

## PURIM

### A Potent Day

The *Zohar* notes that Purim is similar to Yom HaKipurim. This means that what is accomplished on Yom Kippur by fasting can be accomplished on Purim by rejoicing. Furthermore, the very name *Kipurim* ("like Purim"), implies that Purim is the greater *Yom-Tov*, impacting a person more powerfully.

Indeed, *Chazal* teach that when *Moshiach* comes, all the *Yomim-Tovim* will cease to exist; only the *Yom-Tov* of Purim will remain. *Chassidus* explains that the joy and *kedusha* of Purim are so great, that even when we have the joy and *kedusha* of the *geulah*, Purim will still be special.

(תיקוני זוהר נ"ז ע"ב, מדרש משלי פ"ט, ד"ה להבין מארז"ל כל המועדים כו' תשט"ז ושי"ג)

The *Megillah* says that after the miracle of Purim, the Yidden were blessed with joy, which *Chazal* understand to mean that they were now able to celebrate the *Yomim-Tovim*. The Rebbe explains that although other nations also have holidays, they celebrate them with drinking and unbridled conduct. Yidden, by contrast, even when they rejoice and drink, become closer to *HaShem*, and heighten their dedication and their *kedusha*.

(לקו"ש ח"ג ע' 920, ח"ד ע' 1274, וראה שו"ע"ר סי' רצ"ב ס"ג)

The author of *Chiddushei HaRim*, the first Rebbe of Ger, illustrated the powerful potential of Purim with a story:

There was once a Yid who set out on a journey, intending to commit a grievous sin, and took along five hundred gold rubles that he had patiently amassed over the years. On his way, he suddenly heard the heartfelt cries of a family in distress. They were being evicted for not paying their rent. His pity aroused, he gave them all the money that he had intended to use for the *aveira*.

His deed aroused such a great tumult in *Shamayim* that it was decided that whatever this man would decree, would materialize. However, to ensure that the privilege would not be misused, it was ordained that he become a drunkard.

Some time later, a terrible *tzara* descended upon the world. The Baal Shem Tov sent his *talmidim* to beg this drunken Yid to intercede and ask *HaShem* for mercy. They repeatedly found him drunk, until finally, catching him sober, they presented their request and he succeeded in abolishing the decree.

The *Chiddushei Harim* would conclude: Purim is a day of *eis ratzon*, when every Yid – like that drunkard – can accomplish great things, without limitation. However, to allow this to happen, one must make sure that the merrymaking will not interfere with this mighty potential.

(שפתי צדיק אות נ"ג)

### "Ad D'lo Yada"

We read in the *Gemara* that on Purim one must drink "until he cannot differentiate ('*ad d'lo yada*') between 'cursed be Haman' and 'blessed be Mordechai.'"

The *Gemara* relates a story of two *amoraim*, Rabbah and Rav Zeira, who had their Purim *seuda* together, sharing profound secrets of the Torah over a number of cups of wine. However, Rav Zeira was so overwhelmed by the intense *kedusha* of Rabbah's revelations that his *neshama* left his body.

The following day, Rabbah *davened* for Rav Zeira and brought him back to life. The next year, he once again invited Rav Zeira to join him for the *seuda* and to share the deepest secrets of the Torah. Rav Zeira turned down the offer, saying, "Miracles don't happen every day..."

(מגילה ז, ב, לקו"ש חל"א ע' 177)

On the first Purim after his *chasuna*, the Alter Rebbe gave a non-literal exposition of the *avoda* of attaining the level of *ad d'lo yada*. On Purim, he said, we must ensure that the *lo* – literally, "the No," that is, the things that are forbidden – should be *yada* ("known"). What we are supposed to do is well known, but one must also know what is forbidden, so that it can be treated with extra caution.

(ספר השיחות תש"ה ע' 72)

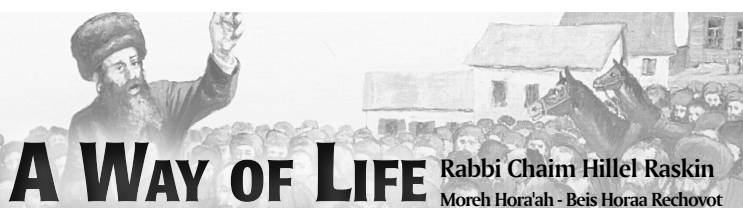
The Rebbe once said: It is self-understood that we must distance ourselves entirely from anything negative ("cursed be Haman"), and seek to treasure and embrace all good things ("blessed be Mordechai"). That applies at any time. What is unique about Purim is that we can accomplish this by allowing our *neshama* to express itself freely (*lo yada*), which is superior to serving *HaShem* by means of conscious thought (*yada*).

In this kind of *avoda* we resemble the Yidden at the time of the Purim story who, when the inner power of their *neshamos* surfaced, fulfilled *mitzvos* faithfully, even to the point of *mesiras nefesh*.

(לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1280)

### CONSIDER THIS!

■ How do we arrange that our rejoicing on Purim should breed enthusiasm and dedication?



# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin  
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

## Zachor for Women

Are women obligated to go to *shul* and hear *Parshas Zachor*?

- The Torah instructs us, "*Zachor es asher asah lecha Amalek*" — we must remember what Amalek did to *Bnei Yisroel* after the miracles shown to them in *Mitzrayim* even though every other nation was afraid to attack, and that Hashem has commanded us to destroy them. The *Sefer HaChinuch* records this as a *mitzvas asei*.<sup>1</sup>
- The way to fulfil this remembering is specifically through reading, or hearing from one who reads, those *pesukim* which mention Amalek and his evil actions.<sup>2</sup> Whether hearing it from the Torah is a Torah obligation or a rabbinic one is a *machlokes* among *rishonim*.<sup>3</sup> The remembrance of Amalek every day in the *Sheish Zechiros* is a *minhag* based on the Arizal.<sup>4</sup>
- How often must we remind ourselves of this? Some *rishonim* hold that *min haTorah* we only need to perform this *mitzva* once in a lifetime,<sup>5</sup> others say no less than once in three years,<sup>6</sup> while others hold it must be heard once a year.<sup>7</sup> Regardless, there is a *mitzva midraban* to read *Parshas Zachor* every year on the Shabbos before Purim, (and some write one can fulfill the obligation on Purim morning if it was missed<sup>8</sup>).
- Are women obligated to hear *Parshas Zachor*? Some *rishonim* understand that this *mitzva* is intertwined with the obligation to eradicate Amalek, and since women are exempt from going to battle, they would be exempt of remembering it as well.<sup>9</sup> Others argue that battling Amalek is a *milchemes mitzva*, an obligatory war, in which women must also participate in some way.<sup>10</sup> Others argue further that the two *mitzvos* are independent of each other, and even if women are exempt from battling Amalek they must still remember the evils Amalek did and how Hashem punishes those who hurt *Bnei Yisroel*.<sup>11</sup>
- The accepted *halacha* is that women are not obligated to hear *Parshas Zachor*.<sup>12</sup> However, since many *poskim* hold that women are obligated, and others hold that they are in fulfillment of a voluntary *mitzva*, many women try to hear *Parshas Zachor* when possible or recite the *pesukim* at home.<sup>13</sup>

1. מצוה תר"ג.
2. מגילה דף י"ח ע"א. שו"ע סי' רפ"ב סט"ז, וראה שו"ע סי' תרפ"ה ס"ז.
3. מן התורה – רא"ש ברכות פ"ז ס"י כ', תה"ד סי' ק"ח מדרבנן – רמב"ן עה"ת סוף כי תצא. וראה מנ"ח מצוה תר"ג.
4. אוצר התפילות ח"א ע"א רכ"ז.
5. ראה שדי חמד מערכת זיין עמוד קס"א.
6. חינוך שם (בשנה אחת, שנים, או שלש לכל הפחות).
7. מיני תרגומא לר"י פיק (הו"ד) בס' המועדים בהלכה) ע"ד מת שמשכתחת מהלב אחר י"ב חדש.
8. מנ"ח שם. ראה רמב"ם הל' מלכים פ"ז ה"ד וברד"ב ז' שם.
9. שו"ת בני ציון סי' ח'.
10. חינוך שם (בשנה אחת, שנים, או שלש לכל הפחות).
11. שו"ת בני ציון סי' ח'.
12. חינוך שם (בשנה אחת, שנים, או שלש לכל הפחות).
13. מנ"ח שם. ראה רמב"ם הל' מלכים פ"ז ה"ד וברד"ב ז' שם.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

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## OUR HEROES

### Reb Shmuel Munkes



Reb Shmuel Munkes, from the town Kalisk, was one of the great chassidim of the Alter Rebbe. The author of the *Beis Rebbe* writes about him: "He was a great chossid and clever in his fear of Hashem, and was well respected by the Alter Rebbe. His conduct is well known, and superficially it seemed as if he acted foolishly, but even there one could see his exceptional genius."

Reb Shmuel Munkes once suspended himself from the gate leading to the Alter Rebbe's *beis medrash*. When the Chassidim questioned him about his strange perch, he told them, "In front of a shoemaker shop, there hangs a shoe; in front of a tailor's workplace, there hangs a garment; in front of a Rebbe's *shul* there should hang a chossid."

In his *Likutei Sippurim*, Reb Chaim Mordechai Perlov notes that Reb Shmuel was a profound chossid and not a joker, and he explains Reb Shmuel's remark as follows:

The reason why a shoemaker and tailor hang their wares at their shop is because that item contains, and therefore expresses, the qualities of the craftsman. Similarly, a chossid must be such that one can recognize on him that he is the Rebbe's handiwork. However, there is a difference: the shoe and garment are hung by the artisan, but the chossid is not hung by the Rebbe but by the chossid himself (as Reb Shmuel did). This means that in order for the Rebbe's efforts to have their effect, the chossid must 'suspend himself,' with total dedication to the Rebbe's directives.

(לקו"ם פרלוב ע' ש"א)

The Radatz Chein related:

My father, Reb Peretz Chein, once arrived at the home of Reb Shmuel Munkes, and before going to bed he asked Reb Shmuel what time he would be getting up. Reb Shmuel replied that he would rise at 3 a.m. In the morning, Reb Shmuel prepared a cup of coffee for himself and for his guest, but Reb Peretz found the coffee to be incredibly bitter and undrinkable. He rummaged around and discovered that Reb Shmuel had unknowingly placed snuff tobacco instead of coffee grinds.

My father asked Reb Shmuel, "How did you drink from this bitter 'coffee'?" To which Reb Shmuel replied, "Believe me, already thirteen years that I don't taste anything that I eat."

(חסידים הראשונים ח"א ע' 37)

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### Among Chassidim?!

Although the Rebbe spearheaded the printing of bilingual Torah publications, stressing that the language is secondary compared to the actual learning, among Chassidim the Rebbe expressed his wish that they communicate in Yiddish. On one occasion the Rebbe even added that the language has a special *kedusha*, since all of the Rebbeim's Chassidus were originally delivered in Yiddish. (*Likutei Sichos*, Vol. 21, p. 446)

It happened once during the winter of 5748 (1988), as the Rebbe was standing at a *levaya*, the Rebbe overheard a conversation in English. The following Shabbos, *Parshas Vayeishev*, the Rebbe expressed disappointment:

"I just overheard two Chassidim, both from *chassidische* families, who learned in a Yiddish speaking *cheder*, conversing in English! Of course for the purpose of *hafotzas hama'ayonos* other languages must be used. But among Chassidim?!" (*Hisvaaduyos* 5748 vol. 2 p. 73)

When *Harav* Hillel Medalia, a prominent *rov* in Antwerp, received an honorary recognition from the government, the Rebbe wrote (18 Cheshvan 5737 (1976)): "It would be worth publicizing that you are an orthodox *rov* with a full beard, *Yiddish* is your mother tongue, and you fight intermarriage. This could have a positive impact in various domains."



347.471.1770



info@LmaanYishmeu.com



www.LmaanYishmeu.com