

## Purim: The Permanent Yom Tov

The Midrash (*Yalkut Mishlei* 944) notes that all the festivals will be abolished (i.e. they will become insignificant compared to the miracles associated with *Moshiach's* arrival) except for Purim and, according to one version, Yom Kippur.

In this segment we will consider reasons for the eternal nature of Purim (and possibly Yom Kippur) and in particular draw parallels between Purim and the Final Redemption.

### ☞ Within Time

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כי כל המועדות הם למעלה מהזמן . . . אבל בפורים נעשה הנס  
תוך הזמן בעצמו . . . והוא מעין מה שיהי' לעתיד . . . ולכן אמרו  
ג"ב שיהיה"ב לא יתבטל

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Whereas all the other festivals involved a radical change in the world order — such as the Ten Plagues — and were *above time*, לְמַעַל מִן הַזְּמַן, above the natural limits set by a world bounded by time, no such physical upheaval occurred during the Purim miracle. Rather, Hashem transformed the heart of a mortal king (and his people) from foe to friend.

While the radical transformation of the world order of the Festivals will pale in comparison to the miracles associated with *Moshiach's* arrival (and thus will be negated), the Purim story — in which mankind's opinion of the Jewish people and of Hashem was radically transformed — will be replicated during the age of *Moshiach*. Just as the month of *Adar*, at the time of the Purim miracle, was associated with *natural*

change [וְהַחֲדָשׁ אֲשֶׁר נִהְפָּךְ לָהֶם], and the month which had been transformed for them (9:22)], so too the times of *Moshiach* will be an era in which Hashem will transform the hearts and minds of mankind away from their pagan gods (or atheist values) to call in His Name. As *Tzephaniah* (3:9) describes that age, כִּי אֲזָ אֶהְפֹּךְ אֶל עַמִּים שְׂפָה בְרוּרָה לְקָרָא, כְּלָם בְּשֵׁם ה' יְהִי, *For then I will give the peoples a pure language so that all of them may call upon the name of HASHEM*. Just as many non-Jews converted at the time of the Purim miracles (cf. *Esther* 8:17, נְרַבִּים מֵעַמֵי, (הָאֲרָץ מִתְיַהְדִּים)), so too mankind will flock to Hashem.

On Yom Kippur too, emphasis is placed on *change*. The verse in *Yeshayahu* [1:18] describing the transmutation of our sins, יִאֲדִימוּ כְהוֹלֵעַ, בְּצֶמֶר יִהְיוּ, *reddened like crimson to pure white as wool*, parallels the change that occurred at the time of the Purim miracle and that will happen in *Moshiach's* time. (5662)

## ☞ With Hindsight All Was Good

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כמו שכל בנין המן וכת דילוי' ה'י הכל סיבה למפלתם כמו כן  
באמת כל הסט'א השולטת עתה . . . סיבות לישועה

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Another similarity may be drawn between the Purim miracle and the events surrounding *Moshiach's* arrival. Just as at the time of the Purim miracle we realized that all that had occurred — Vashti's downfall, Esther's ascension to power, and even Haman's decree — was but a prelude to liberation and even what appeared to be bad was really good. So too, when *Moshiach* will arrive, we will understand that all the tragedies that had occurred during the long and bitter *Galus* were all factors leading to our redemption. (Refer to our remarks in *The Three Festivals* on וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ בָּהּ וּבְמִשָּׁה עֲבָדוּ (5662)

## ☞ Downfall of Edom

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ופורים הכנה לגאולה העתידה תחילת נצחון אדום שכחו חזק  
מאוד

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Another parallel between the Purim story and *Moshiach's* arrival is that they both can only occur after the downfall of Edom, the name

given to Esav's monarchy. (In fact, Esther's strategy in dealing with Haman and especially her invitation to him to attend two banquets was based in large part on the Jewish people's time-honored strategy for dealing with Esav.)<sup>[1]</sup> Whereas, at the time of the Purim miracle, only a branch of Esav's family, Amalek, was punished (cf. *Bereishis* 36:12 stating that Amalek was the scion of Elifaz, Esav's son and Timna a concubine of Elifaz), at the time of the Final Redemption, Esav's threat will be totally eliminated. (5662)

## 🌀 Beyond Understanding

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אבל הגלגולת מקיף למעלה מהמוח ואין שם השגה וציור ודמיון ומשם באה הישועה בימי מרדכי ואסתר.

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All other festivals celebrate the pinnacle of human understanding (דעת ה') reached by the Jewish people. The renowned Gemara (*Rosh Hashanah* 21b) notes that Moshe attained *almost* complete comprehension of Torah — a level comparable to the forty-ninth of the fifty Gates of Understanding (ג' שְׁעָרֵי בִינָה). The Jewish people themselves, nurtured by the forty-eight prophets (cited previously), while not quite on Moshe's level, attained forty-eight levels of understanding (cf. *Zohar Chayei Sarah* drawing a parallel between the forty-eight prophets and the forty-eight sources of wisdom emanating from the Garden of Eden).

We can appreciate why Israel is limited to forty-eight levels of understanding by considering the structural similarity between מ"ח (48) and מוח (brain, intelligence). The מוח, the core of the human intellect, can only grasp מ"ח levels of understanding Hashem.

However, enclosing the מוח is the skull, which protects and envelops the brain but in itself possesses no cognitive function.<sup>[2]</sup>

At the time of the Purim miracle, all rational reasons to save Israel had been rejected. The מוח, the intellect, the power of understanding had sealed Israel's fate. But above the מוח (brain), in the realm beyond human comprehension, hope still remained.<sup>[3]</sup> All forty-eight gates

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1. Cf. *Rashi* (*Bereishis* 32:9) stating that Yaakov utilized a three-pronged approach in dealing with Esav — prayer, gifts, and preparations for warfare.

2. This limitation to our understanding of Hashem is called כֶּתֶר מְלוּכָה, *Hashem's crown*.

3. This is symbolically referred to as the גוּלְגַלְתָּה, *the skull* which lies above and encases the brain.

of comprehension led to Israel's doom, but the fiftieth gate which is beyond human comprehension and known only to Hashem, there Israel was spared. (Haman too, sensing the unique nature of the Jews over natural parameters, erected a gallows 50 cubits high.)

From this perspective, we can appreciate the permanence of Purim. All other *Yomim Tovim* celebrate Israel's release from Egypt's defilement (where we almost sunk to the fiftieth gate of defilement; refer to our commentary on the *Haggadah*) and our eventual spiritual growth, culminating in our attaining the highest level possible of *דְּרֵצַת ה'*, of rational comprehension of Hashem. However, such attainment will pale in comparison to the *דְּרֵצַת ה'* to be achieved upon *Moshiach's* arrival.

The *Yom Tov* of Purim made possible by a reversal of what rationality would have ordained — emanating from the fiftieth gate beyond rational comprehension — will still be pertinent even in the Messianic era when Israel will achieve unparalleled levels of intimacy with Hashem. Both Purim and the Final Redemption are *Yomim Tovim* *לְמַעַל מִן הַדְרֵצַת*, based on the incomprehensible, stemming from zones of closeness and intimacy with Hashem that the rational mind can never achieve. (5661)

## ⚡ Without Israel's Input

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לעתיד שיהי' יום שכולו שבת למעלה מהזמן ממילא קדושת  
המועדים יתבטלו

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To appreciate the association between Purim and the Final Redemption, consider a major distinction between Shabbos and *Yom Tov*. Whereas Shabbos is immutable (its determination does not involve Israel's input), the timing of the Festivals are determined by Israel's representatives, convening as the *Sanhedrin*. The Festivals are truly a tribute to Israel's power to master and sanctify *time*, to determine by itself the timing of the Festivals. During the time of the World to Come which is compared to a *day that is totally Shabbos (Tamid 7:4)*, a world which is above the natural constraints of time, our Festivals will lose some of their significance. However, the *Yom Tov* of Purim, which in no way involved Israel's input (since the miracle of Purim occurred despite our total lack of merit), will still be relevant in that timeless world. (5656)