



A collection of
Torah thoughts
produced by the
Kollel

חידוש Chiddush

אין בית המדרש בלא

KOLLEL UPDATES

Shabbos Shiur

Rabbi Ash delivered a fantastic shiur on the nature of the relationship between Esther and Achashveirosh and its halachic basis and legitimacy.

The shiur was thoroughly enjoyed by the large audience who attended.

Mindful Emotions

Some 40 men and women came to hear Rabbi Johnson address this inspiring topic of personal and spiritual growth.

Based on Chassidus and Midrashic sources, Rabbi Johnson defined the essential characteristic of Amalek and how we combat its manifestations in our personal spiritual lives. Part of the content is presented in this Chiddush.

Purim Personalities

Another full-house crowd participated in another quality pre-Purim shiur facilitated by the Kollel.

Rabbi Shlomo Barber intrigued the 40-strong crowd with facts and details of the Megillah characters you thought you knew.

The content and presentation was amazing and participants came away with many details that they had not previously known about the familiar Purim story.



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Mind-Heart Connection

Zachor is the third of the four special Parshiyos and arguably the most important. By hearing this Torah reading, we fulfil our Torah obligation to remember what Amalek did to us and the Mitzvah to destroy them. According to many authorities hearing this *Keriah* is *Deoraisa* and even women are obligated to hear it.

This Mitzvah is perpetual, applying in every generation. But today we can no longer identify the national of Amalek, and without a king, we cannot go to war. So what is the message of Parshas Zachor for us?

After the first battle with Amalek the posuk says **וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי יָד עַל כַּס יָהּ**. Rashi explains that Hashem swears by His holy throne to fight Amalek throughout the generations. In the verse, only 2 letters of Hashem's name (ה"י) are written, prompting the Medrash to observe that Hashem's name will not be complete until Amalek is destroyed. It is apparent that Amalek's opposition is to the final letters of Hashem's name ו"ה, which will only be reinstated once he has been eradicated.

In Kabbalistic thought, the 4-letter name of Hashem represents the process by which G-dly energy comes down into our world. This process filters through the Divine *Sefiros* which are represented by these 4 letters. This process can be understood, by parallel, to our own conscious processes which brings an idea into existence and then translates it into actuality.

To keep it simple; The first 2 letters of Hashem's name represent two phases of intellect, the origination and development of an idea or concept. These are the *Sefiros* of *Chochma* and *Binah* represented by the י and ה respectively. The ו of Hashem's name represents the downward flow of the idea into the 6 emotions of the heart. The final letter ה represents the translation of emotion into practical action through speech or deed.

Ideally this flow should be direct and automatic. What the mind understands to be right and true should flow through to inspire our emotions. This inspired state should find expression in the words we speak or propel the decision to act.

In a spiritual sense the realisation of Hashem's greatness, His ongoing supervision of Creation and the truth of His holy Torah should generate feelings of love and awe of Hashem which inspire us in keeping His commandments.

Chassidic thought connects Amalek to the neck. Amalek is the *Kelipah* (negative force) corresponding to *Daas*. Like the neck which connects the head to the body, *Daas* is the bridge which allows our intellect to shape and direct our desires and our emotional state. Amalek seeks to sever the head from the body, separating the ה"י from ה"ו and obstructing the natural flow whereby our intellect directs our emotions.

What is *Daas*? Whereas the intellectual qualities of *Chochmah* and *Binah* represent the intellectual grasp of a concept, this understanding remains yet theoretical, disconnected from the person and his reality. *Daas* is the reflective mind where we internalise our understandings, connecting to them deeply and personally, taking them to heart so that they make an impression upon us.

By way of example: A parent disciplining their child may say "It's wrong to hurt others". This truth is readily understood, but for the child it remains a theoretical concept which can be ignored. By asking the child to reflect "How would you feel if someone hurt you", the child internalises the idea, feels it, and connects with it in a meaningful way. This is *Daas*.

Amalek is happy for our study of G-dly truths to remain in our heads. But he chokes the neck to prevent it from becoming personally meaningful and developing into a feeling which just might bring us to make real spiritual growth and changes in our lives.

The Mitzvah **זכור את אשר עשה לך עמלק**, to remember what Amalek did to you. *You* is written in singular form, suggesting that this is a battle which each one of us must wage.

When we learn a Torah concept, hear a good shiur, a nice *vort* at a farbrengen or Shabbos *drosho*, Amalek is lurking. We nod our head in agreement, appreciating the intellectually profundity and recognising the truth. But Amalek says "why get excited?" "Why daven now with more feeling?" and "why should I let this new insight bring about a *hachlota Tovah* (positive resolution)?"

Our battle is to take the Torah we learn out of our brains and bring it into our hearts. When we connect our minds to our body, letting the truths that we know or learn influence and shape our feelings and our behaviour, we complete the name of Hashem inside of our *Neshama*. When we do this, Hashem will reciprocate with the end to all evil when once again His name will be whole.



Shiurim Schedule

AVOS UBONIM

Yeshivas Mordechai Hatzaddik is a worldwide phenomenon. Just as Mordechai gathered Jewish children together to learn Torah, Jewish children come together on Purim to learn Torah.

Purim is more than just feasting and rejoicing. The Ram"o in *Shulchan Aruch* rules that it is appropriate to learn Torah before the Purim Seudah (of course this is in addition to our Mivzotim activities),

Join us 11:15-11:45am on Sunday in the Mezzanine for a special **Avos Ubanim** program, including extra special refreshments and a grand raffle for an awesome prize.

Kollel Welcomes

The Kollel welcomes 5 new Yungeleit who have recently joined the Kollel.

All men are invited to a special *Kabolas Ponim Shalosh Seudos* which will be held next week on Shabbos Parshas Parah in the Yeshiva lunchroom.

Come and meet our new Yungeleit and hear the words of Torah and Chassidus which they will share.

Redefine Yourself

Parshas Parah, the 3rd of the 4 Parshiyos contains a hidden message of Teshuvah and self transformation.

All men and women are invited to join Rabbi Johnson on Monday night, March 17 in the Goldhirsch Hall from 8:30-9:30pm for a fascinating shiur.



Do I need to hear the entire Megillah?

The *mishnah* in *Megillah* (יט,א) brings three opinions regarding from which point in the *Megillah* we must read on *Purim*.

- ◆ Rabbi Meir requires that the entire *Megillah* be read.
- ◆ Rabbi Yehuda requires that we read from *איש יהודי*.
- ◆ Rabbi Yossi rules that the *Megillah* should be read from the 3rd chapter, beginning *אחר הדברים* אלה האלה.
- ◆ The *Gemora* brings a fourth opinion. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai says that one should read from *אורח* ההוא, the 6th chapter.

The conclusion in the *Gemora* is that one must hear the entire *Megillah* in accordance with Rabbi Meir.

When listening to the Megillah what if there were mistakes in pronunciation or the Baal Koreh skipped words?

The *Yerushalmi* (מגילה פרק ב, הלכה ב) אין מדקדקין makes a statement "we are not particular about mistakes". The *Gemora* relates how two *Amoraim*, students of *Rav*, read the *Megillah* before him on Purim. One read *יהודים*, while the other read *יהודיים* (with two *yuds*). *Rav* did not correct either student (although one of them must have made a mistake).

Based on this we deduce that we need not repeat the *Megillah* if a mistake is made.

However, there is a dispute amongst the *Rishonim* regarding which type

of mistake need not be corrected.

The *Ran* understands that it refers to any type of mistake which does not

change the meaning of the word or the לשון. If a mistake does change the meaning, it is considered as if the word was not read and invalidates the reading.

The *רי"א* quoted by the *שלטי גבורים* learns that only a mistake that changes the entire meaning is problematic. i.e. if one left out the word "לא" of *ימי הפורים האלה לא יעברו* the meaning is completely changed. However if other letters or words that don't change the meaning were omitted, one is *יוצא*.

In *Shulchan Aruch*, the *Mechaber* quotes two opinions. He begins with a general statement that we are not particular about mistakes. The second opinion limits this to only include mistakes such as *יהודים* or *יהודיים*, where there is no change in the meaning. However other mistakes will invalidate the *קריאה*.

The *משנה ברורה* in *ביאור הלכה* rules like this second opinion, therefore if a mistake was made, or one missed a word one will have to repeat the *Megillah*.

The uncertainty arises whether one must repeat the *ברכה*. The *ח"אדם* rules that in deference the *רי"א* when repeating the *Megillah* one should not recite a *ברכה*.

Hearing or listening the Megillah?

The *מחבר* rules that when hearing the *Megillah* one needs to have intent to fulfil the Mitzvah - *וצריך* "השומע לכוין לצאת"¹.

The *מגן אברהם* writes that if one heard and was not *מכוון* he is *יוצא*.²

This seems to mean that if one heard the words even if he didn't concentrate his is *יוצא*. The *בוש"ט*

The Gantze Megillah

Rabbi Michael Stern

explains that the *Magen Avraham* is referring to where he did have intent (concentration), but was not "מכוון" to the meaning of the words.

Based on this, the *מנחת אלעזר*³ questions how anyone can fulfil the mitzvah of hearing the *Megillah* since it is almost inevitable that during *leining* one's thoughts will drift off to think about Torah or worldly matters, both of which are not connected with the *Megillah*.

He suggests that each person should follow along with a kosher *Megillah*. Therefore even if his mind wonders, since he is reading along with the *baal korei*, the *דבור* of reading the *Megillah* with his mouth counteracts the *מחשבות זרות*, foreign thoughts.

Regarding *Kiddush*, the *שערים* writes that the same issues exists when one is listening to *Kiddush* and doesn't concentrate. The *אר"צ* writes that looking in the *siddur* helps, even if one did not concentrate on every word.

We can apply this principle to the *Megillah*. By merely looking at the *Megillah* (not reading along), and even in a *chumash* (not a kosher *Megillah*), this will outweigh the fact that his mind may be wondering.

In summary:

- ◆ One must hear every word of the *Megillah*.
- ◆ In addition one must endeavour to concentrate upon every word.
- ◆ One should also follow along inside the *Megillah*, and then if his mind did wonder, he will still be *יוצא*.

¹ סי' תרצ"ט י"ד

² ס"ק טו

³ נמוקי אורח חיים סי' הנ"ל

⁴ ס' קמא ק"א סע"א יג