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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



THE BILLION DOLLAR PURIM!

We live in the billion generation.

A billion is a difficult number to comprehend, but let's try to put that figure in perspective:

A billion seconds ago, it was 1959.

A billion minutes ago, the Roman Empire was in full swing.

A billion hours ago, our ancestors were living in the Stone Age.

And....

A billion dollars ago, was only 8 hours and 20 minutes at the rate Washington spends!

We live in a blessed generation.

With the onset of technology, people are able to build up businesses and sell them within years for billions. Recently Facebook bought messaging app WhatsApp in a deal worth a total of \$19bn (£11.4bn) in cash and shares! Wow!

What makes these companies run, how do they start and what ensures success.

Perhaps the key lies within the story of Purim!

Times were difficult for the Jewish nation in Persia. Haman with the help of King Achashverosh had sent out an edict to destroy the entire Jewish Nation in One Day!

In the twelfth year of Achashverosh's reign on the thirteenth day of Nissan, Haman sent out a letter in the name of the king to the vast empire of Persia: "On the thirteenth of Adar, destroy, annihilate, and lay to waste the entire Jewish nation – every man woman and child."

But the Jewish Nation had a special card to play. Hashem had brought forward the cure before the illness – the new

Queen of the land, was none other than Esther a righteous Jewish lady.

The Midrash tells us that Mordechai was told about this decree by Eliyahu HaNavi. He was informed that it wasn't Haman alone who signed the decree; HASHEM orchestrated these events because of the sins of Klal Yisrael.

Mordechai immediately directed Esther to see the king and beg him to have mercy on her people.

[Esther said:] "Go and assemble all the Jews who are present in Shushan and fast on my behalf. Neither eat nor drink for three days, day and night. My maidens and I will also fast in a like manner, and then I will go to the king – contrary to the law. And if I perish, I perish.

So Mordecai passed and did all that Esther had commanded him."

Esther requested that the Jews fast for three days before her going in to see the king. Mordechai agreed and set the next three days as a time for fasting and Teshuvah.

Our Sages question the words 'Mordechai passed' – what did he pass?

Rashi explains that the second day of that fast was the fifteenth of Nissan – Pesach.

That meant that when they fasted for three days, it overlapped (passed) with the festival of Pesach.

That year, instead of drinking four cups of wine and eating matzah, the Jewish people fasted.

This was not a simple task, for the Torah clearly commands us to eat Matzot, Maror.

We can understand why Mordechai initiated the fast – it was a time of Pikuach Nefesh – the Jewish Nation was in danger and hence it was permitted to put aside the important mitsvot of Pesach in order to fast and gain forgiveness from Hashem.

But why the urgency?

The edict was not take place for more than eleven months. Surely they could have kept the mitsvot of Pesach, eaten Matsot, celebrated the Seder and then after Pesach had finished, they could have gathered all the Jews to fast for three days.

Why the insistence to fast now?

A few years ago Microsoft was in trouble. The kind of trouble that we would love to be in! ▶

8th ADAR II 5779

SHABBAT BEGINS: 6:02 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 7:06 PM

THANK YOU

Baruch HaShem the last few months hard work has paid off. Thanks to all those who supported the important initiative to help build the New TAL Centre.

TAL is proud of the wonderful team effort in making this a reality. We thank HaShem for the fabulous students and TAL members that make TAL have such an important impact on the community.

THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"Gratitude is a magnet to miracles."



DVAR TORAH

The Billion Dollar Purim!
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

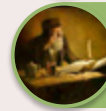
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DVAR TORAH

"Why Purim"
RABBI BENJAMIN STONE

P2



OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI MOSHE BEN MACHIR

P3



HALACHOT

Ensuring Not to Receive a More Prominent
Aliya Than ... / RABBI ELI MANSOUR

P3



Q&A & CARTOON

P4

This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

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They had excess cash on their balance sheet of about \$40 billion dollars.

Apparently they didn't need it for research and development or for marketing.

It was deemed by investors as a waste of resources.

At the time the CEO and founder of Microsoft – Bill Gates was interviewed.

He was asked about his incredible wealth and success. The conversation turned to how he had started out.

He responded, "I was in the right place at the right time, and luck has something to do with that."

He then continued, "In fact there were a lot of people at the same place, but I had vision."

He paused and then said "Many people had vision, but the difference is I took massive and immediate action".

In those days the world had just witnessed its first PC. Bill Gates was one of the few that had a vision, he foresaw the ability for this PC to one day be a part of every household.

That idea is commendable, but an idea alone without action eventually evaporates.

He developed the idea and created software for the future PC placing him (in terms of wealth) the richest man on earth.

Every great accomplishment in history began with an idea.

But an idea alone is useless unless put it into action.

The difference between those that succeed and those that are left on the side lines are that the successors take immediate action.

There are times in life that we are motivated and times when we are down.

The key is to seize the moment and put it into concrete action.

The Mesilat Yesharim (Perek 7) states: "There is no danger as great as the danger of time".

All you have to do to ensure you never realise your ambitions is to let time cool them down; let time pass and it will become more and more difficult to pursue.

Back to Mordechai:

The Jews had just heard about the most terrible decree. They were frightened and devastated.

Mordechai understood that it was important to play immediately on their emotions, to help bring forth a serious and successful Teshuva. He therefore decreed that everyone should fast straight away, even if that meant forgoing on the Mitsvot of Pesach.

Such was the turnaround of the generation, that everyone headed to his call, fasted, prayed and repented, ensuring a Hitaruta Deletata – an awakening from down below on earth, that caused the evil decree to be abolished and the success of the Jewish Nation.

For us billions is not a value for how many dollars we have, it's a value to our actions and servitude of G-d.

We all have great ideas, we all have sparks of spirituality that are fired up on occasions, especially on Purim – lets seize the moment! Develop that idea, join one of the many programs available to you in your community and create a brighter future.

Mordechai's seizing the moment and quick decree, coupled with the peoples actions of repentance helped us be here today.

Now that's worth much more than billions!

■ Shabbat Shalom

RABBI BENJAMIN STONE - MAGGID SHIUR - MI K'AMCHO



"WHY PURIM"

Rabbi Benjamin Stone 4 Adar (2) 5779

Amalek attacked the Jewish people shortly after they left Egypt. At that point the B'nei Yisrael had not yet established themselves in the world in any way. Their only recent interaction with another nation had been as slaves. They had not yet achieved financially, militarily or even spiritually. When viewed objectively there was nothing about the Jewish nation which should cause anyone to be fearful of them. Why then did Amalek find it necessary to travel from far away to declare war on them*?

One further question. The Torah commands us to eradicate the memory of Amalek:

"Remember what Amalek did to you on your way out of Mitzrayim. They came upon you ...and you were tired and they did not fear G-d...Wipe out the memory of Amalek....do not forget" (Devarim 25,17).

Many nations have mistreated us but have not been singled out for such focused destruction. What was it about Amalek's decision to attack the B'nei Yisrael which made them deserve to be wiped out?

In dealing with the above questions we need to examine the language used in the above quoted verse. In that verse the Torah describes the negative elements of Amalek's decision to attack the Jews when they left Egypt. As part of that description the Torah tells us tells us that

"...they did not fear G-d"

Amalek's lack of fear of heaven was self evident. Why did the Torah find it necessary to expressly mention it? It seems the

Torah is telling us something deeper about the mindset of the Amalekite.

The medrash (Tanchuma, 9) tells us that when the Jews left Mitzrayim in the midst of great miracles it was clear that there was some supernatural force on their side. Many nations steered clear, not wishing to start up with a nation which had G-d on its side. Nevertheless Amalek took up the challenge. The medrash compares the situation at the time to that of a boiling bath. Most people would not dare to enter a boiling bath but when someone actually does so he encourages others to give it a try. So too, Amalek saw a nation apparently enjoying heavenly support but nevertheless decided to take it on. They thereby set a precedent for others to show disregard for the ethereal strength of the Jews.

It appears that when Amalek heard of the miraculous birth of a nation devoted to the service of one all - powerful G-d they felt threatened. They saw the possibility of a new world order, a world run by Hashem. Recognizing an overarching G-d would involve subjugating themselves, something they were not prepared to do. When the verse tells us that that Amalek "did not fear G-d" it means that they opposed in principle to the whole idea of godliness. In their opinion, events are dictated by chance or by objects of superstition such as charms and stars and they were not prepared for a change in the status quo.

This is why Mordechai's refusal to bow before Haman - a descendent of Amalek - led Haman to conclude that it was not enough to deal just with Mordechai, but that it was the values he stood for which posed the greatest danger. It was necessary to enact murderous decrees against the whole Jewish nation.

Amalek's obsessive resistance to the concept of divine rule over the world explains why they traveled so far to attack a nation which apparently posed no threat to them. By showing such unprecedented zeal to block the entry into the world of a nation dedicated to Hashem Amalek also identified themselves as our eternal arch enemy, deserving to be wiped out and forgotten.

"Purim"

In choosing which month to attack the Jews, Haman cast lots. Either Haman was simply "tossing a coin" or he was seeking to engage some unspecified supernatural force to guide him in

his decision making. He was happy to show respect to some other - worldly force as long as he did not have to make himself subordinate to it.

The Megillah (9,24) tells us why the festival of Purim (meaning "lots") was given that name. Haman

"cast a lot to confuse and destroy the Jews...but (the king) turned the evil intentions which (Haman) reserved for the Jews back on his head and he and his sons were hung. Therefore these days are called Purim".

Many question why the festival of Purim is named after the lots cast by Haman? Why are the lots so central to the theme of Purim?

In light of the above the casting of the lots can be seen to be very significant indeed.

At the core of the Purim story lay a bubbling tension between a worldview which entails recognition and adherence to a higher power and a worldview in which the individual is all important and self - serving. Haman stood for a world which casts lots where it is expedient to do so but otherwise abhors religion of any sort. Mordechai stood for a world which respected higher authority. Ultimately the sequence of events which led to Haman's downfall and the redemption of the Jews was so remarkable that they clearly appeared to have been divinely orchestrated. These events served to show that Mordechai's standpoint was the true one. Naming the day "Purim" was an ironic allusion to the Haman school of thought which sees life events as the product of happenstance with no input from above.

*Question heard from Rabbi Hartman Shlit"a

■ Shabbat shalom

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI MOSHE BEN MACHIR

Rabbi Moshe ben Machir was his day according to the ways among the great men of Sefat of Torah and the fear of G-d. It who lived some 400 years ago. is designed for every segment He was a good friend of Rabbi of the population, and it deals Shemuel de Uceda, the author in particular with the course of of Midrash Shemuel on Perkei the day, from morning till night, Avoth. He is best known for his during the week and on Shabbat, work Seder HaYom, printed for Rosh Chodesh, and the holidays. the first time in Venice in 5359 Rabbi Moshe ben Machir wrote (1599).

He founded a yeshiva in the village every man should push himself, of Ein Zeitoun, near Sefat. day and night, at all times and at There he also wrote his very specific every instant, not to lose even a work Seder HaYom. Written on single moment of time with the the first edition's flyleaf, we read: vanities and charms of this world. "A work entitled Seder HaYom: From the time he arises in the morning until he goes to bed at night, a man should manage his time in such a way that he seeks only to accomplish G-d's will. As PARDES. Written by a man of for his own desires, they should Moshe ben Machir of Sefat." be the same as Heaven's: Correct and pure."

The book was truly well named. It shows every Jew how to organize



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

ENSURING NOT TO RECEIVE A MORE PROMINENT ALIYA THAN ONE'S FATHER

The Radbaz (Rav David Ben Zimra, Egypt, 1479-1573), in discussing the obligation to respect one's parents, writes that if a person is called for Shelishi – the third Aliya to the Torah in the synagogue – then his son should not later be called for Shishi – the sixth Aliya. As receiving the sixth Aliya is regarded as a more prestigious honor than receiving the third, it would be inappropriate and an infringement upon the father's honor if he receives the third Aliya and his son receives the sixth Aliya. The Mesader (person who calls people to the Torah) must therefore ensure not to call somebody for Shishi if his father had received an earlier Aliya.

The Radbaz goes so far as to rule that if the son is called for Shishi in such a case, even if he is called by name, he should refuse the Aliya. Although it is generally improper to refuse an Aliya after being called by name, in such a case, the son must refuse the Aliya in order not to disrespect his father.

Summary: A person should not be given the sixth Aliya in the synagogue if his father had received an earlier Aliya, as the sixth Aliya is considered the most prominent Aliya, and this would thus be disrespectful to the father. ■



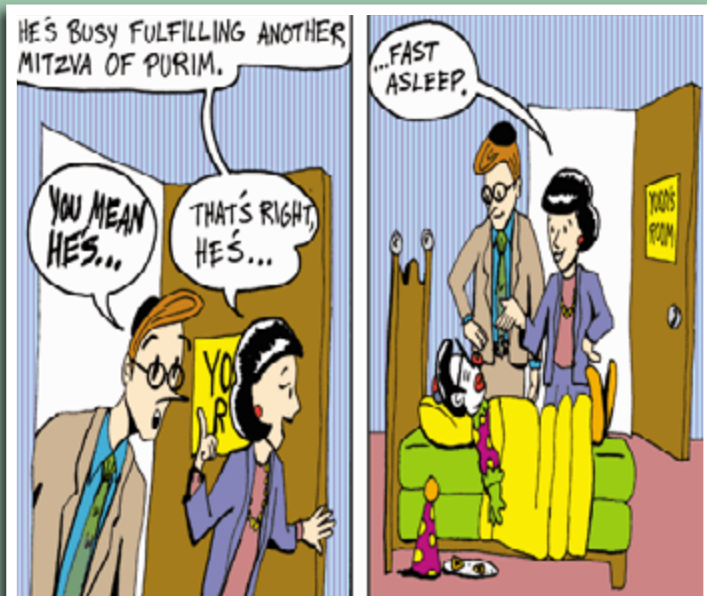
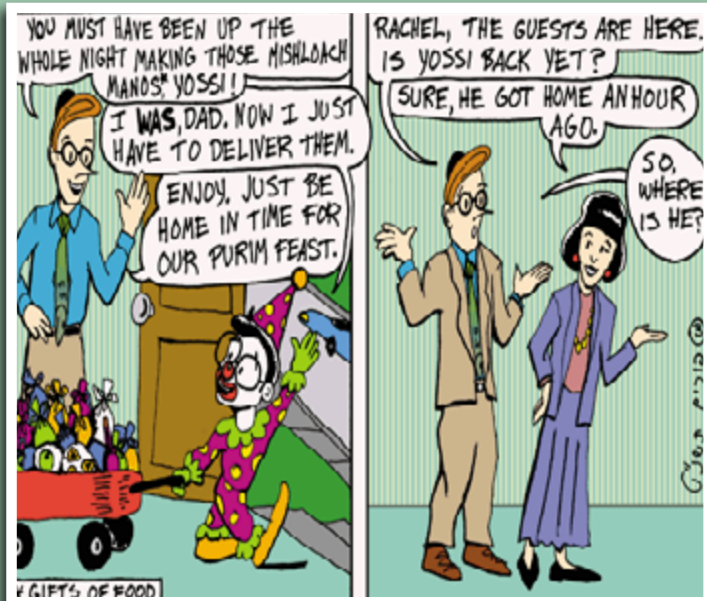
TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- 1 In which four instances is a korban todah brought?
- 2 Until when may a todah be eaten according to the Torah?
Until when according to Rabbinic decree?
- 3 Who may eat from a shelamim?
- 4 What miracle happened at the entrance of the Ohel Moed?
- 5 Other than Yom Kippur, what other service requires that the kohen separate from his family?

1 7:12 - Upon safe arrival from an ocean voyage; Upon safe arrival from a desert journey; Upon being freed from prison; Upon recovering from illness. 2 7:15 - A) Until the next morning; B) Only until midnight. 3 7:19 - Any uncontaminated person (and not only the owner). 4 8:3 - The entire nation was able to fit in this very small area. 5 8:34 - The burning of the parah adumah (red heifer).

Answer

YOSHI & Co.



FRIDAY NIGHT BANQUET YOUNG PROFESSIONALS



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