

Purim 2013

1.

Wine, Gragers and more

Nachalas Tzvi page (513):

The Maggid Mesharim (this sefer was taught to Rabbi Yosef Kaaro by a malach (angel)) explains that Chanukah alludes to oil, which ascends. Whereas Purim alludes to wine, that is stored in grapes. The gematria (numerical value) of wine/יין is 70; which is also the gematria of the word secret/סוד.

What is the connection between wine and secrets? When one drinks wine secrets come out as stated in mesechas Eruvin (65a). On Purim, the Gemara in Megilah (7b) states that we are obligated to get drunk to the point where we don't know the difference between Haman and Mordechai. Rashi, there, explains that one should get drunk specifically by drinking wine. (The actual Halachos and their details regarding this if we hold like the literal translation and statement of this Gemara are beyond the scope of this devar Torah.)

What is the deeper interpretation of this statement of the Maggid Mesharim who says that Chanukah alludes to oil and Purim alludes to wine? (The simple explanation is that wine played a significant role throughout the story related in Megilas Esther, and oil symbolizes one of the major miracles that transpired on Chanukah.) Additionally, why on Chanukah do we hold the dreidel from the top and it spins on the bottom, unlike Purim when we hold the grogger from the bottom and it spins on the top? Furthermore, what is the primary avoda (service) on Purim? Lastly, what lessons can we learn from the Megilah and keep with us for the rest of the year?

Rav Yaakov Emden (Yabetz) explains the difference between the dreidel and the grogger. On Chanukah there was no 'איתערותא דלתתא' / 'awakening down below'. Rather, it was all an 'איתערותא דלעילא' / 'awakening from above'. We were saved due to Hashem's mercy. Therefore, on Chanukah we specifically hold the dreidel from the top in order to allude to the fact that Hashem mercifully saved us. Conversely, on Purim, Mordechai and Esther were the ones who gathered all the Jews and had them fast and repent as stated in Megilas Esther (4, 16). **Since there was an awakening down below (human repentance), and we merited salvation through our own actions, we therefore hold the grogger from the bottom.**

With this we can explain why Chanukah alludes to oil. Oil, by nature, always rises to the top. We are recognizing that salvation results completely from Hashem's mercy.

Dissimilarly, wine comes from squeezing a grape and then gravity pulling the juice down. On Purim we drink wine in order to demonstrate that we played a major role in the story by repenting.

The avoda of Purim is to lovingly and fearfully repent (see Yuma 86). We can accomplish this through learning, davening, and performing chessed (acts of kindness). It says in Megilas Ester (perik nine) that the Jews fulfilled the Torah and accepted it. The Gemara in Shabbas (88) says that they fulfilled what they already received. Purim is a time to repent and take this chizuk (strength and momentum) with us the entire year.

2.

Why isn't Hashem's name written in the Megilah?

Many Mefarshim ask, why isn't Hashem's name written in the Megilah?

The Otzros Hatorah (pages 344-347) quotes Rabbi Eliyahu Hakohen from Ismer (from his safer Eini Haayda) who explains that (1) **the miracle wasn't complete since Amalek wasn't totally destroyed. As long as Amalek still exists, Hashem's name is incomplete. Therefore, His name is not in the Megilah.** Even though we don't know who Amalek is nowadays, their ideologies still exist; therefore it's as if they still exist. For example, the gematria of Amalek/עמלק is doubt/ספק (240). One of the goals of Amalek is to cause us to doubt Hashem and doubt what we do. This is certainly still around today. (See also Shemos perek 17)

(2) **Another reason why Hashem's name isn't in the Megilah is because on Purim we willingly accepted the Torah as stated in mesechas Shabbos (88a). Since Hashem's name isn't mentioned, it is as if He is saying 'I don't need My name to be mentioned, it's all about you!'**

(3) **Additionally, we don't want Haman's children to become arrogant. Maybe they're going to take pride in the fact that they caused such a tumult and forced Hashem to intervene. Hashem's name is therefore left out of the Megilah in order to show them that they are worthless.**

(4) **The final answer is that the Jews were saved on Purim because of their repentance. It was clearly because of their merit that everything occurred as it did. Therefore, in order to hint to the great, lofty level that we reached, Hashem's name isn't in the Megilah.**

See there for more answers.

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