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Turnaround - וְנַהֲפוֹךְ הוּא

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)

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# Introduction

We celebrate [Purim](purim.html) on the [fourteenth](fourteen.html) of [Adar](feasts.html) ([Adar](feasts.html) bet in intercalated years). Cities that were walled in the [time](time.html) of Yehoshua do no celebrate on the [fourteenth](fourteen.html), they celebrate Shushan [Purim](purim.html) on [Adar](feasts.html) 15.

[Purim](purim.html) is celebrated with costumes, noisemakers, and a feast that includes wine and Hamantaschen, special filled cookies that resemble [Haman](esther.html)’s [three](three.html)-cornered [hat](hair.html). We give gifts of [food](food.html) to our friends, and money to the poor.

“…as the days on which the [Jews](gen-jew.html) got relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from [mourning](mourning.html) into a [holiday](festival.html); that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of [food](food.html) to [one](one.html) another and gifts to the poor.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

We also read from the book of [Esther](esther.html) and use a special noisemaker every [time](time.html) [Haman](esther.html)’s [name](name.html) is mentioned as a [sign](signs.html) of disrespect and make our hearts glad with wine.

“A person should drink on [Purim](purim.html) until the point where he can’t tell the difference between “Blessed is Mordechai” and “Cursed is [Haman](esther.html).[[2]](#footnote-2)

# Turnaround

In today’s [world](worlds.html), the [hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) is rarely ‘seen’. [HaShem](hashem.html) is wearing the mask of ‘nature’ and ‘science’ so that His [face](body.html) is completely hidden by His mask. If we want to see the [hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html), we must be prepared to [study](study.html) His Torah diligently. It is only in His written and [oral Torah](orallaw.html) that we learn how to unmask him. [Purim](purim.html)[[3]](#footnote-3) is the [festival](festival.html) where those who [study](study.html) Torah are sensitized into the unique art of seeing behind [HaShem](hashem.html)’s mask. This [study](study.html) will help us to begin understanding How [HaShem](hashem.html) hides behind His mask, yet His wonders, His *nes nistarim* (hidden miracles) can still be discerned. In this process, we can ‘unmask’ [HaShem](hashem.html) and begin to understand why we have so much evil in the [world](worlds.html). Megillat [Esther](esther.html) details how, and why, [HaShem](hashem.html) hides. It also shows us the amazing [secret](sod.html) of how to unmask [HaShem](hashem.html) and see how all the evil will be rectified and be revealed as beneficial.

Megillat [Esther](esther.html) is a book which details the [redemption](redemption.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people in a miraculous and yet hidden way.[[4]](#footnote-4) The most amazing part of this [redemption](redemption.html) is the way [HaShem](hashem.html) manipulated [events](feasts.html) such that every disaster *was turned around* (*V’nahapoch hu*) and became a marvelous [redemption](redemption.html). *V’nahapoch hu[[5]](#footnote-5)* - הוּא וְנַהֲפוֹךְ is not a victory over evil. It means that the enemy’s’ efforts ultimately lead them towards becoming the source of the [salvation](salvation.html) for the [Jews](gen-jew.html). The “evil”, the “bad” is **revealed** to be “good” and beneficial, in fact, absolutely essential. Every [event](feasts.html) will be revealed as an “elegant solution”. This is how [HaShem](hashem.html) conducts His [world](worlds.html). There are no exceptions.

***Zephaniah 3:9*** *In the end I will turn things around for the people. I'll give them a language undistorted, unpolluted, Words to address* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *in worship and, united, to serve me with their* [*shoulders*](body.html) *to the wheel.*

An elegant solution is [one](one.html) in which the maximum desired effect is achieved with the smallest, or simplest effort. In Torah terms, this means that [HaShem](hashem.html) will reveal that everything that has ever happened, or will happen, will be turned around and revealed to be for our good and absolutely essential to [HaShem](hashem.html)’s plan. Everything will contribute to the Oneness[[6]](#footnote-6) of [HaShem](hashem.html).

To illustrate this idea, consider the following idea. In a battle, [one](one.html) can overcome [one](one.html)’s opponent with superior strength, but this is brute force, it is *not* elegant. A more sophisticated approach to battle, is to use your opponent’s own strength against him. Many martial arts, and especially judo,[[7]](#footnote-7) [teach](teacher.html) you how to use your opponent’s strength, or weight, against him. In this illustration of *V’nahapoch hu*, we see an elegant solution that reveals that the defeat of my opponent was due entirely to my opponent’s strength as used against me. My opponent’s strength was my solution to his defeat. His strength against me was revealed to be my solution to defeating my opponent. This is the solution that [HaShem](hashem.html) uses in His [world](worlds.html). He uses *V’nahapoch hu*, to reveal that all things work together for our benefit.[[8]](#footnote-8) All things advance His plan and contribute to His oneness.

Our Sages are masters in the art of seeing *through* what appear to be disastrous [events](feasts.html), to see how they contribute to His plan and reveal His goodness in the [world](worlds.html). They are able to see behind the mask, so to [speak](mashal.html). The following example from the [Gemara](orallaw.html) illustrates this:

***Pesachim 50a*** *…While R. Joshua b. Levi said: This refers to the people who are honoured in this* [*world*](worlds.html)*, but will be lightly esteemed in the next* [*world*](worlds.html)*. As was the case of R.* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *the son of R. Joshua b. Levi, [who] became ill and fell into a trance. When he recovered, his father asked him, ‘What did you see?’ ‘I saw a topsy-turvy* [*world*](worlds.html)*’, he replied, ‘the upper [class] underneath and the lower on top’ he replied: ‘My son’, he observed, ‘you saw a clear* [*world*](worlds.html)*.[[9]](#footnote-9) And how are we [situated] there?’ ‘Just as we are here, so are we there. And I heard them saying, "Happy is he who comes hither with his learning in his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*".*

The message of *V’nahapoch hu*, is, then, a bit different than the [one](one.html) we usually think of. The clear [world](worlds.html) is the [one](one.html) in which we [speak](mashal.html) out, even when we’re the lowly ones. It is *this* [world](worlds.html), the [one](one.html) we live in, which is the true upside-down [world](worlds.html).

The [events](feasts.html) recorded in the book of [Esther](esther.html), and celebrated at [Purim](purim.html), are revealed, through the Megilla, to be examples of *V’nahapoch hu.* Compared to the holocaust, [Haman](esther.html)’s plan was much more complete and thorough than the holocaust. [Haman](esther.html) wanted to destroy every last [Jew](gen-jew.html), in all parts of the [world](worlds.html), ON [ONE](one.html) DAY!!![[10]](#footnote-10) The reversal of this, the *V’nahapoch hu*, is that [Haman](esther.html)’s sons were hanged on [one](one.html) day, on the same tree, at the same [time](time.html). We demonstrate the timelessness of this [event](feasts.html) by rapidly saying their names in [ONE](one.html) breath.[[11]](#footnote-11)

The concept of *V’nahapoch hu* is derived from the following pasuk:[[12]](#footnote-12)

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***9:1*** *Now in the* [*twelfth*](twelve.html) *month, which is the month* [*Adar*](feasts.html)*, on the* [*thirteenth*](thirteen.html) *day of the same, when the king's* [*commandment*](cmds613.html) *and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *hoped to have rule over them; whereas it was turned to the contrary* (וְנַהֲפוֹךְהוּא), *that the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *had rule over them that hated them;*

The commentaries point out that the unexpected reversal of fates is the apparent underlying theme in the [Purim](purim.html) story. Close analysis of the Megillah reveals how quickly and smoothly the plans of [Haman](esther.html) were not merely foiled but more notably transformed into bringing about the [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People. The very night that [Haman](esther.html) planned to convince Achashverosh[[13]](#footnote-13) to have Mordechai hanged ended up being the night on which he advised Achashverosh to extravagantly honor Mordechai. The very gallows that [Haman](esther.html) prepared for Mordechai ended up being used for his own hanging. The very day that [Haman](esther.html) had decided to be the [time](time.html) to destroy the [Jews](gen-jew.html) was the day on which the [Jews](gen-jew.html) destroyed their enemies. Ultimately, [Haman](esther.html)’s own proposal to kill Vashti ended up paving the way for the ultimate [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People. The turn of [events](feasts.html) in the story of [Purim](purim.html) truly embody the verse that says, “Many are the thoughts that are in the [heart](body.html) of man but the counsel of [HaShem](hashem.html) will prevail”.[[14]](#footnote-14)

*V'nahapoch*[[15]](#footnote-15) *hu* וְנַהֲפוֹךְ הוּא, the theme of [Purim](purim.html), connotes not only the fact that the danger was miraculously resolved, but also the way the resolution occurred. Danger's resolution can not always be clearly attributed to heavenly intervention. The [Purim](purim.html) story's significance lies in the fact that the [salvation](salvation.html) recycled and utilized all the elements of the danger in its service.

The picture that expresses this idea in the most powerful way is Mordecai's picture above riding the horse, and [Haman](esther.html) down, leading him, while [Haman](esther.html)'s ambition was to see the same picture, but exactly the opposite way.

The message of [Purim](purim.html), the Feast of Lots, is that current [world](worlds.html) [events](feasts.html) are [HaShem](hashem.html)’s jigsaw puzzle; part of His Master Plan. It is He who charts the course of human [events](feasts.html), even as we [speak](mashal.html). At He plots His course, He sets up every [event](feasts.html) to be revealed, in the end, as beneficial to His Plan.

The [redemption](redemption.html) of [Purim](purim.html) is not a [redemption](redemption.html) where we are restored to our land and [HaShem](hashem.html)’s service. The [redemption](redemption.html) of [Purim](purim.html) is a [redemption](redemption.html) whereby we return to our normal lives after nearly being wiped out. There was no real gain. This is analogous to a man with a terminal illness who receives a cure in the final hours of his life. He has not received anything more that a restoration to his normal life, yet he is exuberant and flies high in his exhilaration at the life that has been restored.

The people were still in [exile](galuyot.html). They were still subjects of king Achashverosh. [Esther](esther.html) was still married to Achashverosh. The [redemption](redemption.html) was real, but it was not our concept of [redemption](redemption.html). Hidden from our view is that [Esther](esther.html)’s son with Achashverosh will permit the rebuilding of the [Temple](temple.html).

Unlike any other [redemption](redemption.html) in our history, this [one](one.html) was obviously accomplished by a complete reversal of fortunes. Everything we needed for victory was already there, but it had all been deployed against us. We only had to turn our hearts to [HaShem](hashem.html) to [merit](merit.html) that He set this same power loose upon our enemies.

This is the message of [Purim](purim.html); V’nahapoch Hu, “it is the opposite”. To us mortals many things seem bad, look around, everyone has their own package of trials and difficulties to contend with. On [Purim](purim.html) we acknowledge that we really don’t understand. And even something that may seem like a disaster is really a blessing in disguise.

This, explains Rav Hutner,[[16]](#footnote-16) is the underlying true miracle of [Purim](purim.html). If it were simply the case that a horrible decree had befallen our people and in the nick of [time](time.html) a [salvation](salvation.html) occurred, then the possibility would remain, that [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people could be exterminated, could be vanquished *chas v’shalom*.[[17]](#footnote-17) To even conceive of the potential for [Haman](esther.html)’s plan ‘to destroy, murder and obliterate all the [Jews](gen-jew.html)’ to succeed goes directly against the will of [HaShem](hashem.html). We are His eternal people and the [covenant](covenant.html) between us is unbreakable, certainly by any means of man. Therefore, the miracle of [Purim](purim.html) had to be specifically that ‘it was turned around’ and in the end the whole [nation](nations.html) could see that every single step that seemed to plant [seeds](flower.html) of despair was in fact a key stage that would lead to great joy and deliverance. This then, is the proper understanding of the pasuk:[[18]](#footnote-18) because we as a people are always protected by [HaShem](hashem.html), there is no inherent possibility of vanquishing us and any attempt to do so is just, in essence, ‘turned around’ and, as a result, the foregone conclusion will always be ‘the [Jews](gen-jew.html) prevailed over their enemies’. It is for this reason that when all other Yamim tovim[[19]](#footnote-19) will be annulled in the days of [Mashiach](mashiach.html),[[20]](#footnote-20) [Purim](purim.html) will still be celebrated. [Purim](purim.html) represents our limitless existence and relationship with [HaShem](hashem.html) and that has no boundaries of celebration. This is our eternal joke which we [laugh](mashal.html) about and enjoy each year on [Purim](purim.html). No matter what the outside [world](worlds.html) may plot against us, we [know](daat.html) that it is all futile. For in the end, the [Hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) will be there to protect and help us as He has done in those days and will continue to do in our times.

# Cure created before the disease

The [eighth](eight.html) blessing of the Shemoneh Esrei [prayer](prayer.html) in which we ask [HaShem](hashem.html), "Heal us, [HaShem](hashem.html), and we will be healed”, contains unnecessary language. Isn't it a given that if [HaShem](hashem.html) heals us, we will be healed? Why the double language?

In his elucidation on the siddur, the 18th-century master, Rabbi Elijah ben Shlomo Zalman, commonly [known](daat.html) as the Vilna Gaon, explains that this blessing means that the cure, or healing, is always created before the illness or pain. "heal us [HaShem](hashem.html)" means we [know](daat.html) that the healing already exists; "and we will be healed" means that we are asking [HaShem](hashem.html) to allow us to access the healing for ourselves and for all Israel.

Dinim, the harsh elements of history, have to be sweetened.

The source of ecstasy in the next [world](worlds.html) is the Yetzer HaRa.

Right balance between [two](two.html) elements – the [body](body.html) and soul. [Adam](adam.html) did not need clothing. The outside shows the inside. Then the [body](body.html) became opaque.

We turn the problem into the solution.

# Examples

[One](one.html) of the central themes in the Megilla is the ‘[humor](mashal.html)’ of “*V’nahapoch hu*”, everything was turned upside down. But not only upside down, rather, whatever [Haman](esther.html) wanted to do against the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People was turned against him.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| [Haman](esther.html) chooses [Adar](feasts.html) 13 for the destruction of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. | [Esther](esther.html) uses [Adar](feasts.html) 13, the very same date, to see the destruction of our enemies, because the King’s decree cannot be annulled. |

The Maharal asks: "Why did [Esther](esther.html) decree that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) take their revenge on [Adar](feasts.html) 13, which was almost [nine](nine.html) months after the date of her writing the ordinances to reverse [Haman](esther.html)'s decree? Would it not have been wiser for her to have convened the date at the earliest possible [time](time.html)? Wasn't there a chance that someone else would find some way of tampering with this [new](new.html) royal [letter](letters.html) if they dallied so long before acting?"

The Maharal answers that the Megillah's [events](feasts.html) centered on hippuch, reversal, and hippuch could only occur if it took place on the same date as [Haman](esther.html)'s decree. It is thus quite clear that this particular [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people could not have been through any other medium but hippuch. On the very day of the very same month that the decree against Israel was to take place, the decree would be turned around for the good. But not prior to that date.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| Achashverosh’s party brings the [Jews](gen-jew.html) trouble. | Mordechai and [Esther](esther.html)’s party brings the solution. |

The Megillah begins with a feast. The feast at the beginning of the Megillah has a clear character of debauchery, greed, and passivity, while the feast at the end is a feast of joy, good, and benevolence. Here too there is a picture and its opposite. The observer can think there is no difference between them, but of course the second feast is completely reversed. In the [first](one.html) feast, the "I" and the satisfaction of his material [desires](needs.html) are at its center, whereas the second feast is characterized by true joy, the expansion of man toward another, "and the [new](new.html) that is transformed into a shield for joy and [mourning](mourning.html) for a good day, a [festival](festival.html) day.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| The gallows were built by [Haman](esther.html) to destroy Mordechai. | The gallows were built by [Haman](esther.html) ends up destroying [Haman](esther.html). |

[Haman](esther.html) builds his own Gallows….

Similarly, we meet [Haman](esther.html) when he comes to Achashverosh’s home to tell the king to hang Mordecai, and this very move to the king becomes an unprecedented step of honoring Mordecai and the humiliation of [Haman](esther.html) as [one](one.html). The wine feast, which could have been considered the culmination of affection for [Haman](esther.html), proved to be his breaking point. From this point on, his dizzying fall began, from the heights of [his majesty](yeshua.html) to the abyss of Saul. They did not help [Haman](esther.html) with his money and property, nor his respectable status. On the contrary, it was precisely these that brought his crushing defeat closer, and, with the will of [HaShem](hashem.html), became the rescue of Israel despite the sharp sword that was already placed on their necks.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| [Haman](esther.html) causes king Achashverosh to override his advisers and obtain Vashti’s death unilaterally. | King Achashverosh eschews his advisers and unilaterally execute [Haman](esther.html). |

[Haman](esther.html)’s [law](law.html), which [Haman](esther.html) formulated and enabled the king to sentence to death without the need for a judicial process, raised him. But ironically, he was also the cause of his crushing defeat. In the continuation of the scroll we read about [Haman](esther.html) falling and bending over Queen [Esther](esther.html). Achashverosh interpreted this as an attempt to perform a sexual act, and in the blink of an eye he exercised his [authority](authority.html) according to the same [law](law.html) that [Haman](esther.html) himself had formulated and ordered his death without trial.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| [Esther](esther.html) is selected to become the [idol](idolatry.html) worshipping king Achashverosh’s queen. This was the worst disaster that could happen to a married [Jewish](gen-jew.html) woman. | [Esther](esther.html), as queen, had the required access to the king, which allowed her to intercede for the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people and bring about their [redemption](redemption.html). |

[HaShem](hashem.html) forced [Esther](esther.html) to become the queen, against her will, in order that she would be put in this position for “such a [time](time.html) as this”. The solution was prepared years in advance of the problem that it was intended to turnaround. This [time](time.html) allowed [Esther](esther.html) to become firmly entrenched in Achashverosh’s [heart](body.html) and be prepared to act in a royal manner to provide the [redemption](redemption.html) for her people.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| [Haman](esther.html) advises that Vashti, the queen, be removed as queen. | Achashverosh replaces Vashti with [Esther](esther.html), the [new](new.html) queen. |

[Haman](esther.html) advises Achashverosh to remove Vashti from the throne because he wanted more power – and in the end, it was Queen [Esther](esther.html) who destroys him.

According to Chazal identification of M'muchan as [Haman](esther.html), the advisor who pushed for Vashti's execution, as [Haman](esther.html), it is fitting that [Haman](esther.html) fell by the same weakness he himself had exposed.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| 10,000 kikar of silver offered to Achashverosh to secure the destruction of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). | 10,000 kikar of silver, and all of [Haman](esther.html)’s wealth, is given to Mordechai after the [redemption](redemption.html) of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). |

[Haman](esther.html) [wants](needs.html) to pay 10,000 kikar of silver to “buy the [Jews](gen-jew.html)”, Achashverosh says ‘Keep the money, and do what you want with the [Jews](gen-jew.html)’, ultimately Mordechai is given [Haman](esther.html)’s fortune, and [household](househld.html), which then rebuilds the second [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html).[[21]](#footnote-21)

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| [Haman](esther.html) builds a very tall gallows to hang his enemy – Mordechai. | [Haman](esther.html)’s gallows is actually used to hang [Haman](esther.html) and his [ten](ten.html) sons who are Mordechai’s enemy. |

[Haman](esther.html), in his [desire](needs.html) to punish Mordechai for not bowing down to [Haman](esther.html), builds a gallows which is 50 amot high. It is huge. Before he can secure the king’s permission to hang Mordechai, he himself, along with his [ten](ten.html) sons, are hanged on this gallows. [Haman](esther.html) built his own gallows.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| [Haman](esther.html) plans a fantastic reward for himself. | The reward is given to [Haman](esther.html)’s enemy, Mordechai. [Haman](esther.html) is debased in the process. |

King Achashverosh asks [Haman](esther.html) how to reward a man that the king wishes to reward. [Haman](esther.html) goes in to great detail to describe the reward which he envisioned for himself. After he lays out all of the details, [Haman](esther.html) is commanded to give this reward to his enemy, Mordechai.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| The king’s signet ring seals the death warrant of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). | The king’s signet ring is used to [sign](signs.html) the death warrant of the enemies of the [Jews](gen-jew.html). |

The irrevocable decree of death and a counter-decree of life were both given from the same [authority](authority.html), the king’s signet ring. Since the terrible decree (to kill all [Jews](gen-jew.html)) was passed with a royal signet ring which cannot be refuted the only option was to send out another decree allowing the [Jews](gen-jew.html) to kill their enemies in return. For the only [time](time.html) in history, a royal allowance was given to obliterate all Anti Semites.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| [Haman](esther.html) was hung on the 16th of [Nisan](feasts.html). | [Jews](gen-jew.html) are fasting and remembering the [korban](korbanot.html) [omer](omer.html) on [Nisan](feasts.html) 16. |

[Haman](esther.html) was hung on the 16th of [Nisan](feasts.html). The representative of the [nation](nations.html) who denies any deviation from nature, was killed on the day when [Jews](gen-jew.html) put everything aside to bring the [korban](korbanot.html) [omer](omer.html), [two](two.html) quarts of freshly cut (even on [Shabbat](sabbath.html)) barley, to celebrate that there is no such thing as nature.

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| All [Jews](gen-jew.html), the enemies of [Haman](esther.html), are to be destroyed on [Adar](feasts.html) 13. [Haman](esther.html) chose this day very carefully. | All the enemies of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) are destroyed on [Adar](feasts.html) 13. |

R' Dessler notes several examples of the extreme precision with which [Haman](esther.html)'s plans are not merely thwarted, they are reversed (with extreme prejudice). [Haman](esther.html) plans to have all the [Jews](gen-jew.html) destroyed; BANG -- on that very day, the [Jews](gen-jew.html), in fact, destroy all their enemies. [Haman](esther.html) plans to hang Mordechai; BANG -- on that very day [Haman](esther.html) is forced to honor Mordechai. [Haman](esther.html) prepares the gallows on which Mordechai is to be hung; BANG -- [Haman](esther.html) is hung on that very gallows.

According to the Megillat [Esther](esther.html), “The very day on which the enemies of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) had expected to get them in their power, the opposite happened, and the [Jews](gen-jew.html) got their enemies in their power.”

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
| [Haman](esther.html) acts like a king and gets people to bow to him. | Mordechai, with the king’s permission, is dressed and acts like a king. Mordechai seemingly impersonates [Haman](esther.html). |

To overturn [Haman](esther.html)’s decree, it is necessary to cause the people to assume that the king Achashverosh sides with the [Jews](gen-jew.html), which he does. To accomplish this reversal, [HaShem](hashem.html) has Mordechai paraded through the streets of the capital dressed in the king’s clothes, riding the king’s horse, and being led by the king’s highest minister. This made a powerful impression on the people. They understood that king Achashverosh would never have permitted such a display – unless he fully supported Mordechai and wanted everyone to [know](daat.html) that he supported Mordechai. In this way, [HaShem](hashem.html) planted a psychological idea that the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were supposed to win, and if they did not, then bad things would happen to those who killed the [Jews](gen-jew.html).

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| **The Problem** | **The Solution** |
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The Maharal explains that turnaround had to be that way. [Haman](esther.html) was attempting the destroy Klal Israel, the eternal [nation](nations.html), the [nation](nations.html) whose existence is guaranteed and ensured by the Creator of the Universe Himself. Throw a projectile at an impenetrable and invincible barrier, that projectile will reverse direction and come directly back at you with the same force with which it was launched. (That's [known](daat.html) as Newton's [Third](three.html) [Law](law.html) to nerds of the west.) [HaShem](hashem.html) wanted Klal Israel to have absolute clarity on their mission and destiny, so he created a very powerful enemy and let him loose... specifically so the whole [world](worlds.html) could see his plans, all of his plans, reverse back on himself.

Not only did [Haman](esther.html)'s plans come back against him -- *he was the* [*one*](one.html) *who turned them around!* [Haman](esther.html) (who was also [known](daat.html) as M'muchan) suggested the plan to depose Vashti and which led to [Esther](esther.html) becoming queen. [Haman](esther.html) himself told the king how to honor [one](one.html) whom the king wishes to honor. [Haman](esther.html) himself prepared the gallows on which he would be hung. When [Haman](esther.html) sent his servants to find a plank 50 amot long, they opined that there was only [one](one.html) such plank in the whole land... it was the main support beam of [Haman](esther.html)'s palace![[22]](#footnote-22) [Haman](esther.html) ordered that his palace be dismantled and, just to be 100% sure, *he measured it length with his own* [*body*](body.html) *to confirm it was the correct length to hang its intended victim.* At that point the archangel [Gavriel](angels.html) exclaimed, "Golly gee willikers! So *that's* why we needed a 50 amah plank to be ready since the [six](six.html) days of [creation](bara.html)!"

What caused [Haman](esther.html)’s terrible ire to be roused to the point that he wanted to do away with all of the [Jews](gen-jew.html)? Of course, it was the fact that Mordechai refused to bow to him. Take note, though, of the following words of the pasuk: “And all the servants of the king that were stationed at the gate of the king would kneel and bow to [Haman](esther.html)…and Mordechai would not kneel and he would not bow (3:2).” It is clear from the pasuk that this requirement for everyone to bow to [Haman](esther.html) was only for those stationed at the King's gate, and not in all 127 countries under the dominion of Achashverosh. As such, had Mordechai not been at the King's gate, the [events](feasts.html) of [Purim](purim.html) would never have taken place! And what brought Mordechai to find himself daily at the gate of the king’s palace? [Esther](esther.html)! Because [Esther](esther.html) was in the palace, Mordechai frequented there to keep as much of an eye on her as possible. It emerges, then, that v’nahapoch hu: the health of [Esther](esther.html) being in the palace was itself what caused Mordechai to stand up to [Haman](esther.html)!

The [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people only came about through [Esther](esther.html)’s position, so it was a blessing in disguise that she became queen. (Also, the [Midrash](orallaw.html) tells us that she bore a son to Achashverosh called Daryovesh (AKA Darius) who eventually became king and allowed the rebuilding of the second [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html)).

In his sefer Pachad [Yitzchak](isaac.html), Rav Hutner develops a [teaching](teacher.html) of the Maharal into the true celebration of [Purim](purim.html). The Maharal notes that the Pasuk in Mishlei, He who digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone-it will return to him (Mishlei 26:27) is an illustration of the scientific principle of cause and effect. Or as Sir [Isaac](isaac.html) Newton stated in his [third](three.html) [law](law.html) of physics: for every action in the natural [world](worlds.html) there is an equal and opposite reaction. Explains the Maharal; if [one](one.html) digs a pit to cause harm to another, then in some way the perpetrator himself will fall into a pit. Furthermore, [one](one.html) who throws a stone at the innocent will find the stone in some other circumstance ricocheting and hitting him in turn. Expounding further, the Maharal writes that with this principle we can understand the [laws](law.html) of *conspiring witnesses*, which is brought down in sefer Devarim:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:19*** *and you shall do to him as he conspired to do to his fellow.*

The [law](law.html) that false testifiers are subjected to the exact punishment which they had plotted against their friend, is simply a case of cause and effect. The negative energy which [one](one.html) expends towards a friend will be directed in turn back upon the wrongdoer. This principle of reciprocity highlights an important idea. In life [one](one.html) can fall into the false belief that control of destiny is in the [hands](fourteen.html) of the individual. This is a mistake. Rather, the moment that [one](one.html) performs an action, the [consequences](conseq.html) are no longer in his or her own [hands](fourteen.html) but have hit the ‘wall’ of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s intervention in the [world](worlds.html). And that whether we want it or not, our actions both positively and negatively will always produce a reaction back upon ourselves.

Everything has a purpose, even evil. We may not want it, but it’s only against resistance and challenge that we grow. [Haman](esther.html)’s Ring, say Chazal, did more than all the Neviim, we may not like to admit it, but we reached, through [Haman](esther.html)’s decrees, the level of Torah acceptance! So, in retrospect, from [HaShem](hashem.html)’s perspective, the [Haman](esther.html) of this [world](worlds.html) was paradoxically the cause for an even greater good.

# Hiddenness

Hiddenness and revelation are at the very foundation of the Book of [Esther](esther.html) and the celebration of [*Purim*](purim.html). Indeed, [Esther](esther.html)’s [name](name.html) itself is from the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) root *s-t-r* meaning hidden. Furthermore, [Esther](esther.html) is not called a “Book” but is more precisely referred to as “The Scroll of [Esther](esther.html)” or *Megillat* [*Esther*](esther.html). Hidden in the word *megillah* is the root *g-l-h* that means “to reveal” and also “to [exile](galuyot.html).” *Megillat* [*Esther*](esther.html) could then be translated as “The Revealing of the Hidden” or, alternatively, “The Exiling of the Hidden.” Thus, the title of the story presages [one](one.html) of its central themes.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Remarkably and surprisingly hidden throughout the entire *Megillah*, is [HaShem](hashem.html). Not once is [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html) mentioned in the unrolling of this scroll.

While [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html) is absent from the unrolling of this scroll, I do not believe that [HaShem](hashem.html) is absent but rather that [HaShem](hashem.html) remains in hiding. The [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[24]](#footnote-24)asks, “Where is [Esther](esther.html) indicated in the *Torah*?

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:17*** *Then My anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My* [*face*](body.html) *from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so that they will say in that day: Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?**18 And I will surely hide My* [*face*](body.html) *in that day for all the evil which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.*

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) thus makes the [connection](connection.html) between [Esther](esther.html) and the hiding of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [face](body.html), an important motif that appears in the Torah and continues throughout biblical and post-biblical [Jewish](gen-jew.html) theology. The hiding of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [face](body.html) is the withholding of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s presence and blessing, it is a metaphor for the terrifying silence of [HaShem](hashem.html):

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 30:8*** *Thou hadst established,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, in Thy favour my mountain as a stronghold-- Thou didst hide Thy* [*face*](body.html)*; I was affrighted.*

In Megillat [Esther](esther.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) wears a mask to hide Himself. According to Chazal, the term *“*HaMelech*”*, “the King”, in the Megillah is also a reference to [HaShem](hashem.html), the King of the [world](worlds.html).[[25]](#footnote-25) Thus, we find [HaShem](hashem.html) wearing a mask disguising Himself as The King.

The message of Megillat [Esther](esther.html) is that even when [HaShem](hashem.html) is not visible to all and does not change nature, it does not mean his supervision over reality is not present. [HaShem](hashem.html) is present in daily life and in the history of the [world](worlds.html). Sometimes it is difficult to notice Divine Providence, but when we look back and see the coincidences that occurred as though by chance, we understand that someone has been directing the processes from above.

This is true of the history of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html), and it is true also regarding the individual who sometimes thinks his life is going along on its own, without Divine intervention. Success, failure, [experience](experience.html), opportunity, none of these are coincidences. Our lives are conducted and supervised by [HaShem](hashem.html), and we can recognize this mainly when we look back, and believe that also looking forward, it will be so.

# Drinking

The [body](body.html), after the [sin](sin.html), is to be elevated to the [spiritual](physical.html). The [body](body.html) [ate](eating.html) the fruit of the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil and crashed. Now we need to elevate the [body](body.html), using wine, to the [spiritual](physical.html). We need to use the source of the problem to become the solution. The concept of *V’nahapoch hu* allows us to turn the problem into the solution!

In Judaism wine[[26]](#footnote-26) is a central feature in all movement from [physical](physical.html) to [spiritual](physical.html). We use wine at occasions of connecting the [two](two.html): at a [wedding](wedding.html), where [two](two.html) [physical](physical.html) [bodies](body.html) will elevate their relationship to the [spiritual](physical.html); at a [circumcision](circumcz.html), where we begin the process of sanctifying the [body](body.html); at kiddush, the blessing sanctifying the [first](one.html) moments of [Shabbat](sabbath.html) where the mundane domain of the week meets the transcendence of [Shabbat](sabbath.html); [four](four.html) cups of wine at the [Passover](passover.html) [seder](haggada.html), where we celebrate [exile](galuyot.html)'s transition to [redemption](redemption.html), slavery to [freedom](freedom.html).

Wine powerfully represents the danger of the [physical](physical.html); if taken in excess it converts consciousness to unconsciousness, dehumanizes to the extent that the drinker becomes entirely part of the [physical](physical.html), nothing more than a mindless [body](body.html). And yet, used correctly, it has the capacity to open consciousness, to facilitate a state of elevation. The deeper sources note that although wine is a [physical](physical.html) substance it obeys the rules of the [spiritual](physical.html): all [physical](physical.html) things degrade and disintegrate with [time](time.html); this is the rule for all things in the material and biological [world](worlds.html) no matter how carefully those things are handled and nursed.

Conversely, things of the spirit improve with [time](time.html); wisdom deepens with age, even as the [body](body.html) of the sage sags, his wisdom gains. But unlike other [physical](physical.html) things, wine improves with age. Uniquely in the [world](worlds.html) of the material, wine reflects the quality of the deeper, the [secret](sod.html) hidden within the material (the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for wine has the same numerical value as the word for [secret](sod.html) - [sod](sod.html)).

Our Sages say that it is an obligation to become so drunk on [Purim](purim.html) that [one](one.html) does not [know](daat.html) the difference between “Cursed be [Haman](esther.html)” and “Blessed be Mordechai.” Since the miracle permeated through to the most material levels, its commemoration also involves the [body](body.html) as well as the soul.

This is the rationale behind our drinking. In our sober state we are not able to fully comprehend the irony of [events](feasts.html). So, we drink! When a person is intoxicated he is able to be merry about his sorrows. For [one](one.html) day a year we bring ourselves to a place where it is possible to see the reality of our sorrows; that they are our [salvation](salvation.html)! For this same reason we dress up, we are showing that things are not the way they seem on the outside

The expression, v’nahapoch hu, it was turned about, reminds us that [HaShem](hashem.html) can bring about a stunning reversal of a [nation](nations.html)'s destiny in the blink of an eye.

On [Purim](purim.html), we are commanded to drink wine, so much wine that we can no longer differentiate between "cursed be [Haman](esther.html)" and "blessed be Mordechai".[[27]](#footnote-27) Some say that it means that you should drink enough that you should get tired and fall [asleep](mashal.html), and when you’re [asleep](mashal.html) you don’t [know](daat.html) the difference between "cursed be [Haman](esther.html)" and "blessed be Mordechai", because when you are [asleep](mashal.html) [HaShem](hashem.html) continues to carry out His plan.

The requirement is not to drink to the point where [one](one.html) can no longer distinguish between [Haman](esther.html) and Mordechai, between evil and good; rather, it is that [one](one.html) must drink until [one](one.html) cannot distinguish between “Cursed be [Haman](esther.html),” the destruction of evil, and “Blessed be Mordechai,” the reward of the righteous. Both the destruction of evil and the enhancement of the good shift the moral balance of the [world](worlds.html) towards the side of the good. Thus, it is not at all a trivial distinction that the [Talmud](orallaw.html) is pointing to. Literally, we are being commanded to [KNOW](daat.html) that there is no difference between ‘Cursed be [Haman](esther.html)’ and ‘Blessed be Mordechai’. Because [HaShem](hashem.html) uses the concept of v’nahapoch hu, we [KNOW](daat.html) that both [Haman](esther.html) and Mordechai are advancing [HaShem](hashem.html)’s plan and contributing to the Oneness of [HaShem](hashem.html). They are both working for our benefit. Wine allows us to literally see the v’nahapoch hu. [Purim](purim.html) is the only day when we can see that both ‘Cursed be [Haman](esther.html)’ and ‘Blessed be Mordechai’[[28]](#footnote-28) are truly the same and are both beneficial. On [Purim](purim.html), we rise above the limited reach of our understanding, and for a brief moment we perceive that "blessed be Mordechai" and its *hippuch/its reversal*, "cursed be [Haman](esther.html)," are really [one](one.html) and the same. [Two](two.html) paths to [one](one.html) destination!

On [Purim](purim.html), [physical](physical.html) and [spiritual](physical.html) reality unite, free will and Divine Providence merge and human history is revealed as identical to [HaShem](hashem.html)'s plan for humanity. The fact that this reality is at times hard to comprehend only means we have to work harder to find the ultimate unity that exists in the [world](worlds.html). The drinking on [Purim](purim.html) helps us pull back the normative curtain of illusionary reality and reveals [HaShem](hashem.html)'s Providence in all places and at all times, even those occurrences we initially perceive as "evil." But this takes getting to a consciousness where all becomes [known](daat.html) within the unknowable, **“Until** [**one**](one.html) **Cannot Distinguish” -** **ad d'lo yada**.

# Costumes and Masks[[29]](#footnote-29)

Whydo we wear costumes and masks on [Purim](purim.html)?

**On** [**Purim**](purim.html) **we celebrate by wearing masks, because we remind ourselves that things are seldom the way they seem on the outside.** The concept of *V’nahapoch hu* means that no matter what we see on the outside, on the inside we find only [HaShem](hashem.html)’s plan and His Oneness.

When we meet someone on the street we do not get to see who they really are. Rather we get to see an image that they project. The image is a projection of what they want us to [know](daat.html) about them. In most cases, what we can discern has very little to do with who, and what, they really are. This is the reality of our [world](worlds.html). Most people are not transparent, they are not beautiful in the Torah sense.[[30]](#footnote-30) Most people are intensely private and do not want people to [know](daat.html) about their true [desires](needs.html). They do not want us to [know](daat.html) *who* they really are. They want us to [know](daat.html) what they *think* we want to [know](daat.html). To put it another way, we wear a costume and a mask most of the [time](time.html). Only on very rare occasions does the mask come off. Only rarely do we reveal who we *really* are.

[Esther](esther.html) hides her identity as a [Jew](gen-jew.html) from the King when she is crowned Queen of his [world](worlds.html)-wide kingdom. [Esther](esther.html), so to [speak](mashal.html), is wearing a mask. When her people are in peril, she finds the courage to go before the king and invite him and [Haman](esther.html) to her banquet. Here is the part of the story where [Esther](esther.html) sets up the *nahafoch hu* for [Haman](esther.html), revealing that she is a [Jew](gen-jew.html) and [Haman](esther.html)’s evil intentions to annihilate her people.

When [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon was created he wore a ‘garment’ of light. His [spiritual](physical.html) nature was incandescent and was seen as light emanating from a wisp of a [body](body.html).

Moshe’s [face](body.html) had to be covered after spending [time](time.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html) on the mountain because it glowed.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 34:29*** *And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount* [*Sinai*](stages.html) *with the* [*two*](two.html) *tables of the testimony in Moses'* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, when he came down from the mount, that Moses* [*knew*](daat.html) *not that the skin of his* [*face*](body.html) *sent forth beams while He talked with him.* ***30*** *And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his* [*face*](body.html) *sent forth beams; and they were afraid to come nigh him.*

After [Adam](adam.html) sinned, [HaShem](hashem.html) made them garments of skins.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:21*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *made for* [*Adam*](adam.html) *and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.*

In the same manner as Moshe, though significantly brighter, [Adam](adam.html) wore a ‘garment’ of light. The garments of the [world](worlds.html), the covering of [Adam](adam.html) before he sinned were of אוֹר *ohr* (with an *aleph*) - “light”. After the [sin](sin.html), the covering became עוֹר *or* (with an *ayin*) - “skin”. The root *or (aleph)* has the silent *“aleph”*, it is light, [spiritual](physical.html), all revelation.[[31]](#footnote-31) The root *ohr (ayin)* spells not only skin but also *iver* – *blind* (no light) as well. The covering which revealed has become a covering which obstructs.

The problem must always be made the solution. *V’nahapoch hu* means we turn the problem into its solution. Use the negative force against itself. Don’t wear “[fig](bethphag.html) leafs” to cover your skin. Use skins to cover your skin.

*Beged* (*בגד*)*,[[32]](#footnote-32)* the word for a garment (and costume), the outer clothing of the invisible core. But amazingly, wonderfully, a “garment”, is also the word for “treachery”.[[33]](#footnote-33)

*Lebush* (לבוש): A garment that is not intended for everyday, every-person wear, but rather for special occasions or special people.[[34]](#footnote-34) Lebush also spells labush, which means ‘not to be ashamed’.

*Meil* (מְעִיל): An outer garment. Meil also means treachery- something sanctified which is being used for the profane.

The garments may lie, they may cover an identity instead of revealing it, that is their nature. A garment conceals our [body](body.html), but it reveals our dignity. Our [bodies](body.html) are no longer transparent. Now we wear a ‘hide’ of skin. This ‘hide’ hides who we really are. In a manner of [speaking](mashal.html), we are constantly wearing a costume and a mask to conceal who and what we really are.

On [Purim](purim.html) we betray the clothing as well. We use clothing and masks to show that we normally conceal who we are with a costume and a mask. This allows us to hide, in a hide, in plain sight.

The miracle of [Purim](purim.html) was a series of hidden miracles and hidden identities. [Esther](esther.html) concealed her [Jewish](gen-jew.html) identity. Mordechai’s identity as the [one](one.html) who saved the king’s life remained hidden from the king until the right [time](time.html). [HaShem](hashem.html), too, is hidden, as His [name](name.html) is not mentioned in the megillah. Therefore, we hide our identity by getting dressed up on [Purim](purim.html).

When [Haman](esther.html)’s decree of genocide was issued, many [Jews](gen-jew.html) dressed up as [gentiles](gen-jew.html) to conceal their identity. When the decree was reversed and the [Jews](gen-jew.html) were permitted to [attack](attacks.html) their enemies, the non-[Jews](gen-jew.html) dressed as [Jews](gen-jew.html) to [save](salvation.html) themselves. In remembrance of this miracle we change our clothes on [Purim](purim.html). Mordechai wore different kinds of clothing (bigdei malchut) when he paraded through the streets of Shushan. We change our clothing to commemorate this miracle.

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) asks “Where do we see a hint to [Esther](esther.html) in the Torah?” it answers with a verse from Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:18 “*v’Anochi haster Astir Panai*” (“and I will surely hide My [Face](body.html)”). The word “[Esther](esther.html)” means “hidden”.

[Jews](gen-jew.html) [know](daat.html) that [HaShem](hashem.html) may often seem to hide. But even in the worst of times, if we look carefully, we discover that He can be found. Another reason we wear masks on [Purim](purim.html) is to indicate that we, too, often hide our real selves. Even when we are cringing, ashamed of our misdeeds, ashamed of our cowardice, hiding behind our masks, we yearn to find [HaShem](hashem.html) and be close to Him. We want to reveal our true selves to Him. The mask creates the illu­sion that it is possible to hide. Even the [first](one.html) man, [Adam](adam.html), told [HaShem](hashem.html), “I heard Your Voice while 1 was in the garden, but I convinced myself that it is possible to hide”.

Even when [HaShem](hashem.html) appears to wear a mask, does that mean that He is distant? No. If you see someone wearing a mask, he is obviously near. If you hear his voice, if you discover his pres­ence, you [know](daat.html) he is near. [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) us to seek Him, to [know](daat.html) His [name](name.html), to [know](daat.html) Him through His love, His deeds, His Torah, His [Creation](bara.html). The [Purim](purim.html) mask is an illusion. In truth, [HaShem](hashem.html) is very near.

Within the Megillah there are a [number](nchart.html) of “dressings up”. Vashti remains attached to her attire despite the demands of Achashverosh. [Esther](esther.html) doesn’t reveal her people, no [one](one.html) [knew](daat.html) where she was from nor realized she was [Jewish](gen-jew.html). People who saw her thought she was from their [nation](nations.html). Mordechai wore sackcloth in [mourning](mourning.html) for his people and was later dressed in the clothes of the king.

The [Talmud](orallaw.html) writes that just as the [Jews](gen-jew.html) at the [time](time.html) pretended to be serving other HaShems, [HaShem](hashem.html) pretended that He was going to destroy the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [nation](nations.html), and in the end He did not.[[35]](#footnote-35) Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Shapiro, [known](daat.html) as the Bnai Yissachar, writes that this is the reason we pretend to be someone else on [Purim](purim.html), since both the [Jews](gen-jew.html)’ and [HaShem](hashem.html)’s actions were masked by other intentions.[[36]](#footnote-36)

[Purim](purim.html) is the [time](time.html) of masks; [HaShem](hashem.html) has gone into hiding in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history, He has donned a mask. But He is not distant; if [one](one.html) is distant he does not need a mask to avoid being identified, the distance achieves that. No, a mask is necessary when [one](one.html) is very close and yet wishes to remain hidden.

The [world](worlds.html) is His mask; nature hides His Presence. But this same [world](worlds.html), this same nature, [needs](needs.html) only to be peeled back to reveal its Source. The ordeal is doubt; all may appear coincidental, and the [Amalek](amalek.html) ideology may be found in the culture of today – nothing has absolute meaning or value, all is accident. The mask is heavy and convincing. But that should not deter us from our function, the function of revealing the Reality behind the mask.

[One](one.html) of the most renowned aspects of the [Purim](purim.html) celebration is masquerading. Children, and even adults, don masks and wear costumes.

What is the source of this custom? On a very basic level, it is an expression of happiness and [Purim](purim.html) is a day when our joy is given full expression. Its significance, however, is historically related to the [Purim](purim.html) miracle. Why was [Esther](esther.html) successful? Because she concealed her identity and Achashverosh, the Persian king, did not [know](daat.html) that she was [Jewish](gen-jew.html) until it became crucially important for him to [know](daat.html) this.

On a deeper level, the concept of concealment is intrinsically related to the mystical core of [Purim](purim.html). Our Sages tell us: Where is there an allusion to the story of [Esther](esther.html) in the Torah?[[37]](#footnote-37) The phrase *hastier astir*, “I will conceal”. And indeed, Godliness is concealed throughout the story of [Purim](purim.html).

Achashverosh wore the [High Priest](priests.html)’s garments at his party, although he did not deserve to wear such garments. In addition, when Achashverosh asked [Haman](esther.html) how to honor someone, he replied that the person should be dressed in royal clothing. [Haman](esther.html) thought he would be that man, and that he would wear garments which he did not deserve. We wear costumes on [Purim](purim.html) to poke fun at both Achashverosh and [Haman](esther.html) who aspired to clothing which was above their station. We wear costumes that do not befit us, but throughout the year we only wear clothing that befits us.

The whole point of wearing costumes on [Purim](purim.html) is to reveal our Yetzer HaRa, to mock how the rest of the year we pretend to be what we are not. [Purim](purim.html) is the great exposure of the hidden Yetzer HaRa, and more importantly, of the hidden [hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) that shapes destiny and directs the affairs of man, from *behind* the scenes.

Those who disguise themselves eventually want to be discovered. So is our Father in [heaven](heaven.html), with all the concealment and darkness, he turns things around, conducts the orchestra, watches over all of us under close and loving supervision, and he just waits for us to discover him and notice that he is there ...

# [Laughter](mashal.html)[[38]](#footnote-38)

[Laughter](mashal.html) is a response to hippuch.

According to the Sefer Yetzirah the ‘sense’ connected with [Adar](feasts.html) is [laughter](mashal.html) and merriment. There are [two](two.html) kinds of [laughter](mashal.html). Nervous [laughter](mashal.html) expresses the feeling that life is meaningless or alienating. This reinforces depression and limited perception. Holy [laughter](mashal.html), on the other [hand](fourteen.html), expresses the recognition that everything paradoxically makes sense. Both tragedy and comedy can pull the rug out from under our mind. When we respond to life with holy [laughter](mashal.html), we can joyful release ourselves from limitation.

The word s’chok ([laughter](mashal.html)) has a numerical value of 414, the same as the term Or Ein Sof, ‘Infinite Light.’ This tells us that through holy [laughter](mashal.html) a person can rise above the [world](worlds.html) of form and perceive the Light of the Infinite [One](one.html).

[Laughter](mashal.html) comes from the revelation that in a split second, our situation can change. Every [experience](experience.html) of sudden and unexpected change of [events](feasts.html), however, gives us a taste of the ultimate transformation of bad to good that will happen in the [future](future.html). This [experience](experience.html) reminds us that at any moment everything can turn upside down and everything can finally make sense. It is this feeling that triggers [laughter](mashal.html) in the [body](body.html) and happiness in the soul of each and every [one](one.html) of us who is looking forward to the day of the final revelation.

[Purim](purim.html) is the power to turn the [world](worlds.html) upside down through [laughter](mashal.html).

Our sages tell us that when the month of [Adar](feasts.html)[[39]](#footnote-39) (the month when we celebrate [Purim](purim.html)) begins, we must increase our happiness,[[40]](#footnote-40) but they don’t tell us to increase our [laughter](mashal.html).[[41]](#footnote-41) Why? [Laughter](mashal.html) is the revealed state of happiness, and we cannot fully [laugh](mashal.html) until [Mashiach](mashiach.html)[[42]](#footnote-42) comes.[[43]](#footnote-43) Then we will have the full revelation, the full understanding of why hardships happened.[[44]](#footnote-44)

[Laughter](mashal.html) is a function of the [daat](daat.html). We respond with [laughter](mashal.html) to an [event](feasts.html), or sequence of [events](feasts.html), which have a certain form, and then this form reverses itself. The sharper the reversal, the sharper we [laugh](mashal.html). The sudden juxtaposition of [two](two.html) polar opposites causes us to [laugh](mashal.html). When [one](one.html) thing becomes its radical opposite, that’s what provokes [laughter](mashal.html). [Laughter](mashal.html) is a response to the unexpected. [Laughter](mashal.html) is the reaction of humans when the confines of reason have been broken. We [laugh](mashal.html) occasionally out of extreme fear or out of extreme joy.

Let us look deeper. In the [spiritual](physical.html) path, what is the change which generates the exhilaration of [spiritual](physical.html) [laughter](mashal.html)? It is the change from ordeal to [redemption](redemption.html), and more specifically, from intense crisis to seemingly impossible [redemption](redemption.html). When crisis leaves no option but total despair and at that point deliverance occurs, [laughter](mashal.html) is the result.

[**Laughter**](mashal.html) **is the** [**experience**](experience.html) **of the soul to the transition from this** [**world**](worlds.html) **to the next. Death, from the** [**spiritual**](physical.html) **perspective, is the funniest** [**experience**](experience.html) **imaginable.[[45]](#footnote-45)**

This [world](worlds.html) is the exact opposite of the next [world](worlds.html). In this [world](worlds.html) it seems that everything is headed for decay and death. When we suddenly transition to the next [world](worlds.html), we see that it is not like that at all.

The irony that the tables turned on [Haman](esther.html) and that [Haman](esther.html) ended up on the very gallows he constructed for Mordechai is downright hysterical. [It’s tantamount to a terrorist trying to open [fire](fire.html) on a group of innocent [Jews](gen-jew.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) forbid, but the idiot has the gun turned the wrong way and blows off his own [head](body.html).] The turnabout of [Purim](purim.html) and its becoming a day of [salvation](salvation.html) and national victory is the greatest possible irony.

When [one](one.html) wears a mask, it makes us [laugh](mashal.html) because when the person takes off his mask we realize, “Oh, it’s only you!” In the [events](feasts.html) leading up to [Purim](purim.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) wore a mask, as it were. It was only when the miracle was complete that we were able to realize that the [hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) was orchestrating the [events](feasts.html) all along. [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [Name](name.html) is not overtly mentioned in the Megillah, but His [Hand](fourteen.html) is clearly present to any discerning individual. That too is part of the irony of the [holiday](festival.html) of [Purim](purim.html).

[Purim](purim.html) is a glimpse into the [future](future.html). It is a day of [laughter](mashal.html) in the same vein as the [future](future.html) [redemption](redemption.html) will be. A [time](time.html) when irony will become clear, that everything that occurred and occurs was only for the sake of Klal Israel.

Chazal tell us that when [Mashiach](mashiach.html) comes there will be an atmosphere of [laughter](mashal.html). This [laughter](mashal.html) will be the result of us realizing how all our worries & suffering were for the good... it will be ridiculous how all our pain, in reality, was a blessing!

[redemption](redemption.html) is not simply the ending of the pain of ordeal, the release and relief felt on waking from terror. On the contrary, the ordeal itself, the suffering itself, becomes the [redemption](redemption.html). This must be understood. Everything [HaShem](hashem.html) does is good, not just the end result. In the indescribable emotions the brothers must have felt when they realized they were facing [Joseph](joseph.html) was the understanding that what they had been through was essential, life-saving. They could appreciate every detail of the torment they had experienced as intrinsic to their happiness now, for without it they would not have achieved perfection. Now, in retrospect, they would not [sacrifice](korbanot.html) [one](one.html) moment of their previous suffering! In fact, they would savor and cherish each of those moments for the rest of their lives. **The ultimate irony is that when the truth is revealed, the problem is the solution…**

That is the real joy of [redemption](redemption.html), the realization that the ordeal and its resolution are in fact both the [redemption](redemption.html). The ultimate [humor](mashal.html), the ultimate irony is that when the truth is revealed, the problem is the solution. Ordeals remain ordeals, and often we are no more intelligible for this [knowledge](knowledge.html) at all; yet knowing that these trials are the substance of ultimate reality, that this suffering will be a source of [one](one.html)'s happiness, is exactly the deep source of strength that [one](one.html) [needs](needs.html).

The second element we note is this. We said that the [experience](experience.html) of moving from crisis to [redemption](redemption.html) causes [laughter](mashal.html). The juxtaposition of such extremes, so suddenly, is the root of [spiritual](physical.html) [laughter](mashal.html) and that is the meaning of: "*Then our* [*mouths*](body.html) *will be filled with* [*laughter*](mashal.html)"[[46]](#footnote-46) and: "*She laughs at the last day*".[[47]](#footnote-47) However when [Joseph](joseph.html) revealed himself to his brothers, it does not state that they laughed. Quite the contrary, their shock was extreme. Let us understand this.

When someone goes through a sudden reversal of state - or to put it in extreme terms when the practical joke is played - the [humor](mashal.html) of the situation is obvious, *but only to the onlookers.* The [one](one.html) who is experiencing this sudden change does not see the [humor](mashal.html) at all. The shock of being forced to admit, of being brought [face](body.html) to [face](body.html) with [one](one.html)'s false image, [one](one.html)'s dearly-held but wrong convictions, [one](one.html)'s imperfect personality structure, is no laughing matter. And if those brothers, men of consummate [spiritual](physical.html) greatness who had just now corrected their personal error, were shocked at the revelation of truth - how will we feel? **When this** [**world**](worlds.html) **is turned upside-down at the** [**redemption**](redemption.html)**, the joke will be on those who must themselves be turned upside-down…**

We are [taught](teacher.html) that at the [time](time.html) of [Purim](purim.html) the [world](worlds.html) was *nahafoch hu*, upside down, evil was ascendant and good was declining. But [one](one.html) of the true messages of the story is that just when the [world](worlds.html) seems to be the most upside down, the most backwards, the most confusing, [HaShem](hashem.html) reveals His [Hand](fourteen.html) intervening behind the scenes and turns it right-side up again. *It’s at the moment of greatest confusion that He can bring the greatest clarity*.

When this [world](worlds.html) is turned upside-down at the [redemption](redemption.html), the joke will be on those who must themselves be turned upside-down. [Jewish](gen-jew.html) living therefore, is an attempt to live in opposition to the secular values of the [world](worlds.html) - if you like, to live upside-down *here*. When that final and massive inversion occurs, we would like to find ourselves already upright and able to witness the correction of values without needing the shock of experiencing it in our flesh.

The [body](body.html) part corresponding to [Adar](feasts.html) is the [spleen](body.html). According to the [Talmud](orallaw.html), this organ is connected with [laughter](mashal.html). The [Zohar](orallaw.html), on the other [hand](fourteen.html), suggests that the [spleen](body.html) is connected with depression. Reb Tzadok seems to reconcile these ideas: “Shallow [laughter](mashal.html) brings about depression.” It’s interesting to note that many professional comedians have suffered from depression.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Deep, pure [laughter](mashal.html) comes through yirah, ‘awe.’ A surprising or incongruous shift in perception can produce a subtle sense of divine awe, a stopping of the mind…and perhaps a healthier [spleen](body.html).

[Laughter](mashal.html) makes an appearance in the [psalms](psalms1.html) of King David. There, in [Psalm](psalms1.html) 126, he prophecies about what's going to happen when the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) arrives. He tells us, [first](one.html) of all, what our own reaction is going to be. We'll be like dreamers, he says. Everything we went through for the last [six](six.html) thousand years will blow away like leaves in the wind. It will be like it didn't happen. Then, our [mouths](body.html) will be full of smiles and [laughter](mashal.html). Why? Because of the "Ha-Ha" reaction. [Two](two.html) incompatible pieces of information come together: [one](one.html) being that we suffered like crazy for thousands of years, and [two](two.html), that [HaShem](hashem.html) was really there the whole [time](time.html). But, this [time](time.html), the [two](two.html) pieces of information stick together. We become aware of why all this had to take place. And in the end, we smile.

# Hamantaschen[[49]](#footnote-49)

Why are Hamantaschen [eaten](eating.html) on [Purim](purim.html)?

[One](one.html) of the main themes of [Purim](purim.html) is that of *V’nahapoch hu*, the “turnabout.” The story represents not only [salvation](salvation.html) from our enemies, but a complete reversal and interchanging of situations for the parties involved. The [Jews](gen-jew.html) switched from being completely dominated by their enemies to completely dominating them. There are many avenues through which [HaShem](hashem.html) could have caused His plan to come about. On [Purim](purim.html), [HaShem](hashem.html) used [Haman](esther.html), the very person who desired to destroy [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people, to actually bring about their [salvation](salvation.html). [Haman](esther.html)’s decree to annihilate the [Jews](gen-jew.html) caused a massive teshuva movement and recommitment to the Torah; culminating in the hanging of [Haman](esther.html) on the same gallows he had built to execute Mordechai. We [eat](eating.html) Hamantaschen on [Purim](purim.html), a sweet cookie named after the bitter [Haman](esther.html), to symbolize the *V’nahapoch hu* of [Haman](esther.html) and his evil actions turning into the source of sweetness and nourishment for [Jewish](gen-jew.html) survival.[[50]](#footnote-50)

Hamantaschen are [eaten](eating.html) in remembrance of the great hidden miracle of [Purim](purim.html). A hamantasch is essentially a cookie whose filling is hidden inside the dough, just as the miracle of [Purim](purim.html) was hidden under the guise of nature. Until the destruction of the [First](one.html) Holy [Temple](temple.html), which occurred shortly before the [time](time.html) of [Purim](purim.html), the [Jews](gen-jew.html) regularly saw open, supernatural miracles. However, with the destruction began a period that lasts until today, where [HaShem](hashem.html) operates in a behind-the-scenes fashion, and His [hand](fourteen.html) is not so apparent in daily [events](feasts.html). The [Purim](purim.html) story was the [first](one.html) [time](time.html) the [Jews](gen-jew.html) realized that the absence of overt miracles did not mean that [HaShem](hashem.html) had abandoned them. Instead, they realized that [HaShem](hashem.html) had a [new](new.html) modus operandi, as they understood how the [Purim](purim.html) miracle was concealed and hidden within nature. Although an observer at the [time](time.html) might misinterpret the [events](feasts.html) as normal and natural political processes, every step of the [Purim](purim.html) story was directed by the [hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html).[[51]](#footnote-51)

# The Yetzer HaRa[[52]](#footnote-52)

The [body](body.html), after the [sin](sin.html), is to be elevated to the [spiritual](physical.html). The [body](body.html) [ate](eating.html) the fruit of the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil and crashed. The Yetzer HaRa, which used to be external to us, visually described as a serpent, is now inside us. That is why we refer to the Yetzer HaRa in the second person.[[53]](#footnote-53) Our goal with *V’nahapoch hu* is to turn the problem into the solution! By doing so, we imitate [HaShem](hashem.html).

Part of the *V’nahapoch hu* is when we use the Yetzer HaRa to get married and to sanctify [sex](marriageact.html) rather than carousing like an animal. We use the Yetzer HaRa to have children and to build our house. In other words, we harness the Yetzer HaRa to perform [mitzvot](cmds613.html) rather than allowing it to degrade us into [sin](sin.html).

The Masters of Mussar explain that if it wasn’t for the Yetzer HaRa, man wouldn’t [desire](needs.html) anything in this [world](worlds.html). He wouldn’t marry, build a home, or raise a family. A [Jew](gen-jew.html)’s mission is to take [physicality](physical.html) and elevate it for [HaShem](hashem.html). In that sense the Yetzer HaRa works as a springboard for greater good and that is why Chazal deemed it above the Yetzer Tov.

The Michtav M’Eliyahu[[54]](#footnote-54) delineates some of the wily tactics of the Yetzer HaRa. The [first](one.html) is chiddush.[[55]](#footnote-55) It always seek a [new](new.html) approach. Our modern version of the Yetzer HaRa is technology and the ease with which a person can hide the darkest [sins](sin.html) in his shirt pocket. How do we combat this? Gearing ourselves with as much Torah [study](study.html) and [mitzvot](cmds613.html)[[56]](#footnote-56) as possible is a sure-[fire](fire.html) way to defend ourselves against our greatest foe.

Another strategy the Yetzer HaRa uses is repetition and persistence. It takes no vacation except [Yom Kippur](kippur.html). On that holy day, the true soul, the part of ourselves that is Divine-like, emerges. But the rest of the year, you can be victorious sometimes, but there’s always a risk of reverting back to old ways. The Yetzer HaRa cannot be eradicated unless you control it. This can mean saying no to a high paying job because you have to work [Shabbat](sabbath.html).[[57]](#footnote-57) It can means not working the land during [shmita](shmita.html)[[58]](#footnote-58) and watching [six](six.html) years of work wither away. It’s reigning in your temper when you want to lash out, resisting the urge to gossip when you want to talk, and being honest even when it’s difficult, because you’re bending your will to [HaShem](hashem.html) not to the Yetzer HaRa.

Taking on an extra [mitzva](cmds613.html) or another few minutes of Torah [study](study.html) weakens our Yetzer HaRa. Every sincere effort in the right direction is [one](one.html) step closer on the path to [atonement](atonemen.html) and repentance.

The idea of ignoring external actions and looking at what really lies behind them is the whole reason for costumes at [Purim](purim.html) [time](time.html). Just as the [hand](fourteen.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) was concealed behind the mask of nature in the days of [Esther](esther.html) and Mordechai, so also is our Yetzer HaRa concealed from the [world](worlds.html). We wear a Yetzer HaTov[[59]](#footnote-59) mask and pretend that the yetzer hara does not exist. [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) us to harness the Yetzer HaRa for beneficial purposes. He [wants](needs.html) us to be driven by the yetzer hara to get married, but to control lust and to use its power to build a family and to build the [world](worlds.html). The [world](worlds.html) [needs](needs.html) the Yetzer HaRa. Our job is to control it and not let it control us. We must wear it as a costume where everyone can see that we are in control of this outer mask. On [Purim](purim.html) we show that the Yetzer HaRa is only skin deep and that we are in control of this powerful urge, in order to do the will of [HaShem](hashem.html).

To resolve these seeming contradictions, we must understand the Torahs view of challenge. Mesilat Yesharim[[60]](#footnote-60) describes life as [one](one.html) of strug­gle. [HaShem](hashem.html) put the neshama[[61]](#footnote-61) into a [physical](physical.html) [body](body.html) in order to earn [Olam Haba](futures.html) through its efforts to overcome the yetzer hara. It is this struggle that elevates a person and enables him to reach the ultimate goal of achieving the [World](futures.html) to Come.

The joy of the [olam haba](futures.html) will be enjoying the Yetzer HaRa when it is revealed to be for our benefit. True *v’nahapoch hu.*

# [Tikkun](tikkun.html)[[62]](#footnote-62)

*V’nahapoch hu* sees it ultimate fulfillment in a [tikkun](tikkun.html), a correction. Mordechai, [Esther](esther.html), and [Haman](esther.html) each had a opportunity to do a [tikkun](tikkun.html) for the [sin](sin.html) of [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon. This [tikkun](tikkun.html) is hinted in the [gemara](orallaw.html).

We [know](daat.html) that at the beginning of a thing, all of the energy of [creation](bara.html) comes together to form that thing. From there on, everything is just maintenance. This means that if we can go back to where a word is [first](one.html) used in the Torah, we can see its beginning. We can see the essence of the word by examining the context of its conception or genesis.

Since Torah is literally the blueprint for the [world](worlds.html), the place where a word is [first](one.html) found in the Torah is where that thing is created. This helps us to understand what [HaShem](hashem.html) is trying to accomplish in His [world](worlds.html).

***Chullin 139b*** *Where is* [*Haman*](esther.html) *indicated in the Torah? — In the verse: Is it [hamin] from the tree?[[63]](#footnote-63) Where is* [*Esther*](esther.html) *indicated in the Torah? — [In the verse,] And I will surely hide [asthir] my* [*face*](body.html)*.[[64]](#footnote-64) Where is Mordecai indicated in the Torah? — In the verse: Flowing myrrh,[[65]](#footnote-65) which the Targum renders as mira dakia.[[66]](#footnote-66)*

## Where can we find an allusion to [Haman](esther.html)?

*(Rashi: the account of* [*Haman*](esther.html)*.)* As it says [when [HaShem](hashem.html) addresses [Adam](adam.html) after the [sin](sin.html)], “Did [you [eat](eating.html)] of [*ha-min*, identical in spelling to the [name](name.html) [Haman](esther.html)] the tree?” (Genesis 3:11) *(Rashi: -alluding to* [*Haman*](esther.html)*’s being hanged on a tree.)*

The [Talmud](orallaw.html)[[67]](#footnote-67) offers as the origin of the [name](name.html) [*Haman*](esther.html) the verse in Bereshit that refers to [Adam](adam.html)’s [sin](sin.html): *Hamin HaEtz hazeh* (“from this tree”?).

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:11*** *And he said, Who told thee that thou [wast] naked? Hast thou* [*eaten*](eating.html) *of the tree* (Hamin HaEtz hazeh)*, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not* [*eat*](eating.html)*?*

## Where is Mordechai alluded to in the Torah?

*(Rashi: the greatness of Mordechai.)* As it says, “Pure myhrr”,[[68]](#footnote-68) which translates [into Aramaic, Onkelos] *mara dachia* [the consonants of which spell Mordechai]. *(Rashi: The pure myhrr is referred to in this verse as ‘the* [*head*](body.html) *of all spices.’ The righteous Men of the Great Assembly are compared to fragrant spices, and their* [*head*](body.html)*-leader-is Mordechai.)*

Where is it that we find an allusion to Mordechai's [name](name.html)? The [Gemara](orallaw.html) says we find it in an obscure verse having to do with the preparation of the implements of the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) - of the [Temple](temple.html). Those implements were prepared through the application of Shemen Hamishcha - special anointing oil was poured over these implements and took them from the role of mundane to holy, made them into holy implements belonging to [HaShem](hashem.html), as it were. And there were very strict rules about the Shemen Hamishcha. You weren't allowed to make it for private use, it was a very restricted kind of thing. If you anointed anything with Shemen Hamishcha which wasn't for [HaShem](hashem.html)'s use, so that was a terrible crime and if you violated the sanctity of the Shemen Hamishcha - of this anointing oil, by using it for any other purpose, that was a great crime too.

Mordechai, his allusion comes from something as strange as this holy anointing oil. Think about Mordechai's role in these tree of [knowledge](thetree.html) stories. Mordechai is actually the only person who plays a role in both stories. Remember there were [two](two.html) competing views of the tree of [knowledge](thetree.html); [one](one.html) in which the main protagonist were Zeresh and [Haman](esther.html), the other in which the main protagonists were [Esther](esther.html) and the king, they were playing the roles of [Adam](adam.html) and Eve respectively.

But in each story let's talk about the forbidden fruit. What was the forbidden fruit in the story of Zeresh and [Haman](esther.html)? The [one](one.html) thing that [Haman](esther.html) couldn't have was Mordechai, Mordechai was the forbidden fruit. Who was the commander about forbidden fruit in story [number](nchart.html) 2? Who [commands](cmds613.html) [Esther](esther.html) that she must not reveal this forbidden [knowledge](knowledge.html) to the king? It's Mordechai. In both stories Mordechai is either the forbidden fruit himself or the [one](one.html) who makes forbidden fruit, who causes something to become forbidden.

Well what is the Shemen Hamishcha? The Shemen Hamishcha - the anointing oil, is the only thing that is at once forbidden and has the ability to make other things forbidden. By forbidden, what do we mean? We don't mean forbidden, forbidden, we mean forbidden to people, because the thing is actually in [HaShem](hashem.html)’s domain not people's domain. That's what Shemen Hamishcha is, the implements of the [Mishkan](mikdash.html), they're not forbidden, forbidden, they're part of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s domain. Go back and listen to our video on Terumah and Tetzaveh this year, what is the [Mishkan](mikdash.html) - the [Tabernacle](mikdash.html)? It's man's attempt to re-create the garden. The garden was [HaShem](hashem.html)’s place in our [world](worlds.html), we try to re-create that, to make a place for [HaShem](hashem.html) in our [world](worlds.html). All of the implements that we put there are [HaShem](hashem.html)’s special things. Well, in the garden [HaShem](hashem.html) also had a special thing, a tree that was His, that had Divine [knowledge](knowledge.html), it was the tree of [knowledge](thetree.html) of good and evil, it was good for Him to have, it wasn't good for us to have. So think about the Shemen Hamishcha - the anointing oil, what does it do? It's that which turns something from a thing used by people into a thing set aside for [HaShem](hashem.html). That was the original tree of [knowledge](thetree.html).

This [time](time.html) though Mordechai is the [one](one.html) who has that power, the [one](one.html) who says, who decrees, who [commands](cmds613.html) to [Esther](esther.html), that this [knowledge](knowledge.html) is [knowledge](knowledge.html) that is that special [knowledge](knowledge.html), it's [knowledge](knowledge.html) that has to remain in [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [head](body.html) and it shouldn't go to the king. Mordechai has the power to put certain [knowledge](knowledge.html) off limits, and in the [Haman](esther.html) and Zeresh story, he himself is off limits, just like the Shemen Hamishcha. It's off limits and it has the power to make something off limits.

## Where is [Esther](esther.html) alluded to in the Torah?

*(Rashi: the account of* [*Esther*](esther.html)*.)* As it says, “And I shall surely hide [*haster astir*, similar to the [name](name.html) [Esther](esther.html)] [My [face](body.html) on that day]”.[[69]](#footnote-69) *(Rashi: In the days of* [*Esther*](esther.html) *the Divine countenance will be concealed, and many troubles and evils will befall the* [*Jewish*](gen-jew.html) *people.)*

 In the Megillah we meet who a G-d who is hiding, G-d's [name](name.html) does not even appear in the Megillah, it's all just, the king, the king, the king, but where is the King of Kings? He's hiding. What of the people in the Megillah - [Esther](esther.html)? She starts out hiding, she hides her actual identity but if she conveys the forbidden [knowledge](knowledge.html) to her husband, to Achashveirosh, what will happen? She will go from hiding to revealed. What does it mean?

Perhaps it means this. G-d says back in the garden you [know](daat.html) things didn't go so well, you started out, out in the open and then you were hiding from Me and I was looking for you and I couldn't find you anywhere, where did you go? So now we're going to do the reverse. Now I'll hide and you try and find Me. Moreover, let's do it this way, you start out hiding and through giving that [knowledge](knowledge.html) to your husband come out in the open, and when you come out in the open, G-d says, I'll come out in the open too - which by the way is exactly what happens in the Megillah.

Now, lets return to [Gan Eden](eden.html) and look at the original [sin](sin.html). In [Gan Eden](eden.html) Man hides from G-d. In the Megilla of [Esther](esther.html) we see G-d is hiding.

[Adam](adam.html) and Chava were commanded to [eat](eating.html) from every tree except the Tree of the [Knowledge](knowledge.html) of Good and Evil. This tree was set aside as a tree for God and as a test for [Adam](adam.html) and Chava. The test was: Do you love Me? Who is in charge, who makes the rules? If you love G-d and He is in charge than you will NOT [EAT](eating.html) from this tree. If you are in charge, then you will [eat](eating.html) from this tree.

The ‘Good - tob’ in the tree of the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil can be seen in [two](two.html) ways: As what you [desire](needs.html) (the woman saw that it was good to [eat](eating.html)), or in a moral sense of doing what [HaShem](hashem.html) [commands](cmds613.html).

[Haman](esther.html) comes home after receiving [Esther](esther.html)’s, invitation and whines about his terrible life:

[***Esther***](esther.html) ***5:10-13****Nevertheless* [*Haman*](esther.html) *refrained himself, and went home; and he sent and fetched his friends and Zeresh his wife. 11 And* [*Haman*](esther.html) *recounted unto them the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and everything as to how the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king. 12*[*Haman*](esther.html) *said moreover: 'Yea,* [*Esther*](esther.html) *the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to-morrow also am I invited by her together with the king. 13 Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the* [*Jew*](gen-jew.html)[*sitting*](mashal.html) *at the king's gate.'*

[Haman](esther.html) has everything except Mordechai’s respect. In [Gan Eden](eden.html), [Adam](adam.html) and Chava had everything except the tree of the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil.

[Haman](esther.html)’s wife, Zeresh, suggests that [Haman](esther.html) build a gallows (also called a tree) from the tree of the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil, and hang Mordechai on it. Now, [Haman](esther.html) can be happy. In the end, [Haman](esther.html) will die on that very gallows in the same way that [Adam](adam.html) and Chava will die as a result of [eating](eating.html) from that tree. In both cases, the tree brings death.

All in all, everything the Rabbis say about the names of these people; [Haman](esther.html), Mordechai, and [Esther](esther.html), all the allusions they find, are all pointing to the same story, they're all pointing to the re-[creation](bara.html) of the [Garden of Eden](eden.html) story. An attempt by [Esther](esther.html) and Mordechai to boldly replay that story, to fix it, to make it better. To go through the steps of our ancestors [Adam](adam.html) and Eve that once led to failure and this [time](time.html) to find success in those steps. To turn our backs on the path chosen by Zeresh and [Haman](esther.html), who do nothing but reenact the folly of reaching for the [one](one.html) thing you can't have because you can't be happy with that which you are. No, instead, to demand from those who are supposed to love us, that they accept us for who we really are, that it's not Kosher to say, oh these are vermin but yeah, I kind of like you. No, if you recognize my humanity, you recognize the humanity of my people. I take you on a [journey](stages.html) from what you want to what you ought to do. And in so doing, we [walk](walking.html) away from the poison of the tree of [knowledge](thetree.html) and we bring G-d out of hiding and into our own lives.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | [**Adam**](adam.html) **and Eve** | **Megillat** [**Esther**](esther.html) |
| Tree of the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil is God’s tree. | They [eat](eating.html) with The KING. They [eat](eating.html) the only thing forbidden and die. They wanted to be the owner of the tree, they wanted to be like God.[[70]](#footnote-70) Eve offers the fruit of the tree as the solution. Did you [eat](eating.html) from the tree (hamin haetz)? This is the hint to [Haman](esther.html). They were killed bt The Tree – HaEtz. | [**Haman**](esther.html) [eats](eating.html) with king achashverush and then schemes to get the only thing he can’t have, and dies. He [wants](needs.html) to be the king. Zeresh offers the tree as a solution (hang Mordechai – Mordechai is the fruit). He is killed on the tree – HaEtz. |
|  |  |  |
| Contest to find a mate involving naming. | [Adam](adam.html) *names* and examines all of the animals looking for a wife. The animals are not acceptable and God selects Eve for his wife. [Adam](adam.html) calls his wife (by [*name*](name.html)) Chava. | **Achashverosh** has a beauty contest to choose a wife. The chosen [one](one.html) will be called by [*name*](name.html).[[71]](#footnote-71) |
|  |  |  |
| Forbidden [knowledge](knowledge.html) brings death. | וַיְצַו יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, עַל-הָאָדָם לֵאמֹר: - [HaShem](hashem.html) commanded *upon* [Adam](adam.html) to not [eat](eating.html) from the tree (forbidden [knowledge](knowledge.html)). God [commands](cmds613.html) them not to [eat](eating.html) or they will **die**. | כִּי מָרְדֳּכַי **צִוָּה** עָלֶיהָ, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תַגִּיד - Mordechai had commanded *upon* [Esther](esther.html) not to say anything[[72]](#footnote-72) (forbidden [knowledge](knowledge.html)) about where she comes from.[[73]](#footnote-73) Mordechai is ‘playing’ the part of God in his commanding. He uses this same word (**וּלְצַוּוֹת**) in commanding [Esther](esther.html) to go to the king.[[74]](#footnote-74) [Esther](esther.html) demurs saying that if she goes univited she will **die**. This is reversed (v’nahapoch hu) when she is told she will die if she does not plead their case to the king. |
|  |  |  |
| Eve [commands](cmds613.html) [Adam](adam.html) to [eat](eating.html)  [Esther](esther.html) [commands](cmds613.html) Mordechai to NOT [eat](eating.html). | Eve gave the fruit to [Adam](adam.html) and commanded him to [eat](eating.html).[[75]](#footnote-75) Eve gave [Adam](adam.html) forbidden [knowledge](knowledge.html) which brings disaster. | [Esther](esther.html) [commands](cmds613.html) Mordechai and the [Jews](gen-jew.html) to NOT [eat](eating.html) for [three](three.html) days during [Passover](passover.html) when they were commanded by [HaShem](hashem.html) to [eat](eating.html).[[76]](#footnote-76) [Esther](esther.html) gives Achashverosh forbidden [knowledge](knowledge.html) to avert disaster. |
|  |  |  |
| God and Mordechai both ‘took themselves’ for a [walk](walking.html). | יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, **מִתְהַלֵּךְ**  - (lit. God took Himself for a [walk](walking.html)) God walked in the garden.[[77]](#footnote-77) | וּבְכָל-יוֹם וָיוֹם--מָרְדֳּכַי **מִתְהַלֵּךְ** – (Lit. Mordechai took himself for a [walk](walking.html)) Mordechai walked himself every day.[[78]](#footnote-78) |
|  |  |  |
| [Two](two.html) types of ‘tob’ – good. There is ‘tob’ as in desireable, and there is ‘tob’ as in morally correct’. | Eve allows [desire](needs.html) to overrule morality.[[79]](#footnote-79) | [Esther](esther.html) must get the king to overrule [desire](needs.html) with morality.[[80]](#footnote-80) This is the only place that kosher (fitting) - וְכָשֵׁר is used in the Tanach. |
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# Teshuva – Repentance

The consummate expression of the conflation of opposites is the dictum (trans­mitted in the [name](name.html) of Reish Lakish[[81]](#footnote-81)) that repentance has the power to transpose blameworthy acts into meritorious acts, a transposition that is associated with [Yom Kippur](kippur.html), the day of [atonement](kippur.html), when transgressions of the contrite are wiped away, as repentance (when it is done from the standpoint of the love of [HaShem](hashem.html)) has the capacity to “transform evil entirely to the good in actuality”. This point is enhanced, additionally, by the idea suggested in a passage from Tikunei [Zohar](orallaw.html)[[82]](#footnote-82) that the expression [yom Kippur](kippur.html)im should be decoded as yom ki-[purim](purim.html), “a day like [Purim](purim.html).” That [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) will be rendered analogous to [Purim](purim.html) implies that the latter is superior to the former. Both days demand self-[sacrifice](korbanot.html), a form of worship that is above reason and [knowledge](knowledge.html), but, in the case of [Yom Kippur](kippur.html), this is carried out through ascetic renunciation, whereas, in the case of [Purim](purim.html), it is realized through sensual indulgence.

In keeping with this theme of *v’nahapoch hu,* we would be remiss if we failed to mention the most important application of this term.

The power of teshuva at the [time](time.html) of [Purim](purim.html) was activated when [Esther](esther.html) realized she must be ready to [sacrifice](korbanot.html) her life if necessary in order to plead the case of the [Jews](gen-jew.html) before the king. That act of supreme self [sacrifice](korbanot.html) and teshuva, coupled with her call for all [Jews](gen-jew.html) in the capital [city](city.html) of Shushan to fast with her for [three](three.html) days and nights, aroused Divine [compassion](jonah.html) from Above, turning the plans of [Haman](esther.html) upside down, till he was hung on the very same tree he hoped to hang Mordecai.

The incredible power of teshuva*,* to not only change the present and affect the [future](future.html), but even "change" the past, is [one](one.html) of the many secrets of [Purim](purim.html). This is [one](one.html) of the reasons why the [Talmud](orallaw.html) says that Yom[HaKippurim](kippur.html), the culmination of the [ten](ten.html) days of *teshuva*, should be read Yom (a day) ki (like) [Purim](purim.html). This astounding statement comparing [Yom Kippur](kippur.html), the holiest day of the year, to a seemingly ‘fun’ day like [Purim](purim.html), captures the essence of what [Purim](purim.html) really is, the ability to completely turn around our lives even when all seems lost.

We are told in the [Talmud](orallaw.html) that **teshuva**, the life changing act of sincere repentance, when motivated by fear of punishment, has the retroactive power of turning purposeful [sins](sin.html) into inadvertent mistakes. Even more than this is **teshuva** motivated by love, which can even turn past purposeful [sins](sin.html) into [merits](merit.html).

***Yoma 86b*** *Resh Lakish said: Great is repentance, for because of it premeditated* [*sins*](sin.html) *are accounted as errors, as it is said: Return, O Israel, unto the Lord, thy God,’ for thou hast stumbled in thy iniquity.[[83]](#footnote-83) ‘Iniquity’ is premeditated, and yet he calls it ‘stumbling’ But that is not so! For Resh Lakish said that repentance is so great that premeditated* [*sins*](sin.html) *are accounted as though they were* [*merits*](merit.html)*, as it is said: And when the* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *turneth from his* [*wickedness*](wicked.html)*, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby![[84]](#footnote-84)*

This is the depth of the miracle of [Purim](purim.html) where everything was flipped upside down. Everything that seemed to be negative turned out to be the positive that existed from the outset. [Purim](purim.html) is a day when we learn to see through the superficiality of things; we learn not to be fooled by the mirage of [impurity](purity.html) that we sometimes see in each other and in ourselves. On [Purim](purim.html), we learn to flip everything around, and where we think we see lowliness and [impurity](purity.html), we look deeper to find the highest levels of [purity](purity.html).

Our task on [Purim](purim.html) is to do teshuvain such a manner that we make our will His will, so he can make His will our will, thereby revealing His presence in every point of [time](time.html) and space.

# End of [Time](time.html)

**Gilui**, meaning “revelation”.

Our Sages [teach](teacher.html) that, “In the era of the [resurrection](techiyat.html), all of the [festivals](festivals.html) will be nullified with the exception of [Purim](purim.html).”

Why will [Purim](purim.html) continue to be observed in that [future](future.html) era? Because its theme parallels the [spiritual](physical.html) state that will prevail at that [time](time.html).

Today, there is a natural order in which Godliness is not revealed, a state of concealment not unlike that which prevailed at the [time](time.html) of the [Purim](purim.html) miracle. Yes, there is an entire framework of [spiritual](physical.html) reality that exists, but it is [known](daat.html) only abstractly. We are not palpably aware of it.

With the [coming](coming.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html)*,* this will radically change. Spirituality will become as real to us as a dollar bill is today. And yet, the [world](worlds.html) as we [know](daat.html) it will not cease to exist. Instead, within the context of material reality, the inner [spiritual](physical.html) truth will be revealed. The same dynamic that was at work during the [Purim](purim.html) miracle will be expressed in a complete sense. In that vein, our joyous celebration on [Purim](purim.html) anticipates and precipitates the ultimate celebration our people will [experience](experience.html) at the [coming](coming.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html).

At the end of [time](time.html) we will again [experience](experience.html) *V’nahapoch hu*. There will be a complete inversion. We will see that everything that we thought was tragic will be shown to be for our benefit.

[Yosef](joseph.html)’s brothers attempted to twart [Yosef](joseph.html)’s [dreams](dreams.html) by selling him into slavery in Mitzrayim. Years later, they discovered that instead of twarting the [dreams](dreams.html), they caused the [dreams](dreams.html) to be fulfilled!

Paro ordered that every baby bo be thrown into the Nilke and killed in order to eliminate any possibility that [one](one.html) of theme could become the ultimate redeemer. His action caused Yochebed to put Moshe in in an ark on the river. He also caused Moshe to be raised in his own palace! In effect, Paro strengthened and enabled the redeemer he was so desperately trying to destroy.

[Haman](esther.html) tried to exterminate Torah. His efforts resulted in the complete acceptance of Torah, and of Torah shebaal peh, the [oral Torah](orallaw.html), in a whole [new](new.html) way. Every step he took in [one](one.html) direction resulted in the opposite direction.

[Purim](purim.html) will become the ikar and the [festivals](festivals.html) will become the tafel.[[85]](#footnote-85)

The Book of [Creation](bara.html) also states that [Adar](feasts.html)'s special [letter](letters.html) is "Kuf" - ק. Tractate Bava Batra,[[86]](#footnote-86) [teaches](teacher.html) that the "a person to the Divine Presence is like a [monkey](mashal.html) ("Kof") to a person". We can look at a [monkey](mashal.html) as a negative element, but we can also see a positive element. The lower element of a [monkey](mashal.html) is external behavior, of "mimicking like a [monkey](mashal.html)", such as the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) expression "Maase Kof B'alma" (mere act of a [monkey](mashal.html))[[87]](#footnote-87) that describes something empty and trivial. However, there is also an elevated mimicry in which we try to imitate [HaShem](hashem.html). "As He is compassionate, you also should be so".[[88]](#footnote-88) This call for "monkeyness" is our [desire](needs.html) to become like the Creator, to reach a state of [connection](connection.html), a complete comparison of our will with the will of [HaShem](hashem.html). This is the month of [Adar](feasts.html).

The month of [Adar](feasts.html) is the month of a great, great effort to compare our will with the will of [HaShem](hashem.html). "They received the Torah again in the days of Achashverosh". At Mount [Sinai](stages.html) Am Yisrael were forced to receive the Torah, but in the month of [Adar](feasts.html) they accepted it in their own will. Therefore, in [Adar](feasts.html) [laughter](mashal.html) can appear. The month of [Adar](feasts.html) has a glittering of the [World](futures.html) to Come. "Then our [mouth](body.html) will be filled with [laughter](mashal.html), and our [tongue](spirit.html) with singing". A glittering from that era when we will [laugh](mashal.html) the same [laugh](mashal.html) of absolute identity with the words of [HaShem](hashem.html).

"They will [laugh](mashal.html) at a life full of intense and ongoing pleasure, an immense flood from [HaShem](hashem.html)'s light, and will savor from His goodness. The [laughter](mashal.html) that [HaShem](hashem.html) laughs with the righteous in the [World](futures.html) to Come. The [laughter](mashal.html) that [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [hand](fourteen.html) will lead, the [laughter](mashal.html) resulting from the Divine Pleasure being open and exposed. This is very glorious".[[89]](#footnote-89)

# Conclusion

Because [HaShem](hashem.html) is [one](one.html), we [know](daat.html) that there are no temporary [events](feasts.html) or processes. Every [event](feasts.html), every process, everything must be part of His oneness. It must be eternal and be a vital part of [HaShem](hashem.html).

[HaShem](hashem.html) does not create any unnecessary [event](feasts.html) or process. This means that every [event](feasts.html) and every process must pertain to His end product. It is not good enough that evil be overcome and replaced with the good, rather every negative and every positive [event](feasts.html) must produce a part of His final plan. Every negative [event](feasts.html) must be reversed in order to [justify](justification.html) its existence. Every negative [event](feasts.html) must be shown to be a positive [event](feasts.html) that produces [HaShem](hashem.html)’s benefit in the [world](worlds.html). The end result of every [event](feasts.html) and every process must be revealed as part of the good. This recognition that everything that happens in the [world](worlds.html) is for our benefit and for the good, is testified in the book of Romans:

***Romans 8:28*** *And we* [*know*](daat.html) *that all things work together for good to them that love* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

The whole purpose of *V’nahapoch hu* is to reveal that no matter how disastrous an [event](feasts.html) or process, seems to be, never the less in the end it will be revealed as positive and absolutely vital to [HaShem](hashem.html)’s plan. There will be no exceptions.

The “V’nahapoch Hu”, the dynamic turnabout, continues today on Shushan [Purim](purim.html). Whereas on other Yamim Tovim, the “second day of Yom Tov” is for the people in Chutz L’Aretz,[[90]](#footnote-90) on [Purim](purim.html) the “second day”, Shushan [Purim](purim.html), is today for [Yerushalayim](city.html) (and certain other formerly-walled cities, almost all of which are in Eretz Yisroel, in which a Second Day is only celebrated for reasons relating to a doubt as to the proper day to observe). Why the turnabout? Why is the “Second Day of Yom Tov” observed in [Yerushalayim](city.html) on [Purim](purim.html) unlike all the other [festivals](festivals.html)? We may suggest the following: the ikar, the essence, of the celebration of the Shalosh Regalim: [Pesach](passover.html), [Shavuot](shavuot.html), and [Succoth](succoth.html), is in [Eretz Israel](city.html), which is why they are referred to in the Torah as the Shalosh Regalim--the [three](three.html) times a year we go up to [Yerushalayim](city.html) and the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) and bring sacrifices to rejuvenate ourselves through the open miracles seen there[[91]](#footnote-91) and inculcate ourselves with the pristine holiness of the people and the place.[[92]](#footnote-92)

The miracle of [Purim](purim.html), on the other [hand](fourteen.html), is the last of our miracles found in Tanach, and it is a miracle in a very different way, for it is a miracle taking place in Chutz L’Aretz, and occurring, not instantaneously, but over a [nine](nine.html)-year period, all B’hester--concealed [event](feasts.html) after concealed [event](feasts.html) after concealed [event](feasts.html), until we looked back and determined that an outstanding miracle had occurred.

Thus, unlike the Shalosh Regalim, which celebrated the open miracles of Yetziat Mitzrayim, Matan Torah and the clouds of glory, and which were replete with the miracles of [Yerushalayim](city.html) in their observance, the miracle of [Purim](purim.html) was a miracle for the [Galut](galuyot.html). It [teaches](teacher.html) us how we are to lead our lives with Bnei Israel and [Eretz Israel](city.html) still in a state of defilement and [impurity](purity.html). Indeed, the [Gemara](orallaw.html)[[93]](#footnote-93) [teaches](teacher.html) that on [Purim](purim.html) we do not read the regular Hallel in order to rejoice in the remembrance of the miracle, but “the reading of the Megilla, this is the Hallel”. The Megillah (the word is related to the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word “Megaleh”, to reveal) reveals to us [HaShem](hashem.html)’s hidden, rather than open and clear role, in our experiences, our successes and our sheer continuity in [Galut](galuyot.html).

On [Purim](purim.html), it is [Yerushalayim](city.html) that takes a “second day” because the miracle of [Purim](purim.html) is to be our guiding light through the hidden miracles of the [exile](galuyot.html) which have occurred, primarily outside of the [land of Israel](city.html). Our role is to uncover the miracles, to recognize the hidden miracles of [HaShem](hashem.html) in our every day lives. We can do this, overcoming the mirages, the illusions and our own delusions of a lifestyle which does not have [HaShem](hashem.html) accompanying and guiding us in our daily life, and replace it with a sincere and meaningful awareness that we should appreciate and thank [HaShem](hashem.html) for his wonders, miracles and favors.

The commentaries point out that the unexpected reversal of fates is the apparent underlying theme in the [Purim](purim.html) story. Close analysis of the Megillah reveals how quickly and smoothly the plans of [Haman](esther.html) were not merely foiled but more notably transformed into bringing about the [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People. The very night that [Haman](esther.html) planned to convince Achashverosh to have Mordechai hanged ended up being the night on which he advised Achashverosh to extravagantly honor Mordechai. The very gallows that [Haman](esther.html) prepared for Mordechai ended up being used for his own hanging. The very day that [Haman](esther.html) had decided to be the [time](time.html) to destroy the [Jews](gen-jew.html) was the day on which the [Jews](gen-jew.html) destroyed their enemies. Ultimately, [Haman](esther.html)’s own proposal to kill Vashti ended up paving the way for the ultimate [salvation](salvation.html) of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People. The turn of [events](feasts.html) in the story of [Purim](purim.html) truly embody the verse that says, “Many are the thoughts that are in the [heart](body.html) of man but the counsel of God will prevail.” (Mishlei 19:21)

This is the [connection](connection.html) between the month of [Adar](feasts.html) and the idea of happiness and [laughter](mashal.html). The “special energy” of this month is the transformation of bad to good, as the Megillah says referring to the month of [Adar](feasts.html), “The month that has been transformed for them from [one](one.html) of sorrow to happiness and from [mourning](mourning.html) to festivity. ([Esther](esther.html) 9:22)” It is therefore specifically this month that is the ideal [time](time.html) to reflect on the miraculous turn of [events](feasts.html) that took place in the story of [Purim](purim.html). Through reliving the finale of the story of [Purim](purim.html) we are given a taste of the [future](future.html) happiness and [laughter](mashal.html) that will fill the [world](worlds.html) when there will be the ultimate transformation of all that seems bad to good. This is the unique joy that we are meant to feel at this [time](time.html), and this is the depth behind the month of [Adar](feasts.html)’s [connection](connection.html) to the idea of [laughter](mashal.html) and happiness.

What if, instead of being a temporary pun or joke which was funny only as long as we put together [two](two.html) incompatible pieces of information, the pieces managed to stay together in a beautiful and fulfilling way?

Then, we would be in a permanent state of [laughter](mashal.html). We would always be in a state of surprised delight at the [creation](bara.html) and all there is in it. So, the sages tell us, will be stage of history of the seventh [millennium](millenium.html), the days of [Mashiach](mashiach.html).

It can't be that far away. [Jewish](gen-jew.html) tradition has it that the [world](worlds.html) as we [know](daat.html) it will last no more than 6000 years. We're already in the year 5760, and [Mashiach](mashiach.html) needn't wait until the last minute to appear on the scene.

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 55:8*** *For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

For bibliography on the centrality of nahafoch (reversal) to the entire [Esther](esther.html) narrative, see Edward L. Greenstein, “A [Jewish](gen-jew.html) Reading of [Esther](esther.html),” in Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel, ed. [Jacob](israelja.html) Neusner, Baruch A. Levine, and Ernest S. Frerichs (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 235, n. 53. See also Gottlieb, “’the Opposite Happened.” On the reversal theme in [Esther](esther.html), see [Abraham](avraham.html) Vinitzer, “'The Reversal of Fortune

**\* \* \***

This [study](study.html) was written by

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian).

Comments may be submitted to:

Rabbi Dr. Greg Killian

12210 Luckey Summit

San Antonio, TX 78252

Internet address: [gkilli@aol.com](mailto:gkilli@aol.com)

Web page: <https://www.betemunah.org/>

(360) 918-2905

Return to [The WATCHMAN](https://www.betemunah.org/) home page

Send comments to Greg Killian at his email address: [gkilli@aol.com](mailto:gkilli@aol.com)

1. Esther 9:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Megillah 7b; Code of Jewish Law 695:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Purim is the plural of pur which means a goral or lottery. If the Megillah says that a ‘Pur’ is simply a Goral, a lottery, why is the term ‘Pur’ used at all? ANSWER: ’Pur’ indicates a lottery for the bad, whereas Goral indicates a lottery for the good (HaRav Yaakov MiLisa). Hakhel Note: Thus, we see the V’nahafoch Hu in the name Purim itself! Alternatively, the ‘Pur’ is a special name for the dice that Haman cast (Ya’arot Devash). [Ya'arot Devash a frequently quoted collection of the sermons of Rabbi Eybeschutz. Jonathan Eybeschütz (also Eibeschutz or Eibeschitz; 1690 in Kraków – 1764 in Altona), was a Talmudist, Halachist, Kabbalist, holding positions as Dayan of Prague, and later as Rabbi of the "Three Communities": Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbek.] [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Purim is a holiday of *nes nistar* (hidden miracles). A *nes nistar* is when HaShem intervenes and helps us, within the laws of nature. Megillat Esther does not tell of any supernatural miracles. Both the Gra and the Malbim point out the seemingly coincidental occurrences in the *megillah* that were really veiled miracles. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Meaning, “and it was overturned” or, “and the opposite happened”, or “but it was reversed”, or “it was turned around”. *hippuch* the Purim particular redemption which literally means reversal. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Judo by the meaning of the word means “gentle way”, which means use opponent’s force to combat against himself. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. In which people occupy the positions they merit. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The concept of “one day” is the concept that the event takes place without any elapsed time. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The Gemara (Megillah 16b) states that the names of all of Haman’s sons should be read in a single breath because they all died at the same moment. By reading about their deaths in a single breath we indicate that the deaths were not ten separate events, but a single moment when they all died. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Pasuk = verse [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. AKA Ahasuerus [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Mishlei (Proverbs) 19:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *V'nahapoch* is spelled with a Hebrew letter (פ) that can have either a ‘P’ or an ‘F’ sound. So, you will see it spelled both ways. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Yitzchak Hutner was born in Warsaw, Poland, to a family with both Ger Hasidic and non-Hasidic Lithuanian Jewish roots. As a child he received private instruction in Torah and Talmud. As a teenager he was enrolled in the Slabodka yeshiva in Lithuania, headed by Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel, where he was known as the "Warsaw Illui" ("prodigy"). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. "chas v'shalom" is a Hebrew phrase that means "HaShem forbid". The Aruch HaShulchan says that it should be literally translated as "completely disgraced". [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Esther 9:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Yamim tovim = Festival days [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Mashiach = Messiah [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Beit HaMikdash (lit. The House of The Holy One) = Temple. The Midrash (Shocher Tov 22) teaches that Haman’s money was distributed as follows: 1/3 to Mordechai and Esther, 1/3 to those involved in Torah study, and 1/3 toward reconstruction of the Beit HaMikdash. What a V’nahafoch Hu! [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Yalkut Esther 1059 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. By Rabbi J. Rolando Matalon [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Hulin 139b [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Zohar, Vayikra 109a, Midrash Rabbah 3:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. If you analyze the gematria of wine (יין) = 70, it matches the gematria of secret (סוד) = 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Megillah 7b [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. You shouldn’t know which is more important, that Haman was destroyed, or that Mordechai was raised up? Which helped the Jews more, that we got rid of Haman, or that we made Mordechai into the important leader? You should KNOW that both have the same result even as the words “Baruch Mordechai” and “Arur Haman” ("cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordechai") have the same Gematria. They both are the same in terms of advancing HaShem’s plan. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Much of this information I learned from Rabbi Akiva Tatz. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. HaShem’s idea of beauty is when our inner self, our spiritual self, is reflected in our body and in our actions. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. In a Hebrew word, when we change an aleph (א) to an ayin (ע), we are converting from the spiritual (א) to the physical (ע). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. This is a general term that refers to all types of clothing. (e.g. Exod. 29:5, Judg. 14:13) [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. A ‘bogged’ is a traitor. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. e.g. Esther 4:2, 6:8; Prov. 31:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Megillah 12a [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Bnei Yissachar, vol. 2, in the chapters on Adar. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. All humans laugh. Only humans laugh. We only laugh at situations involving humans or things that look or act like humans. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The joy of Adar is what makes the month of Adar the “pregnant” month of the year (i.e., seven of the nineteen years in the cycle of the Jewish calendar are “leap years,” “pregnant” with an additional month of Adar). When there are two Adars, Purim is celebrated in the second Adar, in order to link the redemption of Purim to the redemption of Pesach. Thus, we see that the secret of Adar and Purim is “the end is wedged in the beginning”. This may be the reason why we have *V’nahapoch hu* in Sefer Esther and on Purim, in our days. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Ta’anit 29a [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. In the Book of Creation (Sefer Yetzira, Chapter Five and see Ramak) there is a list of psychological dimensions, each is attached to a different month. Every month is characterized by a different dimension on which to focus our work in a particular aspect of our personality. The aspect mentioned in relation to the month of Adar is laughter. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Mashiach = Messiah. ***Berachot 31a*** *R. Johanan said in the name of R. Simeon b. Yohai: It is forbidden to a man to fill his mouth with laughter in this world, because it says, Then will our mouth be filled with laughter and our tongue with singing.3 When will that be? At the time when ‘they shall say among the nations, The Lord hath done great things with these’.* [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Tehillim (Psalms) 126:2-3 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Pri Tzaddik, Adar. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. In relation to Purim, the fear of (the decree of) Haman transforms into the exuberant laughter of the festival of Purim. (Yitzchak Ginsburgh) [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Tehillim (Psalms) 126:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Mishlei (Proverbs) 31:24 [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. By Rabbi Dovber Pinson [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Hamantaschen, literally 'Haman pockets'. The word tasche means "pouch" or "pocket" in German. The word "hamantash" is singular; "Hamantaschen" is plural and is the more common word form. However, many people refer to these pastries as Hamantaschen even in the singular (for example, "I ate an apricot Hamantaschen"). [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Rabbi David Aaron [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Sefer Menuchah V’Kedushah 2:20 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Yetzer HaRa = The Evil Inclination [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. “*You* know *you* want to eat that giant piece of cake.” Thus, the yetzer hara is referred to in the second person. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler (1892 – 30 December 1953) was an Orthodox rabbi, Talmudic scholar, and Jewish philosopher of the 20th century. He is best known for being the mashgiach ruchani ("spiritual counselor") of the Ponevezh yeshiva in Israel and through collections of his writings published posthumously by his pupils. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Chidush (Hebrew: חִדּוּשׁ‬; also transliterated as chiddush, hiddush or hidush), sometimes used in its plural form, chidushim (Hebrew: חִדּוּשׁים‬), is a novel interpretation or approach to something. Historically referring to Torah topics, the term is widely used in rabbinic literature to describe a form of innovation that is made inside the system of the halakha, as distinguished from shinuy, an innovation outside tradition. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. The word "mitzva" (pl. mitzvot) means "commandment". In its strictest sense, it refers only to commandments instituted in the Torah; however, the word is commonly used in a more generic sense to include all of the laws, practices and customs of halakhah, and is often used in an even more loose way to refer to any good deed. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Shabbat = Sabbath [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Shmita = Sabbatical year. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Yetzer HaTov = the good inclination [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Mesillat Yesharim or Mesillas Yeshorim (Hebrew: מסילת ישרים‬, lit. "Path of the Upright") is an ethical (musar) text composed by the influential Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto (1707–1746). [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Neshama = soul [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Much of this section I learned from Rabbi David Fohrman. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Ibid. III, 11. Heb. המן The first word can be read as Haman, and the second can refer to the tree or gallows upon which Haman was hanged; cf. Esther 7:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Devarim (Deuteronomy) 31:18. The second word is very like the name Esther, both in spelling and in sound. The verse in general foretells the many evils and troubles that shall befall Israel when they forsake the ways of God, and this was the case at the time of Esther, cf. Meg. 12a. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Shemot (Exodus) 30:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. The aramaic translation of Onkelos renders the Hebrew by xxxx, which words both in spelling and in sound resemble: Mordecai. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Chullin 139b [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Shemot (Exodus) 30:23 [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Debarim (Deuteronomy) 31:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Esther 2:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Esther 2:10 [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. This is the only other place in the Tanach where we find this word. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Esther 4:8 [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Esther 4:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:8 – This is the first time we find this word. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Esther 2:11 This the last time in the Tanack that this ‘walked’ occurs. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Bereshit (Genesis) 3:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Esther 8:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Shim‘on ben Lakish (Hebrew: שמעון בן לקיש‎; Aramaic: שמעון בר לקיש‎ Shim‘on bar Lakish or bar Lakisha), better known by his nickname Reish Lakish, was an amora who lived in the Roman province of Syria Palaestina in the third century. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Tikunei HaZohar (תקוני הזהר, lit. "Rectifications of the Zohar"), also known as the Tikunim (תקונים), is a main text of the Kabbalah. It is a separate appendix to the Zohar consisting of seventy commentaries on the opening word of the Torah, Bereshit (בראשית), in a style of Kabbalistic Midrash. Containing deep secret teachings of Torah, stirring dialogues and fervent prayers, the explicit and apparent theme and intention of Tikunei HaZohar is to repair and support the Shechinah or Malkhut — hence its name, "Repairs of the Zohar" — and to bring on the Redemption and conclude the Exile. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Hoshea (Hosea) 14:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Yehezechel (Ezekiel) 33:19. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Ikar v'tafel (Hebrew: עיקר וטפל‎, "primary and secondary") is a principle in Jewish law that governs the proper blessing that is assigned to any particular food prior to consumption - Berachot 44a [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Bava Batra 58a [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Rosh, Gittin, b [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Pesikta Zotrta, Re'eh [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Ein Aya, there [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Chutz L’Aretz = outside the land of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. see these miracles listed in Avot 5:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. See Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 489, Bava Basra 21A and Tosafot there, dibur hamaschil Ki Mitzion [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Megillah 14a [↑](#footnote-ref-93)