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Parshat Ki Tisa

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Candle Lighting: 6:44pm

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PURIM REPEATS: A MODERN TALE OF SUCCESS AND JEALOUSY

WRITTEN BY RABBI SHAY TAHAN

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During President Trump's address to Congress last week, there was a notable moment where he said that Democrats were unlikely to applaud his statements no matter what he did—even if he found a cure to save the entire world, they would not stand or show any type of support. Throughout his 100-minute speech, President Trump discussed various topics, including economic policies, foreign affairs, and domestic issues. The address was marked by visible divisions between Republican and Democratic members of Congress. Many Democrats chose to express their dissent

through silent protests, such as wearing symbolic colors, holding up signs with messages like "False," and some even walked out during the speech.



The mefarshim offer different explanations for this. Rashi explains that the **Sanhedrin** separated themselves from Mordechai because he became involved in communal affairs for the king. Although this was clearly for the benefit of the Jewish community, the Sanhedrin felt that his primary role should have been learning Torah instead.

Mahari Kera offers a different perspective, stating that some among the nation blamed Mordechai for provoking Haman, which led to the entire Purim story. They argued that although they were ultimately

saved by the grace of Hashem, the crisis could have been avoided altogether if Mordechai had not agitated Haman in the first place.

It is interesting to see that this very idea is mentioned at the very end of Megillat Esther. After the Megillah discusses at length the work of Mordechai—who led the Jewish nation through the devastating and dangerous time of Haman's decree and witnessed the miracles that Hashem performed to save them—Mordechai was finally elevated to be second in command to the king.

Mordechai's accomplishments and legacy are remarkable. For example, as a member of the Sanhedrin, he established the chag of Purim, along with all its mitzvot. Mordechai is even called "the righteous" (HaTzadik), a title granted to only a select few, such as Yosef, who earned it for resisting the test with Potiphar's wife.

One would expect such a great man to be universally applauded and celebrated. Yet, the Megillah ends with a bitter truth: he was accepted only by the majority of the nation, while a minority still opposed him.

Others offer different explanations, but why were people not fully supportive of the great sage Mordechai HaTzadik? While the actions of the rabbis against Mordechai were driven by idealism, based on what they believed to be the proper priority, Metzudat Tzion explains that the rest of the people were simply jealous of him—after all, it is impossible to please everyone.

When opposition arises against someone, they should not be worried or offended, as this is a clear sign of success. If a person were not successful, no one would bother them. However, the more one achieves, the more opposition they will face, simply because it is human nature to be jealous.

The mefarshim explain that the story of Purim is unique because its themes repeat in every generation. Likewise, jealousy can be attributed to the despicable actions of those who refuse to recognize any good in President Trump's success for the nation.



PURIM ON EREV SHABBAT: A RACE AGAINST TIME

Purim this year falls on Erev Shabbat, which brings several halachic and practical changes to the schedule and atmosphere of the day. The need to balance the mitzvot of Purim with the preparations for Shabbat requires careful planning and adjustment.

Preparing for Shabbat in Advance

Since Purim is a busy day, one must ensure that all Shabbat preparations—cooking, setting the table, and any necessary arrangements—are completed before the Purim Seudah. This requires planning ahead, possibly even beginning preparations on Thursday.

The Purim Seudah

One of the most significant changes is regarding the Purim Seudah. Ordinarily, the meal is held in the afternoon and extends into the night. However, since it is Erev Shabbat, one must finish the main part of the meal early enough so that it does not interfere with the appetite for the Friday night meal.

There is an absolute obligation to come to the Shabbat Seudah hungry, which is why Chazal forbade eating large meals on Fridays, even in the morning. There are two reasons for this prohibition:

1. If one eats a lot, even in the morning, it can diminish his appetite for the Shabbat night meal.

Large meals can interfere with Shabbat preparations by taking up time and energy.

The only exceptions are when a Simcha must take place on that day, such as a Brit Milah or Pidyon HaBen, or in our case, the Purim Seudah. In such instances, the meal must be held as early as possible to minimize its impact on Kavod Shabbat.

The Rema (695:2) writes that ideally, the custom is to hold the Seudah in the morning, which the Mishna Berura explains should be before midday (Chatzot), by the 6th hour of the day, to ensure it does not encroach upon Kavod Shabbat. If one is unable to have the Seudah by Chatzot, he may still do so, but no later than the 10th hour of the day. Of course, if one did not start the Seudah by then, he is still obligated to fulfill the Seudat Purim even after this time. However, one should be extremely careful to start the Seudah on time to avoid any complications.

One may not excuse himself from fulfilling the obligation of Seudat Purim by merely eating a simple meal or even a nice celebratory meal on his own. The Seudah of Purim must be joyous and festive, as the Rambam wrote (Megillah 2; 15): "What is the nature of our

obligation for this feast? A person should eat meat and prepare as lavish a feast as his means permit. He should drink wine until he becomes intoxicated and falls asleep in a stupor."

No Late-Day Drinking

On a regular Purim, many people continue drinking and celebrating late into the afternoon and evening. This year, since Shabbat is approaching, one must be mindful to remain composed and fully prepared for Shabbat. Drinking excessively late in the day could interfere with Shabbat preparations and proper Kabbalat Shabbat.



Zmanim Considerations

Candle lighting for Shabbat must be done at the proper time, and one must ensure that all Purim activities, including the Seudah, are completed before then. This creates a time crunch not present in a regular year.

Megillah Reading

The obligation to hear the Megillah remains unchanged, with the reading taking place on Thursday night and Friday morning as usual. However, since the day is shortened due to the early onset of Shabbat and the need to prepare and eat the Purim Seudah earlier, one should try to daven earlier than usual to ensure timely Megillah reading. Additionally, many families must adjust their schedules to care for their children. Often, the husband hears the Megillah at Shacharit while the mother watches the children, and then they switch, with the mother going to shul to hear the Megillah. This arrangement can cause delays and a late start to the day's other Purim obligations.

Mishloach Manot and Matanot La'Evyonim

The mitzvot of sending Mishloach Manot and giving Matanot La'Evyonim must be fulfilled on Friday during the day. Given the limited time available before Shabbat, it is advisable to distribute these gifts earlier in the day to ensure they are completed properly. Unlike regular years, when one has time while delivering Mishloach Manot to sit with friends, share a l'chaim, laugh, and shmooze, this year the clock is ticking. If one lingers too long, before he knows it, he will have to rush home to prepare for Shabbat, leaving little time to properly fulfill the day's mitzvot.

Interestingly, this year the day is extended by an extra hour due to daylight saving time. While there is much discussion and controversy over the benefits of DST with regard to Jewish laws, for Purim, it seems to be a positive.

ZELENSKY'S WARDROBE: A STATEMENT OR A SIGN OF DISRESPECT?

During a press conference at the White House, a reporter posed a pointed question to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky:

"Mr. President, why don't you wear a suit? You're at the highest level in this country's office, and you refuse to wear a suit. Do you own a suit?"

The question arose in response to Zelensky's consistent choice of military-style clothing over formal attire. This stood out

even more at an official meeting in the White House, where every world leader traditionally appears in a suit. The implication was clear—his break from diplomatic norms was being challenged as inappropriate and disrespectful in such a setting.

One could argue that Zelensky's choice of attire was entirely appropriate, as it aligns with how he presents himself at all official events in Ukraine. His consistent military-style clothing is not just a

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personal preference but a deliberate statement—one that reinforces his nation's wartime reality and his role within it. If this is his standard mode of dress, why should he change it simply because he is in a different setting? Does the expectation to adapt one's appearance to a new environment outweigh the message of authenticity and steadfastness that his attire conveys?

Moreover, why fixate on outward appearance? Shouldn't the focus be on substance rather than style? When leadership is defined by resilience and decisive action, does attire truly matter? If anything, Zelensky's choice underscores the notion that true leadership is about conviction, not clothing.

The Power of Attire: A Torah Perspective

Interestingly, our parashah discusses the special garments of the Kohanim at great length. These regal garments were designed "for honor and glory" (Shemot 28:2). The Torah meticulously details the attire of both the Kohen and the Kohen Gadol, dedicating an entire parashah to every aspect of their clothing with precise specifications.

Additionally, the attire of the Kohen is an absolute obligation; if he enters the Beit HaMikdash without his priestly garments, he is subject to capital punishment, and his service is invalid. This requirement remains unchanged whether the nation is experiencing peace and prosperity or facing the hardships of war. The very questions we posed earlier can be asked here as well—why must the Kohen adhere to such strict regulations? If external appearance is supposedly secondary, why does the Torah place such immense significance on his garments?

The Kohen's Garments: A Vision of Holiness and Impact

The answer is that the garments of the Kohen are not merely ceremonial; they serve a vital role in shaping the spiritual experience of those who come to the Beit HaMikdash. The Kohen is not just an individual performing a ritual—he serves as a representative of Hashem, and his very appearance reinforces the sanctity of the Temple (Rabenu Behaye).

Chazal explain (Tosfot Bava Batra 21) that when the pilgrims would come to the Beit HaMikdash three times a year, they would have a profound spiritual experience that elevated them to a higher level. As they arrived, they would witness the Kohanim in service with their distinct and dignified attire, leaving a lasting impression. The grandeur of the garments enhanced the experience, reinforcing the holiness of the Beit HaMikdash and the significance of *avodat Hashem*.

The visual impact reminds the people that serving Hashem requires precision, dedication, and a sense of higher purpose. Unlike personal clothing choices, which may express individual values, the Kohen's attire is designed to shape the perception and mindset of the entire nation.

The Kohanim do not wear their priestly garments for personal

expression or comfort. Rather, their attire symbolizes their role as representatives of the Jewish people in the service of Hashem. When they enter the Beit HaMikdash, they do so not as private individuals but as emissaries of the nation, performing *avodah* on behalf of Klal Yisrael.

This explains why the requirement remains unchanged in times of war or peace. The Beit HaMikdash represents an eternal reality, one that transcends political and societal conditions. The consistency of the Kohen's appearance

sends a powerful message: no matter the external turmoil, the service of Hashem remains unwavering. The garments create a sense of continuity, stability, and reverence—anchoring the people in their connection to Hashem.

Thus, the Kohen's attire is not just about external appearance but about its profound effect on those who see it. It instills a sense of holiness, reinforces the importance of divine service, and ensures that the experience of the Beit HaMikdash remains etched in the hearts and minds of those who come to worship.



The Impact of Dress in Modern Society

We learn from this that when entering an official setting, such as the White House, one should dress accordingly. Appearance influences perception, prompting others to take you more seriously and conveying a strong message about your stature and intent. Proper, respectful attire is therefore essential.

When looking at a picture of the U.S. president in a suit sitting beside Zelensky in a sweater, one cannot ignore the stark contrast. The image evokes the impression of a statesman—regal and authoritative—alongside someone who appears more like a teenager being lectured by a leader. Moreover, dressing in such a casual manner invites, so to speak, a perception of informality, potentially undermining the gravity of the moment.

The Impact of Clothing on Self-Perception and Behavior

Another important point is that one's attire also influences their own behavior. When a person wears shorts or jeans, they unconsciously carry themselves—walking, speaking, and acting—with a more casual and relaxed demeanor compared to someone dressed in a formal suit. Thus, dress codes are not only about how others perceive an individual but also about how they shape a person's self-perception and conduct. This is why the Chachamim (Bava Kama 91, 2) referred to clothing as *מכובדתא* meaning, "they bring me honor," emphasizing that attire instills a sense of dignity and respect within the wearer.

Because of this, yeshiva students are expected and encouraged to adhere to a specific dress code, even though there is no formal halachic requirement. This practice helps instill a sense of self-respect and influences them to conduct themselves with greater seriousness and dignity.

Although there is no specific halacha requiring yeshiva stu-

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dents to follow a dress code, there is a halacha regarding how a *talmid chacham* must dress (Rambam De'ot chapter 5). His clothing must be clean and respectable—neither excessively flashy nor loud—reflecting a balance of dignity, modesty, and self-respect.

It is possible that Zelensky's choice of military-style attire subcon-

sciously influenced his demeanor, leading him to adopt a more militant stance in front of our dear president—ultimately contributing to his downfall.

היה בפורים במקום שאין עניים

היה בפורים במקום שאין בו יהודים ואין לו למי למסור משלוח מנות, ימנה שליח בטלפון שיתן עבורו משלוח מנות במקום אחר. וכן אם יודע שבפורים יהיה במקום שאין בידו לקיים את מצות משלוח מנות, יבין מראש משלוח וימנה שליח שיתן את המשלוח ביום הפורים.

בדיון מתנות לאביונים הבאנו את ספיקו של היד אהרן במי ששלח משלוח מנות לחבירו לפני פורים שיגיעו אליו בודאות ביום הפורים, והכרעתו שיוצא בזה ידי חובתו. וכתב הערוך השולחן (סימן תרצה סעיף ז): "ויש להסתפק כששלח מנות לרעהו שבמרחקים קודם פורים, ויגיעו לו בפורים אם יצא בזה ידי משלוח מנות. ויש מי שאומר ד"צא, ולי נראה דלא יצא, דבעינן משלוח מנות בפורים עצמו. ועוד דהא עיקר המשלוח מנות הוי משום שמחה, ואיזה שמחה היא לו עתה מה ששלח מקודם". והנה יש לדון בזה משום טעמי המצוה, דידועים עיקרי הטעמים שנאמרו, והם דעת הרב שלמה אלקבץ בספר מנות הלוי שחכמים תקנו משלוח מנות לרמז שעם ישראל מאוחדים באגודה אחת, היפך דברי המן שאמר מעל בני ישראל, ישנו עם אחד מפוזר ומפורד. ועל פי טעם זה אין הבדל אם שלח את המשלוח מנות לפני פורים שהרי ככל שהגיע בפורים מראה בזה אחדות.

וכן דעתו של בעל שו"ת תרומת הדשן (סימן ק"א) שכתב שנתקנה על מנת שיהא לכל אחד ואחד ספיק בידו לקיים סעודת פורים ברווח, ותיקנו שישלחו גם לעשירים כדי שלא לבייש את מי שאין לו, ודאי שאין הבדל מתי שלח את המנות, ובלבד שיגיעו ביום הפורים בו מתקיים הסעודה.

ונראה שהערוך השולחן שכתב טעמים מעצמו לא סבר כמותם, ויתכן שדעתו כמו שכתב הב"ח (סימן תרצה ד"ה וצריך) שעיקר טעם משלוח המנות הוא כדי להיות שמח ושש עם חבירו על שני תשועות שעשה לנו השם יתברך: האחד, שנפרע לנו מכל צרינו ונקם נקמתנו. והשני, שהושיע לנו עד לנו עד שלא נפקד ממנו איש.

היה בפורים במקום שאין עניים ישלח מתנות לעניים על ידי העברה מחשבון הבנק או שימנה בטלפון שליח לתת עבורו.

כתב השולחן ערוך (סימן תרצה ס"ד): "במקום שאין עניים יכול לעכב מעות פורים שלו לעצמו ונותנם במקום שירצה". ועניים היינו ישראל ולא נכרים (משנ"ב ס"ק יב). והיום ניתן להעביר מעות לעניים על ידי הבנק או כרטיס אשראי, או מינוי שליח בטלפון שיתן עבורו במקום שיש עניים, ועדיף לעשות כך מאשר ליתן לפני פורים למי שאוסף עבור העניים אף שמבטיח ליתנם לעניים ביום הפורים עצמו, וזאת מכיון שיש בדבר זה מחלוקת, שבבאר היטב (סימן תרצה ס"ז) הביא את ספיקו של הספר יד אהרן: "נסתפקתי מי ששלח לחבירו שבמדינת הים שני מנות או שני מתנות לשני אביונים קודם פורים, ובפורים עצמו ודאי מגיעים לידו אי יוצא או לא, מי נימא כיון שבשעה ששלח לא היה חיב בהם לא נפיק, או דילמא כיון שבפורים עצמו שהוא שעת החיוב הגיעו לידו נפיק", וסיים שם שדעת היד אהרן שיוצא ידי חובה. ובמהר"י אסאד (סימן רז) הסביר שהעיקר היא קבלת העני, ואין מצוה נקראת אלא על שם גומרה ואילו מעשה השילוח נחשב רק כהכשר מצוה.

ואף שכן סברו עוד הרבה פוסקים, מכל מקום ישנם פוסקים המחמירים וסוברים שאין אדם יוצא ידי חובתו אלא אם נתנם בפורים עצמו, ובכללם מרן החיד"א (ברכי יוסף סוף סימן תרצה) שכתב שאינו חייב לשלוח המעות קודם פורים כדי שיגיעו לעניים בפורים, רק יפריש המעות בפורים ואחר כך ישלחם. ויתכן שטעמו כמו שהסברנו במקום אחר שיש הסוברים שלפני שהגיע זמן עשיית המצוה אין הוא מחויב עדיין לקיימה, ואף ששם ביארנו שודאי יש לאדם לעשות ככל הניתן על מנת להכין את המצוה אולם שם איירי במצוות שאי אפשר לולא כן, ולדוגמא מי שלא אפה או קנה מצה בערב חג הפסח איך יאכל בלילה, וכן מי שלא קנה ארבעת המינים איך יטול בחג הסוכות, אבל כאן נראה שיסוד המצוה שונה במהות, שהרי מצוה זו של מתנות לעניים ניתנה על מנת לקיימה בזמנה ואכן ניתן לקיימה בזמנה על ידי שיתן מעות לעניים בפורים, ואין צורך בדרך כלל להכין את המצוה לפני חג הפורים.

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