

Ha'a'zienu 5782

BS"D Parashat Ha'a'zienu 5782

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Yom HaKipurim & Purim

האם יש קשר בין יום הכיפורים ל Purim?

Is there an analogous feature between these two auspicious days, apart from the similarity of the letters "p-u-r-i-m"?

One might facetiously say that on Yom HaKipurim most people wear masks to cover their true selves and appear to be righteous, whereas on Purim the unmasked, unrestrained real person comes out. However, I propose a genuine connection between these two special days of Yom HaKipurim and Purim.

Rambam (Laws of Tshuva, chap. 1) lays down the protocol for achieving tshuva, consisting of three stages:

התשובה

Vidui, an outspoken, candid confession where the sinner is alone with HaShem, away from any inquisitive ears, and verbalizes the sins he perpetrated.

התשובה

Charata, regret, where the penitent feels genuine remorse, not false remorse like "the shrimp salad I ate yesterday was tasteless", but acknowledging that it was tasty, but he feels remorse over angering the Almighty by violating His commands.

התשובה

resolution not to repeat the transgression in the future.

However, in chapter 2 Rambam introduces a new concept – Tshuva gemura, absolute Tshuva, far different than the elementary tshuva in chapter one. Here Rambam states that absolute tshuva is when the penitent has the opportunity to repeat the sin but refrains because of his desire to repent. Rambam gives an example of a man and woman who sinned, but now find themselves in surroundings similar to those which existed at the time of the sin, and their feelings for each other are still strong and they are physically able to repeat the experience.

The distinction between standard tshuva and tshuva gemura can be described as the difference between basic kosher and glatt kosher.

Aliya from Persia to Jerusalem

One cannot say that the great lifesaving miracle that HaShem performed for Am Yisrael in Persia through Mordechai and Esther was a wasted miracle, because at the end of the day we survived the “Wannsee” like plans of Achashverosh and Haman. But it certainly did not achieve the desired goal that HaShem had “in mind” – to return the Jews to Eretz Yisrael. Historians estimate the number of Jews at the time to have been around twenty percent of the population in the 127 provinces under the rule of the Persian kings.

King Cyrus (Koresh) permitted the Jews to return home and to rebuild the Bet Hamikdash. The Book of Ezra the Scribe 1:1-4 reports:

In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus, king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing: “This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: ‘The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of

the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of his people among you may go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build the temple of the Lord, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem, and may their God be with them. And in any locality where survivors may now be living, the people are to provide them with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with freewill offerings for the temple of God in Jerusalem.'"

Ezra returned from Persia to rebuild the second temple with the "impressive" number of 42,300 Jews out of all the close to one million or more in the Persian provinces! From the point of view of aliya, Purim was a failure, and was attributed to the Jews of the time as a great national sin.

Absolute Tshuva

Now, in the spirit of providing opportunity for tshuva gemura (absolute tshuva), HaShem is preparing similar circumstances in our generation which would, this time, produce the desired result of mass aliya to the holy land.

Our great nemesis today is Iran-Persia, as in the time of Haman. Haman extricated from Achashverosh an irreversible decree that all Jews in the 127 provinces were to be murdered on the same day, the 13th of Adar (it was directed to the rank and file citizens of the provinces to murder their Jewish neighbors, similar to what the Arabs did in Chevron in 1929, when friends and neighbors for years and generations brutally attacked the Jews).

Today the murderous Islamic government of Iran-Persia announces at every opportunity their intention to use atomic weapons on the Jewish Medina and murder men, woman and children in one minute, a fraction of the one day that Haman wanted.

This will envelop the Jews in Eretz Yisrael with great fear and trepidation. But at some point HaShem will perform a sudden fantastic miracle and turn Iran into a big hole on the face of the planet. This will result in great numbers of Jews returning home in the spirit of tshuva gemura, to repent for the historic failure of the Jews at the time of Mordechai and Esther.

Here we have the convergence of the tshuva of Yom HakiPurim and historic Purim under the umbrella of tshuva gemura of Rambam.

Clouds & Pigeons

The prophet Yeshayahu states (60:8) that Yerushalayim will declare:

וְהָיוּ כָּל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כְּעֹלָם הָעֶלְיוֹן וְכָל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ יָבִיאוּ אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלַיִם אֶת־בָּנֵיהֶם וְאֶת־בָּתֵּיהֶם וְאֶת־אֲשֵׁרֵיהֶם וְאֶת־אֲשֵׁרֵי־בָנֵיהֶם וְיִשְׁכְּנוּ בְּיְרוּשָׁלַיִם וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־עֲצֵי הָעֵץ וְאֶת־אֲבָנֵי הָאֵשׁ וְאֶת־אֲבָנֵי הַבַּיִת וְאֶת־אֲבָנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְאֶת־אֲבָנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְאֶת־אֲבָנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ

Who are these (multitude) like clouds that fly and like pigeons that fly to their nests?

What is the prophet saying?

Clouds do not possess the ability to be self-mobile, they are moved by the wind in the direction the wind blows. But pigeons can fly even against the wind, and their nature is to return to their nests under their own power.

From time immemorial there have been two types of Jews who returned home. One is characterized by clouds who were forced by circumstances to return to Eretz Yisrael, as the Jews who came on aliya in the 1930s to escape Hitler, and those who came from the Soviet Union to escape Stalin.

Then there are the Jews who like homing pigeons feel an internal compulsion to return to their holy nest in HaShem's

promised land.

Then there are the “others” who are not like clouds, nor like homing pigeons, but are like petrified trees that are imbedded in fields of concrete.

We in Eretz Yisrael must offer praises of thanks to HaShem for permitting us to be a part of His holy land and pray that our brothers and sisters in galut awaken to the new reality in the HaShem-Am Yisrael relationship which is leading us to the promised goal of final redemption.

Gmar Chatima Tova

Shabbat Shalom

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