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**STORIES OF GREATNESS
TOLD OVER BY: NOAM LEVY**

Purim is a special day that has a unique quality of tefillah. But before we ask for everything and anything, maybe we should think over what we really want and what is really important to us. This story teaches us that even though impulsively we may want to be happier with our current lot. Hopefully, we can see this message and take it to heart so our important tefillos are answered. Have a Great Shabbos!!
- Noam

It was with an uneasy heart that Reb Yitzchak entered the study of his Rebbe, Rabbi bi Moshe of Kovrin. For decades he had been visiting and consulting with the Chassidic master, but never before had it entered his mind to approach him on the subject which he now intended to raise. Always, when he spoke to a Rebbe, it was about his spiritual affairs only. Reb Yitzchak lived in grinding poverty: so it had been since his youth and so he imagined it would always be. But is that any reason to interrupt a tzaddik from his holy work? Yitzchak was fond of saying that G-d doesn't need advice from anyone, not even the Righteous, about who to make rich. No, the only justification to bother a tzaddik was to elicit help and instruction from him about how to serve G-d properly and how not to

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דברים היוצאים מן הל"ב

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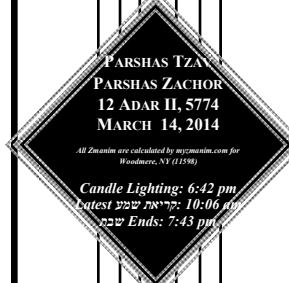
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Purim and the Golden Calf

By Yitzie Schienman, Editor in Chief, 12th Grade

In considering the episode of the golden calf, we are ever and again faced with the same difficult question: how are we to understand such a descent from the loftiest heights to the lowest depths? How could it be that the generation of the exodus from Egypt, who but forty days earlier had witnessed the revelation at Har Sinai, turned to a golden calf, exclaiming, "This is your G-d, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt" (Shemos 32:4)?

Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi, in the Kuzari, tackles this question that has plagued us for thousands of

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Today's Forecast: Chilly

By Moishy Rothman, Editor of Student Articles, 12th Grade

Being the second of the "four Parshas", Parshas Zachor is appropriately placed next to Purim. In both events, the story of Purim and Parshas Zachor, the antagonist is Amalek: either as the nation or as its progeny, Haman. What, other than genealogy, is the connection between Haman and his ancestors that makes this nation so evil? Not only does the Torah consider the nation to be cruel, but we are even commanded to wipe their name from existence because of what they did to the Jews in the desert. What's in Haman's "DNA" that makes him part of this nation: the paradigm of evil?

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Megilla Teasers

By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe

Questions

- 1) Aside from אחשורוש, which other kings appear in the מגילה?
- 2) Which three people in the מגילה have names that begin with the letter וואו?
- 3) Aside from wine, what else is mentioned in the מגילה and is served by the פסח סדר?
- 4) The gallows that המן intended to hang מרדכי on were fifty אמות long (ה:י). Where in the Torah do we find wood measuring fifty אמות?
- 5) What golden item appears in the מגילה four times but nowhere else in תנ"ך?
- 6) Aside from the month of אדר, what other months appear in the מגילה?
- 7) I killed my wife because of my friend and killed my friend because of my wife? Who am I?

Answers

- 1) פרק ב פסוק ו both appear in נבוכדנצר מלך בבל and יכניה מלך יהודה.
- 2) The three names are וואגבתא, ושתי המלכה, and א:א, the tenth son of המן (ט:ט).
- 3) כרפס, the vegetable dipped into salt water is mentioned in the מגילה albeit with a different meaning (א:ו).
- 4) In פרשת נח, the width of the תיבה was fifty אמות (בראשית ו:טו). Thus, wood of that length was needed. עיין ילקוט שמעוני רמז תתרנו (for an interesting connection).
- 5) A שרביט הזהב, a golden scepter is mentioned four times in the מגילה, (ד:יא, ה:ב, ח:ד), but nowhere else in תנ"ך.
- 6) אסתר was taken to the king in the month of טבת (ב:טז). המן arranged the lottery in the month of ניסן (ג:ז). The letters of מרדכי to allow the Jews to destroy their enemies were sent in סיון (ח:ט).
- 7) אסתר (המן) killed his wife ושתי upon the advice of ממוכן and killed אסתר upon the words of his wife המן.

RABBI MOSHE ATIK'S TORAH TEASERS IS AVAILABLE ON AMAZON

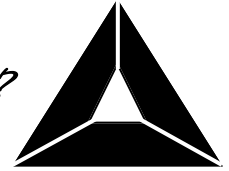


HAMAN VS. ESTHER:

Who Do We Want to Be Like?

By Ariel Sacknovitz,

Director of Production, 12th Grade



If we study the characters of Mordechai and Esther, it is interesting to see the profound influence one's middot have over one's actions and personality. We see how a refined character and healthy self-esteem can build and give meaning to life, while the converse is also true, that a flawed character, someone who refuses to work on his faulty middot, will ultimately self-destruct. When Mordechai refuses to bow to Haman, "Haman is filled with anger" (3:5). It is fascinating to note that Haman has been promoted to viceroy over the entire civilized world (according to one opinion in the Gemara), and despite this, when one little Jew refuses to bow, his world falls apart. This is a sad but common symptom of those who have very big egos, of which Haman was the standard bearer. If one's world is dependent on public adulation and built on what others think of me then when one individual, no matter how seemingly insignificant, refuses to pay homage to me, this means my identity, who and what I am, is being called into question. There is now a gaping hole in the artificial edifice that I have built up in my imagination, which serves as my identity. No one likes being identity-less, and a sure consequence of this is insane and blind hatred for those who have robbed me of myself. The Vilna Gaon points out that Haman did not even notice that Mordechai was not bowing down but had to be told (3:4). Haman's nose was so high in the sky that he did not notice who or what was going on while he passed along. Even once he was told, he refused and was even scared to accept this news and was prepared to judge Mordechai with the benefit of the doubt that maybe Mordechai did not realize how hurtful this was to Haman. The loss of one's identity is not an easy thing to swallow, and Haman feared for himself.

In Perek ה, after Haman is invited to the feast with the king and Esther, his ego is riding high, and he could not be happier. It is exactly at this time, when his ego, built on nothingness, is so high, that his fragility is exposed. He leaves the palace and who is sitting there but that Jew who was adamant in his refusal to bow to Haman. What is equally interesting is to see how Haman copes with this devastating assault on his essence. This may seem bizarre, yet it is psychologically fully understandable. Haman runs off to the escape of his wife and his friends, who he drags in. In a desperate attempt to salvage something of himself, he recounts pitifully what everyone knows all too well, boring his wife and friends with his story of promotion at the palace, culminating with the pinnacle

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We may describe this relationship as follows: on Yom Kippur, Moshe descended Har Sinai with the second set of Luchos. Bnei Yisrael finally accepted the Torah and were forgiven for the sin of the golden calf. On this day, we do not eat, drink, or involve ourselves in any other physical pleasures in order to rectify the sin of the golden calf and the "festivities" that followed. Forgiveness on Yom Kippur is brought about by total abstinence.

On the other hand, the Gemara tells us that the Jews did not fully accept the Torah until after the miracle of Purim, almost a thousand years after the Torah was given (Shabbat 88a). The problems during the time of the Purim story began when the Jews partook in the festivities of King Achashverosh, an inappropriate party, which echoes the festivities connected to the golden calf. But it is in Shushan, years later, that the Jews finally accept the Torah completely. Only then could an attempt be made to elevate eating and drinking into a holy context. This is why we are commanded to drink and partake in a festive meal on Purim.

On Yom Kippur, we rectify the sin of the golden calf and rid ourselves of our arrogance by abstaining from eating and drinking. But on Purim, we elevate eating and drinking. On Purim, we attempt to elevate our physical experiences into the context of proper service of G-d and the Torah, which is accepted anew.

Taken from torahmitzion.org

(Ariel Sacknovitz — Continued from page 13)

Mordechai thwarts the designs of Bigtan and Teresh, Esther reports this to the king: "And Esther says to the king in the name of Mordechai". This willingness to forego great honor and fame for saving the king's life by reporting the matter over in Mordechai's name, we are told in Pirkei Avos, brings redemption to the world. Modesty and an ability to forego the avaricious desire for honor and prestige is the pre-requisite for peace and harmony. We are also told how Esther doesn't divulge her origins to Achashveirosh. The Gemara tells us that this ability not to be "a tell all", to have modesty and not to be compelled to show off all we are and what we do, was a midda inherited from Rachel our matriarch; she did not "let the cat out of the bag" when Leah was marrying Yaakov, our forefather, when it should have been her, wanting to preserve the dignity of her sister and, G-d Forbid, not wanting to embarrass her. We can all choose who we want to be disciples of, Haman or Esther. It is important that we always choose correctly.

Adapted from Eliezer Wolfson

(Yoni Fenster — Continued from page 5)

final analysis, it is the same thing.

Such a message has no resonance today. Politicians always speak of the "new era", the "fresh start", "new challenges", and "new approaches". The common attitude is that what worked in the past won't work now. This is not the Jewish approach.

Of course, each generation does have its own challenges. But the basic mission and the basic message does not change. The Avodah is the same as it was yesterday. The first thing the Kohen does to start today's service is to remember that it is the same thing that he did yesterday and the same thing that he will do tomorrow.

The Gemara in Pesachim (26a) states that there is a principle in the Sacrificial Services that once a mitzvah has been completed (na'asis mitzvasa), the prohibition of meilah (trespassing sacred property) no longer applies. Despite this principle, the Terumas HaDeshen is an exception. After the ashes are lifted and placed next to the mizbayach (ostensibly completing the mitzvah), the law of meilah still applies. The explanation is: just *placing* the ashes there does not complete the mitzvah. The ashes' *being* there is the mitzvah. This fits in with the symbolism we mentioned. The ashes need to remain in that place for every one to see in order to serve the purpose of demonstrating this continuity of the Divine Service.

Adapted from *Rabbi Frand on the Parsha*

(Zack Kalatsky — Continued from page 13)

shem that the Jews deserve to be destroyed because they have שונאת ה'נם; they are separate and dislike each other. The sale from Achashverosh was a representation that Haman's prosecution was accepted. Hashem said that "your claim is that the Jews have separation, but they gave the מחצית השקל for the communal קרבנות. Commentators explain that the reason it is a half shekel and not a whole shekel is that every Jew realized that no matter how successful they are, they are only half of a bigger whole. That shows that all Jews deep down are connected, and therefore Haman's prosecution held no water.



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The Power of Tefillah

By Ari Brandspiegel, 11th Grade

In addition to the four Mitzvos that we practice on Purim, there is one other idea, which was written in the Book of Esther, to be followed for generations. It states, "Words of the fasts and their outcries" (Esther 9:31). This refers to the three days of fasting and prayer which the Jews did before Esther entered the king's inner chambers without permission. Why is this something so important for all generations? It is meant to teach us the perspective we should have about troubles, and about praying for relief from them.

When Haman decreed that all Jews in the kingdom should be killed, and the decree went out, it states in the Book of Esther, "And Mordechai knew all that had occurred" (Esther 4:1). This means he understood for what purpose the decree had occurred. Tractate Megillah (12a) explains that one of the reasons given for the decree was due to the fact that they took part in the feast of King Achashverosh. This great feast celebrated the passing of the seventy years prophesied that would end the exile and mark the rebuilding of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Many Jews had a desire to assimilate, and hence distanced themselves from G-d. As a reaction to this, G-d brought them a trouble as a means to bring them closer. Mordechai understood this and acted accordingly.

"And he (Mordechai) donned sackcloth and ashes and he went out into the middle of the city and cried a great and bitter outcry" (Esther 4:1). This was Mordechai's initial reaction to the decree: prayer. He understood that the decree was in order to bring the Jews closer, and prayer was the first step in achieving that goal. Normally, the first step would be to politically take initiative and then to pray that their efforts would succeed. However, here Mordechai knew that prayer was the first reaction since the whole trouble was to bring the Jews back to their closeness to G-d.

It's interesting to note that all of Mordechai's communications with Esther were through a messenger who went between them (Esther 4:4-16). One would think that at such a crucial time, when the lives of so many people were threatened, that Mordechai would want to speak face to face with Esther. She even sent him clothing to replace his sackcloth so

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Half the Whole

By Zack Kalatsky, 12th Grade

The Gemara says that when Haman bought the Jews, he gave Achashverosh 10,000 talents of silver. When that happened, Hashem said that the Jews already gave שקלים which equaled 10,000 talents of silver in the desert to offset the money that Haman was giving. What does one have to do with the other? Why do you need the זכותים of the שקלים, all Haman is doing is buying the Jews from Achashverosh?

The Gemara right before says that no one could speak lo-shon hara like Haman. He said that the Jews were scattered and separate. In the simple understanding, this means that "they are not in one place to fight back if we try to kill them." There is a rule that if the מגילה says "King" without saying Achashverosh, it means Hashem. Haman was telling Ha-

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the whole world.

If we take just a couple of examples, we see how Esther is the epitome of modesty, someone possessing healthy self-esteem and consequently and ultimately perfection of character. We see at the end of Perek ב how when

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A TIMELESS LESSON

By Natan Alper,
10th Grade

In this week's parsha, Parshas Tzav, there is a discussion about the Karban Chatas. An individual brought the Karban Chatas when he committed an accidental sin. Though it would make sense for the sinners who needed to bring a Karban Chatas to stand on their own line, this would cause embarrassment, since it would be obvious to anyone who saw them that they sinned. As a result, Hashem placed anyone bringing the Karban Chatas in the same line as people bringing other karbanos; maintaining their dignity was paramount. We see that Hashem was careful to guard their feelings, even though they had sinned.

This teaches us that one must do everything they can to never embarrass another individual. Furthermore, even if one has reason to think that an individual "deserves" to be embarrassed, that they "brought it up-

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(Moishy Rothman — Continued from page 10)

Jews were spiritually susceptible to the lax and indolent influence of Amalek. It is because of this attitude that the Torah even calls Amalek "not fearful of God". If someone lacks even the basic drive to grow, he doesn't have a chance to be fearful of God. This is the reason why we are commanded to destroy Amalek: not just literally the nation, but the emotion of "coldness" or lackadaisical behavior. In Megillah (12a) it was brought down that the Jews ate at Achashverosh's banquet commemorating the end of 70 years of exile from which the Jews hadn't returned, and for this sin the Jews were punished with Haman and his evil decrees. The Jewish acceptance of the invitation represents the total hopelessness of redemption and the loss of the Jewish drive to serve God. However, with the leadership of Mordechai, the Jews regained this hope and energy and returned to Eretz Yisroel and rebuilt the Second Beis Hamikdash. It was the rekindling of the Jewish drive that brought the Geulah.

During the time of Purim, it's a renewal of the fire in each and every Jew. After a cold (both literal and spiritual) winter, Purim ushers in a new period of the year; as the famous saying goes: "When Adar comes we increase in joy" (Ta'anis 29a). May we take the lesson of Zachor and Purim, namely the removal of the laxity, and welcome the spring (again, literally and spiritually) and grow.

(Yitzie Schienman — Continued from page 10)

tamount to the sin of the golden calf. Why?

The Kuzari answers that the source of idolatry is not based on the object we intend to worship, but rather from where the intent to worship stems. It is perhaps the greatest arrogance of man that he claims to know the desired form of worship with which to please G-d, by using his limited intellect. It is almost as if we equate our knowledge and understanding with that of the Supreme Being and therefore have no need to be instructed by Him. The fundamental difference between the golden Keruvim (and the Shul for that matter) and the golden calf is that one was commanded by G-d and the other was not. Idolatry is when we think we know better; service of G-d is when we acknowledge we do not.

In most years, the sin of the golden calf is read close to Purim. Chazal tell us that there exists an intrinsic connection between Purim and Yom Kippur. The Arizal explains this connection in the following manner: Purim is in fact on a higher level than "Yom Kippurim", which in turn should be translated as "a day like Purim".

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A CONSISTENT PROCEDURE

By Yoni Fenster, 12th Grade

We read at the beginning of the Parsha the mitzvah known as Terumas HaDeshen: "The Kohen shall don his fitted linen Tunic, and he shall don linen Pants on his flesh, he shall raise the ashes which the fire will consume of the Olah-offering on the Altar, and place it next to the Altar." [Vayikra 1:3]

Before the Kohen would start the daily service, he would go to the place where the Olah's were burnt and scoop up a handful of ashes. He placed this handful of ashes next to the Altar. This ritual of Terumas HaDeshen [lifting the ashes] is not to be confused with another ritual – Hotza'as HaDeshen [removal of the ashes]. This other ritual is mentioned in the very next pasuk: "He shall remove his garments and he shall wear other garments and he shall **remove** the ashes to the outside of the camp, to a pure place." [Vayikra 1:4] Hotza'as HaDeshen is merely "clean-up". Terumas HaDeshen is part of the Avodah [Temple Service].

What is the symbolism of this Avodah? What is the symbolism of the fact that every single morning, the first thing the Kohen did was gather the ashes from the previous day's offerings and place them next to the altar for today's offerings?

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch says something here that is strikingly beautiful. He says, "The Jewish today has to take its mission from the hand of its yesterday." This means, we have to bind today's Avodah [Divine Service] with yesterday's Avodah. This is because yesterday's Avodah and today's Avodah are the same Avodah. In Judaism, there is no such thing as, "That was yesterdays challenge. Today is something different."

No - today is the same Avodah as yesterday. As Rav Hirsch explains, "The very last Jewish grandchild stands there before G-d with the same mission of life that his first ancestor bore." Avraham Avinu, the first Jew, had the exact same mission as the "last Jew". It hasn't changed in 4,000 years.

Each day's service must be done with a freshness and exuberance. Each day, they should be in our eyes "as if they were new." But, in the

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(Stories of Greatness — Continued from page 16)

slip from the true path.

Indeed, Reb Yitzchak never let his desperate economic plight trouble him; not even for a moment. Always he was cheerful, and full of gratitude to G-d for his lot. "Rejoice my stomach," he would say, "that you are light and not a heavy burden to carry around."

But now a number of his daughters were nearly of marriageable age, and there wasn't a coin in the house to make them a wedding and to help set them up. His wife and daughters were sunk in bitter depression over the situation, and as one of the great Rebbes had said, "Depression is a highly contagious disease that infects anyone who comes into its presence." He already noticed that it was affecting his ability to serve G-d purely.

So here he was, about to do the unthinkable. He was going to ask his Rebbe to bless him that G-d should send him a respectable livelihood.

"Rebbe, I... I..." The words froze in his mouth. He felt like a thief caught in the act. "Rebbe, I... I... I can't... M-m-my wife, my daughters..." He froze again, in mid-sentence, too embarrassed to continue.

But it was enough. The Rebbe raised his eyebrows quizzically and said, "Yitzchak, is it a comforta-

ble life you want? Is that it? Well, I will grant it to you, but only if you do one thing for me first.

"Take these two gold coins," the Rebbe instructed the dumb-struck Chassid, "and when you get home, spend both of them on the fanciest, most expensive food you can find. Good wine, the choicest meats, gourmet dishes, and an assortment of fresh fruits, sweets and baked goods for dessert. Don't leave anything out and don't let a single penny be left over. Bring it all into your house and set it out on your table for a banquet. There should be enough for two full meals for one person, one in the day and one in the evening.

"What you must do," concluded the Chassidic master, "is eat it all up, both meals, all by yourself, in utter silence. If your wife or your children ask to eat some of it, or just to taste, ignore them. And say not a word in explanation. I'm warning you, do exactly like I am telling you. Exactly! Afterwards, come back here, and I will grant you what you ask."

All the way home, Yitzchak marveled at what he had promised the Rebbe to do. How could he spend all that money on fancy food? And how could he eat it all? Who cares about food anyway! And how would he be able to not share any of

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he would come and speak to her in person, but he refused. Why? Again, because being that the trouble was sent as a vehicle to bring the Jews closer to G-d through prayer, even one minute of prayer was not worth wasting, even to go speak to the wife of the King.

Even at the very end, when it was obvious that Haman, the instigator of the evil decree, was on his way down, and that the decree would be averted, Mordechai did not behave any differently. Haman is ordered to lead a royal horse with Mordechai on it dressed in royal robes and a royal crown (Esther 6:10). Even Zeresh, Haman's wife, and his close friends subsequently see in this event that it marks his imminent downfall (Esther 6:13). Still, Mordechai doesn't stop for one minute: "He got off the horse, and immediately put on his sackcloth and returned to his place to pray."

Our lesson from this is that troubles are not just a good reason to pray, and prayer is not just a vehicle to bring about relief from troubles. Rather, prayer is a reason why G-d brings about the troubles, which stir a person to come closer to Him. That is why Mordechai continued to pray after he saw Haman's downfall as imminent.

May we all be blessed with a truly happy Purim, and through the lessons of the Purim story may we all experience what is stated in the passage in the Book of Esther, "And the Jews had light and happiness, joy and honor" (Esther 8:16).

Taken from torah.org

(Ariel Sacknovitz — Continued from page 15)

of his career, which is going to be him attending the feast with the king and Esther and nobody else. This astonishing behavior is a desperate act to counter the attack Mordechai perpetrated against Haman's delicate ego. However, "all this is not worth anything every time I see Mordechai the Jew sitting at the gate of the king" (5:13). This fantasy world is played out again when Achashveirosh asks Haman for an idea of what to do to somebody "that the king wants to honor" (6:6). Of course in Haman's mind there is nobody else deserving of honor in

happy Purim (Continued on page 13)

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on themselves," we should withhold our judgment and realize that another's dignity is not something to be taken lightly.

(Moishy Rothman — Continued from page 1)

When looking at Parshas Zachor, the Torah gives an unclear reason for the removal and decimation of Amalek: "Remember...how Amalek met (קָרַךְ) you (Israel) on the way...in the rear, when you were faint and weary; and Amalek didn't fear God." Two questions arise from this Passuk. Firstly, why does the Torah use the word קָרַךְ to mean the word "met"; use the word פָּגַשׁ, a more definite term for the word "meet"? Also, why does the Torah add at the end, in a seemingly haphazard way, "they also didn't fear God"? What does this have to do with destroying Amalek; many other nations also didn't fear God, and yet we aren't commanded to destroy them?

The founding Rosh Yeshiva of KBY, Rav Chaim Ya'akov Goldvicht ז"ל, answers by first establishing "the golden rule" of Amalek. They were, as the Torah called them: "קָרַךְ," literally translated as cold. There was no "fire", or motivation, to serve God or be virtuous. Life was just a passive experience, not actual growth or change spiritually. When Amalek saw a new nation, with a novel and radical notion requiring "fire", a push for change and spiritual growth, Amalek right away wanted to "extinguish" this drive. The Torah says that Amalek attacked from the flank, the weak point, where the

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years. To introduce his answer, the Kuzari establishes an important psychological and philosophical principle: man, who is physical and earthly, finds it straining to relate to G-d, who is spiritual and above this world. It is only natural for us to seek some physical representation to help us connect with G-d. The idea of a physical symbol for the Divine is not completely foreign to the Jewish religion. The Keruvim in the Kodosh HaKadashim were also figures made of gold. Today, we regard the Shul and the Aron contained within as a place and an object with which we connect to G-d. According to the Kuzari, the Bnei Yisrael never intended to create a molten idol to replace G-d, but rather sought a substitute mediator to help them connect with G-d in the absence of their primary mediator, Moshe.

The Kuzari poses the following interesting question. What if instead of the golden calf, the Bnei Yisrael decided to build a Mishkan? In fact, what if they built the very same Mishkan that we have been reading about in the Torah portions for the past few weeks, complete with all the Keilim that are listed? Would that have been considered okay? The answer is no. Had they built the Mishkan complete to the very last item, it would still have been tan-

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it with his family?

It turned out to be even harder than he expected. He sat down to the table with all the dishes of food set out just for him, while his family looked on pleadingly. He could barely manage to swallow it down. Each mouthful was more painful than the last. "G-d, take my soul and spare me this terrible trial," he screamed silently.

By now all his children were wailing and his wife was sobbing and castigating him for his cruelty. "G-d in Heaven! His own children are begging him for scraps and he has no mercy for them. They cry and he averts his eyes. Only he can eat! Yitzchak, have you gone out of your mind?!"

With those words, his poor wife collapsed and fainted. Reb Yitzchak the Chassid did not faint. He gulped down the last morsel and turned his face toward Kovrin.

"Welcome, Yitzchak!" the Rebbe called to him. "I presume you did what I told you to. You did, didn't you?"

"Yes," murmured Yitzchak, his eyes glistening with tears.

The Rebbe noticed, of course. "And now, Yitzchak," he continued gently, "are you prepared for G-d's blessing for wealth that will enable your house to be filled with all the good and desirable things that money can buy? Are you ready for that lifestyle? Are you ready to eat like you did that day in your house at my command? For what difference does it make if your wife and children share your table? Even if you dispense generously of your blessings to the needy--what about all those who you won't feed, the many thousands of impoverished families, your brothers and sisters and their sons and daughters? They will all be hungrily longing for what is on your plate. Do you want the pleasure of wealth like you had at that meal? If so, take it; it's yours. Will you? Can you, Yitzchak?"

"No," Yitzchak whispered. "No!" he said more firmly. "No, I can't and no, I don't want to..."



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10-Minute Halacha Shiur

Given by
Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz
on yutorah.org

Transcribed by
Uri Himelstein

Is a Megillah Muktzeh?

*After Shabbos, we will be celebrating the joyous day of Purim. Since Purim is on Motzei Shabbos this year, Rebbe gave a Shiur on the Muktzeh status of the Megillah. Enjoy! (*Also please note that whenever I use the terminology of "carry" it simply means that something is/isn't Muktzeh)*

- Uri

I. Introduction

A. First of all, if on Shabbos someone is taking a Megillah out for that night, there is an issue of Hachana. However, if one is simply taking it out in order to learn, would that be permissible? Now, certainly a printed Megillah would be allowed. But what about an actual Megillah?

II. Muktzeh for a Megillah

A. There is a Gemara that says that if not for the fact that we must read the Haftarah, the Nevi'im would be Muktzeh on Shabbos. Since we may not read the Megillah on Shabbos (as a Gezairah that we might come to carry it), it would seem to follow that it would be like the Nevi'im and be Muktzeh. The Shulchan Aruch writes that a Kli that is used for Muttar things would be able to be carried even if it isn't for

the use of the Kli itself. But if there is no purpose for it, then it may not be carried. He goes on to say that one may carry Kisvei Hakodesh (or food) even if there is no reason, and the Rema adds that Tefillin would be an exception to this rule. Based on that, it seems Kisvei Hakodesh would be fine. The Shaarei Teshuva says that at first, it would appear that a Megillah would be allowed based on this. However, he quotes a Pri Chadash that has a Chumrah that one may not carry. The Mishna Brurah quotes this Pri Chadash, but rules that a majority of Poskim hold like the Elyah Rabbah, who says that a Megillah would be able to be carried. He also quotes it again in Hilchos Purim, and again disagrees with him, which shows that he gives some credence to this Shitah. The Chayei Adam writes that since it may not be read, it is also Assur to carry in a case of Purim proper. This refers to Shushan Purim, because it is impossible to have regular Purim on Shabbos. And

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10-Minute Halacha Cont'

when Shushan Purim falls on Shabbos, the people of the walled cities would read on the 14th like everybody else. However, if Erev Purim was on Shabbos, then one would be allowed to carry his Megillah just like all other Kisvei Kodesh all year. The Chayei Adam therefore held that on any Shabbos the Megillah would be allowed to be carried, but on a Shabbos where Chazal were specifically Gozeir not to read it (like Shabbos Shushan Purim), they also made it muktzeh. It follows that in a year (like this year) where the 13th comes out on Shabbos, and Chazal didn't decree an Issur to read that day, it would be permissible (like every other Shabbos) to carry it. However, one might have argued that it is different because it is within the range of 11-15 Adar (that is described in the first Mishna of Megillah) where one may be yotzei, and maybe Chazal were Gozeir then. But the Chayei Adam didn't worry about this. It does say, though, that one shouldn't bring it to Shul because it would be Hachana. Again, one could argue that if one would use it, then it would take away the Issur of Hachana. The Kitzur says that there is no problem of

Muktzeh, and there is an issue of Hachana. The Aruch Hashulchan says that even if it falls on Shabbos (and we wouldn't read it then), we don't have to worry about it at all because it is Kisvei Kodesh. Also, there are different Acharonim (like the Shabbos Shel Mi) who say that the Pri Chadash really doesn't argue on the Elyah Rabbah, and that they are talking about different Shabbasos. They say that the Pri Chadash would only Assur it on Shabbos which is Purim itself.

II. Conclusion

- A. Essentially, there are two approaches in the Poskim.
- A Megillah isn't Muktzeh at all, and we simply don't pasken like the Pri Chadash, but there are still Hachana issues.
 - The Pri Chadash may be right, but he is only talking about Shabbasos which are also Purim. On a regular Shabbos it would be fine.
- B. This year we may open the Megillah and read it. However, one shouldn't bring it to Shul because that would be Hachana (although one could argue that using it in Shul on Shabbos would negate this issue).