

12 Adar II, 5784
March 22, 2024

Purim

Our sages teach us that from the very moment the month of Adar begins we should increase in joy! It is therefore certainly an appropriate time for each of us to begin thinking about and preparing ourselves for the very joyous chag of Purim!

On Purim we celebrate that Hashem saved us from the diabolical plan of the evil Haman to, chas v'shalom, destroy all of the Jewish People, men, women, and children, in one day.

The time in Jewish history when the story of Purim occurred should have been the most peaceful and secure time for the Jewish People. After all, the leader of the Jewish People, the righteous Mordechai, a member of the Supreme Jewish Court known as the Sanhedrin, was an advisor to the king. The queen at that time was none other than a righteous Jewish woman named Esther. Never in the history of our long and bitter exile was there such a time when a Jewish woman was married to the king of the entire world. Naturally, the Jewish People at that time should have enjoyed a peaceful, secure, and certain existence.

In fact, however, just the opposite occurred. It was specifically at that time that the most severe decree ever against the Jewish People was issued: the destruction, chas v'shalom, of every Jewish person, men, women, and children - all in one day! It was a decree against every Jew living in all of the lands in Achashveirosh's kingdom - which at that time was the entire civilized world! There was nowhere to run! And the fact that it was all to happen in one day and by surprise meant that there was no time to run either!

How did it come about that at such a unique time in Jewish history when everything should have naturally been the best for the Jewish People, specifically then they experienced the severest, most dire decree ever against them?

The Gemara explains that the reason for the terrible decree was that the Jewish People at that time "had pleasure from the seudah of that wicked one, Achashvairosh." From this we clearly see that Jewish People and nature are two entirely different things! The way Hashem conducts Himself with us is not at all subject to the laws of nature. Everything in our lives depends solely on our learning Hashem's Torah and performing Hashem's mitzvot.

Just as the devastating decree came about through supernatural means, so too the abolishing of the decree came about through supernatural means. Mordechai and Esther's first move was not diplomacy, as might have been expected. Instead they called upon all of the Jewish People to fast and pray and return to Hashem. Only after securing Hashem's forgiveness and beracha did Esther, knowing that Hashem desires that all of His blessings

be en clothed in the garments of nature, enter into the throne room of Achashveirosh with the goal of convincing him to rescind the decree. Esther had fasted three days straight and had thereby most certainly considerably diminished her most valuable commodity in Achashveirosh's eyes, her beauty. Nevertheless Esther went, knowing that Hashem's blessings en clothe themselves in any appropriate vessel - but the vessel is not the main thing. The main thing is the blessing of Hashem, and this, Esther knew, the Jewish People had already secured.

The story of Purim reminds us that the Jewish People's entire existence is supernatural. And just as it is true regarding the Jewish People as a whole, so it is true regarding each one of us individually. Every moment and every detail of each of our lives is conducted from above in a supernatural way. We need only to constantly strengthen our connection to Hashem by learning His Torah and conducting ourselves the way He wants, and then we can be confident that any natural vessels we make will surely suffice to contain Hashem's boundless, supernatural blessings.

**Shabbat Shalom!
Purim Sameach!**

Rabbi David