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PURIM IS TIME TO CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES

One prominent theme in the *Megillah* is the changing of clothes. At the party of Achashveirosh there is an opinion that Achashveirosh changed his royal clothing and wore the clothes of the *Kohen Gadol*. We find that Mordechai changed his clothing and wore sackcloth. When Haman paraded Mordechai through the streets of Shushan Mordechai was dressed in the king's royal clothing. When Mordechai's relationship to Esther was revealed he wore royal clothing. When Esther went to see the King even though she had no prior appointment, the *passuk* says ותלבש אסתר מלכות she dressed with the Queen's special clothing. *Chazal* comment on this same *passuk* that she dressed with "*ruach hakodesh*" a spiritual "clothing" that she did not possess until now. During the Purim Yom Tov it is a custom for people to change their regular clothing and to wear costumes sometimes even hiding their true identity. What does the change of clothing have to do with the Yom Tov of Purim?

At the party where Esther accuses Haman as the villain who plans to have her and her nation exterminated, she mentions ואילו לעבדים ולשפחות נמכרנו החרשתי that if we were being sold as slaves or maidservants I would have kept silent. What does Esther mean by "if" when this option of being sold instead of murdered was not even on the table? Secondly, when she points a finger at Haman as the culprit about to murder her, Achashveirosh reacts with such a startling innocent surprise הוא איזה הוא מי הוא זה ואיזה הוא who is criminal who intended to execute such an evil scheme? His astonishment make no sense at all since he himself partnered with Haman in this nefarious global plot to wipe out the Jewish nation.

The Ohev Yisrael answers these questions by revealing the unwritten story of the *Megillah*. When Haman initially asked Achashveirosh to give him permission to take over control of the Jews he told the king that his intention was to "buy" them and make them into "slaves" - לעבדם. However, in the document of sale, Haman replaced the letter *Ayin* with the letter *Aleph* which then read לאבדם to eradicate them. That is why Achashveirosh reacted so strongly in disbelief "Who was the one who dared to commit the extermination of the Jewish Nation without my written consent?"

This is not the first time we find that a switching of these same two letters of *Aleph* and *Ayin* heralded a world cataclysmic altering of life and death. The *passuk* says that after the *chait* of *Aitz Hadaas*, and Man received the decree of death, Hashem made for Adam כתנות עור of skin. The *Ari Hakadosh* writes that prior to the *chait* Adam possessed כתנות אור with an *Aleph* which means a covering that radiated light and spirituality. It was only after sinning when evil

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had access to enter his body that he lost this outer clothing of light and it was replaced by physical skin עור.

Even since then, the mission of Man's existence was somewhat detoured to bring about the return to his original *madraigah* of אור. This divine task was handed over to *Am Yisrael* who were deemed the Second Edition of Adam. At Sinai where the Torah was given to them, that mission was achieved as *Chazal* say (Shabbos 146) פסקה זוהמתן their filthiness from the original sin ceased. However, their lofty status was quickly dwarfed and lost because they worshipped the Golden Calf. This sudden downfall from their pinnacle of their gained spirituality is alluded to in the actual construction of the *Aigel*. *Chazal* say that the *Aigel* was formed with witchcraft by throwing into a fiery furnace a slab of gold on which was carved the words עלי שור "rise bull". The origin of this slab was from Moshe *Rabbeinu* who carved on it the words עלי שור in order to bring up Yosef's metal coffin, who is compared to a bull (Devarim 33,17), from the bottom of Nile River which was the place of his internment. When making the *Aigel* they threw this slab into the furnace and out came the form of the *Aigel*. By worshipping *Avodah Zara*, *Am Yisrael* slid back 69 levels of spiritual greatness, from after attaining their *madraiga* of אור and then returning back to עור. The difference between the Aleph (1) and Aiyin (70) is 69 the same *gematriah* of טס. This was the expensive price they paid for that טס.

The *Meforshim* write that the *Seuda* of Achashveirosh in Shushan in which he and Haman invited all the *Yidden* to partake from, was for the purpose to bring about a *kitrug* on that generation of *Am Yisrael* for failing to occupy themselves with the *avoda* to rectify the original Falling of Man. *Yirmiyah Hanavi* prophesized that after 70 years from the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* the *geulah* and the return to *Eretz Yisrael* will arrive. Achashveirosh and Haman wrongly calculated that this was the end of the 70th year. Seeing that the *Second Bayis* was not built and there was no interest to do so from *Am Yisrael*, it must be that Hashem has become disenchanted with them. Now is the ripe time to wipe them off the world map and terminate their mission of *Tikkun Adam* forever. Now will start the reign of the Primeval *Nachash*, Satanism, the instigator of evil that was the catalyst in the sin of Adam and Chavah.

The number of 70 (years) is an important factor in the history of the world since creation. The *Medrash* says (Bamidbar Rabba 14,24) two enemies were not cursed until 70 *pessukim* passed over them, the *Nachash* and Haman. From *Bereishis* until ארור אתה there are seventy *pessukim*. From אחר הדברים האלה גדל מהלך את המן until ויתלו את המן there are also seventy *pessukim*. There are seventy nations besides *Am Yisrael*. Aisav is the head as the *passuk* says (Tehillim 80,14) יכרסמנה חזיר מיער the boar (pig) from the forest will cut and uproot. In the word מיער, the letter ע is positioned in mid-air above all the other letters. *Chazal* say that Aisav is the חזיר of the *passuk* who just like the *Chazir* stretches out its feet to demonstrate

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that he is "kosher" with split hooves, even though he is missing the second characteristic of kashrus which is to chew its cud. The upper position of the letter ע therefore shows that עשו is the head of the seventy nations.

Now we can tie in this passuk to the story of Purim. The word יער also refers to the *Beis Hamikdash* (Yuma 39b). The word יכרסמנה spells יכרת will uproot and cut off (the letters of ס ת are interchangeable). The last letters מנה spell המן. This is conveying that after the 70 years of Haman's calculations, *Am Yisrael* can be cut off from Hashem for there is no evidence in sight of a יער, *Beis Hamikdash* that has been rebuilt. כרת is *gematriah* שער נ, that now has come the time to cut *Am Yisrael* out of existence and Amalek will reign forever. This was the reason of hanging Mordechai on the עץ that was fifty cubits high to show that Amalek now possess the power to cut off *Yisrael*.

Just to ensure that *Yisrael* were deserving of total annihilation, a mega party was made in which the *Yidden* also attended. If Haman found that the *Yidden* will party together with the Persians and derive pleasure from drinking the wine and dining while using the vessels of the *Beis Hamikdash* and being oblivious to the open display of the *Bigdei Kehuna*, then he would be confident to decree a world pogrom to make *Yisrael* extinct and not worry about Hashem's intervention. The reason being that their actions will parallel the sin of Adam and Chavah eating from the *Aitz Hadaas*. Note that in describing the *Aitz Hadaas* Chava saw it as טוב תאוה נחמד which are all descriptions of pleasurable experiences that overrode Hashem's command.

The *passuk* says that what initiated her downfall was Chava's craving for the fruit of the *Aitz Hadaas* that she saw ותרא with the organ of her eye, עין. Because of that she and Adam lost the Aleph of אור which was replaced with the letter *ayin* which means eye. Rashi Sota 9b writes the *lashon* בחוה (הנחש) עיניו נתן it placed its eyes on Chava. It all started with the *Nachash's* eyes as well (Bereishis Rabba 18,6).

Even if Achashveirosh's and Haman's calculations of the return of *Yisrael* from galus to *Eretz Yisrael* were slightly off, nevertheless their *kitrug* on *Yisrael* was serious enough for Haman to be successful in having a decree of annihilation to befall them. In order for *Yisrael* to fight this *kitrug* they first had to know from where it stemmed from. Hashem alluded to them or at least to Mordechai Hatzadik that this entire *gezairah* came about because Haman changed the letters of א and ע from the word לעבדם to the word לאבדם as we explained above. This is to indicate that *Yisrael* were not fulfilling their life mission of changing the *matzav* of עור to אור.

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Chazal state that Haman has an association with the *Aitz Hadaas* as the Torah alludes to his name in the words **המן** העץ אשר צויתך (Bereishis 3,11), connecting him with the the Serpent and **סמאל**, the *Malach* of Aisav. The *Nachash* like Haman changed the truth of Hashem's words from **surely** dying as the punishment for eating the forbidden fruit, to **perhaps** you will die (**עמלק** גמטריא ספק). Achashveirash was willing for his wife to even appear unclothed to his party in order for *Yidden* to have impure thoughts by **gazing** at *peritzus* and therefore show that they have lost all hope to reach the Aleph of **אור**. By enjoying their participation in the party they gave testimony that they are forever anchored by the physical eye that seeks *chait* and there is no more reason for their existence nor the *Beis Hamikdash's* rebuilding.

A support for the above idea is found in Esther's name of **הדסה**. The root word **הדס** means myrtle which is used as part of the *Four Minim*. *Chazal* say that the **הדס** symbolizes the shape of the human **eyes**. **הדס** is also *gematriah* 69 which alludes to the journey of elevations from **עור** to **אור**. Hashem was sending signals to Yisrael that they must recommit themselves to the mission of fixing the **ע** and elevating oneself to live aligned with the *neshamah* which possesses the **אור** and not the **גוף**.

A third aid for helping Yisrael to be aware of their precarious predicament and the need for immediate *teshuvah*, is the many instances of the changing of clothes that was occurring throughout the ordeal. The word for traitor is **בוגד**. It is from the *lashon* of **בגד** clothing. The *sefarim* say the reason they share the same root is to convey that every sin and *begidah* must be looked upon like clothing. The clothing that you wear is not you or your essence but rather something you can take off and remove. When one has sinned he must rectify the shortcoming, but his essence remains pure and intact. The Baal Shem Tov ztl wrote that the word **חטא** is spelled with an extra silent *aleph* at the end in order to show that even if we sin we are still connected to the silent aleph of Hashem and the **אור**.

When people of Shushan finally understood that their lifestyle failed to accomplish their mission and hit a new low with the wild partying disgracing the *Beis Hamikdash* they did *teshuvah*. Fasting for three days in a row was a *tikkun* for the enjoying both the *seudah* of Achashveirosh and a *tikkun* for the eating from the *Aitz Hadaas*. To this the *passuk* refers to when it says **לולא ה' שהיה לנו בקום עלינו אדם** (Tehillim 124,2) would it not have been for Hashem with us when **אדם** stood up to annihilate us, we would have perished. Who is this nameless **אדם** that the *passuk* is referring to? The *Chazal* answer Haman. What the *passuk* is really saying is that Haman brought upon us **אדם**, a *kitrug* referring to **Adam Harishon** that Yisrael are lax and apathetic to their mission of *Tikkun Olam*. The seventy years are almost up and look at the low state of *ruchniyus* that they are in. At the time of Mordechai and Esther the *kitrug* against *Am Yisrael* was so strong that without Hashem's waking us up from our deep slumber we would have disappeared from the face of the earth.

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The *gematria* of **משיח** with the word equals **בְּקוֹם עֲלֵינוּ אָדָם**. Hashem gifted Yisrael during the time of the horrific decree of Jewish annihilation, the future light that is destined to appear in the final *geulah* with the arrival of *Moshiach*. To this the *Megillah* refers to when it says ליהודים היתה אורה. A hint to this is found in the *gematriah* **אורה** with the word which equals **אָדָם קוֹדֵם חַטָּא**. It is also the *gematriah* of עה"כ **אָדָם**.

On Purim there was a *Kabbalas Hatorah* on *Torah Shb'al Peh* as it is written וקבלו היהודים. The word **אורה** which is in the female gender form refers to the *Torah B'al Peh* for it receives from the *Torah Bichsav*. Yisrael received on Purim what they received on *Shvuos* because on Purim also there was a *פסקה זוהמתן* at least for the time period of Purim. The *passuk* in *Megillas Esther* says ויקר ליהודים היתה אורה ושמחה וששון ויקר and *Chazal* say *Megillah* 16b **אורה** refers to *Torah*, *שמחה* refers to *Yom Tov*, *ששון* to *Milah*, and *יקר* to *Tefillin*. In its deeper meaning the *passuk* is telling us that on Purim there is a changing of clothes from having physical bodies into spiritual bodies. Most times we require our bodies to be influenced from our *neshamos* with the **לבוש** (clothing) of *saichel*. However on Purim the *saichel* is not necessary to guide and pull the reins of the body because our bodies which are infused through the future light become spiritual like *Adam Harishon* before the *chait* and *Matan Torah*.

It is the **אורה** of the Oral Torah that brings the future light into a person and sanctifies his body. As the *sefer* *Shav Shamattsa* writes in his preface that just like the written Torah requires parchment which then when written upon becomes holy **אור**, so too the Oral Torah which is spoken through the mouth and travels throughout the body becomes the elevated and sanctified parchment (*Eruvin* 53b *Maharsha*).

On Purim when *Am Yisrael* accepted the Oral Torah their bodies became **אור**. This new *Orah* brought an inner *שמחה* which *Chazal* interpret to mean **בבשר** (*אין שמחה אלא*) *in korbanos*). Every other *Yom Tov* you eat meat and drink wine. On Purim your body is so elevated that it is a *mizbaich* in which meat and wine are sacrificed and poured on. The *Milah* of Purim is not the 8th day circumcision but rather the one of the **heart** which Hashem will do when *Moshiach* comes ומל'ה' אלקיך את לבבך. The *Tefillin* of Purim are different from the entire year. The whole year you bind the *tefilin* and their parchments to your body. On Purim you bind your body to your *tefilin*!

All these change of clothing comes from the *Orah* of Torah and a transformed sanctified body as long as the day of Purim lasts.

This is the inner secret of **עד דלא ידע בין ארור המן וברוך מרדכי**. The *Tov* of the *Aitz Hadaas* is *Mordechai* and the *Rah* is *Haman*. On Purim even the *rah* is *tov* because the *tikkun* of the body

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is when the *rah* that entered leaves the body and Man is transformed into the same status as was before the *chait*.

Make sure you are ready for a change of new clothing on Purim.

Gut Shabbos Freilichen Purim