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Rabbi Avi Wiesenfeld

Behind the Scenes

here was once a Chassidish Rebbe who was receiving a long line of his Chassidim, waiting eagerly to see him. As was customary, many poor individuals would also come, hoping to receive financial assistance from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe noticed a familiar man to whom he regularly gave charity standing at the end of the line. However, on this occasion, he realized he had no money to offer him. Unsure of what to do, he suddenly noticed a wealthy man joining the line—someone who would likely bring a generous donation.

Turning to his gabbai (attendant), the Rebbe instructed, "Call that wealthy man to the front of the line. I need him here immediately." The gabbai complied, and as was the custom, when the affluent visitor reached the Rebbe, he presented a substantial sum of money. The Rebbe was relieved, knowing he would now have something to give the poor man when his turn arrived.

When the poor man finally reached the Rebbe, he was deeply upset. "How can this be?" he cried out. "Just because I am poor, I must wait longer than the wealthy? This is unjust!"

The Rebbe responded gently, "Let me explain something to you. In life, we do not always see the full picture. We are often unaware of the intricate workings behind the scenes. What you did not realize is that I had no money to give you. I

called that wealthy man forward because I knew he would provide me with the means to help you."

"This," the Rebbe continued, "is the essence of Purim. The Megillah reveals how, time and again, what seemed like disaster for Klal Yisrael was, in truth, the unfolding of a Divine plan for salvation. Life is filled with trials and challenges, with moments that appear bleak and insurmountable. Yet, we must remember: "Kol d'avid Rachmana l'tav avid—Everything that Hashem does is for the best" (Berachos 60b).

The holy Berditchever Rebbe once illustrated this idea with a parable.

A mother had two children. To one, she served a lavish dessert: a slice of chocolate cake with two scoops of ice cream. The child was delighted. To the other, she offered a plate of cut-up fruit. The second child protested, "This is unfair! You must love my brother more than me. Look at the treat he received compared to what you gave me!"

The mother lovingly replied, "My dear child, what you do not realize is that you have diabetes. If I were to give you the same dessert, it would endanger your health. What seems like favoritism is, in fact, my deep love and care for you."

"So it is with Purim, with the Megillah, and with life itself," the Rebbe concluded. "Often, what appears to be misfortune is really Hashem guiding us toward something greater. We must strengthen our faith and recog-

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nize that even when we do not understand, everything Hashem does is ultimately for our benefit. "Let this be the message of Purim: rejoice in the Yom Tov, embrace true simcha, and internalize the profound

lesson that Hashem's hand is always at work, turning challenges into blessings."

Rabbi Daniel Glatstein

Banging During Haman's Name

he custom of banging during Haman's name in the Megillah is a long-standing minhag. But what is the origin of this custom and what is its significance? Let us explore five explanations for this practice and examine its underlying rationale.

She'eilos U'Teshuvos Milei D'Avos (3:13), from R' Yisrael David Margolies Yaffe, a disciple of the Chasam Sofer, writes that this custom originated from the Lishkas HaGazit—the seat of the Sanhedrin during the time of the Second Beis HaMikdash. Others trace its origins to Rashi's time. Indeed, the Shibolei HaLeket in the name of Rashi and the Tanya Rabasi, also authored by Shibolei HaLeket, record that at the conclusion of the Megillah reading, people would stomp their feet or clash stones together upon hearing Haman's name.

What is the underlying rationale of this practice? One explanation, cited by Rabbi Yitzchak Tirna (Sefer HaMinhagim, #51), is that banging serves to disgrace Haman's name, in keeping with the principle, "Shem Resha'im Yirkav—The name of the wicked shall rot" (Mishlei 10:7). Match Moshe (#1006) elaborates on this idea, citing multiple early sources indicating that this practice was observed in France and Provence for this very reason.

There is even a remez (allusion) in the Torah. The phrase, "Vehaya im ben hakos ha'rasha—And it shall be, if the wicked man is deserving of lashes" (Devarim 25:2)—has its final letters of 'V'haya im bin' (hei, mem, nun) spelling Haman. The implication is that the act of striking symbolizes the erasure of Haman's name.

However, if the rationale is Shem Resha'im Yirkav, one might ask: why do we not bang during the Torah readings about Pharaoh or Esav? Why is this custom reserved exclusively for Haman?

This leads to a second explanation: the custom is a fulfillment of the mitzvah, "Timcheh Es Zecher Amalek—You shall obliterate the memory of Amalek" (Devarim 25:19). The Beis Yosef (690) citing the Orchos Chaim of Lunel as well as the Mateh Moshe suggest that the purpose of banging is not merely to disgrace Haman's name, but rather to physically enact the mitzvah of eradicating Amalek. A striking numerical parallel reinforces this: the phrase "Macheh Emcheh—I will utterly erase" (Shemos 17:14)—has the same gematria as 'Zeh Haman.'

A further layer to this explanation appears in the writings of Rav Pinchas Koritzer. He posits that every rabbinic mitzvah has a foundation in Torah law, and that when a word in Hebrew has multiple meanings, we strive to fulfill all interpretations simultaneously. For example, Tenufah means both "waving" and "raising," so when performing Tenufah (waving sacrificial parts in the Beis Hamikdash), we wave in all directions and lift upwards as well. Similarly, Timcheh does not only mean "to erase," but also "to strike." This is reflected in Selichos, where we describe Hashem as Machei U'Masei-one who both smites and heals. By banging during Haman's name, we actualize

both meanings of Timcheh.

Yet another reason for this custom is found in the tradition of Rabbeinu Yehuda HaChassid, cited in Asufos Mi'Talmidei Baal HaRokeach. He recounts an exchange with a nobleman who questioned the practice of banging during Haman's name. Rabbeinu Yehuda HaChassid responded that each time we bang, Haman is struck in Gehinnom. When the nobleman demanded proof, Rabbeinu Yehuda HaChassid miraculously revealed to him a vision of Gehinnom, where Haman suffered with every strike. Similarly, Baal Shevet Mussar and Midrash Eliyahu on Megillas Esther cite a tradition that each time we strike at Haman's name, Hashem ensures that Haman experiences torment in the afterlife.

Another perspective is offered by the Kerem Ephraim, who draws upon the Ramban's principle of Po'el Dimyon (Bereishis 12:6)—the idea that symbolic actions can bring about actual events. For example, when Hashem decreed Bavel's downfall, He commanded Yirmiyahu to cast a stone into the river as a symbolic act foretelling its fate. Similarly, Elisha's shooting of an arrow was a prophetic enactment of Aram's downfall. Based on this, the Ramban explains Ma'aseh Avos Siman L'Banim-that the actions of our forefathers prefigure future events. In this vein, our act of banging during Haman's name serves as a symbolic enactment of our eventual obliteration of Amalek.

The Nesivos HaMishpat (Megillas S'tarim) applies this concept to Megillas Esther, noting that Haman's gallows were 50 cubits high because he sought to subjugate the 50 levels of holiness beneath the 50 levels of impurity. His actions were a deliberate

Po'el Dimyon to overpower kedushah. Similarly, our striking during Haman's name functions as a Po'el Dimyon in our quest to eradicate Amalek.

The Chida in Machzik Beracha (Orach Chaim 687:1) offers yet another rationale. He cites the Sefer Kav V'Naki, who suggests that throughout Jewish history, various oppressors have sought to replicate Haman's schemes. The persistent practice of banging during Haman's name serves as a deterrent, sending a clear message that

the Jewish people will never forget nor forgive such adversaries. This, he argues, may serve as a spiritual safeguard against future enemies.

Lastly, an interesting perspective is presented in She'eilos U'Teshuvos Pri HaSadeh (3:42), where he notes that there were efforts in various communities to abolish the custom. He argues that, even if this practice is not an obligatory mitzvah, it constitutes Shi'yirei Mitzvah—a remnant of a mitzvah that serves to prevent

calamity (Sukkah 38a), similar to the protective effects of Semichah, Tenufah, and Na'anuim. As such, the tradition of striking at Haman's name remains a sacred Jewish practice, affirmed by the Rema (Orach Chaim 690:17), who notes that it is customary for children to inscribe Haman's name down and then strike it.

Thus, this age-old practice is more than mere custom; it is an expression with profound meaning.

Rabbi Paysach Krohn

True Unity

any years ago, during a time of crisis for the Jewish people, Haman said to Achashverosh, "There is a nation that is scattered and dispersed throughout your kingdom" (Esther 3:8).

Haman's intent was to reassure Achashverosh that there was no cause for concern—the Jews were too divided to unite against him, regardless of any decree he might issue. However, the commentaries explain that Haman's words can be understood homiletically.

Why was there a time of distress for the Jewish people at that moment? Because they were scattered, fragmented, and divided. There was a lack of love, of mutual care, and of unity. So how was that decree overturned? The meforshim note that Esther, in her wisdom, instructed Mordechai, "Gather all the Jews together" (ibid. 4:16). She called for unity, for shared anguish, for collective prayer.

Haman's accusation—that the Jews were scattered and divided—was countered and rectified

through the command: "Go, assemble all the Jews."

Allow me to share with you what it means to feel together with another in their pain and plight.

A letter, written by a young kollel man in Har Nof, originally from England, was sent in the aftermath of the horrific 2008 terrorist attack at Yeshivat Merkaz HaRav, which took the lives of eight yeshiva students—Doron, Ro'i, Yonadav, Yochai, Yonatan, Neria, Segev, and Avraham David. He composed it eight times—one for each bereaved family. I want to share just two paragraphs:

"The truth is, I am from abroad, from England. I am here, learning in a kollel in Har Nof. I did not know your son, nor did I know much about Yeshivat Merkaz HaRav. But I am writing to tell you that even though I do not know you personally, your sorrow is my sorrow, your pain is my pain, and your loss is my loss. This is not merely your personal tragedy—it is a tragedy for all of us.

"We have all lost a brother, we have all lost a son, and I weep together with you. I want to add, without any formal vow, that just as his memory will never be forgotten by you, it will never be forgotten by me. The memory of your son will always remain before me. I pray that we shall know no more sorrow."

The Gemara (Pesachim 50a) recounts a remarkable episode. R' Yosef fell into a near-death state, and Rashi explains that he actually died and later returned. Upon reviving, his father, R' Yehoshua, asked him, "My son, what did you see?" He replied, "I heard a voice proclaiming: 'Fortunate is he who arrives in the World of Truth with his Torah in hand.""

The simple meaning of this statement is clear: Fortunate is the one who has learned Torah, pursued it, internalized it, and carried it with him beyond this world. These eight precious students did not just come to the World of Truth with their Torah in hand metaphorically. They were taken as they were immersed in their learning, with the Talmud literally before them.

Their names must never be forgotten: Doron, Ro'i, Yonadav, Yochai, Yonatan, Neria, Segev, and Avraham David. The finest among us were taken.

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\$21,844,010 Donated Since 2019 \$7,654,415 Donating This Year After World War II, the Klausenberger Rebbe spent time in the displaced persons camps, offering strength and comfort to survivors. Among them was a young boy, around 15 or 16 years old, who had lost everything in the camps. In his grief, he had discarded his yarmulke, his tzitzis, and everything connected to his faith.

The people around him knew his family and understood the greatness he had come from. They tried to speak with him, to bring him back, but he refused to listen. Finally, they approached the Klausenberger Rebbe, pleading with him to intervene. The Rebbe asked them to bring the boy to him.

The young man entered, already determined not to engage. The Rebbe looked at him and gently said, "I knew your father." The boy nodded, saying nothing. The Rebbe continued, "I remember when you were young—you were a masmid, a dedicated student." Again, the boy nodded but remained silent. Then the Rebbe placed his hand on the boy's shoulder, touched his face, and said, "You are angry, aren't you?"

The boy looked up at him and, for the first time, met his gaze. He nodded. "You are angry," the Rebbe continued, "because they took the best ones, didn't they?" Tears welled in the boy's eyes as he nodded again.

The Rebbe then said, "What can I say? I lost a wife and eleven children. They took the best ones, and they left us—you and me." The Rebbe and the boy wept together for twenty minutes, repeating only one phrase: "They took the best ones, and they left us." When they finished, the Rebbe kissed the boy and sent him on his way.

That night, for the first time in years, the boy recited Shema. A few days later, he began wearing tzitzis again. Eventually, he donned tefillin once more.

At the time I heard this, that boy was a 75-year-old man living in Baltimore. He shared this story with me, saying, "Everyone else spoke to my head, but the Rebbe spoke to my heart."

In life, sometimes there is no way to rationalize the unfathomable tragedy. The only thing we can do is speak to each other's hearts.

History teaches us that the Jewish people only reached their highest spiritual heights when they were united. The Torah describes the Jewish people encamped at Mount Sinai in the singular form as one person, with one heart (Shemos 19:2). That unity was the foundation of their ability to receive the Torah.

My Rebbe, Rav Dovid Cohen shlita, offered a brilliant insight. The Megillah states that at the end of the Purim story, the Jews "kiymu v'kiblu—fulfilled and accepted" (Esther

9:27). The Gemara explains that there was a renewed acceptance of the Torah during the time of Purim (Shabbos 88a). Rav Dovid noted something striking: The word "kiblu" is not actually written in the plural form. It is written as "kibel," singular.

True acceptance of Torah only happens when we are united as one.

On Purim, we must reaffirm our commitment—to unity, to love for one another, to true responsibility for each other. Not just for those who are less religious than we are, but even for those who see themselves as more religious than us. It is easy to love someone whom we perceive as spiritually beneath us; it is far harder to love someone who believes they are above us. And yet, that is our challenge.

We must take responsibility for each other. The concept of arvus, mutual responsibility (Shavuos 39a), is not merely an abstract idea. It requires action. It demands that we refuse to stand idly by when injustice occurs. Whether it is ensuring justice for our brothers and sisters in Israel, orphans, agunos, upholding business ethics, or strengthening Torah learning, our obligation is clear: we must not remain passive. We must stand together, united in purpose and in responsibility.

May we merit to see the ultimate redemption, speedily in our days.

Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser

The Ears of Hamantaschen

Thy do we eat Haman-taschen?
Some suggest it refers to Oznei Haman, "Haman's ears," symbolizing his downfall, as he heeded the wicked advice of his wife. His wife urged him to construct the gallows for Mordechai, leading to his ultimate

demise. We commemorate this reversal through the symbolism of Hamantaschen.

However, the Torah commands us, "Lo yidbak me'uma min ha'cherem—nothing from that which is condemned should remain" (Devarim 13:18). We are obligated to obliterate any trace of Amalek. How, then, can we retain even

the memory of Haman's ears?

The answer lies in the verse: "Hat'u oznaychem u'lechu eilai" — "Incline your ear and come to Me" (Yeshaya 55:3). The Zera Shimshon teaches that through Haman's decree, all of Klal Yisrael was awakened to do complete teshuvah. Thus, we recall the ozen, the ear, as a symbol of how our listening to Hashem's will transformed our fate.

Bring Them Home!

Names of Hostages in Gaza and Partial List of Injured Soldiers (Updated: 13 Adar)

שמות חיילים פצועים לרפואה שלמה

אביתר מנחם חיים בן זהבה אברהם מרדכי בן יעל אהרן בן שרה הנדל אופק בו אלינור אורי אברהם בן הדסה אייל אליעזר בן חנה אלון בן מרים אלחנן יאיר בן דבורה אליה בן רוית אלישע יהודה בן רות אלעד בן שרית אמיר בן אלה בנימין בן ריינה בנימין יצחק בן שרה בר חיים בן נורית גלעד איתי בן אפרת דוד בן זיוה חיים מרדכי בן שרה איטה טל גרשון בן שרה יאיר יונה בן דרורה צפורה מלכה יהודה אהרון בן מרים אסתר יהונתן יאשיהו בן כרמית יהונתן יוסף בן שירה יואל בן אילה יוחאי יהודה בן סיגל חוה ירין אליהו בן סיגל ישראל בן ענבל אסתר כפיר חיים בן מירה מרים מיכאל בן פריידל מישל בת אנג'ליקה מנחם דוד חי בן מרים משה אהרן בן לאה בילא משה צבי בן עירית מתן בן דבורה ניר בן אורנה עדי מנחם בן מורן מירה עודד אפרים בן ויויאן עוז חי בן סמדר

עידו בן ענבל

עמיחי בן סיגלית רחל עמית יהונתן בן מאיה רואי בן עופרה רון בן אבישג רון בן שרון רועי חיים בן מירב תום שאול בן דניאל תומר בן צפורה

אבינתן בן דיצה תרצה (אור) אביתר בן גליה (דוד) איתן בן רות אדית (הורן) איתן אברהם בן אפרת (מור) אלון בן עידית (אהל) אלקנה בן רוחמה (בוחבוט) אריאל בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו) בר אברהם בן גיוליה (קופרשטיין) גיא בן מירב (גלבוע דלאל) גלי בן טליה (ברמן) דוד בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו) זיו בן טליה (ברמן) יוסף חיים בן מרים (אוחנה) מקסים בן טלה (הרקין) מתן שחר בן ענת (אנגרסט) מתן בן ירדנה עינב (צנגאוקר) נמרוד בן ויקי (כהן) עידן בן יעל (אלכסנדר) עמרי בן אסתר ורוניקה (מירן) רום בן תמר נועה (ברסלבסקי) שגב בן גלית (כלפון) תמיר בן חירות (נמרודי)

Bring Them Home!

Names of Hostages in Gaza and Partial List of Injured Soldiers (Updated: 13 Adar)

INJURED SOLDIERS

Evyatar Menachem Chaim ben Zehava Avraham Mordechai ben Yael Aharon ben Sarah Hendel Ofek ben Elinor Ori Avraham ben Hadassah Eyal Eliezer ben Chana Alon ben Miriam Elchanan Yair ben Devorah Eliya ben Ravit Elisha Yehudah ben Rut Elad ben Sarit Amir ben Ella Binyamin ben Reina Binyamin Yitzchak ben Sarah Bar Chaim ben Nurit Gilad Itai ben Efrat David ben Ziva Chaim Mordechai ben Sarah Itta Tal Gershon ben Sarah Yair Yonah ben Drora Tzipporah Malka Yehuda Aharon ben Miriam Esther Yehonatan Yoshivahu ben Carmit Yehonatan Yosef ben Shira Yoel ben Ayala Yochai Yehudah ben Sigal Chava Yarin Eliyahu ben Sigal Yisrael ben Inbal Esther Kfir Chaim ben Mira Miriam Michael ben Freidel Michelle bat Angelika Menachem David Chai ben Miriam Moshe Aharon ben Leah Beila Moshe Tzi ben Irit Matan ben Devorah Nir ben Orna Menachem ben Moran Mira Oded Efraim ben Vivian Oz Chai ben Smadar Ido ben Inbal Amichai ben Sigalit Rachel Amit Yehonatan ben Maya Roi ben Ofra

Ron ben Avishag Ron ben Sharon Roi Chaim ben Meirav Tom Shaul ben Danielle Tomer ben Tzipporah

Avinatan ben Ditza Tirtza (Ohr) Evyatar ben Galya (David) Eitan ben Ruth Idit (Horen) Eitan Avraham ben Efrat (Mor) Alon ben Idit (Ohel) Elkana ben Ruchama (Buchbut) Ariel ben Sylvia Monica (Konyo) Bar Avraham ben Julia (Cooperstein) Guy ben Meirav (Gilboa Dalal) Gali ben Talya (Berman) David ben Sylvia Monica (Konyo) Ziv ben Talya (Berman) Yosef Chaim ben Miriam (Ochana) Maxim ben Talleh (Herkin) Matan Shachar ben Anat (Angrest) Matan ben Yardena Einav (Tzangauker) Nimrod ben Viki (Cohen) Idan ben Yael (Alexander) Omri ben Esther Veronica (Miran) Rom ben Tamar Noa (Braslevsky) Segev ben Galit (Chalfon) Tamir ben Cheirut (Nimrodi) An Etymology, Anthology, and Cholentology
(For men only)

ひせり	The simple meaning of cholent is 'hot'	(hence, nonchalant means 'not hot' or 'cool').
777	The simple meaning of cholene is mot	(inclined, fibricitation includes fibricity)

- When cholent is removed from the fire, it immediately cools down and dries out. This is a רמז that as long as a Yid is connected to the fire of Torah, he remains warm in his עבודת השם, but once he's disconnected, he immediately cools down and dries out.
- אליט"א My son heard from his Rebbe שָלָן: Cholent is from שָלָן = overnight. (This negates the practice of מינים who forbade leaving a fire burning over שבת, as per the literal meaning of , לא תבערו אש... ביום השבת.)
- וף If I would print it here it wouldn't be דוס. Really, I'm still waiting for the גילוי.

צ'אלנט ר"ת צדיק אוכל לשובע נפישת טרחו, כענין מי שטרח בערב שבת יאכל בשבת

יוסיף הבל

אורח חיים שמח הלכות שבת

מצוה לאכול את הצ׳אלנט בלילה

וי"א שהיא דאורייתא. והמדקדקין

אוכלים אותו גם בליל חמישי. המהדרין עושין קדירה לכל אחד

ואחד. והמהדרין מן המהדרין לילה

ראשון אוכל קדירה אחת מכאן

ואילך מוסיף והולך קדירה לכל לילה.

בית

שלן בעומקה של הלכה ר' יבישא אמר בעומקה של קדירה. וירח ה' את ריח הניחוח. אמר לפמליא דידיה חזו חזו בני בני בני חביבי דמשתכחין בלערא דלהון ואכלין בחדוותא דילי. מיד בא המלאך קארטאפאל ודרשלהו הכי צ'אלנט של ליל שבת

חובה היא דכתיב הלעיטני נא מן האדום האדום הזה מאי האדום האדום תרי זימני אלא חד ללילה וחד ליום. ויאמר חרבונה אחד התלמידים ובטפח הסמוך לפתח מבחוץ. כשבאו חיילות המלך לסלק את הצ'אלנט מעל האש לא מצאו אלא הצ'אלנט של לילה

ולא נכנסו לבתיהם כלל. וכשילאו חיילות המלך מן החצר מיד אכלו היהודים את הצ'אלנט של לילה ועדיין היה חם והצ'אלנט של יום נשאר לפליטה עד הבוקר. למולאי שבת ילאו ישראל מדושני עונג והיכו באויביהם על קדקדיהם. הוא דהעיד המן עליהם ישנו עם אחד מדושן ומעונג בין העמים.

וישראל קדושים הם

מש"כ מצוה לאכול את הצ'אלנט בלילה כו'. בריש פרק האוכל קמא אמר רב שמנונא אמר רבב ביקש המן לאבד צ'אלנט מישראל. אמר אין כחם אלא בפה. אמרי לה בצ'אלנט ואמרי לה בקוגעל. ומסתברא כמ"ד בצ'אלנט דכתיב הלעיטני נא מן

> האדום האדום הזה. אמר המן לפני אחשורוש בא ונאבד את הצ'אלנט מפיהם. א"ל אחשורוש חטוף חטוף חטוף חטוף. א"ל המן והצ'אלנט יאכל לעושי המלאכה. א"ל אחשורוש הצ'אלנט נמון לך. אמר רב ציבלי אלמלא מקרא כתוב אי אפשר לאומרו. פירש"י

הצ'אלנט נתון לך. דיינו לסלקו מן האש. אי אפשר לאומרו. שביזה את הצ'אלנט. ומרדכי ידע. אמר רב הבלא אמר מרדכי לישראל אין כחנו אלא בפה אמרי לה בתפלה ואמרי לה בצ'אלנט. והלכתא בצ'אלנט. לך כנוס את כל הבחורים. ונתקן להם ליל חמישי צ'אלנט סדר. מיד נקהלו כל בחורי ישראל אל מרדכי וילן בעמק כל הלילה מאי וילן בעמק אמר רב חקירא

בעשרה מאמרות נברא הצ'אלנט - למעשה ולא להלכה

Fatty meat (טרטימר בשר שמן)

Extra salt, to draw out the flavor of the meat Lots of onions (one onion for every two potatoes)

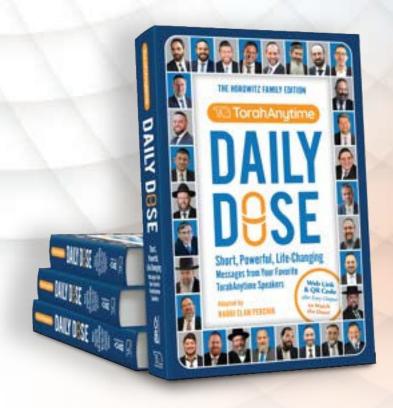
Brown sugar for sweetness and dark color Lots of tomato sauce (רמז לדבר: האדום האדום הזה) Immersed crockpot (for הלבות הטמנה, contact your local orthodox rabbi)

Sautee the onions beforehand (in the crockpot)
Not too much water, so it doesn't absorb all the
flavor

Put up Friday morning on high
Turn down before Shabbos to low (this keeps it
from drying out)

לכילוי נשמת המן בן המדתא





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