

MOOR LANE MORE TORAH

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BANGING FOR HAMAN

By Rabbi Mord Maman

There were many resha'im in the Torah. We do not bang for Paroh, Bilam or Korach, so why for Haman?

Keter Shem Tob picks up on this and asks: ultimately Haman lost, he was defeated, hanged and his name has been erased, but we every year strive to erase his name.

Why? Because of the plan which he planned?

But Paroh not only thought to do evil things, he actually did them! How many people did he break with backbreaking labour, how many children did he kill, place in walls of buildings, throw into the river, but we don't make noise at his name!

He suggests the reason for this is that Paroh's cruelty wasn't anything new per se: we see throughout history that many kings have enslaved other nations, but Haman created a new form of evil: he used propaganda, he informed, he aroused an empire to be prepared to rise against the

Jewish people to destroy them, he aroused the king's wrath to destroy them. He was the first antisemite.

"Haman created a new form of evil: he used propaganda"



We hear it in Haman's words, yeshno am echad mefuzar umeforrad bein ha'amim vedateihem shonot mikol am. "There is a unique people scattered and dispersed through all the realms of Your Majesty's realm, and their laws are different from anyone else's." (Esther 3:8) And therefore, since they're different and since they

don't accept the King's laws, issue a decree, the first warrant for genocide: lehashmid laharog ule'abeid et kol hayehudim mina'ar ve'ad zakein taf venashim beyom echad. The chilling words: "destroy, to obliterate and to exterminate all the Jews, young and old, children and women in one day" (Esther 3:13).

And even though he did not succeed in his days, nevertheless, many people in every generation learned from him and acted as he did, and many casualties among the Jewish people fell. Many brazen dogs hold in their hands the craft of Haman.

This we bang for; this deserves to be erased. ♦



HAPPY PURIM

Insights into the Megillah

By Rabbi Moshe Stamler



כְּשֶׁבַת הַמֶּלֶךְ אַחַשְׁוֵרוֹשׁ עַל כִּסֵּא מַלְכוּתוֹ אֲשֶׁר בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַבְּיָרָה
When the king Achashverosh sat on the royal throne which was in the capital Shushan. (1.2.)

When the king Achashverosh sat on the royal throne which was in the capital Shushan.' The midrashim explain that this throne was a replica of the throne of King Shlomo which Achashverosh made because he was not able to sit on the actual throne of Shlomo. [The Yalkut implies the reason was because previous kings who had attempted to sit on it had been injured.] It took three years to build. The only place with artisans capable of making it was Shushan. Since it was very large, they were unable to bring it to Babylon, which had previously been to seat of the Kings, and therefore Achashverosh moved the monarchy and occupied the throne in Shushan.

This is why the megillah stresses that it was when Achashverosh sat on this throne, as opposed to his predecessors, who sat on the throne in Babylon. The megillah writes this to show the greatness of G-d who orchestrated events to perform a miracle for Israel: because Mordechai was in Shushan, as it states 'there was a Jewish man in Shushan' meaning he already was there, therefore G-d arranged for Achashverosh to come to Shushan and reside there. This is why our Sages said that we need to read the entire megillah - even though apparently Achashverosh's glory is unnecessary for us to know - because each verse is recounting the greatness of the miracle.

However, the miracle was with a hidden face meaning that He brought it about through natural means. When the Sages ask 'where is the hint to Esther in the Torah', they mean to ask where is there a hint that even at times of 'a hidden face', namely in Exile, G-d performs great miracles for us such as the Purim miracle. [Vilna Gaon]

יָבוֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּן הַיּוֹם אֶל-הַמְּשֵׁתָהּ אֲשֶׁר-עָשִׂיתִי לוֹ
May the king and Haman come today.... (5.4.)

When the king Achashverosh sat on the royal throne which was in the capital Shushan.' The midrashim G-d's name is not mentioned explicitly in the megillah, only via hints: the initial letters and final letters of two phrases יבא המלך והמן היום 'May the King and Haman come today' and כי כלתה אליו הרעה 'the evil determination against him was final'. This is because the miracle which G-d did for us was hidden from the eyes of man and therefore His name is only written in a hidden way: in the place where it mentions the zenith of the greatness of Haman and in the place where it mentions his lowest moment of downfall. It is specifically in these two places that G-d's name is hinted, to inform us that the greatness of Haman was from G-d and his downfall was also from Him. These hints are at the beginning and the end of these phrases to indicate that G-d was the first cause of both Haman's initial greatness and his eventual downfall, to let future generations know that He watches over us 'from the cracks' to save us from those who stand up against us. [Yosef Lekach]

בַּיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר שָׁבְרוּ אֹיְבֵי הַיְהוּדִים לְשָׁלוֹט בָּהֶם

וַנִּהְפּוּךְ הוּא אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁלְטוּ הַיְהוּדִים הַמָּה בְּשִׁנְאֵיהֶם

On the day when the Jews' enemies expected to prevail over them, it was turned about and the Jews prevailed over those who hated them. (9.1)

An enemy is someone who personally wishes to carry out evil; a hater is someone who rejoices in that evil but does not himself do anything. 'It was turned about' that the Jews overcame not only their enemies but even those who hated them. The word *המה* [gematria fifty] is used because the forty-nine gates of evil decreed against the Jews were overturned for the good, so that they would prevail against those who hated them. [Vilna Gaon]

קִיְמוּ וְקִבְלוּ הַיְהוּדִים עָלֵיהֶם וְעַל-זָרָעָם וְעַל כָּל-הַנְּלוּיִם עֲלֵיהֶם

The Jews confirmed and undertook upon themselves and their descendants and upon anyone who might join them to observe these two days (9.23)

The acceptance of Purim by these different groups of people- the Jews themselves, their descendants and converts - corresponds to the effect Haman's decree would have had on these respective groups. His intention was to destroy to kill and to exterminate, להשמיד להרוג ולאבד. The Jews themselves were in danger - להרוג. Future generations would not have existed as Haman's intention was to wipe out the memory of the Jewish nation - לאבד. Converts would have had no Jewish religion to join and so were subject to להשמיד which means that Haman intended to eradicate our religion. Hence all three groups accepted Purim to mark their salvation from these three aspects of the decree. [Vilna Gaon]

וּתְכַתֵּב אֶסְתֵּר הַמֶּלֶכָה בֵּת-אֲבִיחַיִל וּמֶרְדֵּכַי הַיְהוּדִי אֶת-כָּל-תְּקֵף לְקַיֵּם
אֶת אַגְרַת הַפּוּרִים הַזֹּאת הַשְּׁנִייתָ:

Esther and Mordechai wrote the power of the miracle to confirm this second Purim letter (9.29)

Mordechai had originally written the account very briefly, to the point where the Jewish people did not realize they had been divinely judged guilty of annihilation. On the contrary they consider themselves as righteous and that because of their righteousness G-d caused Haman to make a mistake in his astrological calculations. Therefore, Esther and Mordechai now decided to write second letters to the Jewish people, to make known that there had been a decree of annihilation against them, and that through fasting and prayers G-d had had mercy on them. This is what the phrase 'the power of the miracle' refers to: i.e. the lengthy detailing of what happened, so they would understand through the details of the events that לולי ה' שֶׁהָיָה לָנוּ 'were it not for G-d who stood up for us says Israel' ככ"ד תהלים. This is why the second letters are referred to as דברי אמת words of truth. [Yosef Lekach.]

יַעֲשׂוּ-עֵץ גְּבוּהַ חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה

They should make gallows 50 cubits high (5.14)

The purpose of such tall gallows was so that Haman would be able to have the satisfaction of seeing his enemy hanging from the gallows from a distance when he would be in the King's courtyard. This was divinely orchestrated so that when Esther accused Haman of planning to kill Mordechai, Achashverosh would be able to see these very gallows from his palace, as the actual sight of the gallows would arouse the King's anger against Haman much more than merely hearing about them. The advice of Haman's wife and allies brought about his downfall. [Vilna Gaon]



The Depth of Joy

By R' Meir Simcha Cohen

It was the hanhagat hamishpat, manner of American judgement, in which straight-comedian and satirist Alan King who summed up the Jewish calendar with the pithy statement, "They tried to kill us, we won, let's eat!"

Perhaps the epitome of such an attitude is the approach many of us seem to take when it comes to Purim. Some of us distance ourselves from all things alcohol related, reluctant to see its results and yet others perhaps take matters a little too far, resulting in an atmosphere that seems frivolous and unrestrained for our otherwise refined selves. We may, and indeed should, question what the correct atmosphere of the day should be. Further, with the current situation ongoing in Israel and the rise in anti-Semitism both globally and locally, we may wonder what approach it is that we should have in mind as we celebrate this joyful day with all its external expressions of exuberance.

A beautiful idea is discussed in the sefer Ahavah Rabbah (Rabbi Y.S. Goldschmidt, Israel), albeit with a number of commentators giving different variations of the same concept. He writes that Hashem runs the word in two ways – through

embodiment of evil and impurity, such as Haman Harashah, as the channel through which the most remarkable accomplishments may come about. This concept is another angle of the classic idea that Purim is all about what's beneath the surface. The Megillah sounds a bit like a sample of the almost typical storyline of the Jew in galut – suffering, dire predictions, no apparent potential for salvation... but a loving G-d really pulling all the strings from the background, waiting for us to recognise it. In fact, whilst Hashem's name does not explicitly appear even

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once in the whole Megillah, the Midrash (Esther Rabbah 3:10) states that the word 'Hamelech' in the Megillah, may actually hint at Hashem Himself – the idea being that Hashem was 'running the show' all along, despite it not being obvious on the surface.

The unique expression of joy on Purim may in fact reflect this theme. A genuinely happy and excited person who overflows with simcha usually has a deep-seated inner sense of joy and satisfaction themselves. When a person fully appreciates and internalises the underlying significance of a joyful event, they can then indeed sing and dance, with confidence in the knowledge that the external rejoicing is a true reflection and extension of

their internal emotions. In the same way as the miraculous ending of the Megillah is one in which Hashem's pulling the strings really becomes obvious as having been the primary factor under the surface, so too the depth of the external rejoicing on Purim is a reflection of a true inner joy. Perhaps this is also the meaning of the explanation of the Megillat Setarim (Rabbenu Ya'akov of Lissa, author of the classic Netivot Hamishpat) of the passuk in the Megillah (8:16), "The Jews had light and gladness (simcha) and joy (sasson)...", in his comment, "It appears that the simcha is the gladness of the heart and pleasure of the soul and mind, and sasson is the joy of the limbs"; the internal gladness of the soul as well as the external joy of the physical body are both crucial factors at play.

To take this a step further, the message is that not only is it despite the hardships and turbulence of galut that we must celebrate, it is in fact precisely because of them that we must push ourselves to internalise the message of Hashem running the show from behind the scenes. Rabbi Daniel Fine (Still Thinking Still Aloud, 2011) records an event that happened during the Nazi Holocaust that most accurately depicts the spirit of the Jew in the most trying of circumstances.

One of the forms of torment which the SS officers would inflict was that after a long and harsh day of back-breaking labour, the Jewish inmates would be forced to sing and dance, much to the officers' amusement. One time, the inmates decided that the tune that day would be one often put to the words, "Ashrenu mah tov chelkenu – Fortunate are we! How good is our portion!" Indeed, they sang it and after a couple of minutes, the inmates slowly but surely picked up on the nuances of their tune and this infused them with a certain amount of strength and chizzuk. Unbelievably, they started singing and dancing with more enthusiasm, commemorating the underlying Jewish spirit which cannot be fully suppressed, no matter how difficult and indeed tragic the situation.

Whilst it is true that the situation in Israel and in fact in many of our communities all over the world is far from a simple one, this in itself is reason for us to think about the message of Purim, to remember that Hashem is watching over His children no matter what and to allow those emotions of "Ashrenu, mah tov chelkenu" to explode in an unparalleled display of true happiness and joy! Purim sameach! ✨



Schar Shabbat

By R' Yishai Lister

Can I rent my house over Shabbat?

Can I join a Shabbat Kollel?

Can I work as a Chazzan or Ba'al Koreh and charge a fee?

Can I ask my neighbour to send his daughter to babysit for Shabbat afternoon for payment?

May one organise a daily-interest-increase loan which would effectively mean monetary gain on a Saturday?

“What might be the problem?” I hear you ask. Well...

There are restrictions on any arrangement where one gains money over Shabbat (called Schar Shabbat), whether for services one provides (Bava Metzia 58a/ Ketubot 64a) or for renting things out over Shabbat (Shulchan Aruch Siman 246:1).

Gaining money over Shabbat is prohibited so as to prevent people transgressing the melacha of kotev. Any business deals or jobs can include and may very well lead to writing things down or jotting down one's hours, etc. It makes no difference when the money is actually received: as long as the right to the money was gained over Shabbat, it is prohibited.



PERMISSIBLE WAYS TO EARN MONEY OVER SHABBAT:

1) ABSORBED EARNINGS/ HAVLA'AH

The prohibition of Schar Shabbat only applies when the payment is being gained for work done on Shabbat and only on Shabbat. However, if the Shabbat earnings are contractually combined with other non-Shabbat earnings, then the payment is permitted.

This only works if it was decided before Shabbat that the earnings should be weekday earnings with Shabbat earnings as part of the package.

A girl who babysits at an hourly rate of five pounds and has a job for Friday night may not hand in her hours to her employer after Shabbat as being one hour on Shabbat. Rather, the employer should ask her to babysit on Friday afternoon for an hour as well. The two jobs should not be seen as two separate jobs (with one of them being on Shabbat), rather as one combined job. Therefore, all her work on Shabbat is only a continuation of the job she had started on Erev Shabbat, rather than an hourly rate, and is effectively absorbed into the job she started on the weekday.

Similarly, a tutor may not be hired just for Shabbat afternoon, rather he should have a job during chol in addition to Shabbat afternoon and those two periods of time should be seen as one job. The period of time on Shabbat is just the start/ finish of a job to be/that has been done and is effectively absorbed into a weekday job, and is therefore not a problem of Schar Shabbat.

A Baal Korei should read from the Torah during the week as well as Shabbat and both sessions should be seen as one long employment. This avoids the problem of Schar Shabbat. (Shulchan Aruch 306:4)

Some poskim write that one may allow his vending machine or hotel (which operates on a day-to-day basis) to operate over Shabbat as constant maintenance throughout the week makes it one big job. (Sefer Yesodei Yeshurun 306) (Whether or not this also applies to internet businesses that one wants to leave open over Shabbat is beyond the scope of this article and a competent Rav should be consulted.)

2) SATURDAY / SHABBAT

May one organise a daily-interest-increase loan which would effectively mean monetary gain on a Saturday? This is usually permitted, as Saturday ends at midnight, whereas Shabbat ends at Tzet HaKochavim, which is earlier than midnight. Therefore, the Saturday earnings would be permitted as they extend into chol. [However, if one lives in a place where Shabbat goes out after 12am, one may not be able to rely on this heter.] This may be another reason to permit Jewish owned hotels which work on a day-to-day basis.

3) A GIFT

The restrictions of Schar Shabbat only apply if one is earning on a pre-arranged and obligatory payment. However, if one receives a surprise non-arranged gift (even in the form of money) which is seen only as thanks for his services, it is permitted. It must be understood by both parties (the giver and receiver) that this is a voluntary payment. (Mishna Berura 306:15)

4) DEDUCTING FROM A LOAN

If one is paid in advance of the work in the form of a loan, and the amount of the loan is reduced to zero as his work proceeds, then it is permitted, as one is not gaining money, rather losing his debts. (Magen Avraham 306:7/ Tehilla LeDavid 306:7) (See also Rav Akiva Eiger Sif Katan 7 who disagrees with the Tehilla LeDavid and limits this heter to extremely rare cases.)

5) MITZVA

According to most poskim (Mishna Berura 306:22), Schar Shabbat is muttar for a mitzvah. For example, a Baal Tefillah, Baal Tokeah, Torah Tutor, Kollel Avrech (who in most cases according to Shevet Halevi and R' Moshe Sternbuch has a din of a real worker (Shevet Halevi 8:315/ Teshuvos V'Hanhagos 5:384)), a doctor (for treating a Jewish patient) etc. may accept payment. (Shulchan Aruch 306:5/Mishbatzos Zahav 4/Mishna Berura 23) However, pricing and payment should only be discussed after Shabbat (Mishbatzos Zahav ibid.)

It is important to note that the poskim warn that if one earns money even with this heter, one will not see a siman bracha from that money. (Pesachim 50b/ Magen Avraham 306:8)

Some Poskim write that this only applies to one who is wealthy and does not need the money. One who can only just afford to get by does not need a siman bracha with the money he earns, he just needs to be able to put bread on the table... (Orchos Chaim Spinka 585:13)

One should strive to use one of the other heterim mentioned above to avoid these uncertainties.

IF ONE DID THE WORK ALREADY

One may neither offer payment (Mishna Berura 306:21), nor accept the payment (Mishna Berura 306:15) for a job over Shabbat without one of the heterim mentioned below, whether this job was taken on with ignorance of the Halacha or intentionally.

The restriction also applies if one is going to receive payment in a way other than monetary payment, for example "you wash my dishes and I'll wash yours another time"; gaining favours may also very well be prohibited. (Shmiras Shabbat Kehilchasah 28:54) However, a favour in the form of a preventative measure is permitted when gain on Shabbat as a wage- for example "you watch my orchard and I'll watch yours later" is permissible. Guarding an orchard is a preventative service and is therefore not Schar Shabbat when used as payment. (Shmiras Shabbat Kehilchoso 28 note 121)



