

ויהי בימי אחשורוש הוא  
 אחשורוש המלך מהרוועד כוש שבעועשרים  
 ומאה מדינה בימים ההם כשבת המלך אחשורוש על כסא  
 מלכותו אשר בשושן הבירה בשנת שלוש למלכו עשה משתה  
 לכל שריו ועבדיו חיל פרס ומדי הפרתמים ושרי המדינות לפניו  
 בהראתו את עשר כבוד מלכותו ואת יקר תפארת גדולתו ימים רבים שבונים  
 ומאת יוב ובמלואת הימים האלה עשה המלך לכל העם הנמצאים בשושן הבירה  
 לבוגד ולועד קטן משתה שבעת ימים בחצר גנת ביתן המלך חור כרפס ותכלת אדווז  
 בחבלי בוץ וארגמן על גלילי כסף ועמודי שיש מטות זהב וכסף על רצפת בהט ושש ודר  
 וסחרת והשקות בכלי זהב וכלים מפלים שונים ויין מלכות רב כיד המלך והשתיה כדת אין  
 אנפכי כן יסדר המלך על כל רב ביתו לעשות כרצון איש ואיש גבושת המלכה  
 עשתה משתה נשים בית המלכות אשר למלך אחשורוש ביום השביעי כטוב לב המלך ביין  
 אמר למהומן בזתא הרבונא בגתא ואבגתא זתר וכרכס שבעת הסריסים המשרתים את פני  
 המלך אחשורוש להביא את ושת המלכה לפני המלך בכתר מלכות להראות העמים והשרים  
 את פיה כי טובת מראה היא ותמאן המלכה ושת לבוא בדבר המלך אשר ביד הסריסים  
 ויקצף המלך מאד וחמתו בעיה בו ויאמר המלך לחכמים ידעי העתים כי כן  
 דבר המלך לפני כל ידעי רת ודין והקרב אליו כרשנא שתר ארמתא תרשייש מרס  
 מרסנא ממוכן שבעת שרי פרס ומדי ראי פני המלך הישבים ראשנה במלכות  
 כדת מה לעשות במלכה ושהי על אשר לא עשתה את מאמר המלך אחשורוש  
 ביד הסריסים ויאמר ממוכן לפני המלך והשרים לא על



**PURIM**  
**A DAY OF VICTORY**  
**5780**

By R. Baruch, PhD



## פורים: יום נצחון

### Purim: A Day of Victory

Someone whom G-d used in a mighty way was a woman named Hadassah or in the Persian language, Esther. Hadassah lost her parents at a young age and went to live with her uncle, Mordechai the Jew. Although Mordechai was a high government official in the Persian Empire, he trained Hadassah in the matters relating to G-d. In other words, he taught her to walk in the faith, trusting in the L-rd, regardless of what type of situation in which she found herself. Imagine how difficult it would have been for a young Jewish woman, having been taught the laws of modesty, to be taken by a Gentile king into a process whereby she was going to be examined by this king as to whether she could be his queen. She did not seek this nor want such a position. So why did she participate in such an event? What is known and emphasized concerning Hadassah is how she submitted to her uncle Mordechai.

Many times I have heard individuals say that she should have refused to participate in such an ungodly manner by which a queen was going to be selected. Again, it was not her desire, but she obeyed Mordechai, whom the Scriptures reveal watched her closely, looking out for her well-being every day. When one reads the book of Esther, there is a common phrase that surrounds Hadassah, that *"she found favor in the eyes"* of everyone she met. This expression is a Scriptural sign that she was in the will of HaShem (the L-rd). It was Mordechai who would continuously counsel her in what to do. It was because of her trust in Mordechai as a man who could discern G-d's will, that she found herself to be in the king's palace as the new queen.

It is very interesting that Mordechai commanded Hadassah not to reveal to anyone that she was Jewish.

לֹא-הִגִּידָה אֶסְתֵּר, אֶת-עַמָּהּ וְאֶת-מִוֹלְדֹתָהּ: כִּי מְרַדְּכִי צִוָּה עָלֶיהָ, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תִגִּיד

*"Esther did not tell her people or her heritage; because Mordechai commanded her that she should not tell."* Esther 2:10

Why did Mordechai command Hadassah in this way? The conclusion at which one must arrive is that he had insight from G-d concerning this subject. A seemingly confusing verse is found towards the end of chapter 2 (See 2:19). There the reader is informed that for a second time, young women were gathered, as previously, which ended with Hadassah being chosen as the queen. For what purpose was this second round of the virgins being gathered? The answer to this question is found in the next verse,

אִין אֶסְתֵּר, מִגִּדְתָּ מִוֹלְדֹתָהּ וְאֶת-עַמָּהּ, כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה עָלֶיהָ, מְרַדְּכִי; וְאֶת-מֵאֲמַר מְרַדְּכִי אֶסְתֵּר עָשָׂה,  
כַּאֲשֶׁר הִיְתָה בְּאֲמֹנָה אֵתוֹ

*"Esther did not tell her heritage nor her people just as Mordechai had commanded her, and the word of Mordechai Esther does, just as when she was trained by him."* Esther 2:20

The linking of the information contained in verses 19-20 of chapter 2 is most revealing. It would seem to imply that it was because Hadassah had obeyed the command of Mordechai not to reveal that she was Jewish, that the king again ordered for virgins to be gathered. This second gathering was to pressure Esther to tell the king of her background. As we continue to read in the book of Esther, we learn Esther's Jewishness played a major role in the book. It would have been expedient for Hadassah to have obeyed her husband, the king; instead of her uncle. So why did she not submit to her husband? Although women are called to be submissive to their husbands, this submission never takes precedent over obeying G-d. Mordechai was providing to Esther spiritual counsel, i.e. truth; and it was her acceptance of his revelation and instruction that positioned her to be used by G-d and be the primary person in bringing victory to the Jewish people and the defeat of the enemy of Israel, Haman.

Hadassah is not just an example of obedience for women, but also for men. The message of this book is that one cannot intuitively know the will or purposes of G-d. In order carry out the will of G-d, all people are absolutely dependent upon divine revelation. Whereas prophets and men of G-d provided for Israel the revelation of G-d in the past, now it is the Holy Scriptures. Obviously the Holy Spirit's illumination is necessary to assist us in understanding this perfect revelation from G-d.

Hadassah did not allow the pressure from the king or the threat of being replaced by a young woman selected in this second gathering to influence her to compromise. Naturally, there are times when individuals must make compromises, but these compromises can never be in regard to Scriptural revelation. Frequently, the enemy tries to convince believers that if a compromise is not made, then what will take place will be so unpleasant or harmful that ignoring the clear teachings of the Bible can be set aside. A good example of this took place several years ago when the late Ovadia Yosef, chief rabbi of Israel, gave his approval for Israel to compromise on the giving away of the Golan Heights for a peace agreement with Syria. Rabbi Yosef said that in order to save Jewish lives, it was permissible to set aside Scriptural truth concerning the Jewish people's covenant relating to the Land of Israel. Thankfully, this agreement with Syria never took place. The fact of the manner is that it is never in one's best interest to disobey the Word of G-d.

I know that there will be those who have questions relating to this view in light of the principle of פיקוח נפש. This term applies to when keeping Shabbat law conflicts with matters pertaining to the well-being of an individual. For example, a person needs to be taken to the hospital on Shabbat for emergency treatment to either save his life or treat a significant ailment. In such situations, all authorities of Jewish law agree that the Shabbat law may be violated. Hence, is this not compromising the Scriptures? There is a major difference between פיקוח נפש and comprising the Word of G-d. In regard to פיקוח נפש the issue is when two Biblical commandments collide with one another and keeping the Shabbat will bring a known or strongly perceived injury or suffering to an individual. In the example concerning Chief Rabbi Yosef, transgressing the Word of G-d was not actually to save a life, but only based upon an assumption that it will save life, if parts of the Land of Israel is given away. Secondly, there is no commandment to make peace with an enemy. It is clear that disobeying G-d in giving up Land that HaShem gave to the Jewish people by covenant certainty will not result in favor from G-d.

In returning to Hadassah, it was only when she came before the king the second time to make know to him her request, that she revealed who her people were and what was her heritage. It is most significant that Hadassah had already found strong favor by this time in

his eyes. In other words, it was the best possible timing for the king to learn that Haman's plan to destroy and annihilate the Jewish people would also result in the death of his queen. It was indeed the submission of Hadassah to the plans and purposes of G-d revealed by Mordechai that in the end provided the means for the deliverance of the Jewish people.

The Festival of Purim relates to the Hebrew word פּוּר which means "lot". This is what Haman used to arrive at the "right" time to execute his plan to exterminate the Jewish people. One of the primary messages of the book of Esther is that when one depends upon the revelation of G-d, i.e. His Word, then HaShem will take what was intended for evil and turn it into good. It is only in submissiveness to truth that one will find in the end victory. Contained within the book of Esther are principles which teach the reader how to find victory in one's life. Purim is indeed a Festival of Victory.

May you have a meaningful observance of Purim...Shalom