

HAMAN & ACHASHVEROSH TODAY

On Purim, the side of kedushah, represented by Mordechai and Esther, prevailed against the side of tumah, represented by Achashveirosh and Haman. We didn't only face the danger of Haman then. Chazal said that when Esther raised her finger at Haman and said, "This oppressive man, this enemy", she was actually trying to her point her finger at Achashveirosh. And, Chazal also said that Achashveirosh was an even bigger enemy to Klal Yisrael than Haman. On Purim, we were faced with two bitter enemies: Haman, and Achashveirosh.

What did Haman want to do to us, and what did Achashveirosh want to do to us? They didn't just hate the Jewish people. They were really at war with Hashem and His Torah. There are "three ties bound together: Hashem, the Torah, and the Yisrael (the Jewish people)". Hashem, the Torah, and Yisrael are inextricably bound with each other. The enemies who fight to destroy the Jewish people are essentially attempting to rebel against Hashem, and His Torah, being that Hashem, Torah, and Yisrael are all intertwined. Hashem is called Echad, "One". The Torah is also called "one" Torah: "One Torah it shall be, to you." The Written Torah and Oral Torah are both part of one Torah. And Klal Yisrael are called am echad, "one nation." Thus, Hashem, the Torah, and the Jewish people are all called echad (one).

[Being that there is an ongoing war between the side of kedushah versus the side of tumah], echad on the side of kedushah is opposed by an echad on the side of evil – one single power that attempts to fight against the echad on the side of kedushah. This is called the echad d'kilkul, the "oneness" on the side of ruination. It is Achashveirosh who represented echad d'kilkul. He was one king who had the entire world under his rule, all united under his evil intentions. It wasn't a coincidence that he ruled the entire world. He was the echad on the side of evil, who unifies the entire world under his dominion. Just as Hashem is One in the side of holiness, and He rules over all, and unifies the entire Creation, so did He allow this power to exist in the side of evil: Achashveirosh, who ruled the entire world under his evil dominion. The festive meal the made included all of the nations of the world, representing his power to unify the entire world into one unit for the purpose of opposing Hashem's rule over the world.

Haman, though, was an entirely different kind of evil. Haman was all about causing pirud, separation. Haman

said that the Jewish people are "one nation, scattered and spread apart between the nations." Haman's words represent his entire agenda: to highlight the disparity amongst the Jewish people, to break apart their unity. Haman descended from Amalek, the root of evil which is responsible for causing us to have 'rifyon yadayim' (weakened hands) in our Torah learning, and rifyon is from the root letters of the word pirur (crumbling). The Maharal therefore says that the word 'Purim' is from the word pirur, to crumble. The pur (lot) that Haman cast represents his agenda to cause pirur (crumbling) and thereby cause pirud (separation) amidst Klal Yisrael.

Both Achashverosh (echad d'kilkul) and Haman (pirud) were fighting the unit of Hashem, the Torah, and Klal Yisrael. Thus, Purim wasn't just a threat from Haman alone or from Achashveirosh alone. It was the union of both of them - pirud combined with echad d'klipah, to fight against the echad d'kedushah of Hashem, Torah, and Yisrael.

Haman said about us that we are "one nation, scattered and apart between the nations." How are we one, if we are spread out? It is because although we are all one, Haman/Amalek tries to cause disparity within us and break apart our oneness. Haman/Amalek thrives on pirud, on a lack of achdus in Klal Yisrael, and he was defeated through a very specific formula: Mordechai gathering together Klal Yisrael. Since Mordechai was the "Moshe in his generation", and Moshe is the all-inclusive soul of all the parts of Klal Yisrael, all of the parts of Klal Yisrael had to unify under their root - the soul of Moshe/Mordechai - in order to counter the broken unity amongst us that was caused by Amalek. Thus, gathering all the Jews together needed to be done precisely through Mordechai, to reveal that the Jewish people are not simply disparate from each other and spread out among the nations as Haman said. It was to reveal the reality, that Klal Yisrael are really one unit. And once we gathered together, Haman's power was weakened.

After Haman was defeated, though, Achashveirosh still remained. Achashveirosh still ruled the entire world, and the Gemara says "We are still the slaves of Achashveriosh", so although we had won against Haman (Amalek/pirud), we did not yet win over echad d'kilkul" [and he still prevented us from building the Beis HaMikdash]. Not only did Achashveriosh still remain, but he will return once again in the Acharis HaYomim (the final days).

Achashveirosh and Haman banding together was not just a one-time occurrence that took place many years ago. This evil union will once again return in the final days, for it was an evil that continues until this very day, and it will emerge in its full power again in the final days before the Geulah. However, it is from that situation that the yeshuah, the final Geulah, will come about. Chazal said that Purim will never cease, even in the future when all other festivals will cease. The festivals are in remembrance of leaving Egypt, which will no longer be relevant, but Purim will never be forgotten: “The days of Purim will never cease, and their remembrance will never be forgotten from their offspring”. In the Gemara, there is an argument if we will be deserving of the Geulah, depending on if we do teshuvah or not. Either we will do teshuvah and immediately have the Geulah, or, according to the other view in the Gemara, we will get a “king as harsh as Haman”, and that will force everyone into doing teshuvah. Haman was not a king, though, so what is a “king as harsh as Haman”? It means that since Achashveirosh and Haman will unite again in the end of days, in that sense, Haman will be like a “king”.

Any bar daas (mature, thinking person) can actually see it taking place now. We are very close to the end of the 6,000 year era we are currently in, and Achashveirosh and Haman have returned. Nowadays, we are a very scattered nation. There is pirud levavos, a great separation in our hearts amongst each other. We are one nation, but we are separated and divided amongst each other. In the times we live in, there is no place which is free from machlokes and fighting. Chazal said that idol worship was so rampant in the era of the first Beis HaMikdash to the point that there were idols on every roof. In a similar vein, it can be said that in our times, there is no roof which does not house machlokes within it. This is all the modern-day manifestation of “Haman”, the concept of pirud/disparity, the power of Amalek. When we are “a scattered nation”, as Haman accused, this gives power to Amalek. There was never as much disparity within the Jewish people as there is today, and all of this fuels Amalek.

But there is something even worse today – ‘Achashveirosh’ is present today as well, and he was an even greater threat to us than Haman. [Whereas Haman wanted to annihilate us physically, Achashveirosh wanted to destroy the kedushah of our neshamos and thereby annihilate us totally.] Achashveirosh is echad d’kilkul, the concept of “evil oneness”, he can devise one single tactic that can bring us down entirely. It’s very clear to any sensible person how this manifests today. In our generation, a person has “one” device [smartphone or internet-enabled device] which connects him to the entire world, all at once, to all of its

49 levels of tumah. Anyone can see how this is so clear. ‘Achashveirosh’ and ‘Haman’ are still around today, and they’ve merely taken on a different form. But it’s the same forces of tumah which they embodied. Haman is all of the pirud (disparity) and machlokes that’s so rampant today, and Achashveirosh is the one single evil today which is bringing down everyone with it, the echad d’kilkul. And together, these two evils (machlokes and internet-capable devices) are banding together to raze the foundations of Klal Yisrael.

If we are zocheh, Klal Yisrael will become gathered together again, just as in the time of Mordechai, and we will reveal our power of echad, which we gain from being davuk (connected) with Hashem, with His Torah, and with His tzaddikim of every generation who are connected to the dimension of Hashem Echad. Klal Yisrael will have to come together again in order for the power of echad to be revealed. Although there are all kinds of justified reasons for machlokes and dislike towards other Jews - even if it’s technically not considered sinas chinam (baseless hatred) and it’s considered rational, it is still rooted in pirud, it is all ‘Haman’. When we will be unified together again, when all of our ‘branches’ unite under its ‘root’, we will reveal echad, and that will erase Haman/Amalek forever. And, by the Geulah, even Achashveirosh will be destroyed. As of now “We are still slaves of Achashveirosh”, we are still being attacked by his schemes of echad d’kilkul in which he uses one single tool to bring down our neshamos, chas v’shalom. On Purim, we only got rid of Haman, but not Achashveirosh, who is just as strong now as he was then. But in the Geulah, our Purim will become complete with both Haman and Achashveirosh erased forever. And that will be the complete revelation of, **ליהודים היתה אורה** “To the Jews, there was light” – which is the completely revealed ohr of HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

DOING TESHUVAH BEFORE THE GEULAH

QUESTION Is the war of Gog-Magog the same thing as the war of Amalek? **ANSWER** The root of the war of Gog-Magog is a war against Hashem, and from every direction of the world, and this branches out into a war against the Jewish people, just as with the war of Amalek. Amalek is called the evil “element of wind” - which includes every evil within it (just as wind includes all the directions in it), and Gog-Magog is the kli, the container, the evil “element of earth”, which holds the war of Amalek within it and enables it to be actualized.

QUESTION How did the world begin to get ruined since the year 5760? What exactly happened during that year which changed the world? **ANSWER** That is when the power of Amalek began to dominate in the world, because from 5760 and onward, there are 240 years left until the end of the current 6000 year dimension we are in [the gematria of Amalek is 240].

QUESTION What is this dominance of “Amalek” since 5760? Is this referring to the Internet in people’s homes?

ANSWER Yes.

QUESTION Amalek is all about the concept of “My strength and the might of my hand”, and this arrogance seems to characterize the most powerful countries of the world, such as America, Russia, China, North Korea, and Israel, who all boast of their power. Are all these countries a branch of “Amalek”?

ANSWER The countries of chutz l’aretz (outside Eretz Yisrael) are a branch of Amalek, while Israel is entirely under the exile of the “Erev Rav”.

QUESTION When America defeated the Germans in World War II, does that mean that America isn’t part of Amalek since they fought Germany, whom the Gedolim referred to as Amalek?

ANSWER Amalek is able to be at war within itself [hence different countries of “Amalek” are able to wage war against other countries of “Amalek”]. Part of the “war of Amalek” includes the war of “Esav” against the Jewish people, and the war of “Yishmael” against the Jewish people.

QUESTION Since the world today is centered on pursuing pleasure and self-gratification, would that place all of the nations of the world under the category of Amalek? **ANSWER** At their root, all of the nations are included in Amalek, each nation in a different way.

QUESTION What is the “internal” war of Gog and Magog that we face? **ANSWER** Everything contains good and evil within it, which are mixed together. A clear example of this is the destructive kli, the device which enables connection to media/internet, which contains good and evil mixed together in it in a very disturbing manner. It is through it [internet devices] that the entire world is being fought against – it fights against each person with his various issues and wishes. And there is also a revealed reality that we can see as clearly as light (ohr), in which there are wars, physical suffering and emotional suffering, troubles from every direction. Corresponding to all of this is the power in the final days to become deeply united with each other in our hearts as never before and reach a deep level of ahavas Yisrael (examples include the chessed organizations for Klal Yisrael as well as Daf Yomi which connects all of Klal Yisrael together). There is also a burst of emunah peshutah that a person can easily reveal today, the “simple” power which counter all of the complex and devious ways of the world today with all of their harmful wisdom [technology, etc.] And, because of this, in this generation, it is easier for a person to grasp the secret of Echad [to connect one’s soul to one desire alone, which is the desire for Hashem Echad, which is how a person becomes connected to the “50th gate of kedushah].

QUESTION What do “Gog” and “Magog” each represent? **ANSWER** Reb Tzadok HaKohen (sefer Machsheves Charotz: 9) explains that “Gog” is from the word גג (gag, a roof), and which hint to the concept of גאוה (gaavah, haughtiness), because Hashem says about a baal gaavah, “I am and him cannot dwell under one roof” (Sotah 5b). Reb Tzadok says further, “When the

word Gog is spelled with the letter vov (גוג) it refers to a person who makes himself self-sufficient (as if he’s independent from Hashem). This is a person is entirely conceited at his root.” (See also Pri Tzaddik to Parshas Shemini, 9). In retrospect of this, the Zohar (II:57, II:75) says that Hashem’s exaltedness and pride (גאוה) will reign supreme after the arrival of Gog and Magog. And Rav Tzadok further writes in sefer Pri Tzaddik (Beraishis:12) that the evil of kefirah (denying Hashem) is represented by Gog-Magog, which is the collected evil of all 70 gentile nations, and as a hint, the gematria (equivalent) of the words Gog and Magog totals 70 (sefer Pri Tzaddik, Va’eira 2, and based on Midrash Tanchuma, parshas Korach, 12). (2) Gog represents the evil that fights against Mashiach ben Yosef. As a hint, Gog has the letter gimmel twice in his name, which equals 3 and 3, for a total of 6, and Yosef is represented by the number 6, for Yosef is called Yesod, the sixth of the 10 Sefiros. Rav Tzadok writes (in Pri Tzaddik, Naso 15) that Gog-Magog will fight against Mashiach ben Yosef. This is because Gog-Magog represent gaavah (conceitedness), which is also the root of the tumah of Sodomy (immorality) [as written about by Reb Nachman of Breslev]. The Gemara (Succah 52a) discusses the war of Gog and Magog against Mashiach ben Yosef. Magog is the tumah that fights against Mashiach ben Dovid. The sefer Pri Tzaddik (Rosh HaShanah, 11) says, “The main evil of Gog and Magog is to counter the holiness of Mashiach ben Dovid.” (See also Pri Tzaddik parshas Netzavim, 11.) This is the particular evil of kefirah, denying the power of Hashem. The sefer Shem M’Shmuel (in Chol HaMoed Succos) wrote, “The concept of Gog and Magog is all about a rebellion against Hashem.” If we analyze it more closely, this is actually the evil of Magog, because the sefer Shem M’Shmuel states elsewhere that Magog is all about “throwing away the yoke of Heaven.” (3) The word Gog is the letter gimmel twice, connected by the letter vov (which is the Hebrew letter that connects all other Hebrew letters together), representing three forces of evil that combine together, which fight against the three main forces on the side of holiness. The triad of Gog, Magog, and Armilos will fight against Moshe, Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben Dovid. The sefer Don Yadin [of Rebbi Shimon Astripole] says that Gog, Magog and Armilos are three wicked individuals who are all essentially one unit. This is the depth behind the Gemara’s words that if a person is careful to eat the “three” Shabbos meals, he will be saved from the war of Gog and Magog, and this is also connected with the words of the Zohar (Shemos, 7, 72) that Gog-Magog will wage war 3 times. Gog – or gaavah - is the evil that fights against Mashiach ben Yosef, whereas using media/internet devices is the evil that fights against Mashiach ben Dovid. The internet (and by extension, all internet-enabled devices) is the one, all-inclusive force of tumah which counters the all-inclusiveness of the Individual One of the world (Hashem), and it represents the evil of denying that Hashem runs the world.

QUESTION If Eliyahu HaNavi comes and arouses everyone to do teshuvah before Mashiach comes, which seems to imply that Eliyahu will enable each person to be redeemed even from the worst levels of tumah, why we do need to come out of all the tumah of today and do teshuvah, if Eliyahu will

come return all of us? **ANSWER** Eliyahu does not return everyone to doing teshuvah. This is because Chazal state (Eduyos 8:7), "Eliyahu does not come to contaminate nor purify, to distance or to draw close, only to distance with the arm those who are close, and to draw close with the arm those who are distant." [In other words, only those who are already close to Hashem are the ones who will gain from Eliyahu's revelation before the Geulah.] See also the Gemara Kiddushin 71a. Eliyahu will come to "return the hearts of the fathers on their children", and it is certainly going to depend on each person's particular level in ruchniyus, and chas v'shalom should a person say that we don't need to do teshuvah before Eliyahu's arrival. To the extent that one does personal self-work, that is how much one will merit the great ohr (the illumination) of the revelations of Eliyahu, followed by the revelations of the Geulah.

QUESTION Why then does everyone need to do teshuvah, if the two Mashiachs will come fix the world anyhow? **ANSWER** Because doing teshuvah draws the Geulah closer. The more that a person fixes with teshuvah, to that extent will a person merit the spiritual benefits that will come from the two Mashiachs, on his own level and to the degree that he does teshuvah. Because even when Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben Dovid will arrive, not everyone will merit to equally partake of the spiritual benefits that they will bring.

QUESTION Eliyahu HaNavi will inform the Jewish people that Mashiach is arriving - but how will we know if he's really Eliyahu HaNavi? **ANSWER** It is not absolutely certain if everyone will believe Eliyahu's report that Mashiach is arriving. Only those who are truthful (anshei emes) will recognize it.

QUESTION How will we know who Mashiach ben Yosef is and who Mashiach ben Dovid is, when they arrive? Will

Eliyahu inform us? **ANSWER** It will be just like how a person senses when it becomes day and when it becomes evening, which is a simple feeling that you just know about. That will be the case when Mashiach completely emerges from his potential state, from his hidden state to his revealed state. Mashiach ben Yosef will emerge when he fully utilizes his potential, whereas Mashiach ben Dovid will emerge when he stops being hidden and he becomes revealed.

QUESTION The Chofetz Chaim wrote several sefarim on how to be worthy of the Geulah. Is there anything else we need to do that isn't mentioned in the Chofetz Chaim's words? **ANSWER** Become connected with the shaar HaNun d'kedushah (the 50th level of holiness)!

QUESTION How can a person do teshuvah in a joyous way and stay positive, instead of falling into worry and sadness from all of his aveiros and personal shortcomings?

ANSWER The suggested advice for this is that first, you should always see what positive gains you have had in your life so far, recognizing the value of what you have, and then thank Hashem for whatever good you have. Only after that should you reflect on your shortcomings.

In this way, the beginning of your connection to Hashem will be coming from recognizing what you have, from actualizing your gratitude to Hashem about your good points and achievements - and from that positive state, you are now ready to do teshuvah for whatever areas you fall short in.

This will turn your fears about your aveiros and personal shortcomings, into pachad d'kedushah ("holy fear").

When your fears about your past aveiros and personal shortcomings are appearing to you after have actively established a relationship with Hashem, only then can you recognize clearly whatever it is that you need to fix, and only from that

healthier perspective towards yourself can you go about fixing your past.

QUESTION If a person just has filtered Internet, will this, too prevent him from getting into Olam HaBa? **ANSWER** That will be the case if one feels a chibur nafshi, if he still feels "emotionally connected" to the Internet, and if he doesn't disconnect from this by the moment before the Geulah arrives.

QUESTION How can I motivate all those I love and care about to get rid of their Internet husband and children to give up their Internet? They simply don't get that this will prevent them from Geulah and Olam HaBa. How can I save their neshamos for all of eternity? **ANSWER** Try to explain about it to them, pleasantly and gracefully, from the depth of your heart. Also, daven and cry to Hashem for them.

QUESTION How do we do teshuvah when we get ready for the Geulah? **ANSWER** First, a person needs to do teshuvah from being afraid of Hashem. After that, he should be happy that he is doing teshuvah. First a person needs to actually do teshuvah, and only after that can he rejoice with simchah.

QUESTION What are the benefits of being in Eretz Yisrael to be there for Mashiach? **ANSWER** The suffering of chevlei Mashiach is lesser for those who are already found in Eretz Yisrael by the arrival of Mashiach. On a deeper level, it is because the "light of Mashiach" will first radiate in Eretz Yisrael, and therefore anyone found in Eretz Yisrael at Mashiach's arrival are the first to receive his light.

QUESTION How is it possible not to fall into despair from all the destruction that can chas v'shalom happen during the final stages of chevlei Mashiach, and to have emunah, bitachon, and simchah? **ANSWER** Feel Hashem's love for you, and trust in Him that everything He does is good.

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