COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



To receive this via email or for sponsorship opportunities please email us info@torahactionlife.com www.torahactionlife.com



"CELEBRATING 7 WONDERFUL YEARS of Torah to the community! TAL LONDON'S LEADING PLATFORM for Jewish Student & YP's."

RABBI **JONATHAN TAWIL**



WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

It's the middle of the coldest January in 50 years. Two friends are sitting in a bar in Saskatchewan - Canada, arguing over their vacation plans. Today is the beginning of their holidays, and they still haven't decided where they're going.

Finally one of them stands up, and says, "OK. Here's the thing. We want to go someplace hot. We want to get as far away from Saskatchewan as we can get. Let's get a globe!" So they procure a globe, and placing a finger on Saskatchewan, they turn it over and look. Australia seems to be as far away from Saskatchewan as you can get, so they decide that's where they're going.

Still in their parkas and sealskin mitts, they head to the airport and climb on a plane. The next day, they arrive in Sydney. They decide, just for devilment, that they're going to fly (still in their parkas) to the middle of the outback. They want to see the looks on the locals' faces when they walk into the local hotel. They arrive and go to the coffee shop for a drink. At their table, they remove their sealskin mitts, pull back their hoods, and order a tea.

Conversation in the coffee shop has come to a standstill, for the time being.

After some time, and much elbowing, one of the local crowd weaves his way over to the Canadians' table. "G'day, mates!" he pipes up cheerily. "This crowd of clowns at the next table want to know where you're from."

"Saskatoon, Saskatchewan" Canadians replied.

The Aussie made his way back to his own table. "So, where are they from?" his friends demanded.

"I dunno," he replied. "They didn't speak English."

Where are you from?

Many of us have can trace our ancestors to different parts of the world. Perhaps your grandparents are from Europe, the Middle East, America, Asia or even Africa.

As Jews we have been nomads in the world since the destruction of our Holv Temple nearly two thousand years ago.

There are two words in Hebrew used to describe living/dwelling: דר and דד. One who lives in London would say: ו "גר" in London. I live in London.

When Yaakov's family of 70 came down to Egypt due to the famine in Israel, Pharaoh asked them why they moved

They responded: "לַגור בארץ באנץ" - we have come to live in the land. (Bereishit 47:4) The word in Hebrew used to describe their desire to live in Egypt is לגור.

> SPONSOR

This week's edition is sponsored Lehatslachat Rav Yitschak Hakohen

> UPCOMING EVENTS

Purim Seuda Party @NW11 Friday Night Dinner @NW4 Family Weekend Away @RG24 8FY

THE WEEKLY QUOTE

«Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence."!»

> MAZAL TOV TO

Yaakov Tamir & Yakira Stein on their engagement

Nissim & Sophia Baruch on their daughter Eva's Bat Mitsva

Rabbi Dweck and Margalit on the Bar Mitsva of their son Aaron

DVAR TORAH Where are you from? RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

P1



DVAR TORAH Arur Haman, Baruch Mordechai RABBI SHMUEL KIMCHE

P4

P3



DVAR TORAH Divine return on investment RABBI MASHIACH KELATY

P5



HALACHOT Purim & Shabbat RABBI ELI MANSOUR

OUR CHACHAMIM



0&A AND CARTOONS

We can see from the rest of the Passuk their plan was to just temporarily live in Egypt until the famine passed over Kenaan. It was not supposed to be a permanent move, as it indeed turned out to be.

The root of the word גר is היד - a foreigner, one who is not totally settled and comfortable with their surroundings.

מר" Ger," also means convert, somebody who was not born Jewish and wasn't "at home" with Judaism for a part of their life. Even after their conversion, whilst we hope they'll feel at home as much as possible, there're still a few special laws that only pertain to a convert, such as being extra sensitive to them and showing them more compassion and love, specific marriage laws, and so on. Thus אור has the connotation of temporariness and of out of the ordinary/exception.

On the other hand the word אדר has much more of a permanent connotation to it. For example, an apartment is called a אירה.

In an attempt to explain the creation of the world, there's a famous saying which says:

נתאוה הקב"ה להיות לו יתברך דירה בתחתונים

Hashem yearned for a "דירה" – a dwelling place, in the lower world(s) i.e. our world.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that just as a person residing in their own home resides in their true nature and in all their essence, expressions, and appearances, so too Hashem yearned for a home in the lower worlds, in which he would be able to reside in all his essence, expressions, and appearances.

We see here too that דירה has the connotation of a permanent dwelling place. Keeping this mind we can try to explain what the name of this month Adar means. Hashem has many names and titles.

One way in which he's described, is as an א - Alef, the אלופו של עולם, meaning, The General/beginner of the world. The word in Hebrew used in the IDF for a major-general is (Aluf) אלוף for example.

On a very basic level, just like the letter Alef is the first letter and the "leader" of all the other letters, so too Hashem is the "Alef" of our world.

We live in a busy world in which we sometimes forget to designate the right honour to G-d. A world in which we forget to make him our constant number One!

If you visited my home the other day and were relating to others the features of my home, you probably wouldn't take too much time to explain how I was there, and what I was doing there. It's my home! Not much explanation needed.

On the other hand, in someone else's home, I do stick out, and finding me there requires some mention and clarification.

אדר Adar, is a time when Hashem is an (Alef) א-דר, an Alef who is אדר, living permanently amongst us! Hashem (the "Alef") is so much at home during the Purim story, that he is not even mentioned as an unusual guest or character in the Megilah, BECAUSE he's so much at home, he's doesn't stick out, it's his "natural habitat!" There is not the story of Purim on one hand, and G-D on the other, which need to be connected to each other. They're both one, and therefore there is no need to mention G-D!

Hashem is and always will be in control. This is the month in which that control radiates.

We read the Megilah which is Megaleh – reveals the true essence behind 'natural' events.

You might think these Saskatchewans don't speak English, but in fact you are not assessing what is in front of you.

G-d desires an abode in this world and just like He is behind miraculous events in the Torah, He is behind our everyday life.

This is the month in which He is showing us He is at home with us.

It is up to us to search, seek and behold His Greatness – Can you see it?

Partner with us & Sponsor our events

£15

One seat at a Friday Night Dinner

Help us to continue to provide subsidised Friday Night Dinners by covering the meal for one person willing to have a meaningfull Shabbat.

£150

One table at a Friday Night Dinner

Subsidise a whole table of 10 young professionnals in need to discover the atmosphere of a Shabbat Dinner.

£200

One week of Parasha Sheet

Sponsor the publication of our popular Parasha Sheet to allow thousands of families to taste the beauty of our Torah.

Your personnal message will be displayed on the Parasha sheet.

Email us at info@torahactionlife.com







ARUR HAMAN, BARUCH MORDECHAI

One of the central themes on this strange yet powerful day of Purim is the seeming strange mitzvah Derabanan of becoming intoxicated. To explain-away the mitzvah as an opportunity to 'let loose' for one day a year, seems to rob the day of its holiness and meaning – certainly something that Chazal did not intend! So what is actually meant by the famous statement: "Chayav Inish Libesumei..."? Are we seriously to be inebriated to the point that we cannot discern between Hero and Villain, Tzaddik and Rasha? This doesn't sound like the Judaism that we know!

To further the intrigue, we find a seeming contradiction in the Halacha:

• The Shulchan Aruch – OC 695:2 - teaches the famous Halacha:

ידיב אינש לבסומי בפוריא עד דלא ידע בין ארור המן לברוך מרדכי

A person is obligated to become 'fragranced' ("Libesumei") to the point that he does not know the difference between Arur Haman and Baruch Mordechai.

• Shulchan Aruch – OC 690:16 - however also instructs: צריך שיאמר: ארור המן, ברוך מרדכי, ארורה זרש, ברוכה אסתר

A person must say: Cursed is Haman, Blessed is Mordechai, Cursed is Zeresh, Blessed is Esther...

Now the obvious questions arising from all this is: How is it possible to fulfil both Halachot? How is it possible to be both drunk to the point of being incapable to discerning between Hero and Villain in the story, yet at the same time be able to recall and mention them as Tzaddik and Rasha.

The plot thickens, as we discover that (as the Vilna Gaon points out) the gematria (numerical value) of the two statements "Arur Haman" and "Baruch Mordechai" are identical. Both yield an exact result of 502!

All this points to there being a deeper and more satisfying approach to understanding 'becoming fragranced' to the point that we don't know the difference between 'Arur Haman' and 'Baruch Mordechai'.

The time-old question of injustice reappears in every generation. Moshe Rabbeinu, Yirmiyahu HaNavi, Iyov as well as the Gemara (Brachot 7b) all reiterate the problem of "Why do good things happen to bad people, and bad things happen to good people?" (Our objective now is not

to try to describe the numerous Jewish approaches to Theodicy.)

When good things happen to good people – we see or intuit the Hand of Hashem as a Divine Judge. Similarly, when bad things happen to bad people and Evil is destroyed.

In fact – THE VERY SAME Divine Involvement is seen by both – evil being destroyed, and goodness being rewarded.

Both Haman's demise and Mordechai's rise – both bringabout the same Kiddush Hashem – both have the same gematria.

What is meant by "A person must become 'fragranced' to the point that he doesn't know the difference between Haman and Mordechai", is that a person should see through the Purim events – that no matter what the individual does, at the end of the day – goodness will be rewarded and evil will be destroyed – Baruch Mordechai and Arur Haman.

In Chapter 4, the pivotal scene in Megillat Esther, we find Mordechai confronting Esther, trying to convince her to go to the king and beg him to spare the Jews. We would have expected the argument be something like "Esther, this is why you became queen; you HAVE to do your duty..." But we all know the famous, yet most unexpected line was "Don't think you can escape the plight of the Jewish people in the king's palace. If you are silent at this time, salvation will come to the Jewish people from a different place, just that you and your father's house will be lost. Who knows, perhaps it was for this that you were ordained to become queen?" To paraphrase: "Esther, you can choose your role, but you cannot choose the outcome. If you choose to do the right thing, then good will happen to you, if you choose to do the wrong thing, then bad will happen to you - but Hashem's Will, will prevail in the end. The Jewish people will never be destroyed".

The message to us is clear. With or without drink, the message of Purim – both through the evil machinations of Haman and the heroic selflessness of Mordechai – teaches us that if we do Evil, it will rebound and destroy us, and if we make the right choices, goodness will prevail. We think that we drive our own destiny, but ultimately Hashem's will prevail.

Sometimes we need to be drunk to absorb that message.

PURIM SAMEACH!





DIVINE RETURN ON INVESTMENT

In this week's parashah, Hashem commands Moshe to gather "all the wise-hearted people whom I have invested with a spirit of wisdom" to make the priestly garments (Exodus 28:1).

But the Torah is unclear. Were these select people Divinely ordained with a spirit of wisdom for this particular mission, or were intrinsic "wise-hearted" people imbued with an extra "spirit of wisdom"? If the former is correct, then what did Hashem add? And if all their wisdom was divinely-gifted, then why didn't Hashem simply ask Moshe to "gather all the people in whom I have invested a spirit of wisdom"?

Rav Sholom Shwadron, the Magid of Jerusalem, of blessed memory, once told a story about the famed Dubno Magid, Rabbi Yaakov Kranz.

The Dubno Magid once spoke in a town and a few maskilim (members of the enlightenment movement) attended. After the talk, one of the cynics, who was totally unaffected by the warm and inspiring message, approached the famed Magid. "The Sages tell us," began the sceptic, "that words from

the heart, penetrate the heart. Rabbi," he snickered, "I assume that you spoke from your heart.

Your words, however, have had no impact on me whatsoever! How can that be? Why didn't your words penetrate my heart?"

Rabbi Kranz smiled. In his usual fashion, he began with a parable. "A simpleton once went by the workplace of a blacksmith, who was holding a large bellows. After a few squeezes, the flames of the smith's fire danced with a rage. The man, who always found it difficult to start a fire in his own fireplace, marvelled at the contraption.

He immediately went and purchased the amazing invention. Entering his home, he smugly announced, "I just discovered how to make a raging fire with the simple squeeze of a lever!"

He set a few logs in the cold fireplace and began to push the two ends of the bellows together. Nothing happened. The logs lay cold and lifeless. Embarrassed, the man returned to the blacksmith and explained his predicament. "I want a refund!" he shouted. "This blower doesn't work!"

"Are you for real?" laughed the experienced blacksmith. "You were blowing on cold logs! You must start a small fire on your own! If you don't start with a spark, a fire will never erupt!" The Magid turned toward the maskil and shook his head sadly. "If there is no spark, the largest bellows will not make a fire."

In telling Moshe whom to choose for the sacred task of designing the Mishkan, the Torah tells us how G-d invests. He wants people that were imbued with a ruach

chochmah - a spirit of wisdom. But he prefaces the statement by telling us how one receives spiritual wisdom. The gift of spiritual wisdom does not go to just anyone. Hashem looks for those who have wisdom of the heart. Those who understand what it means to be kind, compassionate, and loyal. Those who have the devotion to His will and the desire for more enlightenment receive His ordination. The

people who were imbued with Hashem's Divine spirit previously had a spark. And from that spark grew a force - a Divine force - that propelled wise hearts into a Divine spirit of wisdom.

Hashem tells us that we must begin the process on our own. If we supply the heart, He will supply the power to have deep, spiritual, even holy insight. He will supply the force. Or, as the Medrash puts it, if we open up a hole the size of a needle, He will open up a hole the size of a large hall. Why specifically a needle? Because a needle makes an impression that, albeit small, is permanent.

Let's make ourselves into worthy receptacles for Hashem's wisdom.

Watch my shiurim on Torah Anytime: https://www.torahanytime.com/#/speaker?!=119 Mordechai ben Musha Yeta | Aharon ben Leah | Pinchas ben Tamar | Rivkah bat Sarah | Pesach Simcha ben Feigle | Yona bat Esther Shira Ilana bat Susan Shoshana Farha | Naomi bat Mazal | Sarah Chaya bat Blima Freida | Myriam Lea bat Sarah | Rafael ben Rachel Elisha Ben Ayala | Sarah Bat Rachel



OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI **YOSEF CHAIM SONNENFELD**THE ROSH AV BEIT DIN OF IFRUSALEM

The Gaon Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld Zatzal was born to the Tzaddik Rabbi Avraham Shlomo in the Slovakian town of Worboy in 5609. At the age of four he lost his father, and starting from the age of eight he began to demonstrate exceptional abilities in the holy Torah. He went to study in the yeshiva of the Gaon Rabbi Tzvi Manheim Zatzal, and at the age of 13 he was given Smicha and received the title of Moreinu ("our teacher").

He also learned Torah from the gaon Rabbi Avraham Shemuel Sofer Zatzal, the author of Ketav Sofer, and the gaon Rabbi Avraham Shag Zatzal, the Rav and Av Beit Din of Kobelsdorf. Rabbi Yosef Chaim's reputation quickly began to spread, and when his teacher Rabbi Avraham Shag left for Eretz Israel, he accompanied him there and was treasured by all the Torah greats of Israel. Rabbi Yosef Chaim aided his teacher in strengthening Jewish observance in Israel, and with his help the districts of Mea Shearim, Beit Israel, and Beit Ungarin were built in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Yosef Chaim was also among the founders of the great Diskin orphanage, and later he was unanimously appointed as the Rosh Av Beit Din of Jerusalem. He was effective in vigorously and boldly working for the holiness of Jerusalem, and he was also active in Jewish institutions connected to the government. His humility was legendary, and in his will he stated that his casket was not to be brought into his Beit Midrash.

Rather, people should only say of him: "We mourn an old Jew of Eretz Israel who has passed away." Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld's soul ascended to Heaven on Adar 19, 5692, and his body was laid to rest on the Mount of Olives as all the inhabitants of Jerusalem mourned his passing. May the memory of the Tzaddik be blessed!



HALACHOT

RABBI **ELI MANSOUR**

PURIM – WEARING SHABBAT CLOTHES; CUSTOMS FOR PURIM NIGHT; LEARNING TORAH ON PURIM

Rav Haim Vital (1543-1620) would immerse in a Mikveh on the day before Purim, just like on Erev Yom Tov, and this is an admirable practice to observe.

One should change into Shabbat clothes already on Purim night. Some people wear Shabbat clothes only during the day of Purim, but this is improper; Shabbat clothes should be worn already on Purim night, as the special spiritual light of Mordechai is upon us once Purim begins in the evening. Women, too, should change into their Shabbat clothes, and wear jewellery, on Purim night and wear them throughout Purim day. This Halacha is mentioned by the Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909), in his work Ateret Tiferet

The Shulchan Aruch rules (Orah Haim 695:1) that one does not fulfil the Misva of the Purim feast on Purim night; the meal must be eaten specifically during the day of Purim. Nevertheless, the Rama (Rabbi Moshe Isserles of Cracow, 1525-1572) notes that there is a Mitsva to have a somewhat festive meal even on Purim night. It is customary to eat seeds on Purim night, as Ester ate seeds in Ahashverosh's palace, since she could not eat the meat. Furthermore, Daniel – who, according to some opinions, was Ester's messenger, Hatach – ate seeds while he served under the Babylonian emperor Nevuchadnesar.

One should be especially careful to avoid fighting and discord throughout Purim, both at night and during the day. The flurry of activity that characterizes the Purim celebration can oftentimes create pressure and tension in the home, and it is thus crucial to make a special effort to exercise patience and forbearance on Purim, in order not to disturb the festive atmosphere.

Additionally, one should make a special effort to make time for Torah learning on the night of Purim. A famous verse describes that at the time of the Purim miracle the Jews experienced "Ora Ve'simha" – "light and joy" – and the Sages teach that "light" refers to Torah study and "joy" refers to festive celebration. "Light" is mentioned before "joy" because the "joy" – the Purim festivity – is observed ▶



Edgware 020 8952 4444 Hendon 020 8203 4444 Golders Green 020 8458 4444





during the day, and thus the "light" – Torah learning – should be done the previous night.

It is therefore proper to spend Purim night engaged in Torah learning, since there often is not much time available during the daytime for learning.

More generally, the Hida (Rav Haim Yosef David Azoulai, 1724-1807) commented that if the Jewish people would conduct themselves with sanctity on Purim day, rejoicing for the sake of Heaven and then spending time learning Torah, we would immediately earn redemption. Most people, unfortunately, do not allocate time for Torah

study on Purim, and this itself is reason to make an effort to spend time learning on this day.

The Sefer Hasidim (work by Rabbenu Yehuda Hachasid of Regensburg, Germany, late 12th-early 13th century) teaches that one should make a special effort to fulfill Misvot that few others fulfill, and one will thereby earn great reward.

Thus, it is appropriate and worthwhile to try to spend time studying Torah on Purim, as it is a day when few people make a point of fulfilling this Mitsva of Torah learning. ■

The Rabbi Jacob S. Kassin Memorial Halacha Series Authored by Rabbi Eli J. Mansour (1/16/2017)

BLOTTING OUT HAMAN ON PURIM



There is a widespread custom to make noise when Haman's name is mentioned in the Megillat Esther (a total of 54 times). This custom has its roots in the biblical commandment "you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven" (Devarim 25,19) since Haman was a descendant of Agag the Amalekite (Esther 3,1 and 9,24).

What are the sources of this custom? Doesn't it cause a Halakhic problem of not being able to hear the Megillah?

Blotting Out Haman's Name during the Megillah Reading

1. Make noise every time his name is mentioned:

Rabbi Tzidkiyahu ben Avraham (Italy, 13th century, Shiboley Haleket p. 157) found in the name of Rashi (France d. 1104) that "they stamp with their feet or stone upon stone, and they break pots when they hear [the names] Haman or Zeresh". In other words, they made noise in order to prevent people from **hearing** these names. It should be noted, however, that Rashi mentions this custom not in connection with the Megillah reading, but rather when Haman and Zeresh are mentioned in the piyyut **after** the Megillah reading.

2. Many communities limit the times to make noise:

The Shelah haKadosh mentions that in his time noise was only made when mentioning the downfall of Haman

while other communities only did so during the mentioning of the hanging of Haman and his 10 sons.

Others have a custom to only make noise when mentioned Haman with a title.

Ben Ish Chai mentions their custom to only make noise at the first and last mention of the name of Haman.

3. Writing Haman's name on stones which are banged against each other in order to erase his name:

This was the custom described by R. Avraham of Lunel in his Sefer Hamanhig written in Toledo in 1204). He says that this is the custom of the children of France and Provence in order to fulfill the verse "may the name of the wicked rot" (Proverbs 10:7). This was quoted by Sefer Abudraham Hashalem (14th century) Bet Yosef to Orah Hayyim 690, s.v. katav b'Orhot Hayyim) and then in the Shulhan Arukh by the Rema (Cracow, ca. 1570, Orah Hayyim 690:17). The purpose of banging the stones is not to blot out Haman's name by making **noise** but rather to **erase** Haman's name from the stones.

4. Clap hands in order to make noise when Haman's name is read in the Megillah:

This custom is reported by R. Yehudah Aryeh Modena (1571-1648) in his Ceremonies and Religious Customs of Various Nations of the Known World (London, 1733, Vol. 1, p. 69).









TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- When the Kohen Gadol wore all his priestly garments, where on his head were the Tefillin situated?
- What was unique about the bull sin-offering brought during the inauguration of the Kohanim?
- **18** What does the crown on the Mizbeach Haketoret symbolize?

Answer

- 30:3 The crown of Kehuna.
- 29:14 It is the only extemal sin-offering that was completely burned.
 - 1 28:37 Between the Tzitzit and the Mitznefet.

YSSI & Co.























TAL offers events for everyone. Whether you are a Student, Young Professional or a Married Couple, you will always find a programme that suits you.





