

Purim 2016

1.

Yom Kippur is like Purim

Kuntres Benyane yemei Purim siman zayin pages 97-102

The Zohar (tekunei Zohar tekunei 21 page 57b) says that Purim is similar to Yom Kippur. **The Beneyahu explains that the words יום כיפור spells כפורים. Meaning, Yom Kippur is like Purim.** The Gra explains that Yom Kippur and Purim are like one Yom Tov. On Purim we spend half of our time with personal pursuits and on Yom Kippur we spend half of our time on Godly pursuits (הצני לה' וחצני לכם).

The question arises; what is the connection between Purim and Yom Kippur? They are seemingly opposites. The Gra (Yehal Or and commentary to the Megilah) explains that we received the Torah both on Purim and Yom Kippur. The Gemara in Tanis (26b) quotes Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel who says that there were no holidays like Yom Kippur etc., the wedding day etc., when we received the Torah. Rashi explains that we received the luchos at that time. The pasuk states “Moshe brought the people forth from the camp toward God; they stood at the bottom of the mountain.” (19, 17) "ויוצא משה את העם לקראת האלהים מן המחנה ויתיצבו בתחתית ההר." The Gemara in Shabbos (88a) deduces from this pasuk that Hashem covered the mountain over the Jews and said ‘If you accept the Torah, good. If not, this will be your burial place!’ (ויתיצבו) "בתחתית ההר" אמר רב אבדימי בר חמא בר חסא מלמד שכפה הקדוש ברוך הוא עליהם את ההר כגיגית ואמר להם אם (אתם מקבלים התורה מוטב, ואם לאו שם תהא קבורתכם. (As a side point, Tosefos (ibid) asks why Hashem needed to force the Jews to accept the Torah since they already said “נעשה ונשמע” “we will do and we will obey!” (24, 7)? One answer is that, maybe, in the future, we would go off the derech (proper path) and no longer want to follow the Torah so Hashem also needed to force it upon us. Another answer is as follows; the Medrash Tanchuma (parshas Noach gimal) says the Jews accepted Torah shebichtav (written Torah) willingly but needed to be forced to accept Torah shebeal peh (oral). A third answer is that when we accepted the Torah, it was out of ahava (love), so Hashem did this in order to have us accept the Torah out of yirah (fear) as well. The Bartenura (first perek of Avos) says, that someone who lovingly serves Hashem will be careful with all the positive commandments, and someone who fearfully serves Hashem will be careful with all the negative commandments; therefore, the Jews needed to be forced to accept the Torah as well, to have the fear which is necessary to perform the passive mitzvos.) **This is one of the connections between Purim and Yom Kippur; accepting the Torah.**

The luchos were given on Yom Kippur only after the Jews repented. They accepted the Torah by repenting. Yom Kippur was therefore the designated time for all future generations to repent. That being so Purim is also a time to repent. On Purim we also accepted the Torah by repenting. Not only is Purim a time for repenting, but the entire month is a time for repenting. The main strength of the month is when the moon is full. It is for this reason that most holidays are in the middle of the month when the moon is complete. The Chidushei Ha’Rim says that Shevuos isn’t in the middle of the month because it doesn’t have a set date. It’s the fiftieth day of the omer as stated in mesechas Rosh Hashana (6b). Purim falls out specifically in the middle of the month of Adar. We therefore merited to lovingly repent and willingly and lovingly receive the Torah specifically in the middle of the month of Adar.

Another connection between Purim and Yom Kippur is as follows; the Midrash Mishlay (9) states that in the future all of the holidays will be null and void except for Purim. Similarly, in the future all of the Megilos will be null and void except for Megilas Ester. The Rambam (end of hilchos Megilah) also says this. The Maggid Mishna says we will see what happens when Mashiach comes. The Raved argues and says that the Megilos won't be null and void because there is a benefit to still learn from every Megilah. Rather even though in the future they will not continue to learn the other Megilos, nevertheless they will still publically continue to learn from Megilas Ester. The Lechem Mishna has a similar approach as does the Raved. He says that we will continue to learn from the Megilos. However, we will learn from Megilas Ester more consistently. The same applies to Yom Kippur. The Pirkei D'Rebbi Eliezer (perek 46) states that in the future all of the holidays will be null and void except for Yom Kippur. The aforementioned Midrash Mishlay says this as well. **The Sefas Emes (inyani Purim 636) explains that Purim and Yom Kippur will always exist because these days are days of repentance. Repentance is so important and great.** The Gemara in Berachos (34b) quotes Rabbi Avahu who says the place where one who repented stands; a completely righteous person can't stand. (א"ר אבהו מקום שבעלי תשובה עומדין צדיקים גמורים אינם עומדין וכו'). Purim and Yom Kippur which symbolize repentance must therefore last forever.

There is still an obvious question which must be addressed. It is implied from the aforementioned that Purim is better than Yom Kippur since Yom Kippur is only like Purim. How can this be explained?

The Gemara in Yevamos (3b) states that a positive (active) mitzvah pushes off a negative (passive) mitzvah. (עשה דוחה לא תעשה.) Why is this so? The Ramban (parshas Yisro 20, 8) explains that our love for Hashem causes us to perform positive mitzvos. However, our fear for Hashem causes us to perform negative mitzvos. Since love is greater than fear therefore it makes sense that a positive (active) mitzvah pushes off a negative (passive) mitzvah. (עשה דוחה לא תעשה.) The Ramchal also says (Meselas Yesharim perek 19). **Since Yom Kippur is a time when we should repent out of fear and Purim is a time when we should repent out of love, therefore it makes sense that Purim is greater than Yom Kippur.** The Sefas Emes (inyani Purim 636) says that being happy could lead to proper repentance. We are able to love Hashem on Purim by being happy and we are able to fear Hashem on Yom Kippur by afflicting ourselves in various ways as related in the last perek of mesechas Megilah. Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler (Michtav M'Eliyahu chalek beis page 125) says a similar idea. Yom Kippur purifies our sins and impurities. **The fear from sinning on Yom Kippur is secondary to the love from the happiness we have on Purim.**

Another explanation is as follows; on Purim we lovingly accepted the Torah. The way we can come closest to the Torah is by learning it with love. The Mishna in Horeyos (13a) states that a mamzer who is a talmid chacham is better than a Kohen Gadol who is an am ha'aretz. (ממזר תלמיד חכם קודם לכהן גדול עם הארץ.) The Gemara derives this from the pasuk in Mishlei (3, 15) that states "It (the Torah) is more precious than pearls, and all of your desires cannot compare to it (the desire for Torah)." "יקרה היא מפנינים וכל הפיזיך לא ישבו בו." The Gemara darshens (expounds) on this pasuk and says that a talmid chacham is greater than the Kohen Gadol who enters into the inner of the inners (Kodesh Kadashim). ("יקרה היא") מפנינים. Why does the Gemara/Torah specifically use an example of the Kohen Gadol who enters into the Kodesh Kadashim? The Maharal (chiddushim on Yuma) explains that the peak of the connection between the Kohen Gadol and Hashem is on

Yom Kippur when he enters into the Kodesh Kadashim. It is for this reason that the Kohen Gadol wears white; to demonstrate his complete purity. The chidush of the talmid chacham being better than the Kohen Gadol is precisely this. Even when the Kohen Gadol is in the holiest state, place and time of the year, the talmid chacham is still holier. The reason for this is as follows; the only reason why the Kohen Gadol is able to reach such a lofty level is because of the place (Kodesh Kadashim) and time (Yom Kippur). The talmid chacham is always able to connect to Hashem. It doesn't matter when or where. This is why the Kohen Gadol who enters into the Kodesh Kadashim on Yom Kippur is used as an example. The Maharal (Gevuros Hashem) says that the greatest way to connect to Hashem is by learning Torah. This is the way we can become closest to Hashem. (Nesivos Olam nisiv HaTorah 9) Rav Eliyahu Lopian (Lev Eliyahu parshas Vayigash pages 196-197) quotes a fascinating Gemara in Kesubos (111a). The Gemara quotes Rav Eliezer who says that in the future am haaretzim (ignoramuses) will not get resurrected. Rabbi Yochanan was bothered by this. They told Rabbi Yochanan the pasuk (Devarim 4, 4) states "But you who cling to Hashem, your God – you are alive today." ("ואתם הדבקים בה' אלהיכם חיים כולכם היום.") The Gemara asks, is it possible to attach yourself to God? Hashem is an all-consuming fire! The Gemara answers that anyone who marries his daughter to a talmid chacham, or someone who does business with a talmid chacham or helps out a talmid chacham it's as if you attached yourself to Hashem. Rav Eliyahu Lopian explains that even an am haaretz (ignoramus) who did not learn Gemara will be resurrected if he supports the Yissochors. This is what Rabbi Yochanan meant. With this we can offer another explanation as to why Purim is better than Yom Kippur. **On Purim everyone merits to attach themselves to the Torah; since we lovingly and willingly accept the Torah.**

Another connection between Purim and Yom Kippur is as follows. The sefer Meor Veshemesh (inyani Purim) explains that Mordechai and Ester were holy people. On Purim the saton can't prosecute as it does on Yom Kippur. A question arises based on a Gemara in Yuma (20a). The gematria of השטן is 364. The saton is able to prosecute 364 days in the year. It is implied from this Gemara that the saton isn't able to prosecute on Yom Kippur. The Gemara is referring to the saton's inability to prosecute on Yom Kippur, not Purim? How can we explain the statement of the Meor Veshemesh?

The Chovos hatalmidim also compares Purim to Yom Kippur. **Just like on Yom Kippur everyone must fast (unless it's dangerous to do so), so too, on Purim everyone must rejoice.** By being happy on Purim we can be happy the entire year. The Gemara in Megilah (5) relates that Rebbi planted a sapling on Purim. The Gemara discusses how this was permissible. One of the answers is that it is a planting of happiness (נטיעה של שמחה). The Chidushei Ha'Rim explains that on Purim we are able to plant a plant of happiness within our hearts.

The sefer Segulas Yisroel (siman 66) has a tradition that Purim is a very important time to daven. We should daven for our children, parnassah, health and other important matters. We should also daven for our relatives and the rest of the Jewish nation. **Just like a major focus of Yom Kippur is prayer, Purim is as well.** The halacha is that on Purim we must give money to anyone who asks for it as stated in the Shulchan Aruch (694, 3). (כל הפושט יד). (נותנין לו.) A deeper idea behind this halacha is as follows; by our going above and beyond in order to give to others, Hashem will also hopefully go above and beyond in order to give to others measure for measure.

Mishnas Rabbi Aaron (chalek gimal pages 80-81) relates additional ways that Purim and Yom Kippur are similar. **There is a mitzvah to eat before Yom Kippur as stated in Berachos (8b).** The Rabbeinu Yona (shar daled os ches) explains that since Yom Kippur is so holy it is really fitting to rejoice and feast like we do during other holidays. Rather, **we feast the day before. On Purim we do the opposite. We first fast the day before Purim and then on Purim we feast.** The Gemara in Pesachim (68b) relates that Ravenna's son Mar would fast every day except for on Shevuos, Purim and the eve of Yom Kippur. Why didn't he fast specifically these three times? These three times we are commanded to feast and are a time when we accepted the Torah. Since we received the Torah we need to elevate the physical to the spiritual. On Yom Kippur we become like angels by abstaining from food. Conversely, on Purim we must direct the physical to the spiritual. This is also why there is an obligation to feast and rejoice. Esav and Amalek were all about running after physicality's.