

TORAS AVIGDOR

AUTHENTIC TORAH THOUGHT FOR LIFE

RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"l

PURIM

WITH

RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"l

BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

THE THRONE OF GLORY

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Part I. Hashem's Throne

Where is the Throne?

In the story of Purim we find one of the *ikrei yesodos haTorah*; one of the most important foundations of being a Torah Jew. And because in our hustle and bustle of celebrating the *yom tov*, it is too often overlooked, it's appropriate therefore that we should spend some time together discussing the subject.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu, when He expressed the necessity to destroy Amalek, He said like this: **כִּי יָד עַל כֶּסֶם יָרִיב** – *Because a hand is raised against the throne of Hashem*, **וְלֹא חָזַק לָהּ בְּעַמְלֵק מְדוּרָה** – *that's why there will be a war against Amalek forever* (Shemos 17:16). Again: The mitzvah of *mechiyas Amalek* is because Amalek raised his hand – not against Hashem – but against His throne.

The question is what is this 'throne of Hashem'? We don't know that Amalek ever made an attempt against a throne, that they tried to build a ladder into the heavens to raise their hands against the *kisei Kah*. And so we have to understand what it's talking about here; which throne are we being called to defend?

Where He Rests

So listen to the *pshat*. At the beginning of the Torah we read that **רוּחַ אֱלֹקִים מְרַחֵף עַל פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם** – *the spirit of Hashem was hovering over the waters that covered the earth* (Bereishis 1:2). It means that the Shechinah had no place to rest; it was looking for a place to settle.

Now, that's a queer *possuk* because Hashem could rest His Presence anywhere He wishes. The fact that there's darkness or water **עַל פְּנֵי תְהוֹמוֹת** doesn't make a difference. Today they have seaplanes that could land on water – are you going to say that the Shechinah couldn't do that? And so it has to be understood.

The answer is there was no *nation* to rest on. Hashem was looking for a place to rest means He was looking for a *nation* where His Shechinah could dwell. And He looked around and there was nothing; no place to rest.

That's why the Torah tells us this story, so that we should know what Hashem was thinking, *kavayachol*. Hashem made that the *ruach Elokim* should hover over the water waiting for a nation to rest His Presence upon and He said, "Wait. Wait.

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Mark (Yerucham) Halpern, Toronto, Canada.

The time will come and you'll find a *makom menuchah*, a place to rest.”

The National Throne

And when will that be? When did it happen? When the Am Yisroel came into existence. When Avraham and his children after him chose to be Hashem's nation, from then on the spirit of Hashem rested on the Am Yisroel. וְשֹׁכְנֵתִי – *Where will I rest?* בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל – *among the Bnei Yisroel* (Shemos 29:45).

So now you know what it means the throne of Hashem: *Keis Kah* means the Am Hashem. The Bnei Yisroel are the throne on which the Shechinah rests; nowhere else.

In the entire universe if you wish to find the address, אֵיזָה מְקוֹם כְּבוֹדוֹ, it's right here on the Bnei Yisroel. In Boro Park, in Williamsburg, in Lakewood, in Passaic, in Baltimore. Wherever there are Jews, each one of us – men, women, children – our heads are supporting the רֹחַ אֱלֹקִים. The Shechinah rests on us and it will never move away from us. That's a *yesod hayesodos*, that the Am Yisroel are the throne on which the Shechinah rests.

The Never-Ending Purim Story

And that's what it means יָד עַל כַּסֵּי יְהוָה. When Amalek raised up his hand against the Am Yisroel it was a hand against the throne of Hashem. And the same thing in the days of Purim. When Haman gained the king's ring and sealed the decree, he was attacking Hakadosh Baruch Hu's throne. Because if he would have *chas veshalom* carried out his plan, Hakadosh Baruch Hu would have no place anymore. The whole world wouldn't exist anymore.

And you shouldn't think it ended after the Purim story. We close the Megillah and go home and sing and drink and eat and dance, and we imagine it's the end of the story. It's not so. You have to know that when the Bnei Yisroel were given permission by Achashveirosh to fight back and they killed many *goyim*, what do you think was the result? You think they began to love Jews?

Forget about it! After Purim was over the *sinah* was greater than before. The *goyim* hated them even more! *Goyim* do not like it when Jews kill *goyim*; even if the Jews are defending themselves.

Kosher Pogroms

You remember not long ago the New York Times was complaining that the Jews whenever they have a chance, they make pogroms against the *goyim*. The writer mentioned that in the times of Haman the Jews made a pogrom on the *goyim*, and he was upset that the Jews were doing it again.

What happened? A homeless man, a bum with a razor blade, was in an elevator in Williamsburg and he gashed a Jew's face and took away his wallet.

So the Williamsburg Jews are not fools. They couldn't appeal to the police; the police wouldn't do anything. So one of the Jews who saw what happened ran after this homeless man and while he was running he called for help. “*Chaptzem! Catch him!*” He put out the Williamsburg call for reinforcements.

You know, Williamsburg is not West Orange; they have big families in Williamsburg, and so all of a sudden the windows and doors of the apartment buildings open up and there are *chassidim* pouring out from everywhere into the streets.

They responded to the call and when they caught this *shaigetz* they gave him the special *chaptzem* treatment. They gave him a treatment and he had to go to the hospital.

Fake News

So how did the good friends of the Jewish people report it in the New York Times? *Headline: Homeless Man Attacked By Hassidic Mob*. You know what that means, right? An innocent homeless man walking in the street with no place to go, probably just looking to do a good deed, and the *hassidic* mob rushed out of their houses and made a riot; for no reason they attacked the poor honorable fellow.

That's always how it is for the anti-Semites – when Jews defend themselves it's called a riot. The New York Times doesn't like that Jews should make pogroms – they prefer it the other way around.

But it's not only the Times. When the Jews in Eretz Yisroel fought back against the Arabs who attacked them so when the Jews won the war they gained many enemies at that time. Now, I'm no patriot for Medinas Yisroel but if the Arabs are coming to kill, the Jews shouldn't defend themselves? The gentiles don't think so. The U.N. makes a special meeting about the problem, a special declaration against Medinas Yisroel. All over the world, all the *goyim* hated the Jews because they won the war.

Because that's the way of the world. When Jews are killed, *chas veshalom*, so the *goyim*, even the good *goyim*, don't mind it much. But when Jews kill *goyim*, all the *goyim* are hurt very much.

Achashveirosh's Complaint

And that's why after Purim the Jews gained more *sonim* than before. Even Achashveirosh, although he was friendly to Esther, when he got the report about how many *goyim* were killed in Shushan he said **וּבְשָׂאֵר מְדִינֹת הַמְּלֶכֶת מָה עָשׂוּ** – “*And in the other provinces what did they do?*” It hurt him. He thought like a New York Times writer; it hurt him that they killed the *goyim*. **וּבְשָׂאֵר מְדִינֹת הַמְּלֶכֶת מָה עָשׂוּ** means, “How many did they kill already?! So many?!”

Now, *chalilah* had they killed the Jews, Achashveirosh wouldn't have said anything. Killing too many Jews, he wouldn't say a word. But if Jews kill *goyim* – in self-defense – that's a tragedy. Nothing changed after Purim.

We Are Friendless

Now if that's the case, we have no friends – **הֲלֵכָה עֲשִׂי שׂוֹנֵא יַעֲקֹב**. ‘*Halachah*’ means, have no question about it; it always has been and always will be: *Sinas haYehudim* is part of Hashem's Plan. There are good reasons for that, for anti-Semitism; it's not

our subject now but there are very good reasons and therefore there's no such thing as a stop to this *sinah*. And even though you don't see signs of it always, you should know in their hearts the *umos haolam* hate Yisroel.

When Hitler was destroying the Jews in Europe, all the *goyim*, in their hearts, were not disturbed at all. That's saying it mildly. They were not disturbed *at all*.

And even though one or two, for political reasons, said “It's terrible. We have to stop this. We have to take revenge on Hitler,” after it was all over, what did they do? Very little. *Teirutzim*, explanations. “There's nobody to blame. They couldn't help themselves. They were forced by the rule of Hitler. He was a dictator. Nobody could get out of it. You had to follow orders.” *Teirutzim*. And therefore poof, nothing.

Welcoming the Cubans

During the war too. I told you about the St. Louis, a boat of nine hundred refugees who escaped from Europe in order not to be killed by the Germans. And they came to the shores of America and begged “Please let us come into America. We don't want anything of you, just to let us get off and save our lives.”

Nothing doing. They didn't let them land. They said, “Go away. Otherwise we'll shoot.” They had to go back and everyone was killed by the Germans.

But when Castro took over Cuba, so the American president, he was generous. He said, “If you don't like living under a dictatorship, America is open to you. I'm going to allow you to come.”

Open Borders

And they came in the tens of thousands; tens of thousands of Cubans came to America. Nobody was trying to kill them; just they didn't like a dictatorship. They all came because America is more comfortable. They can make more money; they're happier. You can go sit in a candy store all

night and gamble and you get food stamps and welfare relief. It's a pleasure to come to America.

And so the Cubans were invited with open arms. But Jews who wanted to save their lives were not allowed to land. It's something about the Jews. It's the old story, the age-old story of עֲשֵׂיוֹ שׁוֹנֵי אֵיֶקֶב.

Purim Forever

And just like by Purim the hatred didn't end, it's a reminder for us that the story never ends. Today also, the hatred of the Jews is a big *ikar* in the world; the *frumme* are surrounded on all sides by enemies. Sometimes they're polite, for politics, other reasons. But you should know we have enemies.

So what do we do? We can't do anything against the *goyim* now. We shouldn't even try. One day Hashem will settle all the scores but we don't have to advertise it – and it won't help us to advertise it. You should just be a nice polite man. We have to be friendly to them and look only for *darkei shalom*; for ways and means of appeasing them. Always. But at the same time we should know that in their hearts they do not like us.

And that's what Purim is. Purim reminds us that the *halachah* is and always will be עֲשֵׂיוֹ שׁוֹנֵי אֵיֶקֶב. But it reminds us also of something bigger than that. Purim says that when there's hatred against Yaakov – not only hatred but even disdain, derision, disrespect – it means that it's an attack against the people who are upholding the Presence of Hashem in this world. It's an attack against the *kisei Kah*! That's the crux of what we're learning now, that Haman and all those like him that attack the Am Yisroel physically or ideologically, are thereby raising a hand against Hashem's throne in this world.

Part II. Defending the Throne

The Secret of Purim

Now we begin to see one of the great obligations that is incurred as a result of the story of Purim. It's

the secret of Purim that is overlooked. Because if the *sinah* that motivated Amalek and Haman then, and the *sinah* that's still in the world today, is a raising of the hand against the *kisei Hashem*, then it's up to us now to raise *our* hands in *defense* of the *kisei Kah*. That's what Hakadosh Baruch Hu is waiting for.

“My people,” He says, “you have a very great obligation to wage a great campaign against that *sinah*. I'm not asking you to go to war. Don't worry about that now. I'll take care of that. לִי נִקְמָה וְשָׁלֹמִים – I'm the One Who will take revenge for you (Devarim 32:35). But what do you have to do? You have to defend My throne *by showing how much you love the Am Yisroel.*”

That's the duty of Purim! To be a Jew-lover! Because who else is going to fill the void? The Arabs are going to love the ones upon whom the Shechinah rests? The Christians are going to love us? Mayor Dinkins is going to love us? Even when they made a pogrom against the Jews in Crown Heights he didn't do anything. And so who should love Jews if not the Jews themselves?

The Mitzvos of the Day

And therefore it's a serious subject: A Jew is obligated to defend the *kisei Kah* by loving the nation that is His throne. Not merely we shouldn't *hate* our fellow Jews. Not merely we shouldn't slander them and have *machlokes*. That's nothing yet. We should make it a career of showing that we are *enamored* with the Jewish people: with the nation in general, with our history, with all the great men of the past, *and most importantly with the Am Yisroel today* – men and women and boys and girls. We love them all!

It's a wonderful day, Purim, and you shouldn't waste it. *Stam* to drink and be wild, *stam* to sit and eat, no, that's not it. Purim means it's time to raise up the Jewish people. All year long too but especially on Purim you have to make a demonstration that

you are defending the *kisei Kah*. That's what Purim is for!

So you begin to understand now what it means **מְשֻׁלוֹחַ מְנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ וּמִתְּנוֹת לְאֲבִיּוֹנִים** – *the sending of portions, every person to his fellow, and gifts to the poor* (Esther 9:22). The purpose of the *mitzvos* of Purim are to encourage us to fulfill one of the primary purposes of Purim – to love the Am Yisroel.

The Forever Nation

Of course we're celebrating that Hashem saved us in the times of Achashveirosh. And we're celebrating that He always will save us! That's *simchas Purim*! Purim means that we are a nation forever, that we are still celebrating 2,500 years after it happened. We have to be excited about that, excited that we're still around, that we're the eternal people; we're forever and ever. **וַיְמִי הַפּוּרִים** – *There will always be a Purim among the Yehudim; the memory of Purim will never go away from us* (*ibid.* 9:28). Forever and ever there's going to be a Purim. That's the underlying *simchah*, that no matter how much *sinah* there will be, *we're going to be forever because His throne will be forever!*

But for that we could have just a day of happiness; a day of reading the Megillas Esther and eating and drinking and dancing and thinking about this *yesod* that we are the *Am Olam*, that we are the Forever Nation. What's this business of **מְשֻׁלוֹחַ מְנוֹת**? **מִתְּנוֹת לְאֲבִיּוֹנִים**? **אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ**? What's the business of **אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ**? What's that have to do with Purim?

The answer is what we're talking about now. Chazal wanted us to make a demonstration! To counteract that attitude of the world. "I'm demonstrating that I love my fellow Jew. I'm giving you this as a demonstration of what's in my heart."

That's what Purim is for: **אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ** – *each man to his friend*. Who is your friend? Everybody should be your friend. On Purim when you send gifts, it's because you're making friendship, you're increasing friendship. **מְשֻׁלוֹחַ מְנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ** – We send gifts to

our fellow Jews to show them it's **רֵעֵהוּ**; you're my friend.

Making a Scene

So let's say you're going to bring *shalach manos* to a neighbor. Make a scene from it! Don't merely go through the motions. Here I give you, you give me, finished. No! Make a scene about **רֵעֵהוּ**! "Oh, Chaim, I'm so happy that you're a *chaver* of mine. I love you, Chaim. I wish I could give you gifts every day!"

Say words that are *marbeh ahavah u'reus*. Find ways and means to express *ahavas Yisroel* – even if you're not giving *shalach manos*. You see a fellow Jew in the street, you don't know him from a hole in the wall but he's from the *kisei Kah* so say something to him: "A *freilichen* Purim, my fellow Jew! I love you!" You have a *shalach manos* that someone gave you in your hand? Give it to him. Absolutely! You're being *mechazeik* the throne of Hashem.

Monetary Gifts

Matanos la'evyonim too. It doesn't say **צְדָקָה** לְאֲבִיּוֹנִים, 'charity' to the poor; **מִתְּנוֹת לְאֲבִיּוֹנִים** means 'gifts' to the poor. We're giving them gifts too. Only that the poor prefer *tzedakah*, money, rather than a little dishful of cake and *beblach*. They want money so we give them money. That's a sign of loving the poor people, giving them money. And if you'll say nice words to them too and honor them and make them feel good even better.

If you can invite poor people to your table, even better. Not everybody has a home – not only the poor. Some people don't have a place to be on Purim for the *seudah*, for the happy festivities of the day. There are lonely Jews. They're also the *kisei Kah*! So bring them into your home. Show them that you're with them, that we're the *Am Olam*, the Forever Nation, together.

"Oh," Hashem says "Now I see that you know how to utilize the day. That's why I gave you Purim; because Haman wanted to utilize Purim for the opposite, for a tremendous *sinah* against the Am

Hashem, and you're going to utilize that same day for a tremendous *ahavah* to the Am Hashem. וְנִהַפְּךָ הוּא! That's the best way to utilize Purim.

Weak-Minded Love

It's a very important opportunity. And in order to make it a little bit more effective, a little bit of *mashkeh* helps to make your mind a little bit weak. When your *seichel* is strong, so you're a *pikeach*, a wise-guy: "Why should I love him for nothing? I should love that fellow? Heh, heh, heh, love him."

But after you have a cup of wine you're a little bit tipsy now so you're thinking, "Heh, heh, heh, I do love you! Why? Just because you're a fellow Jew. You and I, we're the *kisei Kah!* Hashem is with us! Ooh aah! Me and you!" And you embrace him.

Yielding to Drunkenness

So someone says, "What? Should I yield to that drunken impulse, something I wouldn't do when I was sober? Hug him?!"

Absolutely! If you allow yourself to be persuaded by a drunken impulse to be friendly with a fellow Jew, you're doing what Hashem wants you to do. כָּל הַמְתַּפְּתָה מֵיַיִן יֵשׁ בּוֹ מְדַעַת קוֹנוֹ – *If you allow yourself to be persuaded by means of wine, you have the attitude of your Creator* (Eirubin 65a). You're fulfilling the *ratzon Hashem*.

It means like this: Suppose Purim, you'll be in a synagogue or at a big family *mesibah* where people come together and you came in a little late, so there was one empty seat. After you sat down, you looked. The man next to you was somebody you didn't like. A neighbor or a cousin you don't love so much. But now you're stuck. You can't get up.

And now there's wine on the table and Purim it's a mitzvah to drink some wine. So, if you're smart you'll pour some wine in your cup and drink it down. Pour him some too and wait for the alcohol to go to your head. Now when you were sober, you didn't want to associate with him so much; but now you're a little bit tipsy, so you think, "I'm going to put an arm around his shoulders."

Good Silliness

Now, it's a silly thing. Here all year round you're sober, your mind is working, and you decided not to like him and Purim just because you're thinking under the influence of alcohol, you decided to like him?

And the answer is, yes! If you're able to be persuaded from wine to do what's right, to like a fellow Jew – after all, he's a fellow Jew; he's a *koshereh frum Jew* – then you're using alcohol for the right purpose.

Now you don't need much wine for this program. A little bit, that's enough. If you're wise you don't need any alcohol. Sometimes you can yield to the *simchas Purim* itself and embrace your fellow Jew. You're bashful? Make believe you're tipsy. Give him a hug. "I love you because you're a fellow Jew! I love you because the Shechinah is with you!" Excellent! You had a successful Purim!

After Purim you meet him, "Oh, do you remember we embraced on Purim?" Or "You remember when I brought you that *shalach manos*?" Keep on thinking about that all year long because that was the purpose of this great day, to practice up being a patriot for the Am Hashem; to be devoted with all your heart, *bechol levavcha uvechol nafshecha uvechol meodecha* to the Am Yisroel, the nation that is and will forever be the throne of Hashem.

Part III. Raising the Throne

Ah Gantz Yuhr Purim

Now, we can't rely on this one day, on *mishloach manos* and *matanos la'evyonim* and some *mashkeh*, to accomplish this great program of raising up the *kisei Hashem*. One day is excellent but we have to think of a plan for Purim that will be the beginning of a career; a Purim program that will last all year long.

And if you get busy with this program, if you show that you're serious about it then Hakadosh Baruch Hu says, "You started something good! הִבָּא לְטָהֳרָה מִסִּיעֵיךָ לָנוּ – I'm going to help you. I'll help you on Purim and I'll help you all year long."

And even if you're only acting in the beginning, you're only doing it because you heard me speak about it, but the acting is very important – הַחֲצוֹנִיּוֹת הַמְּעוֹרְרֵת אֶת הַפְּנִימִיּוֹת. The Mesillas Yesharim says: *the outwardliness bestirs the inwardliness*. It's a true and tried rule: you keep doing and you'll become what you're trying to be.

Now I'm going to list three different forms of endeavor, of outwardliness, which we can practice; three programs in the area of raising up the *kisei Kah*. I suggest that we should try to work on them at least on Purim. And then if you're a *gibor*, Shushan Purim too, even better. If you're a *chochom* you'll do it afterwards for a whole month. And if you really mean business you'll keep going; you'll do it for the rest of your life. If it's a life program then *ashreichem!* You can become Purim-people all year long. *Ashreichem!*

Let's Get Practical

Number one: To show a fellow Jew that you care about him by means of encouraging him, of saying kind words. If the world is not interested in making the Jew feel good then it's up to us to fill that void. And therefore it's a *chiyuv*; it's your work, your job to encourage your fellow Jews.

Search for ways and means of making your fellow Jew happy. Find the right words to be *mesameach* them, to be *mechabed* them, to encourage them and praise them; whatever you can do to make a Jew *freilich*.

Let's say, your wife. Your wife is also a Jew; is anybody telling your wife how important she is? The world will never appreciate the *frum* Jewish mother who's bringing up *frum* children. Just the opposite; they look down at her. The truth is they

despise her. So who's going to do it if not her fellow Jew?!

Home Improvement

Start on Purim. She made a little something or a big something for the Purim *seudah*? Let her know how good it is. "Purim wouldn't be the same without your soup or your *hamantaschen*," whatever it is.

Practice up before Purim. She cooked for Shabbos? Tell her, "The *chulent* is delicious." Among the things you say at the table, *divrei Torah*, the first should be, "Oh, how *geshmak* the *challos* are that you baked."

Now, there are many many ways to administer encouragement in the home. Everybody must utilize his own judgment but there's no question that you can tell her that she's gaining Olam Haba every second that she's busy raising the children, keeping a *frum* house; that Hashem is looking down at her and He's getting *nachas* from her. "Chana, my dear, Hashem is watching you in the kitchen and He appreciates you!"

Right Back At You

She can do it too. Her husband comes home from business. All day long he had trouble with competitors and customers. He had *tzaros*. So he tells his wife and she says "Well, it's your own fault. I always told you that you can't get along with anybody." She pours salt on his wounds.

That's before she heard about this Purim lesson. But suppose she says, "You're doing a *mitzvah*. You'll succeed, don't worry. You'll win out. You're working very well for the family. We all need your money to support us. We're eating from your money, and the children are learning Torah because of your money. It's a big *mitzvah* you're doing when you struggle with the customers." She encourages him. Oh, now she's doing her part in being *mechazeik* the *kisei Kah!*

Encourage your children if they're learning well. Say "Chaim'l, I have *hana'ah* you're learning well." Give him a caress. "Keep it up Chaim," you say. "You'll be a *gadol b'Yisroel* one day."

If Sarah'le is behaving, helping out, say, "Sarah'le you'll be a *rebbetzin*. You'll have a husband a big *talmid chochom*. You'll have a beautiful family."

Give More Than Money

Get into the habit of encouraging your fellow Jew with words. Let's say somebody comes to you for *tzedakah*, somebody from Yerushalayim; on Purim he comes, or anytime. He needs money to marry off his children so you give him some money. Fine, very good. Give him as much money as you can. Absolutely that's strengthening the throne. That man has thirteen children he has to marry off!

But in addition you should say "It's a pleasure, an honor, to help you. I really should run after you. You're a *kavod* to our people. It's a pleasure to look at you. As you walk in the street, you're advertising *yiddishkeit*. People look at you, nice long *peyos*; ah! a Yerushalmi."

Tell him that. It's true anyhow and you're giving that man life. He walks out with more than the \$5 that you gave him. He walks out with happiness.

Raising the Rebbe

Let's say you're bringing *mishloach manos* to your rebbe. Don't just give it to him and leave. Say, "Rebbe, I can't thank you enough for what you do for me. You're making me into a *mentch*, a ben-Torah." And then find ways to do it in the *yeshiva* too, after Purim. After the *shiur* is over go to your *rebbe* and say, "Rebbi, it was a *mechayeh* today's *shiur*. I *shteiged* so much from it." Your *rebbe*, you should know, is not going to be angry at you.

Everybody is waiting for that. You'd be surprised. Everybody wants a little bit of encouragement. On all sides, people are waiting to hear one good word. I'm waiting too; after I finish this lecture I go upstairs and I'm waiting for my wife to tell me, "What a good speech you made tonight." I don't

need her *haskamah* because I've said this, the same thing, a thousand times already. But I'm waiting.

Now this you should know has to be done at all times but especially on Purim you should have it in mind. "Encourage people with words," that's our first objective.

The Facelift

Number two - actually it's included in encouragement but it deserves its own number: **הוֹדוּ מִקְבֵּל אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם בְּסִבֵּר פְּנִיָּם יְפוּת** - Greet every Jew with a friendly and pleasant face (Avos 1:15).

Purim is a good day to start out. Some people wear masks on Purim so you do that too. Put on this mask. (*The Rav made a big smile*). This is a mask, a pleasant face. You don't really mean it, but do it anyhow. Purim is an especially good time to smile at people. It's Purim after all, and so, make Purim a day of smiling.

But it's a good mask to wear after Purim too. Don't let go! It's *motzei Purim* and a man is let's say coming towards you on the street; so you're not thinking too much and you look at him like this (*the Rav made a gloomy face*). No, that's not the way.

Three Things

"I'm so glad I met you." Say it. "It's good to see you again." And put on that mask of **סִבֵּר פְּנִיָּם יְפוּת**. Pay attention to those words. It means three things, that mask: *seiver*, *panim* and *yafos*.

Seiver means show that you have *sevara*, that you're thinking about him. You're interested in your fellow Jew; he's important to you.

Panim; show him your *panim*, your face. A man passes me in the street and never turns his face to me. He shows me his ear! Show your face.

And *yafos*, a pleasant face. It should be a face that brings him pleasure. Not a face like the bottom of a pan; a smile!

You were successful?! Excellent. Now try it again with another Jew. Take a break for a few minutes and do it again. And keep in mind - try to

be *mekayeim* the three aspects: *seiver*, *panim* and *yafos*.

Required Training

The same, you should now, applies in the home. You come home from the *yeshivah*; as you pass by the kitchen, look into the kitchen where your mother is cooking supper for you. Show your face. And show *seiver*, you're thinking about your mother. And *yafos*, it should be a pleasant face.

Did you ever think about that? Don't think it's a small thing. **סִבֵּר פְּנִים יְפוֹת** is one of the big *ikrim* in our lives. It's not *l'fnim m'shuras hadin*. It's a *hevei*; a *tzivuy*, a *mitzvah*. **הִוָּה** means 'train yourself'.

And so on Purim, at least, think about that. Instead of merely getting drunk – I'm not saying you shouldn't get drunk, but while you're drunk think about this: "I want to make my fellow Jews happy." And even if you imbibe a little wine it can't be too much because you have to still be able to count: One, *beseiver*, two, *panim*, and three, *yafos*.

Purim Blessings

One more idea. Now this one, I'd like one day to dedicate a full lecture to it but for now, just to help prepare for Purim, we'll say it very short. And that's the habit of trying to learn how to bless a Jew, to become a *mevarech es Yisroel*.

Purim, when you take a drink, turn to your friend and shake hands and say "L'chaim!" But not like you do during the year, not merely to be *yotzei* the word *lechaim*. Be *mechaven* the *peirush hamilim*. L'chaim – "You should live long. You should have *nachas* and *arichus yamim* and good health." Say *l'chaim tovim ul'shalom!* Be *mechaven* the words. You should have a life of *shalom*. No *goyim* should bother you. You shouldn't get a cold. You should have good *parnassah* and good *shidduchim* for your children.

Bless and Repeat

I'll tell you something else, a little secret. After he goes away, say it again. You hear that? Say it

again. This time he doesn't hear you. That shows you mean it though. If somebody says to you "Ah *freilichen Purim*" so you respond but then after he goes away, say it again, "Hashem should give you a *freilichin Purim*. And a *freilichen Shushan Purim*. And a *freilichen* long life." He doesn't have to hear. Hakadosh Baruch Hu hears.

I learned that from a very big man. The Alter of Slabodka once passed by a house and he said 'Gut morgen' to the house.

So somebody said "Who is listening? Who is hearing it?"

He said "Men darf heren? You have to hear it? Nobody has to hear it.

'Gut morgen' means they should have a good breakfast. There shouldn't be any fighting in the house. There should be *shalom bayis*. All good things he wanted them to have. They should hear you? It's not important.

Purim Excursions

And so when you go outside on Purim – some people are outside for many hours – so when you pass by a *frum* house, you see a big *mezuzah* on the door, say "These people there should all live long." Say that. Aloud, *b'kol ram*. They don't have to hear it. Hashem hears it. "They should all live long. They should have *nachas* from their children. They should have good health, *parnassah b'revach*."

Say it! Say it again at the next house! Don't be stingy. Once you get that habit you should know – *ashrecha*. *Ashrecha!* You're a fortunate person if you learn how to bless Jews. You see a Jew on the other side of the street. You don't even know who he is but you see he's a *frum* Jew; he's carrying *mishloach manos*. Say "Ribono Shel Olam, guard that Jew. Make him successful. Keep him well and healthy."

Now this is practical. It's not merely a theoretical idea. It is a great accomplishment to acquire such a *hergel*, a habit, of giving *brachos* to Jews. Getting into the habit of being a *mevarech es Yisroel*, you

should know, is paramount in *avodas Hashem* and Purim is an excellent opportunity to make a good beginning.

If you do it even once, you should know you have accomplished something important. Even once. And if you can do it on Purim a number of times, you've started out on a career. And if you keep on doing it, you should know that you have gained a *shleimus*, a great perfection. Because part of *avodas Hashem*, a very big part, is the *avodah* of serving Hakadosh Baruch Hu by elevating His people, by honoring His people, by loving His people.

Have a Wonderful Shabbos

Let's Get Practical

Learning to Love

On Purim we aim to counter Amalek by strengthening the "Throne" of Hashem, the place where He rests His Glory; the Am Yisroel. The Rov discussed three practical ways of doing this. 1. Encouraging *frum* Jews. 2. Greeting *frum* Jews with a pleasant countenance. 3. Blessing *frum* Jews. This week, I will *bli neder* spend thirty seconds at the end of my day to review how I LGPdid in these three areas and I will resolve to keep increasing my *ahavas Yisroel*.

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

499 - In The Way You Wish To Go | **E-225** - I Love Your People Yisroel
E-3 - Purim: A World Upside Down

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QUESTION

What should be our attitude towards those who become *shikur* on Purim?

ANSWER

We have to know that the purpose of our lives is to acquire *daas*, not to lose *daas*. When a person becomes very intoxicated he's in the category of an animal and that's no praise for him at all.

However, sometimes, in order to raise the airplane off the ground you have to put high-octane fuel into the tank to help get liftoff. And therefore, in order to make yourself more enthusiastic there's nothing wrong with imbibing a certain amount. But to get out of control, that's a mistake. It's not a *kiddush Hashem*; you make yourself look disgusting. No, I don't approve of that; it's very wrong.

And therefore, although there's a mitzvah on Purim of **יין נְכַנֵּס יַיִן יִצְאָ סוּד** but you have to be very careful that when the wine comes in it's the secret of the Jew that comes out. That's the only thing that should be coming out.

The Jew has in his *neshamah* a love of Hashem, only that he's too bashful to talk about it. He's enthusiastic for the Torah and *mitzvos* but he's embarrassed to show it. But when the wine comes in, so it pushes out the secret; the truth comes out and it shows his real *pnimiyus*. When he's a little bit intoxicated the Jew shows the real enthusiasm that he possesses, things that he never showed before.

So therefore, Purim is a great opportunity for people to demonstrate their loyalty to the Torah, their *emunah* in Hakadosh Baruch Hu; that He's protecting us at all times and that eventually we will conquer, that we will outlive all of our enemies just like we outlived Haman. All this and much more we can demonstrate on Purim; and we are able to do it when we elicit from within us the greatness of which we are capable. We have it in ourselves! And a little bit of *mashkeh* helps out, no question about it.

TAPE # 867 (March 1992)