

י' לְמַדְדָּכִי אֵת דְּבָרֵי אֶסְתֵּר: וַיֹּאמֶר מְרַדְּכָי לְהָשִׁיב אֶל-אֶסְתֵּר אֶל-
י"ד תְּדַמֶּי בְּנַפְשֶׁךָ לְהַמְלִיט בֵּית-הַמֶּלֶךְ מִכָּל-הַיְהוּדִים: כִּי אִם-הִתְחַשֵּׁ
תְּחַדְיִשִׁי בְּעַת הַזֹּאת רוּחַ וְהִצְלָה יַעֲמוּד לַיהוּדִים מִמָּקוֹם אַחַד
וְאֵת וּבֵית-אָבִיךָ תֵּאבְדוּ וּמִי יוֹדֵעַ אִם-לָעֵת בָּזֹאת הִגַּעַת לַמְּלָכוֹת:

- 13 Mordekhai sent back reply to Esther – “Do not imagine that you can escape to the king’s palace from the fate of all the Jews. For if you keep your silence at this time, relief and salvation will come forth for the Jews from some other place – but you and your father’s house will be lost forever. And who can say; could it not be for just such a time as this that you came into royalty?”

אלקי עד שלא נוצרתי איני כדאי, ועכשו שנוצרתי כאלו לא נוצרתי

Rav Kook explained this meditation as follows: Hashem, you know that had I been born in an earlier generation, in an earlier era, I would have been worthless, unable to accomplish my specific assignment.¹⁰ Yet, I have accomplished so little of my present assignment, I am likewise unworthy of having been created even in this generation.

When a Jew says *Retzeih* he does not refer to the satisfaction of needs and the fulfillment of the desires about which he poured out his heart in the middle, petitionary section. For this he has already prayed in the previous benediction, *Sheina Kolemu* (“Hear our voice”). When he reaches *Retzeih* these “petty” matters no longer concern him. His soul is bound up in a great, profound, world-embracing request. He asks God to accept the great sacrifice he has just offered,¹⁵ to accept his being that is returned to God, cleaving unto the Infinite and connecting itself to the Divine throne (*Worship of the Heart*, 178-79).

פרק ה מגילת אסתר

ה' א צוֹתָהּ עָלָיו אֶסְתֵּר: וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַתִּלְבַּשׁ אֶסְתֵּר מְלָכוֹת
וַתַּעֲמֹד בַּחֲצַר בֵּית-הַמֶּלֶךְ הַפְּנִימִית נֹכַח בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַמֶּלֶךְ יוֹשֵׁב

- 5¹ On the third day, Esther dressed herself in royalty, and came to stand in the inner courtyard of the king’s palace, facing the palace, while the king sat upon his royal throne in the great hall, facing the palace entrance.

On the third day, Esther dressed herself in royalty. Judaism disliked cowardice or the exaggerated caution that tells man that he must not begin unless he knows for sure that he will be able to finish. Courageous action is motivated not by pragmatic, mercantile, discursive, logical reasoning, but by convincing, intuitive insights, by spiritual perceptions that are beyond the reach of logical-formal analysis.

"תורה יוקב"
משה אסתר

חסידות חייב אינש לבסומי - פ"ה מבוארת

שהוא בחינת גמות רצה להשמיד ולהרוג את כל היהודים שהם בבחינת בטול הפך היש והגמות. ואם היו כופרים ח"ו לא היו עושים להם כלום, שהרי לא נזר רק על היהודים, אך כולם כאחד לא עלה על דעתם מחשבת חוץ ח"ו ומסרו נפשם על אחדותו ית', וזהו בחינת בטול הנ"ל. וישנו בכח בכל אחד מישראל, ואפילו קל שבקלים יכול למסור נפשו בפועל ממש שלא ליפרד מאחדותו ית' בשום אופן בעולם, ומה שעובר שאר עבירות היינו מפני הרוח שטות שמטעהו לחשוב שאינו נפרד מהקב"ה על ידי עבירה ההיא, כיון שלובש ציצית ומניח תפלין.

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משה אסתר

1)

אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי אִם-חַפְצֵי בַּהֶמְלֶכֶת וְנִקְדָּה בְּשֵׁם: וּבְהִגִּיעַ תֵּר-אֶסְתֵּר
 בֵּת-אֲבִיהָיִל וְדָד מְרֻדְכַי אֲשֶׁר לָקַח-לָו לְבַת לְבוֹא אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא
 בְּקִשָּׁה דְבָר כִּי אִם אֶת-אֲשֶׁר יֹאמֵר הִגִּי סֵרִיס-הַמֶּלֶךְ שֹׁמֵר הַנְּשִׂיִם
 וְתֵהִי אֶסְתֵּר נִשְׂאֵת חֵן בְּעֵינֵי כָל-רְאִיָּה: וְתִלְקַח אֶסְתֵּר אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ

15 And when the time came for Esther, daughter of Mordekhai's uncle, Avihayil, whom Mordekhai had adopted as his own child, to come before the king – she did not ask for anything, except for what Hegai the king's eunuch, keeper of the women, told her to bring. And Esther carried grace in the eyes of all who saw her.

2)

and Esther carried grace in the eyes of all who saw her. The Hebrew word *hen*, grace, refers to the attribute of charm, in contradistinction to beauty. While beauty is usually a result of combinations of several physical factors, of external features, charm comes from within. It flows from the deep recesses of the spiritual personality. Charm is engendered by the presence of God in the human being.

3)

But Ahasuerus was also fascinated by something mysterious that he could not grasp, by the inner strength of Esther – her charm. He felt somehow instinctively, intuitively, that she is not an ordinary person. When he was in her presence, he felt that his whole being was more exalted, advanced, elevated to greater heights.

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4)

ב אֲשֶׁר הוֹרְדָהוּ שְׁמוֹה: וַיְהִי יְהוָה אֶת-יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי אִישׁ
 ג מְצַלִּיחַ וַיְהִי בְּבֵית אֲדֹנָיו הַמִּצְרִי: וַיֵּרָא אֲדֹנָיו כִּי יִהְיֶה
 ד אִתּוֹ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-הָיָא עֲשָׂה יִהְיֶה מִצְלִיחַ בְּיָדוֹ: וַיִּמְצָא
 ← יוֹסֵף חֵן בְּעֵינָיו וַיִּשְׂרַת אֹהֲנוֹ וַיִּפְקְדֵהוּ עַל-בֵּיתוֹ וְכָל-יֵשֶׁבֶת
 ה לֹו נָתַן בְּיָדוֹ: וַיְהִי מֵאֵז הַפְּקִיד אֹהֲנוֹ בְּבֵיתוֹ וְעַל כָּל-אֲשֶׁר

(Talmud Chullin 139b).

אסתר מן התורה מנין (דברים לא, יח) ואנכי הסתר אסתיר מרדכי מן התורה מנין דכתיב (שמות ל, כג) מר דרור ומתרגמין מירא דכיא

5)

: They also asked Rav Mattana: **From where in the Torah** can one find an allusion to the events involving **Esther**? He replied to them that the verse states: "Then My anger shall be kindled against them on that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so that they will say in that day: Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us? **And I will hide [haster astir] My face** on that day for all the evil which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned to other gods"

6)

. Even during the non-prophetic era, at a time when the divine countenance is hidden (*haster panim*), man is summoned to carry on, to undertake difficult tasks courageously and implement them to the best of his ability. Esther was paradigmatic of the unrelenting faith and resolute devotion of a Jew that is evinced even when circumstances appear dark and gloomy. ((Ibid. p.89)

3) 1)

וְתֹאמֶר אֶסְתֵּר לְהָשִׁיב אֵלַי מְרֹדֶכַי: לִךְ כְּנוּס אֶת-כָּל-הַיְהוּדִים
הַנִּמְצָאִים בְּשׁוּשַׁן וְצוּמוּ עָלַי וְאֶל-תֹּאכְלוּ וְאֶל-תִּשְׁתּוּ שְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים

Go. Gather all the Jews in Shushan, and fast for me. Esther taught Mordechai and the Jews how to pray and how to fast in times of distress and crisis.

ז' א' ג' כ' כ"ו

פרק ה' דף לא.

2)

אָמַר רַב הַמְנוּנָא: כַּמָּה הִלְכָתָא גְבוּרָתָא אֵיכָא לְמִשְׁמַע מַהֲנֵי קְרָאֵי

Rav Hammuna said: How many significant halakhot can be derived from these verses of the prayer of Hannah? As it says: "And Hannah

3)

When called upon to act as divine agent, to be a history-maker, the Jew must be mature, courageous, and intellectually developed. When it is time to pray, the Jew must shed his maturity and reach out for either the enthusiasm or the grief of the child. The woman is more of an expert in playing this double role. Esther performed it magnificently. She knew how to be cunning and how to pray. Therefore, the Megilla is named for Esther. (*Days of Deliverance*)



4)

אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ כִּי אֶסְחָפֵץ בְּהַּ הַמֶּלֶךְ וְנִקְרָאָה בְּשֵׁם: וּבְהִגִּיעַ הַיּוֹם-אֶסְתֵּר
בִּתְדַאבִּיחִיל וְדִד מְרֹדֶכַי אֲשֶׁר לָקַח-לוֹ לְבַת לְבוֹא אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ לֹא
בְקִשָּׁה דְבָר כִּי אִם אֶת-אֲשֶׁר יֹאמֶר יִגִּי סָרִיס-הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׂמֵר הַנְּשִׂימ
וְתֵהִי אֶסְתֵּר נְשֵׂאת חֵן בְּעֵינֵי כָל-דְּאִיָּה: וְתִלְקַח אֶסְתֵּר אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ
אֶחָשׁוּרוּשׁ אֶל-בֵּית מַלְכוּתוֹ בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָעֲשִׂירִי הוּא-חֹדֶשׁ טֵבֵת

5)

We do not understand the detailed description of the preparation of the maidens prior to their visit in the royal palace. The Megilla tells us about the beauty treatment they received, about the ointments and sweet perfumes and other cosmetics applied to them, and the length of time during which they were submitted to such treatment. The whole story is *prima facie* one of pagan permissiveness and voluptuousness.



6)

Mordechai and Esther are reminiscent of Abraham and Sarah. The assignments were equally important but by no means identical. Regarding the Jewish people's founders the name change to both of them involved the addition of a letter from God's name, signifying that they will share a spiritual role. "Not only did man and woman achieve human dignity at creation, both in God's image, but they also attained together, and only together, covenantal sanctity." (Man of Faith, p. 86)



7)

א"ר חסדא מ"ט דרבי דכתיב {בראשית ב': כ"ב} ויבן ה' [אלהים] את הצלע מלמד שנתן הקב"ה בינה יתירה באשה יותר מבייש

Rav Hisda said: What is the reason of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi? As it is written, with regard to the creation of woman: "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, He made [vayyiven] a woman, and brought her to the man" (Genesis 2:22). This teaches that the Holy One, Blessed be He, granted a woman a greater understanding [bina] than that of a men.

1)

The first intellectual judgment, the first intuitive flash, the primordial revelation of truth belongs frequently to man. However, when it comes to implementation, the woman is the master. The implementation of any plan is a technological feat that consists in the selection and employment of the most effective means for the sake of achieving a desired end. This is cunning, which is the forte of the woman.



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2)

וְתֹאמֶר אֶסְתֵּר לְהָשִׁיב אֶל־מַרְדֵּכָי: לֶךְ כְּנֹס אֶת־כָּל־הַיְהוּדִים
הַנִּמְצְאִים בְּשׁוֹשָׁן וְצוּמוּ עָלַי וְאֶל־תֹּאכְלוּ וְאֶל־תִּשְׁתּוּ שְׁלֹשַׁת יָמִים

לִילָה וַיּוֹם גַּם־אֲנִי וְנַעֲרֹתַי אָצוּם כֵּן וּבִכֵּן אָבּוּא אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר
לֹא־כִדַּת וְכֹאֲשֶׁר אֲבַדְתִּי אֲבַדְתִּי: וַיַּעֲבֵר מַרְדֵּכָי וַיַּעַשׂ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־

3)

פורים: כתב הדיקוני וזהו (תיקון כ"א ור"י ב'): פורים אהקריאת על שם יום הכיפורים. וכיאר הגר"א: דפורים הוא משלים מה שחסר ביום הכיפורים והוא שמחה ומשחה שווה ראוי בו מחמת קבלת התורה שווה ביום הכיפורים בלחות השניות אך לפי שיהיה הוא

night; I and my maids shall fast also. And so shall I come before the king, in defiance of the law – and if I am lost – I am lost."



4)

כב אֶב לְמַנְצֵחַ עַל־אֵילַת הַשָּׁחַר מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד: אֵלַי אֵלֵי לְמָה עֲצַבְתָּנִי רְחֹק
ג מִיִּשׁוּעָתִי דְבַרְי שְׁאֲנָתִי: אֵלֹהֵי אֶקְרָא יוֹמָם וְלֹא תַעֲנֶנּוּ וְלִילָה וְלֹא־
ד דוֹמְיָה לִי: וְאַתָּה קְרוֹשׁ יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּךָ בִּטְחוּ אֲבֹתֵינוּ בְּטָחוּ

22 ¹ For the conductor, on the ayeles hashachar, * a psalm by David. ² My God, my God, why have You forsaken me; why so far from saving me, from the words of my roar? ³ O my God! I call out by day, but You answer not; and by night, but there is no respite for me. ⁴ Yet You are the Holy One, enthroned upon the praises of Israel! ⁵ In You our fathers trusted, they trusted and You delivered them. ⁶ To You they cried out and they were rescued; in You they trusted and they were not shamed. ⁷ But I am a worm and not a man, scorn of humanity, despised of people. ⁸ All who see me, deride me; they open wide with [their] lip, they wag [their] head. ⁹ If one commits himself to HASHEM, He will deliver him! He will

5)

Talmud Yerushalmi (Berachot 1:1): Rabbi Chiya Rabba and Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta were walking in the Arbel Valley early in the morning, and they saw the light before the break of dawn (ayelet hashachar). Rabbi Chiya Rabba said to Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta: This is how the redemption of Israel will be: At first it will be little by little, but then it will become stronger... At first Mordechai sat at the Kings gate (Esther 2:22) and then, "Haman took the garments and the horse (Ibid 5:11). Then Mordechai returned to the king's gate (Ibid 6:12) and "Mordechai left before the king in royal garments" (Ibid 8:15). Finally, "The Jews experienced light and joy" (Ibid, 8:16)."