



From our members

Divrei Torah on the Megilah



Purim Money

Rabbi Aharon Gaffen | Menahel Mesivta Shaarei Adirim

אם על המלך טוב יכתב לאבדם ועשרת אלפים ככר כסף אשקול על ידי עשי המלאכה להביא אל גזוי המלך

If it pleases the king, let an edict be drawn for their destruction, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the stewards for deposit in the royal treasury.

The passuk says that Haman offered Achasveirosh 10,000 silver pieces "in exchange" for allowing Haman to destroy the Jewish people. The gemora (Megilah 13b) says that since Haman was going to offer the money, He gave us the mitzvah of *מחצית השקל* which was brought every year during the month of Adar to the בית המקדש in order to counteract the actions of Haman. This is why we read *פרשת שקלים* on the Shabbos that coincides with or precedes ראש חודש אדר.

The Steipler Gaon זצ"ל asks why it is necessary to "counter" Haman's actions. It isn't as if Haman was performing some sort of mitzvah which protects him. He was merely spending money frivolously in pursuit of his evil desires. So, why did the *הקב"ה* find it necessary to give us a special mitzvah to dull the effects of Haman's actions?

He answers that Haman's actions created a tremendous accusation against us. Once Haman showed that one can spend an entire fortune in order to do evil, even more so how much we

should invest an entire fortune to do mitzvos. Were בני ישראל not at the level of generously giving tzedakah, Haman's offering money to Achashveirosh might have resulted in the Jewish people not being able to survive the decree. However, ה' gave us the mitzvah of *שקלים* for us to show that we do give up money for the sake of mitzvos.

"Once Haman showed that one can spend an entire fortune in order to do evil, even more so how much we should invest an entire fortune to do mitzvos."

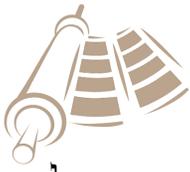
Based on this, maybe we can explain why the מצוות of Purim focus heavily on

spending money in the performance of mitzvos. Both משלוח מנות and מתנות לאביונים involve spending money on other people – above and beyond what is required of us on other days of the year and even on other Yomim Tovim. Even by the seduah, the Rambam says in *וייתקן סעודה נאה כפי אשר ב' הלכה ט"ו* a person should prepare a beautiful seudah as much as he can afford. We do not see this language by any other Yom Tov seudah. We see again that there is a focus on spending money in the celebration of Purim in order to counter the spending of Haman. ♦

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Hashem's Plan is Hidden

Rabbi Shlomo Crandall | Regional Director Chai Lifeline Midwest

ותאמר אסתר אם-על-המלך טוב יבוא המלך והמון היום אל-המשתה אשר-עשיתי לו

"If it pleases the King," Esther replied, "let the King and Haman come today to the feast that I have prepared for him."

It is a well known idea that Hashem's name does not appear in the Megilla. Some suggest that the repeated times that the Megilla uses the expression Hamelech, The KING, is a hint to the King of Kings. The initials of Hashem's name are also hinted to in the center of the Megilla, with the words יבוא המלך והמון היום.

What is the significance of Hashem's name being absent from the Megilla? The message, I believe is simultaneously simple, profound, and very relevant.

"We live in a world where we do not see Hashem. He is hidden."

We live in a world where we do not see Hashem. He is hidden. We live in a world of *Hester Panim*. Sometimes, He is more hidden, and sometimes we think we see a hint of Hashem's

hashgacha Pratis. Imagine what it would be like living in the period of Mordechai and Esther. What would the local periodicals report regarding the political twists and turns, the ups and downs, and the

status of the Jewish people. On a good day (Esther's rise to power) the pundits would be telling their readers of the fortunate times we are living in, and Achashveirosh's approval rating among Klal Yisrael would be high. Soon after that, he appointed Haman to power. With that appointment, his approval ratings began to dip. In retrospect, the pundits probably wasted a lot of time guessing, and predicting how much they could and should trust Achashveirosh.

The names have changed. But the story line is the same. We are living in a world of Hester Panim, with little understanding of how things will turn out. Megilas Esther should give us all pause as many of us think we understand current events. From my standpoint, all I know is that we are living in world that is masked. The Almighty ways are hidden from us. *H'nistarot L' Hashem Elokainua*.

As a news junkie, this message is an important one for me, as a simple reminder that that my job is really not to try to figure out G-d's plan. My job is far simpler - just do the Almighty's will. ♦



The Nervous Heroine

Rabbi Yakov Danishefsky LMSW

ותאמר אסתר אם-על-המלך טוב יבוא המלך והמון היום אל-המשתה אשר-עשיתי לו

"If it pleases the King," Esther replied, "let the King and Haman come today to the feast that I have prepared for him."

Uninvited and at the risk of her very life, Esther approaches Achashverosh. He accepts her, and she invites him and Haman to a private party. They come.

Now, in this climactic moment, Achashverosh asks her what she'd like, up to half the kingdom. If you're reading the Megillah for the first time, you hold your breath anticipating the importance of this moment when Esther will say, "save my people!" But that's not what she says. Instead, she merely asks that they attend another party tomorrow. What happened?!

Perhaps she got nervous. Revealing her connection to the Jewish people and asking to overturn the King and Haman's decree was a big deal, to say the least. So, in that ever-important moment, perhaps all the courage she could muster up was to invite them to another party. Isn't it nice to see that the greatest heroine of all time also got nervous?

But Rav Hutner offers another explanation. In attempting to overcome Amalek, Esther was calling upon the power of "*machar*," the power of tomorrow.

"If you're reading the Megillah for the first time, you hold your breath anticipating the importance of this moment when Esther will say, "save my people!" But that's not what she says. What happened?!"

Rav Hutner points out that whenever we find the destruction of Amalek, we find the use of the term *machar*. Because Amalek's cynicism and hopelessness says there is no tomorrow. Amalek says there is nothing more than what's right in front of you. There is nothing more than the finitude of today. Belief in God though, at its core, is a belief in hope. It is a faith in tomorrow. A commitment to relentless optimism and the possibility of change.

Esther intentionally pushed off her destruction of Haman in order to invoke the power of *machar*, the power of believing that our lives are grounded in something beyond the finitude of today. Esther was attaching herself and the Jewish people to the transcendent hopefulness of tomorrow. ♦



Esther Makes her Move

Freddie Goldman | Treasurer Adas Yeshurun

וַיְהִי כִּרְאוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת אֶסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה עֹמֶדֶת בּוֹזְעַר נִשְׂאָה זֶזֶן בְּעֵינָיו וַיִּשֹׁט הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאַסְתֵּר
אֶת שֵׁרְבִיט הוֹהֵב אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדוֹ וַתִּקְרַב אֶסְתֵּר וַתִּגַּע בְּרֹאשׁ הַשֵּׁרְבִיט

"Achashverosh saw Esther in the courtyard, and he found favor and the king extended his golden scepter that was in his hand and Esther moved close and touched the tip of the scepter."

One of the very dramatic points in the Megillah was Esther's entrance into the chambers of the king to request his help in saving the Jewish People. The gravity and danger of the situation was palpable. Esther understood that she was carrying the weight and the future of an entire nation on her shoulders.

Esther prepares and makes her move to approach the king. The pasuk says that Achashverosh saw Esther in the courtyard, and she found favor and the king extended his golden scepter that was in his hand and Esther moved close and touched the tip of the scepter.

Two obvious questions must be asked: Where else would the scepter have been had it not been in his hand? What is the significance of Esther's reaction?

Several years ago, I saw in the name of Rav Moshe Meir Weiss, a close talmid of Rav Moshe Feinstein, an amazing explanation. Achashverosh saw that Esther had come and he sensed her fear and trepidation. Achashverosh said to himself "This is my queen. Why should she be afraid? Esther is not just another commoner that has come to seek an audience with the king."

In a bold gesture Achashverosh flips the scepter, **the part that was in his hand**, and extends the **handle** to Esther. Achashverosh was telling Esther "what's mine is yours" (עֲדֵי־חֵצִי (הַמְלָכֹת וַיִּנְתְּנוּ לָךְ) and she need not fear. Esther's response to only touch the tip of the scepter was her way of communicating that she too was relinquishing all that she possessed back to Achashverosh.

This level of giving and surrendering of oneself and one's possessions serves as a tremendous lesson on how we must conduct ourselves **בין אדם לחבירו**.

It is obvious that Purim is a vehicle for mitzvot **בין אדם לחבירו**:

- משלוח מנות איש לרעהו - gifts to our friends and neighbors.
- מתנות לאביונים - gifts to the needy.
- משתה ושמחה - a seuda to celebrate with others and ensuring that others have a respectable seuda, as well.
- מקרא מגילה - This reading is an activity that is not just a personal mitzvah rather it is supposed to be read **ברב עם**.

The avodah of Purim is, in so many ways, is about connecting with and helping one another. We were accused of being an **אחד מפור ומפרד עם** and the only way to rectify this was to come together **באהבה**. Now is not any different. We must be mevatel ourselves, our resources and our pride for one another. Give to one another, and with the right intentions!

Rav Dessler writes in Michtav Meilyahu (קונטרס החסד) כי **לאשר יתן, יאהב...אם יתחיל נא להטיב את כל אשר ימצא, כי אז ירגיש אשר כולם המה קרוביו, כולם אהוביו** "To the one you give, you will love! If we would start doing good for all those we encounter [even strangers], we would soon feel as though they are all close family and loved ones."

During this **תקופה** it has been especially difficult to connect in the ways that we are so accustomed. Baruch Hashem, we have revolutionized our creativity and maximized efforts to express **בעזרת ה'**, "togetherness," albeit under extraordinary circumstances. **בין אדם לחבירו** will show Hashem that we are truly ready for the **גאולה שלימה** and the rebuilding of the **בית המקדש במהרה בימינו** where we can finally and forever come together **מלך הדרת מלך**. ♦



Rally all the Jews

Benjy Kandelman | Senior Customer Support Manager SAP - Fieldglass

אִישׁ יְהוּדִי הָיָה בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַבִּירָה וּשְׁמוֹ מֹרְדֵכַי בֶּן יָאִיר בֶּן־שִׁמְעִי בֶן־קִישׁ אִישׁ יְמִינִי

In the capital Shushan lived a Jew by the name of Mordechai, son of Yair son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjaminite.

Messeches Chullin, Daf 139b, and Megillah Daf 10b, explain where Mordechai is alluded to in the Torah (a pasuk in Shemos Ki Sissa 30:23). "Now take for yourself choice spices, Mar Dror..." the Targum Unkelus translates Mar dror as Mari Dechya. The gemara explains, this refers to Mordechai, the choicest of the spices. Of all the places in the Torah there could have been an allusion to Mordechai, why would it be in the Ketores?

The Yaaros Devash answers that Mordechai was able to rally all of the Jews of his time, regardless of their affiliation or religiosity, to fast and pray for the salvation of the Jewish people, to overturn the evil Gezeira of Haman Harasha. Even the Jews who had attended Achashveirosh's seudah that celebrated the lack of rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash were fasting and praying for the reversal of the evil Gezeira based on Mordechai's urging!

(Continued on page 4)

How did Mordechai know that the only way to overturn this evil decree was to rally everyone together in fast and prayer? From the ketores! In the mixture of the holy incense, we combine so many beautiful smelling spices along with Chelbana. The Chelbana (galbanum), is a spice that has a repulsive smell to it. But when it gets combined with all the other spices, it creates a heavenly smell fit for the worship of Hashem in the Beis Hamikdash. From here, Mordechai knew that if he could rally all of the Jews (even the ones who do things that in the

moment were repulsive to Hashem), together klal Yisrael could tear up the evil decree and defeat Haman Harasha.

So, why have we been the pesukim of the Ketores every day since the beginning of the pandemic? To remind us the power of Klal Yisrael! No matter what our daily observance looks like, all of our Tefillos are needed to tear up the evil Gezeira of Covid-19, and return to the days of old without the need for masks and social distancing. And with Hashem's help, the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash and coming of Mashiach! ♦

“No matter what our daily observance looks like, all of our Tefillos are needed to tear up the evil Gezeira.”



Advised to Fall

Rabbi David Segal | Owner - Goldman Segal Catering

וַיְסַפֵּר הַמֶּן לְיָרֵשׁ אִשְׁתּוֹ וּלְכָל־אֲהָבָיו אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר קָרָהוּ וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ זִוְכָמְיוֹ וַיִּרֶשׁ אִשְׁתּוֹ אִם בְּיָרֵעַ הַיְהוּדִים בְּיָרֵדְכִי אֲשֶׁר הַזְּכוּת לְנַפְל לְנַפְנִי לֹא־תוּכַל לוֹ כִּי־נַפְוֹל תִּפְוֹל לְנַפְנִי:

And Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him. His advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, if Mordechai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish stock, you will not overcome him; you will certainly fall before him.

Megillas Esther relates that after Haman paraded Mordechai through the streets of Shushan, he returned home and told Zeresh his wife and his friends everything that happened to him. His wife and advisers said to him, if Mordechai is of Jewish lineage and you start to fall before him, you will not succeed but will surely fall before him.

My Zaidy, Rabbi Dov Segal, a”h asked; What kind of advisors are these? What kind of a wife is that? You had a hard day at the office and you come home and they dump on you even more. He answered; they weren’t dumping on him or even telling him to give up. They were giving him advice.

Why did they start with the question “is Mordechai of Jewish lineage? “ Because they knew Jews are rachmanim bnei rachmanim. We are merciful people - sons of merciful people. Even

when we know we shouldn’t be merciful, we are. Let’s look at the advice they gave him. If Mordechai is really Jewish and you started to fall before him, your only hope is to “fall before him”-meaning bow down to him and beg his forgiveness. Even though he might know he shouldn’t forgive you, being Jewish he won’t be able to do otherwise but to forgive you.

“We are merciful people - sons of merciful people. Even when we know we shouldn’t be merciful, we are. ”

If you look at the Megilla, in the very next pasuk they come to take Haman to Esther’s second party. It’s at that party that Esther reveals herself as being Jewish. Hearing that, Haman takes his wife and advisor’s advice and falls before her. Before Esther has a chance to respond, Achashverous comes in, and the rest is history. ♦



Where are the Boys

Reb Nochi Stein | “Mr. Pirchei”

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נָתַן הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲחַשְׁוֵרוּשׁ לְאַסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה אֶת־בַּיִת הַמֶּן

That very day King Ahasuerus gave the property of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, to Queen Esther.

Since this תורה about Purim, I will quote a very well known piyyut, Maoz Tzur. I know what you are thinking: how can we entrust our Pirchei boys to Reb Nochi if on Purim he is quoting מעוז מַעוֹז which we sing on Chanukah? (To give him the benefit of the doubt: possibly, he is just too old.) In my defense, I am quoting Reb Shimon Schwab who asks the question in בית השואבה מעין.

Most of his sons and his possessions were hung on the tree. What are the possessions of Haman? Picture the gallows. Hanging on it are Haman’s jet plane, speedboat and Tesla? Reb Shimon Schwab however asserts that

Haman did not have any physical possessions since they all went to Esther. We see this in (פרק ח' פסוק א) מגלת אסתר ביום ההוא נתן המלך אחשורוש לאסתר המלכה את בית המן the sole possession that Haman had left were his sons.

Purim marks a full year that I have not seen my Yeshurun Pirchei boys. Although I haven’t seen them in person, I call each one every week and give them a remote Pirchei group. Hopefully with Hashem’s help I will be able to see my boys in person soon. ♦



Not What, But How

Adam Block | Regulatory Analyst, Dental Assisting National Board

לְהוֹרִים הַיְתֵה אֹרֶה וְשִׂמְחָה וְשִׂשׂוֹן וְיִקָּר

The Jews enjoyed light and gladness, happiness and honor.

The Gemara in Megillah 16B quotes R' Yehudah who expounds the above pasuk, " to refer to four mitzvos: אורה refers to torah, שמחה to yom tov, ששון to bris milah, and ויקר to tefillin.

This interpretation of the verse implies that these four mitzvos were somehow lost or prohibited by Haman in his decree and that the Jews were unable to learn Torah and observe halachah until the salvation occurred with his demise (see Rashi). However, this idea that the Jewish people were prohibited in keeping halachah during the Purim story is nevertheless difficult to understand, especially as the "simple" understanding of the Megillah is that Haman's plot was specifically to physically destroy the Jews' (in contrast to the story of Chanukkah, wherein the Greeks only wanted to harm us spiritually by forbidding mitzva observance and not seek our physical destruction).

Rav Shimon Schwab ZT"l, in his sefer מעין בית השואבה, therefore suggests that the Jews did in fact learn Torah and fulfill these mitzvos prior to their salvation and rescue from the hands of Haman. However, their mitzva observance was nevertheless lacking. There was no passion, no joy, no radiance that came with it.

"their mitzva observance was nevertheless lacking. There was no passion, no joy, no radiance that came with it."

Their Torah was without אורה, it didn't illuminate their minds and inspire their souls to become better people. Their Yomim Tovim were without שמחה

and instead provided them a source of stress and angst. The mitzva of bris milah was performed without ששון and joyful anticipation and instead with a resigned sense of fear of the challenges life might

have lurking ahead. Tefillin, the mitzva that is supposed to impress yiras shamayim and awe upon those that see it, was performed by rote and without the proper יקר, honor, thereby accomplishing no such thing.

With the ישועה of Purim, not only did the Jews come away with a new lease on physical life, but also a new lease on their spiritual existence and way of life as well. They continued performing these mitzvos, but this time with a renewed אורה ושמחה וששון ויקר to go with it.

We know that the second קבלת התורה in Jewish history took place on Purim and unlike the first, it was an acceptance of Torah מאהבה, with love. Perhaps we can say, based on Rav Schwab, that Torah observance and living life as a Jew מאהבה means that we strive to infuse all our mitzvos, learning, davening, and chesed with the passion and appropriate feelings they so deserve.

"With the salvation of Purim, not only did the Jews come away with a new lease on physical life, but also a new lease on their spiritual existence."

It's not enough that we "just do", but that we work on ourselves to achieve the feelings, emotions, and sensitivities that halachah and mitzva observance are meant to engender. With all the pressures modern life puts on us or that we put on ourselves, this is by no means an easy task and may take a lifetime to achieve. However, we should recognize that this is the end goal for how all our actions should be conducted. We hope that through the merit of these efforts, we may finally see a ישועה from our current world travails and that we see the ultimate אורה ושמחה וששון ויקר with the coming of Mashiach, במהרה בימינו. ♦



Shoshanas Yakov

Rabbi Ami Zimmerman | Chaver Kollel Choshen Mishpat Kollel

שׁוֹשַׁנַּת יַעֲקֹב... לְהוֹדִיעַ שְׂכָל הַיְיָ לֹא יִבְשׁוּ. וְלֹא יִכְלְמוּ לְנַצּוֹז כָּל הַזּוֹסִים בָּךְ

Chazal were mesaken us to read the above at the end of the reading of Megillah. What is the uniqueness of this line that we sing it after krias hamegilla?

Rav Shlomo Brevda answers in his sefer קימו וקיבלו that the reason for this is pretty simple, and what we've heard many times: ונהפכו.

In times that there were kings, the nature of events were such that no single person had any power to change the commands of a king. What the king says goes. Even if a person were to scream and yell, it wouldn't change anything.

Additionally, when a king makes a decree he puts thought into it. Every action the king does for his kingdom is with long

thought out intentions and reasoning.

Here in the Purim Story we see that Hashem turned everything upside down, making the King and the Generals do the exact opposite of their intentions and reasoning in order to bring Yeshua to Klal Yisrael.

We constantly worry day after day about things that will prevent us from having Menuchas Hanefesh, doing mitzvos and getting closer to the Eibeshter. So we sing this niggun after krias Hamegilla to remind ourselves not to worry at all in these areas and to daven to Hashem to save us from any harm. We should be zoche iy"H to see Yeshuas Hashem speedily in all these areas of our lives. Freilechem Purim!! ♦



A Bracha on Mishloach Manos

Rabbi Avi Schwartz | Rebbe Arie Crown Hebrew Day School

Should we make a bracha on giving Mishloach Manos?

The רשב"א in סימן יח brings Rav Yosef Ben Pellet who asked the רמב"ם: 'Why don't we make a מצוה mitzvos like lending someone money, giving tzedakah or giving gifts to the poor?'

The רשב"א brings that since the mitzvah is not completely reliant on the individual, because the other person can refuse, a ברכה cannot be said.

Based on this, **Rav Chaim Pinchus Scheinberg** brings the רמ"א in סימן תרצ"ה that says, even if one refuses to accept a מנות, the person who sent it is still מקיים his mitzvah! Clearly משלוח מנות is not a mitzvah that is reliant on another person, so why do we not make a ברכה bracha on giving Mishloach Manos?

Rav Scheinberg answers that the focus of the mitzvah of משלוח מנות is not in the transfer of my gift to you, but in creating more שלום and ריעות, peace and friendship. Which is why the רמ"א states that the acceptance is irrelevant. Just by sending משלוח מנות you are creating more שלום and ריעות. Therefore, the lack of ברכה is not because of the involvement of another person. His acceptance is irrelevant.

So what then is the reason for no requirement of a bracha on giving Mishloach Manos?

The יוסף in סימן תל"ב says that we don't make a ברכה since it is a מצוה בלב, a mitzvah that takes place in the heart, and חז"ל did not establish a ברכה but only on mitzvos with an action.

As stated above, the essence of משלוח מנות is to create more שלום and ריעות, and therefore it is considered a מצוה בלב and not able to have a ברכה recited upon it.

Additionally, even according to the רמ"א, if Reuven gave מנות to Shimon, and Shimon got upset that Reuven attempted to send him מנות, Reuven would not be מקיים the mitzvah. Reuven clearly did not increase שלום and ריעות. Therefore the mitzvah is somewhat dependent on more than one person and cannot have a ברכה recited upon it for that reason. ♦



Hands up Against Amalek

Rabbi Benzy Fox

In the Krias HaTorah on Purim day, we read the section in Parshas Beshalach dealing with Klal Yisrael's initial fight with Amalek. The Torah describes how the tide of war literally turned based on the position of Moshe's hands: "When Moshe *would raise* his hands, and Yisrael prevailed" (Exodus 17-11, emphasis added). Notably, the Pasuk does not say "When Moshe raised his hands." What is the Torah's choice utilizing the future tense meant to teach each one of us?

The Chofetz Chaim explains that Moshe symbolizes the strength of Torah. Klal Yisrael's path to victory in its battle against Amalek is intrinsically connected to its relationship to the Torah. The Torah precisely uses the future tense to make known that in each subsequent generation, Klal Yisrael will only be victorious over its adversaries if Moshe's hands are raised, namely, that they support and carry the Torah.

"Klal Yisrael's path to victory in its battle against Amalek is intrinsically connected to its relationship to the Torah."

Furthermore, several Gemaros highlight the central role of Torah in the victory of Purim. Megillah 16a describes how when Haman saw Mordechai illustrating the Kemitza procedure to his students, he exclaimed that their fistful of flour came and pushed away his ten thousand silver coins. Moreover, Shabbos 88a says that Klal Yisrael reaccepted the Torah on Purim. "Moshe's hands" had been raised once again by Klal Yisrael in its epic battle against Amalek at the time of Purim.

Finally, we can now better understand Ramah's ruling in Orach Chaim 595-2 that it is good to learn Torah before beginning the Seudas Purim. The supremacy of Torah is so fundamental to Purim and our entire victory over Amalek was, is and will be due to our connection to the Torah, that it has practical Halachic ramifications. Therefore, before commencing our seudah, we learn Torah and thus remind ourselves in what Zechus we merited the great salvation and miracle on Purim. ♦



From our extended Yeshurun Family:

Purim and Yom Kippur

Rabbi Chaim Rosen | Rosh Kollel Kollel Toras Ephraim Shlomo

The Zohar writes (Tikkun #21) Purim got its name from Yom HaKippurim - פורים אתקריאת על שם יום הכיפורים.

We see from the Zohar that there seems to be a clear connection between Purim and Yom Kippur. The Vilna Gaon goes a step further. He writes that every Yom Tov has a seudah. Yom Kippur is a Yom Tov, but it doesn't have a seudah because it is a fast day. The seudas Yom Tov of Yom Kippur is "made up" with the Purim seudah! At first glance this seems very odd. If there were two days on the Jewish calendar that seem as diametrically opposed to each other as possible they would be Purim and Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur is a serious day of teshuvah in which we fast and are in shul most of the day, as opposed to Purim which is a jolly day of drinking and feasting. What is the connection between these seemingly totally opposite days!?

In my humble opinion, if we appreciate the depth and beauty of Purim we will come to the conclusion that the differences between Purim and Yom Kippur are only in the exterior. In their essence they are two sides of the same coin. Here are some of the comparisons between Purim and Yom Kippur so we can have a taste of how seudas Purim could be the completion of Yom Kippur.

If we are able to integrate Yom Kippur into our Purim we will Bezras Hashem enjoy all of the ruchnius pleasure that Purim has to offer without compromising the festive atmosphere!

“the differences between Purim and Yom Kippur are only in the exterior”

1) Both Yom Kippur and Purim are days of kabbalas HaTorah. On Yom Kippur we received the second set of Luchos.

The Gemara says that the miracle of Purim caused a renewed kabbalas HaTorah out of love.

The Gra explains that just like there is a chiyuv seudah on Shavuos, as the Gemara says "hakol modim debainan lachem", everyone agrees that on Shavuos one has to engage in physical pleasure in order to show that we are happy that we received the Torah. So too on Purim we were mekabel the Torah anew out of love, therefore we need to make a seudah to show that we accepted the Torah out of love.

The Kabbalas Hatorah that took place on Yom Kippur comes to its pinnacle on Purim when we accept the Torah out of love. Perhaps since the Kabbalos Hatorah on Purim is on the highest madreiga that is why the expression of simcha is the greatest with the obligation of mishta and simcha!

2) The medrash in Mishlei (#9) says that all of the Yomim Tovim will be batul leasid lavo except Purim and Yom Kippur.

I heard the following explanation from Hagoan Rav Asher Weiss Shlita: On both of these days we have total deveikas with Hashem. A great expression of deveikas is giving Hashem back all we have. On Yom Kippur we give back our guf. We give up all of our physical pleasures. We also give over our ratzon, rededicate ourselves to Hashem, and focus on doing teshuva.

On Purim, when we drink "ad d'lo yada" we give Hashem our daas. These two days of the year are an expression of the Jew's essence so just like the Yid is eternal so too these days can't be batul.

3) Just like on Yom Kippur when we are Bezras Hashem sealed for another year of life, and given new life which is like a techias hameisim, so too on Purim we were saved from death and given a new life. The gemara on 14a in Megila says that being saved from death requires singing shira.

The Medrash Tehillim #102 says that "am nivra ahallel Kah" refers to the generation of Mordechai and Esther, and it also refers to after Yom Kippur when we sing Hallel with the daled minim! We are created anew after a clean slate of the mechila of Yom Kippur. Purim we also came back to life. Haman wanted to wipe out the Jewish people, and we were sealed to be destroyed. Hashem saved us, it was as if we were brought back from the dead. Because of this salvation we rededicated ourselves to Hashem. This repeats itself every year! The Ramchal in his sefer Derech Hashem says the hashpa of the Yom Tov repeats itself every year.

On Yom Kippur there is a techia/resurrection of the neshama, and on Purim there is a techia/resurrection of the guf!

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On Purim even the body can come to life, and be holy even under the influence of alcohol!

On Purim we see if our teshuvah on Yom Kippur penetrated the guf, and changed us through and through!

4) The Gra writes that Yom Kippur is a day that resembles Olam Haba. Yom Kippur is a day that we experience a taste of Olam Haba. It is a day that we refrain from all physical pleasures. This mirrors Olam Haba. In Olam Haba there won't be any physical pleasure.

The Gemara in Brachos says Olam Habba's pleasure is the enjoyment of basking in the light of the Ziv Hashchina. The experience of Yom Kippur is similar to that Ruchniyus pleasure. All we do the entire day is daven and engage in actions of deveikus. The only thing is we can't fully enjoy Yom Kippur because we are still in our physical bodies, so as much as a person can enjoy davening he is still experiencing the pain (inuy) of the fast.

Purim on the other hand is different. Purim we reached a level of understanding that Hashem is always with us, and that everything that Hashem does is for the best. We reached a level of understanding that is similar to the ultimate revelation of the oneness of Hashem that we will imy" experience in the world to come. Therefore we celebrate Purim in a way that resembles the pleasure of Olam Haba, namely we bask in the ziv Hashchina without the interference of the body. The body and soul are in total harmony. A person can drink "ad delo yada" and feel close to Hashem. Purim is the "mashal" for the actual pleasure of Olam Haba. The Purim seudah is a taste of the "seuda leveyason". When a person feels happy after he drinks he can focus fully on the pleasure of Olam Haba. That is how Purim complements Yom Kippur.

Furthermore on both of these days we come to clarity (olam habarur) that Hashem Hu Haelokim, Ein Od Melvado! That is an additional reason why they are both days that have a taste of Olam Haba. Olam Haba is a place of total clarity of Hashem's metzius. That yediya is the greatest deveikus, which is the experience of being nehene m'eziv Hashchina! On Yom Kippur and Purim we have a taste of that clarity. In a certain sense the clarity that we can achieve on Purim is greater than the clarity we have on Yom Kippur.

“We celebrate Purim in a way that resembles the pleasure of Olam Haba, namely we bask in the Ziv Hashchina without the interference of the body.”

This clarity on Yom Kippur enables us to do Teshuva. However on Yom Kippur only our seichel has clarity, and in order to get clarity we need to knock the body out of the picture. We need the background of the five inuyim to accomplish this goal. On Purim however after mechiyas Amalek, Amalek is gematria safek, we have the potential to get to that clarity even with our body. We can Bezras Hashem get there even if we give up our seichel "ad delo yada"!!

If a person drinks with this intention, he doesn't have to get that drunk, and he can experience a tremendous closeness to Hashem, and feel that great yearning for the time of "venisgav Hashem levado". He can have a very uplifting and meaningful Purim.

5) The Gra says that the difference between an animal and a person is people have seichel and sechok. Yom Kippur is the madreiga of seichel. It is the cognitive awareness of Hashem and our obligation to serve Him.

Purim is the higher madreiga of daas which is sechok. Sechok comes from the deep understanding that what one might perceive on the surface is not necessarily the truth. It might be that the reality is just the opposite (ונהפך הוא). (נהפך הוא).

This is the madreiga that Rebbe Akiva reached. When all the Tana'im were crying after witnessing the churban Beis Hamikdash, Rebbe Akiva was laughing. He saw deeply what seemed to be bad was really the catalyst for good! He saw "kol ma d'avid Rachmana letav avid". Amalek is likened to a leitz. We reach the madreiga of sechok when there is mechias Amalek-when leitzanus is eradicated, then we can reach sechok on the side of kedusha, the deep realization that Hashem is pure goodness and guiding us for our best every step of the way!

May Hashem take away the pandemic, and send Moshiach so we can experience the ultimate sechok "Az Yemalei Sechok pinu" speedily in our days

A freilechin Purim ♦

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