the lad is not with me? I fear to see the evil that would come upon my father (44:34).	How how can I endure to see the calamity that is coming to my people? How can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred? (8:6).
וְיָהִי בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי יוֹם הַלֶּדֶת אֶת-פַּרְעֹה וַיַּעַשׁ מִשְׁתֶּה לְכָל-עֲבָדָיו	בִּשְׁנַת שָׁלוֹשׁ לְמָלְכוֹ עָשָׂה מִשְׁתֶּה לְכָל-שָּׁרִיו וַעֲבָדָיו
On the third day – Pharaoh's birthday – he made a feast for all his servants (40:20).	In the third year of his reign, he made a feast for all his officers and servants (1:3).

II Thematic parallels

- A Jew rises to prominence in the foreign court.
- There is a downturn in fortunes followed by even greater success.
- The heroes earn royal power.
- Two courtiers challenge the king and are punished, and through them the hero becomes known to the king.
- Their success is tied in with their ability to save their people.
- The reversal of fortunes has to do with the king's sleeplessness.
- The drama ends with a banquet where the invitees do not know the identity of the host.