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Megillah Daf 11

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Rish Lakish introduced his lecture on Megillas Esther with the following interpretation: It is written [Mishlei 28:15]: *As a roaring lion, and a ravenous bear; so is a wicked ruler over a poor people. A roaring lion is referring to Nebuchadnezzar the wicked; a ravenous bear is referring to Achashverosh. Proof to this is learned from Rav Yosef who states that the Persians eat and drink like a bear and are corpulent like a bear and grow hair like a bear and do not repose like a bear. A wicked ruler is referring to Haman and a poor people is referring to the Jewish people who were considered poor because of their deficiencies in observing mitzvos.* (11a)

Rabbi Elozar introduced his lecture on Megillas Esther with the following interpretation: It is written [Koheles 10:18]: *Through laziness the ceiling collapses and with idleness of hands the house leaks.* Because the Jewish people were lazy regarding the study of Torah, the enemy of Hashem (referring to Hashem Himself) became poor. (11a)

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak introduced his lecture on Megillas Esther with the following interpretation: A song of ascents: If it had not been for Hashem who was with us, let Israel declare it now. If it had not been Hashem who was with us when a man rose up against us. ‘A man’ (referring to Haman) and not a king.

Rava introduced his lecture on Megillas Esther with the following interpretation: When the righteous are exalted the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule the people sigh. ‘When the righteous are exalted the people rejoice’ — this is illustrated by Mordechai and Esther, as it is written: and the city of Shushan was cheerful and glad (when Mordechai was dressed in the royal garb). ‘But when the wicked rule the people sigh’ — this is illustrated by Haman, as it is written: but the city of Shushan was perplexed (after Haman issued his decree to destroy the Jewish people).

Rav Masnah introduced his lecture on Megillas Esther with the following interpretation: For what great nation is there that has God so close to them.

Rav Ashi introduced his lecture on Megillas Esther with the following interpretation: Or has any God done miracles etc.

And it came to pass [va-yehi] in the days of Achashverosh etc. Rav said: [The word va-yehi is equivalent to] ‘vai and hi’ [woe and mourning]. With reference to this it is written: and there you shall sell yourselves to your enemies for slaves and for bondwomen, etc.

Shmuel introduced his lecture on Megillas Esther with the following interpretation: It is written [Vayikra 26:44]: *I will not cast them away, neither will I loathe*



them, to destroy them utterly, to break my covenant with them, for I am Hashem, their G-d. I will not cast them away is referring to the times of the Greeks; neither will I loathe them is referring to the times of Nebuchadnezzar; to destroy them utterly is referring to the times of Haman; to break my covenant with them is referring to the times of Persians; for I am Hashem, their G-d is referring to the times of Gog and Magog.

The Gemora cites a braisa that understands the above verse differently. I will not cast them away is referring to the times of the Chaldeans, for in that time I appointed for them Daniel, Chaniah, Mishael, and Azariah; neither will I loathe them is referring to the times of the Greeks, as I appointed for them Shimon Hatzaddik, the Chashmenoi and his sons and Matisyahu the Kohen Gadol; to destroy them utterly is referring to the times of Haman, as I appointed for them Mordechai and Esther; to break my covenant with them is referring to the times of Persians, as I appointed for them Rebbe and other sages of that generation; for I am Hashem, their G-d is referring to the future, when no nation will be able to control the Jewish people. (11a)

The Gemora discusses the interpretation of the name Achashverosh. Rav said: He was the brother of the head. This is referring to Nebuchadnezzar the wicked, who was called head. Achashverosh was similar to Nebuchadnezzar in several ways. Nebuchadnezzar killed and Achashverosh intended to kill. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Beis Hamikdash and Achashverosh wished to destroy it.

Shmuel interprets the name Achashverosh: In his time the faces of the Jews were black as the bottom of a pot.

Rabbi Yochanan says: Everyone who remembered him would say "woe to his head."

Rabbi Chanina said: His taxes were so heavy that everyone became poor. (11a)

It is written: *Achashverosh, who is Achashverosh*. The Gemora understands this to mean that he remained wicked from the beginning to end. The Gemora cites other examples like this. It is written in that form by Esav, Dasan and Aviram and King Achaz.

It is written [Divrei Hayamim 2, 1:26]: *Avram, that is Avraham*. The Gemora understands this to mean that he remained righteous from beginning to end. It is written in that form regarding Aharon and Moshe as well. By David, the Gemora understands it to mean that he remained humble from beginning to end. Just as in his youth he belittled himself before anyone who was his superior in Torah, so in his kingship, he belittled himself before anyone who was his superior in wisdom.

It is written: Who ruled: Rav said: this indicates that he (Achashverosh) raised himself to the throne (as he did not inherit the position). Some interpret this as a praise, and some as a derision. Some interpret it as a praise, holding that there was no other man equally fit for the throne. Others interpret it as a derision, holding that he was not fit for the throne, but that he was very wealthy, and by means of excessive distribution of money, he rose to the throne. (11a)

It is written: *Achashverosh, who is Achashverosh, who ruled from Hodu to Cush*. Rav says these countries were at opposite ends of the world, thus the verse teaches that Achashverosh ruled the entire world. Shmuel says they were adjacent to one another and the verse teaches that he ruled the entire world as easily as he ruled these two countries.

The Gemora cites a similar discussion: It is written: *“For he (King Solomon) ruled over the entire area on this side of the river, from Tifsach to Azzah.”* Rav and Shmuel argue about the meaning of this verse. One says: Tifsach was at one end of the world and Azzah was at the other end. The other says: They were next to each other. Just as he ruled over Tifsach and Azzah, so he ruled over the entire world. (11a)

It is written: *Achashverosh, who is Achashverosh, who ruled from Hodu to Cush, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces.* Rav Chisda said: Initially, he ruled over seven provinces, later he ruled over another twenty, and at the end he ruled over all one hundred and twenty-seven provinces.

The Gemora asks: But if you interpret the verse like that, what of the verse: And the years of the life of Amram were one hundred and thirty seven years? What lesson will you derive from that?

The Gemora answers: There is a difference here, because the whole text is superfluous. Let us see: it is written: from Hodu to Cush. Why then do I require, one hundred and twenty seven provinces? You must conclude that it is for a special lesson . (11a)

The Gemora cites a braisa: There were only three kings that ruled over the entire world; Achav, Achashverosh and Nebuchadnezzar. The Gemora proceeds to cite the Scriptural verses proving that.

The Gemora asks: Didn't King Shlomo rule over the entire world? The Gemora answers: He didn't complete his reign (*he became a common man towards the end of his reign*).

The Gemora asks: But according to one opinion, he was reinstated as a king (after becoming a commoner)?

The Gemora answers: He was a ruler over the beings above (*demons*) and below, so he wasn't included in the listing.

The Gemora asks again: Didn't Sancheriv rule over the entire world? The Gemora answers that he didn't capture Yerushalayim.

The Gemora asks again: Didn't Daryavesh (*Darius*) rule over the entire world? The Gemora answers that there were seven countries that he did not rule over.

The Gemora asks again: Didn't Koresh (Cyrus) rule over the entire world? The Gemora answers that the only proof we have for this is Koresh's own words and they are not reliable. (11a – 11b)

It is written: *In those days, when King Achashverosh sat on his royal throne, which was in Shushan the capital.* This would seem to be referring to the beginning of his reign; yet from the next verse, it explicitly says the third year. It is written: *In the third year of his reign, he made a feast for all his ministers and servants.* Rava explains: In the third year, his mind was put at ease and he celebrated with a grand party. Achashverosh said: *“Balshetzar calculated the seventy years of exile but made a mistake; I calculated the seventy years (which concluded now) and I did not make any mistakes.”*

The Gemora explains: Balshetzar's mistake was to calculate the starting point of the seventy years with the time that Nebuchadnezzar ascended the throne. Achashverosh sought to correct that and he calculated from the exile of Yehoyachin. The Gemora states that



the correct calculation would have been to count from the destruction of Yerushalayim. (11b – 12a)

DAILY MASHAL

DEFEAT AMALEK WITH TORAH

➤ Rabbi Elozar introduced his lecture on Megillas Esther with the following interpretation: It is written [Koheles 10:18]: *Through laziness the ceiling collapses and with idleness of hands the house leaks.* Because the Jewish people were lazy regarding the study of Torah, the enemy of Hashem (*referring to Hashem Himself*) became poor.

The Maharal comments that it is evident from this Gemora that the only merit that can save Klal Yisroel from the hands of Amalek is the studying of Torah. Klal Yisroel can become elevated through the study of Torah and only then can we overcome Amalek.

The Riaz explains that this is why the salvation of Purim came after Mordechai gathered the twenty-two thousand young children and studied Torah with them. The Gemora later on (16b) expounds on the verse that states: (Esther 8:16) *layehudim haysa orah visimcha visasson vikar*, the Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor. Light is referring to Torah; Gladness is referring to the festivals; Joy is referring to *bris milah*; Glory is referring to tefillin. Torah is mentioned first because that is the method to prevail over Amalek.

Lesson from Hakhel

Chazal (Megillah 11A) teach that the fourth and fifth words of the Megillah, "Hu Achashveirosh--he is Achashveirosh)" teach us a profound lesson. He "is" Achashveirosh--the very same Achashveirosh--before,

during and after the Purim story. Esther, his queen, who was a nevia (prophetess) and one of the greatest women in history, had no impact upon him. Mordechai, as the Mishne L'Melech, the number two man in his government, who was a Tzaddik, a navi (prophet), and one of the great members of the Anshei Kenesses HaGadolah, had no effect on his life. Indeed, even the miracles of Purim--the amazing turn of events which were years in the making--were personally overlooked and ignored, although they otherwise made the king's chronicles and the history books for all time. As a matter of fact, Achashveirosh had ordered that the work to reconstruct the Beis HaMikdash be halted at the beginning of his reign--and continued his stop-work order throughout his 14-year reign. The Beis HaMikdash only continued to be rebuilt upon the succession to his throne by his son, Daryavesh. What an important lesson this is for us! We cannot let the time in which we currently find ourselves in march by us without it having an important impact upon us.

May we suggest learning to have a special kavanah in the first brocha of Shemone Esrei as we recite the words "Ozer", "U'Moshia", "U'Magen":

Ozer--a Helper, who thwarts an existing immediate danger from overpowering a person (example: You have already been attacked and the attacker is defeated);

Moshia--a Savior, who cancels danger threatening to overpower a person (example: Prior to his attacking, the attacker runs away);

Mogen--a Shield, who prevents trouble from reaching you in the first place (example: The attacker never leaves home).