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WEEKLY PARSHA
ARCHIVE Q&A

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HAMAN WANTED TO DESTROY OUR DEEPER ESSENCE

How indeed can we reach the point in ourselves that is above our own *daas*? How do we penetrate into this inner spiritual light?

This is the secret of the concept of *igul* (circle). Having the perspective that comes from standing amidst the “circle” is what reveals true unity between our brethren. Superficially, this is called *ahavas haberiyos* (love for the creations) and *ahavas Yisrael* (love for Jews), and this is also true, but there is much more to it. *Ahavas Yisrael* is about reaching the point [in the soul, inwardly], where all are equal. Only at that point is true unity revealed.

How do we reach that point? Let us reflect on the following.

From what age does a person receive *daas*? The clarity of *daas* can only be received at 20 years of age (because Heaven does not punish a person for any sins committed before that age). One is considered to be capable of *daas* at either 13 for a boy or 12 for a girl. A child younger than that has no *daas*. Haman wanted to destroy all Jews, including children. He also wanted to destroy anyone who didn't have *daas*. Simply speaking, this was a decree to destroy all of the Jewish people. But his deeper agenda was because he wasn't trying to attack us at our point of *daas*. He wanted to destroy even the point in us that is above our *daas*.

This is in contrast with Bilaam, who also tried to destroy the Jewish people. Bilaam is Moshe's equal in the side of impurity, equal to Moshe in prophecy. Bilaam wanted to attack us at our *daas*, which is represented by Moshe. That is one way to start up with *Klal Yisrael*. But there is a deeper kind of war against *Klal Yisrael*. Haman was trying to attack us on a much deeper level. He argued to Achashveirosh that we are “one” nation who did not behave like other nation. He was not picking on the fact that there are differences within the Jewish people; rather, he was attacking our oneness, our unity. He wanted to destroy the entire Jewish people all in “one” day, which hints to his attack on our own oneness.

This was very unlike the war of the Greek nation against *Klal Yisrael*, who were trying to influence our *chochmah* (wisdom) to think like them. When it comes to our *chochmah*, we each think differently because we each have our own *daas*. But Haman wanted to destroy us precisely because of our inner oneness. He was

fighting us at a plane that is beyond *daas*. It is thus said of Amalek (ancestor of Haman), “*There is war of Hashem against Amalek, from generation to generation*”.¹ Amalek is at war with G-d. Why is this the definition of Amalek’s war? It is because the Jewish people are one nation who are unified under their connection with Hashem. There is nothing in creation that is absolutely one; the only “one” in Creation is Hashem’s oneness, and those who attempt to fight the oneness of the Jewish people are really trying to fight the oneness of Hashem.

In the point of our *daas*, there is no oneness in the Jewish people, for everyone’s *daas* is different. But Haman and Achashveirosh were fighting the point of oneness in the Jewish people, where we are indeed connected under one unit. This was not a war against our *daas*, which would only be against our outer layer; it was a war against the “oneness” that is in the Jewish people, which comes from the light of Hashem – thus it was a war against the oneness of Hashem. The light of *echad* (oneness) is the Infinite Light of Hashem; Hashem is called the “One Almighty, Who Is Individual”; and Hashem is called “*Hashem echad*”, “Hashem is one”. Haman was aware of our oneness and he was using it to attack us, by trying to reveal our aspect of “oneness” in the side of evil [by getting the entire people to bow down to him].

We see that when Mordechai didn’t bow to Haman, Haman became enraged. Why did it bother Haman so much that one Jew doesn’t want to bow down to him? It was because Haman was trying to attack us through revealing our “oneness” in the side of evil, which he was trying to accomplish through getting everyone to bow down to him. Now that one Jew wasn’t bowing down to him, it was foiling his plans, because it meant that there we weren’t unified in subservience to him. Haman could only have power over us if he could get us all to bow down to him, so if even one Jew isn’t bowing to him, he couldn’t have power over us.

After he became enraged at Mordechai, he planned a gallows of 50 *amos* high to hang Mordechai on. Why specifically did he want it to be 50 *amos*? The deeper meaning behind this is because there are “50 gates of understanding” in the

¹ *Shemos 17:15*

world², which is the inner structure that Hashem has designed the world with. When Haman wanted to hang Mordechai on a gallows that was 50 *amos* high, on a deeper level, this is a hint that wanted to destroy all of this inner structure of the 50 gates of understanding. By hanging Mordechai, he hoped to destroy the “oneness” that is the root all of the 50 gates of understanding.

Haman also gave the plan to have all the Jews destroyed on the 13th of Nissan, and 13 is equal to the letters *yud* (י) and *gimmel* (ג), which is equal to the word *אחד* *echad* (one), because he was trying to fight us through oneness. Haman wanted to destroy us on the grounds that we are all one nation. The fact that his plans were foiled shows us that the light that was revealed on Purim is the inner light of our “oneness”.

OUR AVODAH ON PURIM – REACHING THE POINT OF “ONENESS” IN THE SOUL

It is easy to talk about this concept of oneness, but there is a deep *avodah* we have to reach this place of oneness in our own souls. It is not an easy task to penetrate past all of the layers in the soul and to get to the deepest layer of the soul, which is the “oneness” that resides within us.

On Purim, we penetrate into our souls, using external means [intoxication], but there is really an inner work we need to do along with this. The outer tool we use for this is the intoxication, where we become inebriated to the point where we do not know the difference between “Blessed is Mordechai” and “Cursed is Haman.” The wine erases our *daas*, and when we have no *daas*, we can get in touch with the inner root of the soul, the point where all souls are equal in.

That all concerns the physical action of our *avodah* on Purim; now let us explain, with *siyata d’shmaya*, of how we can dig very deep into the soul and reach the inner perspective of “oneness” which we are describing here.

THE SECRET WHICH THE WINE REVEALS

Chazal state, “When wine enters, the secret come forth.”³ A “secret” is not merely something that you choose to hide from revealing to someone. Such a

² *Rosh HaShanah 21b*

³ *Eruvin 65a*

secret is only a “secret” due to circumstantial factors. The only true “secret” is something which can never be revealed. A secret is described as “Your mouth is blocked from speaking of it.”⁴ There is a deep place in the soul which is called “The heart is not revealed to the mouth.”⁵ It is a deep perspective in the soul, and it exists in the depths of each and every Jew’s soul. This deep place in the soul is called a “secret”.

What does it mean, then, that “when wine enters, the secret come forth?” If “secrets” come out, then they are not really secrets, because a secret is only something which can never be revealed. So what are the “secrets” that can come out through intoxication? The depth of the matter is that the “secrets” which can come forth from oneself, via the intoxication of wine, are secrets that can always remain as secrets. It is the “secret” that is in every Jew’s soul: “Hashem is one and His name is one” – and this oneness is called “*Kneses Yisrael*”, the collective unit of the Jewish people.

This point is hidden from most people, because it so deep in the soul, and not only is it hidden from others, it is often hidden from the person himself. When “wine enters, secret come forth”, this does not mean that a person tells these secrets to another. It means that the “secret” becomes revealed to the person himself.

Achashveirosh served wine for seven days after the meal that lasted for 180 days, and the Gemara says that each person had served to him wine which was older than him⁶; every person had wine which preceded his own birth. In this statement, Chazal are hinting to us about the “secret” of the soul, which is **above** one’s “I” – the root of the “I”. When the point above the “I” is revealed to a person, the “secret” of the soul is revealed within him.

This is the depth of “When wine enters, the secret comes forth”: it can be revealed to a person the very root of his essence. Thus, the “secret” that is meant to be revealed on Purim is not about revealing the “I” itself. If that would be the

⁴ *Sefer Yetzirah* 1:7

⁵ *Kobeh Rabbah* 12:9

⁶ *Megillah* 12a

point, then each person at the party would have drunk a wine that was made on the day he was born. But that is not what they drank. They drank a wine that preceded their day of birth, which hints to us that the “secret” revealed to the one who drinks the wine is, the revelation of the point **above** the “I.”

Achashveirosh was trying to reveal this “secret” in the side of evil, through the wine that he served them during these seven days after his grand feast. But in the side of holiness, we have an *avodah* on Purim that parallels this concept: through the wine on Purim, we are meant to reveal within us the presence of the Individual One of the world. Hashem’s oneness resides in the point deep in the soul that is above the “I” of a person. Purim is about penetrating past our very “I” – and to get further and further into **the areas of our soul that are beyond the “I”** (ego\self).

THE “I” IS THE RATZON\WILL

Until now we have explained how the light of Purim is above the point of our *daas*. Now we will explain, with *siyata d’shmaya*, of how the light of Purim is also above the point of our *ratzon* (will).

It is written, “*Make for Me a temple, and I will dwell amongst them*”⁷. The *Nefesh HaChaim*⁸ and the *Alsbich*⁹ both explain that the *possuk* does not say “amongst him” but “amongst them”, which shows us that Hashem dwells in each Jew. If so, the *possuk* is saying that Hashem wanted that the heart of each Jew should become a sanctuary where His presence (the *Shechinah*) will reside.

The Sages said that in the seven-day feast which Achashveirosh hosted for the Jews [where he served them wine that preceded their birthdays], he used the vessels of the *Beis HaMikdash*.¹⁰ The depth behind his agenda was because he was really trying to reveal the point in a Jew’s soul that is “above the I”, in the side of evil [by getting everyone to partake in his party and by getting them to reveal what their truest, innermost desires were].

⁷ *Shemos* 25:8

⁸ *Nefesh HaChaim* 1:4

⁹ *Alsbich al HaTorah*, *Shemos* 25:8

¹⁰ *Esther Rabbah* 2:11

But Achashveirosh's plan couldn't work, because since he was a person who did not have recognition of the Creator, he thought that the deepest part of a Jew's soul is the point of *ratzon*\will [and he didn't know that there is a point in a Jew's soul which is beyond the conscious *ratzon* of the person]. Achashveirosh gave the order that all of the wine be served "according to each person's wish" – according to each person's *ratzon*. He thought that the essence of the soul is the *ratzon*, and by getting them to have an evil *ratzon* to partake joyously in his party, he thought he could ruin them at their very core.

The "I" of a person (the self) is his *ratzon* (will), but the deeper part of the soul lies beyond the "I". It is the light of the Creator in the Jew's soul, and Achashveirosh was unaware of this layer of the soul. He could only get the Jews to sin at the level of *ratzon* [by getting them to pursue gluttony and to want it].

Ultimately, he did not succeed in getting them all to have a unified *ratzon* for evil. This is because the *ratzon* of each person is different, and it is only Hashem, in His Infinite Light, Who can unify and equalize everything. Achashveirosh was trying to equalize everyone by showing how all of us had the same evil *ratzon*. His mistake was that he didn't realize that he was trying to do something that was impossible.

The light revealed on Purim is thus a point that not only transcends anything that can become "divisive": it transcends our *daas* (logical perception), and it transcends our *ratzon*\will [for both our *daas* and *ratzon* are divisive aspects].

PURIM – GETTING PAST OUR RATZON

It is well-known that the *gematria*¹¹ of "Moshe" is equal to "ratzon".¹² As we have been explaining, Purim revealed a level that is beyond *ratzon*. This was also the perspective which the people were trying to gain in making the golden calf. They thought that Moshe was dead, so they wanted to have a bond with Hashem that was beyond *ratzon*: they wanted to have a "circular" relationship with Hashem

¹¹ numerical value in Hebrew

¹² *השם* equals 345 and *נוצר* equals 346. There is a rule in *gematria* called "am hakolel" that the numbers can still be 1 off and yet there is still a parallel.

(“*igul*”), a point where all people have an equal relationship with Hashem. They wanted to reveal this point of equality, and this is what they were trying to show by making the *eigel* (the golden calf), which is from the word “*igul*”. [Their intentions were holy, but ultimately, it led to an action of sin].

On Purim, this perspective was revealed in a holy manner. On Purim, this inner point was revealed, in which are all equal in; this is reflected by the fact that on Purim, we penetrate past our *ratzon*/will, by removing our *retzonos* [via intoxication]. When one removes his *retzonos*, he can get in touch with the reality of the Creator.

TWO ASPECTS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HASHEM

This is because there are two aspects in the relationship between *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and the Jewish people. One aspect of it is to fulfill the *mitzvos*, which fulfill the will of the Creator, and through that, we bond with Hashem. A second aspect of our bond with Hashem is, “A Jew, even when he sins, is still a Jew.”¹³ Hashem loves each member of the Jewish people even if, *chas v’shalom*, he is not doing His will.

Therefore, the bond between Hashem and the Jewish people exists on two levels. One level of the bond is through the *mitzvos*. A person bonds with Hashem through doing the *mitzvos*, which are Hashem’s will. Each morning in the blessings before *Shema*, we express our acceptance of His will upon us. The second level of the bond we have with Hashem, though, is unconditional. It is like how a son is his father’s child regardless of what he does – he is always the child of his father, and it doesn’t depend on anything he does.

One needs to build these two levels in his soul. We need to do the *mitzvos* so that we can attain the level of the bond with Hashem that is available to us through doing the *mitzvos*, where we are fulfilling His will. But along with this, we also need another aspect in our relationship with Hashem. This is not a replacement, *chas v’shalom*, to the first level. Rather, it must rather go hand-in-hand with the first level. One needs to also have a bond with the Creator

¹³ *Talmud Bavli: Sanhedrin 44a*

regardless of the actions that he does. One must ultimately feel towards Hashem that “I am Your son, and You are my father.” So on one hand, one needs to build a bond with the Creator through doing the *mitzvos*, and along with this, one needs to also enjoy a father-son relationship with Hashem – while making sure not to become lax, *chas v’shalom*, in keeping any part of the Torah: **a Jew must know that he is loved, on an intrinsic level, by the Creator of the world. A Jew is Hashem’s child, and he is a part of Him, so to speak.**

The redemption we had on Pesach prepared us to receive the Torah, where we would receive the *mitzvos*. We declared “*Naaseh V’Nishma*” there and that made us eligible to receive the Torah. This meant that we were making our *ratzon* subservient to the Creator’s will. But the redemption we had on Purim was a new aspect in our relationship with Hashem. It was a re-acceptance of the Torah, which was also done with *ratzon*, and the depth of this was that we became desirous (“*retzuyah*”, from the word *ratzon*) to Hashem.

When we re-accepted the Torah on Purim, it didn’t give us more *mitzvos* than what we received at Har Sinai; our obligation in the *mitzvos* did not change, and indeed, it cannot be ever be forsaken, *chas v’shalom*. But the “*ratzon*” we revealed on Purim was that we revealed this point that Hashem always desires the Jewish people in every situation. So it doesn’t mean simply that they now accepted the Torah again willingly. Rather, they revealed how the One who gave the Torah always wants them.

A person understands simply that if he does the will of Hashem, then Hashem will want him, and if he doesn’t do the will of Hashem *chas v’shalom*, then Hashem doesn’t want him. **But Hashem always desires every Jew.** The prophet states that at the time of redemption, all Jews will return, and no Jew will be left behind.¹⁴ Thus, the light revealed on Purim is really the light of future redemption. The future redemption is not only for those who did Hashem’s will; it is not selective.

Rather, every Jew is called Hashem’s child, and he is included in the redemption; it is not possible for any Jew to be left out of it, as the prophet guarantees. The light of the redemption in the future is not dependent on the actions that a Jew

¹⁴ *Shmuel II 14:14*

has done. Purim is the source of this light. On Purim, there was a decree of death on all Jews, and the redemption than was experienced by everyone, without any exceptions. It didn't depend on how worthy their actions were.

(However, we need to emphasize that in addition to the light which is not dependent on our actions, there is also a light that is dependent on our actions. So we need to contain both of these two lights at once, and they go hand-in-hand with each other. Compare this to having a father and mother. A person cannot come from only a father or only a mother; he needs to come from both. The same goes for our bond with Hashem.

We cannot say that there is only one kind of bond with Hashem, in which a person is always connected to Hashem even if he doesn't do His will. Rather, we need both the aspects of doing His will and having an unconditional relationship with Him, in the same way that we need both a father and a mother.)

Purim revealed the deeper aspect of our bond with Hashem: that our relationship with Hashem goes above logic, for it is not dependent on any reason. The Sages said that the Jewish people then were deserving of the decree, either because they enjoyed Achashveirosh's party or because they bowed to the idols then. **In what merit, then, were we saved from the decree? From a deep perspective, there were no merits that saved us! It was simply because we were Hashem's children!**

When we realized that this was the nature of our salvation, we were able to come to an entirely new acceptance of the Torah, where we realized that **we are connected to the Creator in every situation.**

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

פוריים 006 - ענין העיגול בפורים - ספר מועדי השנה

ETERNAL SURVIVAL FOR OUR SOUL PARTS

QUESTION *The Rav had said that there is a heavenly process that determines which parts of the soul will transition over to the next world, and which parts do not transition over. But if every person has a soul that is eternal, what does this mean that only some parts of the soul make the transition?*

ANSWER *The external, superficial definition is, that let's say a person does an aveirah with his left hand but did mitzvos with his right hand. So the left hand will be cut off, and the right hand will remain. That is the simple analogy how to understand it. "The soul of the sinner shall die", that is a general definition. If part of the soul remains in its state of sin, so that part of the soul will cease. But Hashem's compassion, the Infinite Light, can show mercy on His creations and revive the dead parts. So Hashem's compassion can revive a person who sinned. But if middas hadin (Hashem's mode of judgment) is used, then some parts of the soul make the transition and they remain in existence, while other parts are shown less compassion from Hashem. The clear definition is, the purified part of the soul can transition to the Next World, while the parts that didn't get purified cannot make the transition. Raboseinu said that every person has to become reincarnated many times as a gilgul, so when a person gets up at Techiyas HaMeisim, from which gilgul does he arise? The most purified part of the soul from each of the person's lifetimes comes together with all the other purified parts from all the person's lifetimes, and all of this becomes combined into one complete point.*

RELEASING FEAR THROUGH SHMOOZING & DRINKING PURIM WINE

QUESTION *The Rav explained that fears come from daas ra, from impaired thinking, and that one can release his fears by releasing his impaired daas,*

either through (a) talking about his worries to another, or (b) through drinking wine [on Purim]. Can the Rav explain more about how this works?

ANSWER (1) Telling over one's worries to another helps a person remove a person's daas. One thought communicates with another, as we see from the verse "I spoke with my heart", and the Sages said that "the heart speaks". So when a person has a fear, his mind is thinking and mentally verbalizing the fear, and this ignites the fear even more. But by talking about the fear to another, it leaves the thoughts and enters the realm of speech, and this calms the mind and mitigates the intensity of the fear.

(2) Drinking wine creates a certain disconnection from the senses, and through this one is freed from the situation he is found in, and this in turn calms the fear. Even more, when one drinks properly, he enters into a more inner place in his soul, as in "When wine enters, the secret comes out" – and there, everything is good. Reaching this place is the root of repairing fear.

PURIM – RE-ACCEPTANCE OF THE TORAH

QUESTION At Har Sinai, the Jewish people were forced to accept the Torah when Hashem suspended the mountain above their heads, and on Purim, they accepted the Torah willingly, out of love. But even by Purim, weren't they under a lot of pressure from Haman's decree and that's why they turned to Hashem?

ANSWER [Just as there is a halachah when a person needs to be pressured into giving a get and it is considered that he is giving it willingly because] "We force him until he says "I want" [so too a person can become forced into], revealing the love that he has deep down to do Hashem's will.