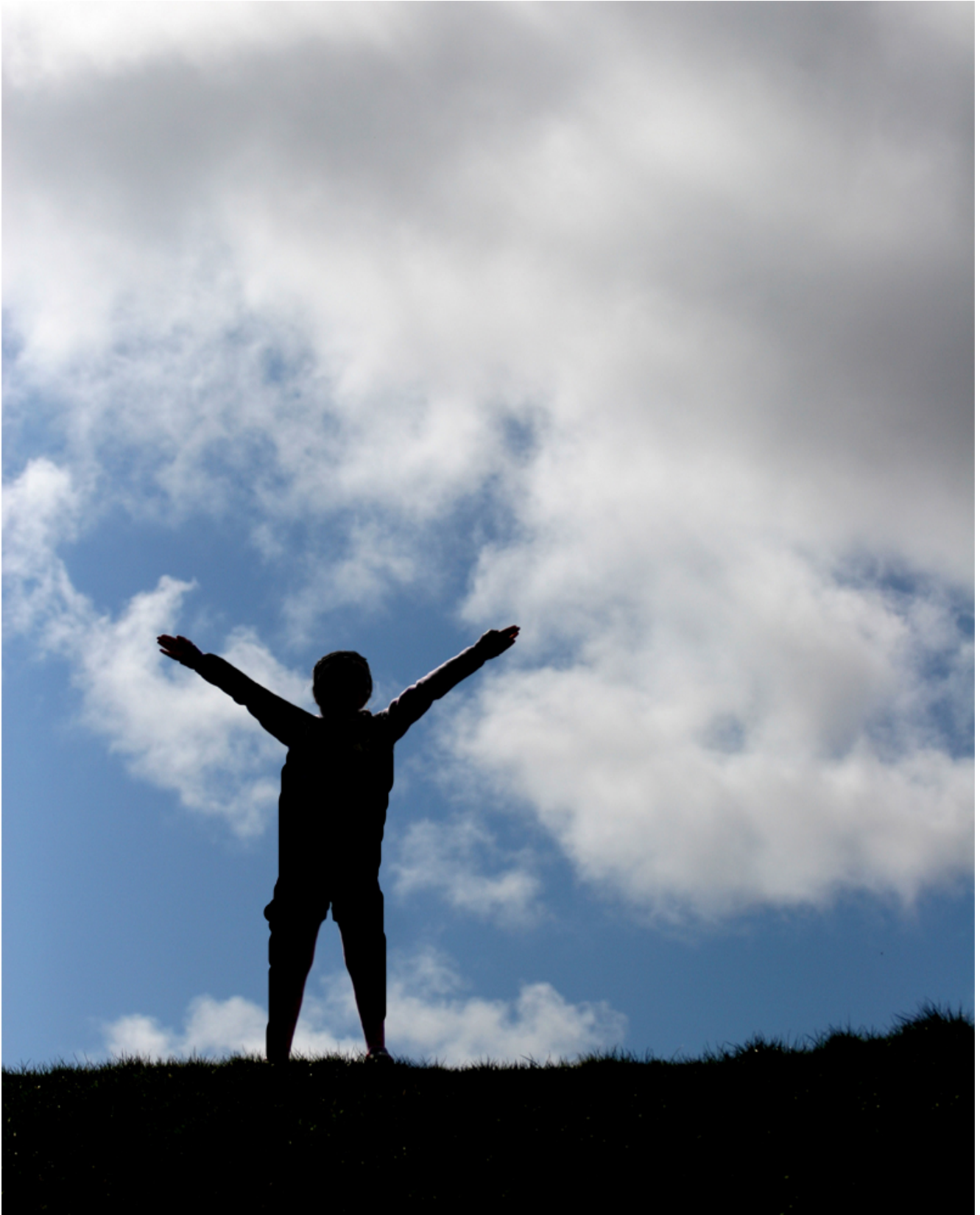


The Humane Human

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A Sacred Time

Adar 3

The Kabbalists reveal that Haman—archenemy of the Jewish people—had little of the milk of human kindness flowing through his veins. There was something inhuman about him, and there's a hint to this in his name. "Haman" is a conjunction of the letters *hei-mem*, which have a numerical value of 45, the same as *adam*, a human being. These are attached to a letter *nun*, which stands for *nachash*, the Hebrew word for snake.

Reb Nosson explains that Haman wanted to damage our humanness, which is expressed in our speech. What we do with our intellect and our power of speech is what determines our spiritual direction. I need to learn to counter the snake which wants me to follow the path of the hatred of Haman. Instead, I need to be understanding and use my capacity to speak for the purpose of spiritual growth.

Purim is one of the most opportune times for effective prayer that can be accessed during the entire year. Even the second day of Purim that is celebrated in cities which were walled during the times of Yehoshua bin Nun is a great day for the prayers of every Jew, no matter where they might be. Now is the time when it's possible to crush the force of the primordial serpent that latches onto the heel of *adam* by begging G-d to help me act fulfill the fullness of my human potential.

Master of the world! Show me how to act like a human being and destroy the force of Haman. Help me use my intellect and speech only for the good, removing all hatred and strife from my nature so that I can become a genuine humane and compassionate human being.