

Dvar Torah for Purim

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Based on *Likutey Halakhot, Reishis HaGez 3*

After Haman is hanged we are told, “The wrath of the King/king subsided” (Esther 7:10) . We know the rule, that when Megilat Esther uses the expression “the king” without the mention of any name, the King–God–is meant, and also Achashveirosh. The Maharal of Prague asks why it is necessary to mention that Achashveirosh’s anger subsided. He answers that Achashveirosh, heretofore an anti-Semite’s anti-Semite, was no longer angry *at the Jews*. (He was still angry at Haman.) All the points that Haman had raised against the Jewish people to incite Achashveirosh (ibid. 3:8) were completely removed from the latter’s heart.

That a king who had sold a significant portion of his subjects down the river to let them be killed was now benign towards them, is also a miracle for which we have to thank the King. That, writes the Maharal, is only a part of the miracle. Not only did God save us from Haman’s plot, God also forgave the Jewish people in toto, even those who had sinned (for bowing to the statue and/or enjoying Achashveirosh’s ball; see Megilah 12a). God’s forgiving us caused the human king to view us kindly.

Reb Noson explains why, in Temple (Beit HaMikdash) times, the kohanim's clothing brought about forgiveness for the Jewish people. Clothing is derived from the concept known as *chashmal*. The word *chashmal* can be read as two words, *chash*, silence, and *mal*, speaking. (We all know that our clothes say something about who we are while simultaneously "silencing" our physical flaws!) Every Jew has to do at least a little bit of kohen-duty and bring about forgiveness for all Jews. How? By adding *daat*, God-consciousness, to himself and others.

In a certain way, *daat* is clothing for one's will. The deepest, most essential will of a Jew is to do for God. However, a lot of stuff gets in the way, which is why we need a tzaddik, kohen and sometimes a friend, to add to our *daat* in order to clear the other stuff away. Though the pursuit of *daat* requires a bit of talking, asking and answering, often a point is reached where silence is the only correct answer. At that silent point—will—one gets all the answers he needs to do for God.

Once upon a time, when wool was the basic material for most clothing, sheep-shearing engendered a party. The deeper reason for the celebration, writes Reb Noson, was the joy of knowing that greater *daat* was in the offing. At his ball, Achashveirosh wore the kohen gadol's clothing to indicate the apparent end, God forbid, of Jewish *daat*, of Jewish forgiveness. (After all, the prophesied 70 years had passed and the Jews were still in exile.) It seemed that there was a limit to *daat* and his was it—God forbid! But Mordekhai the Jew and Queen Esther proved him wrong; Queen Esther when she dressed herself in prophecy (Esther 5:1) and Mordekhai the Tzaddik when he left the King's/king's presence in spectacular garb (ibid 8:15) very much like a kohen.

afreilekhen Purim!

Purim sameach!

Merry Purim!

A merry Purim to you and yours. If you're drinking, ***DON'T DRIVE!***

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