

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

אסתר מן התורה מנין? "ואנכי הסתר אסתיר" מרדכי מן התורה מנין? "מר דרוו" ומתורגמין מירא דביא ... (חולין קל"ב):

The **Tzaddik, R' Michael Ber Weissmandl ז"ל** was famous both for his survival and rescue efforts during the Holocaust, as well as his teachings based on what would be later be termed "Equidistant Letter Sequences" (ELS), later popularized by *Aish HaTorah* and other programs as "Bible Codes." Notably, the well known code of the Nuremberg trials and "Purimfest 1946" was first attributed to him in 2002 by Rabbi Chaim Alexander Neiman. While the Nuremberg teaching is not itself an example of ELS, it is often mentioned in the context of other "Bible Codes," and viewed as part of that genre.

Rabbi Yaakov Mordechai Greenwald ז"ל was a renowned *Torah* scholar and widely respected therapist. He had strong personal relationships with many *Gedolei Yisroel*, including the **Steipler Gaon ז"ל**, who frequently referred clients to him. He related that although the concept of "Bible Codes" - hidden secrets in the *Torah*, is well known today, he was *zoche* to be serve R' Michael Ber Weissmandl, who was the "Father of Codes." He didn't have a computer or programs that we have today, and all his calculations were done inside his brilliant mind.

Rabbi Greenwald relates the following amazing story: "I was once visiting Rav Weissmandl before *Purim* and he asked me, 'Did you count how many letters there are in the *megillah* yet?' I told him I didn't know. He continued, 'There are 12,196 letters!' I told him, 'Okay, and what can we do with that number?' He asked me to bring him a *chumash*. I brought him one.

"Count from the first "א" in the *Torah* the same amount of letters as there are in the *megillah* - 12,196 - and you'll reach a "ס". From that letter, count the same number of letters again and you'll get to a "ת". Do it once more and the following letter will be a "ר". And there you have the name "אסתר". It's unbelievable!" Indeed, it truly was breathtaking.

"And what about Mordechai?" I asked, half jokingly. "Don't you think he might feel left out?"

"I don't know," the *Rav* responded honestly, "come back next year."

Sure enough, the following year I returned and asked R' Michael Ber, "Nu, what's with Mordechai?" He excitedly told me that he found a clue to Mordechai as well. *Chazal* teach (חולין קל"ב): Where is the name Mordechai hinted to in the *Torah*? From the words in *Parshas Tetzaveh* (שמות ל-כג) - "ואתה קח לך בשמים ראש מר דרוו" - which the *Gemara* translates as "מירא דביא" - which contain the same letters as the name "מרדכי". This is the place where the name of Mordechai is hinted to in the *Torah*.

"So now," continued R' Michael Ber with a glint in his eye, "count from the "מ" of "מר דרוו" the amount of letters in the *megillah* - 12,196 - and you'll get to a "ר". Count again and you'll reach a "ד". Count the same amount again and you'll see a "כ", and once more and you'll hit the letter *yud* - and there you have מרדכי. Truly wondrous!"

Rabbi Greenwald continued, "That is not the end of the story. Many years ago, we hosted a very intelligent woman one *Shabbos*. She was in a women's seminary to learn more about *Yiddishkeit* and kept arguing with the *Rabbanim* and *Moros* there about everything she learned. It was difficult on them, and they asked us to host her. After the *seuda*, she asked to speak with me privately and she unloaded on me all of her personal questions. She told me that she didn't believe that *Torah* was from Heaven and that it's unattainable. Suddenly, the incredible findings that Rav Weissmandl had taught me years earlier came to mind. I told her about the holiday of *Purim*, and shared with her the hints to מרדכי ואסתר in the *Torah*. She listened quietly, then got up and went to her room. In the morning, she came down with puffy eyes, looking totally exhausted. She said she had stayed up all night working on her computer, as it was her field of work. It took her the entire night to figure out the mathematical equations and the exact statistical percentages of what I had told her. "It's simply impossible from a statistical standpoint!" she concluded.

Years later, I attended a wedding. When I came down from the *chuppah*, I heard a woman calling my name. I turned around but didn't recognize the person who had called me. "I apologize," I told her, "but you don't look familiar."

"Rabbi, I am the 'מרדכי ואסתר' girl!" she exclaimed. "After what you told me, I changed my entire life! I now cover my hair, my husband learns in *kollel*, and my children are attending wonderful *yeshivos*, *Baruch Hashem!*" (**Binas HaMiddos**)

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

Shmuel HaNavi relayed to *Shaul HaMelech*, *Hashem's* command for him to eradicate the nation of Amalek. Without argument, Shaul mustered 210,000 soldiers and "advanced as far as the city of Amalek ..." But we know that Amalek had multiple locations where they dwelt, why does the *Navi* make it seem as though the *Amalekim* lived in one city?

R' Hillel Leibshutz ז"ל (Av Beis Din of Lublin) explains that the *Navi* says that Shaul and his men reached the city and settled in to wait in the wadi - "וירב בנחל". He explains that the word "וירב" stems from the word "ריב" - which means to fight. The *Torah* teaches us, "רק על ריב דברים" - meaning that the only fight one should have, is through words and not through violence. *Chazal* explain that this means that when

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY HAFTORAH BY AN UNEQUALLED HISTORIAN

Klal Yisroel goes out to war they should first attempt to make peace with their enemy through words, before resorting to active warfare. Shaul understood this and although *Hashem* gave him explicit instructions to eradicate Amalek, he understood that *Hashem* wanted him to follow the *Torah* and attempt to make peace with Amalek first.

Thus, we can begin to understand that the *Navi's* specification of the words "וירב בנחל" and the words "עיר עמלק" - "וירב בנחל" - "עיר עמלק", was meant for us to understand the way Shaul first settled his army in the wadi while he sent a peace party out to "the city" to negotiate. While he was prepared to fight Amalek "in the city," he was also prepared to have his men remain on the outskirts if a peace deal could be reached.

ונפש כי תקריב קרבן מנחה לה' סלת יהיה קרבנו ויצק עליה שמן ונתן עליה לבנה ... (כ-א)

The *Torah* enumerates a variety of *korbonos* one can bring. Some are obligatory, others are voluntary. The *Gemara* in *Megillah* (16a) relates the following anecdote: When Achashverosh ordered Haman to honor Mordechai by parading him through the streets of *Shushan* extolling his praises, he dejectedly sought out Mordechai. He found him learning *Torah* with his *talmidim*. He asked what they were studying and Mordechai replied, they were learning *Hilchos Kmitzah*. (**Rashi** explains it was the 16th of *Nissan*; the day of *Hakrovos Haomer*) because when we had the *Bais HaMikdash* a person could donate a *mincha*, bring the *Kmitzah*, and have a *kapara*. Haman replied, "Your little handful of flour knocked out my 10,000 כספי."

The questions are obvious; 1) Why was Mordechai learning this topic specifically? 2) Haman said, your *Kmitzah* knocked out ... he should have asked why are you learning *Hilchos Kmitzah*? 3) What was the power of *Kmitzah* that enabled it to supersede Haman quest? *Chazal* teach us that even today, without the *Bais HaMikdash*, we can access the power of *korbonos* by learning their respective *halachos*. Mordechai wanted to both unleash those *kochos* and was also *לישועה*. It was therefore not just the *halachos* of *Kmitzah*, but as Haman himself testified, an actual *Kmitzah* that he was offering.

R' Yonason Eibshitz ז"ל adds that Haman wanted to distribute money to the poor, accruing "zechusim" to enable him to eradicate the *Yidden!* Mordechai was relaying the following message: The *Parsha of Menachos* states, "ונפש כי תקריב". *Rashi* says this refers to the עניים who can only afford flour. Yet, *Hashem* considers it as if they brought their soul, their נפש because they did it with *מסירת נפש*. You, Haman, a rich man, are attempting to give "tzedaka" for cruel purposes. That will never overpower the simple faith, love and sacrifice of a *Yiddishe* עני. Now, Haman realized that he stood no chance. If we also display *הסתר אסתיר* inside of us, *B'ezras Hashem* we should also be *zoche to nissim* and *yeshuos* בכלל ובפרט.

משל למת הדבר דומה

אדם כי יקריב מנחם קרבן לה' ... (א-ב) **משל:** Harry Houdini was a legendary magician in the early 20th century. (He was the son of Rabbi and Mrs. Mayer Shmuel Weisz. Harry changed his name). During his career, his stunts dazzled crowds across the globe, eventually becoming a world sensation and legend that lives on today. Actually, he was probably a better locksmith than anything else. He had a standing challenge that he could get out of any locked jail in 60 minutes, providing they would let him enter in his regular street clothes and not watch him work.

A little town in the British Isles wanted to attract tourists to the town, so they decided to challenge the great Houdini. They had just completed an escape-proof jail, and they invited Houdini to come and see if he could break out. He accepted the challenge. He entered the jail in his street clothes and after the locksmith locked the door with a loud clang of steel, everybody left him alone to work. Houdini had hidden a long flexible steel rod in his belt, which is what he used to trip the lock. Houdini got to work but it seemed a lot more trouble than usual. Keeping his ear close to the lock, he worked for 30 minutes, 45 minutes, but nothing worked. After about two hours, he was utterly exhausted. It seemed he would fail this challenge, when suddenly, he leaned against the door, and to his amazement, it fell open! It turned out that someone by mistake forgot to lock the door! The door was locked only in Houdini's mind! **נמשל:** *Sefer Vayikrah* is all about our service to *Hashem*; the *korbanos* and many *mitzvos*. Sometimes, an act of service seems challenging and a bit much, but the above story demonstrates that sheer willpower can overcome any challenge. It's all in our mind! May we all merit this!

דרגה יתירה

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO **אשר קרן בדרך ויוגב כך כל הנשלים אחריו ואתה עיף ויגע ... (פרשת זכור - דברים כה-ה)** True *avodas Hashem* is remembering exactly what Amalek did to us. What did they do? Amalek came from far to attack the Jewish people in their time of weariness and fatigue. They came with great alacrity and enthusiasm to show the world not to be afraid of *Hashem!* Although it was a long and difficult journey, and the world was in awe and trembling from the Jews, Amalek was not deterred! They came with a passion! Nothing would stop them because they were determined to succeed!

Writes the **Shevet Sofer, R' Simcha Bunim Sofer ז"ל**, "Amalek teaches us us how to serve *Hashem!*" We need to remember Amalek and learn to serve our "יוצר" - Creator, the way Amalek served their "יוצר" - the *Satan!* The way they followed their evil inclination is a powerful lesson for us how to serve *Hashem!* Amalek caused a great prosecution against the Jewish people! "אשר קרן בדרך" - they cooled us down from our enthusiasm to serve *Hashem*, "ויניב בך כל הנשלים אחריו" - they cut off all the stragglers from *Klal Yisroel*. All those people who just "following the crowd" - who were going through the motions of serving *Hashem*. Those people were cut off! The prosecution was against them! If Amalek can serve their *Yetzer* with so much enthusiasm and *zerizus*, then shouldn't YOU serve *Hashem* with fire! Amalek caused us to be cold. They took away our fire and this is why we need to remember them.

We must remember Amalek every single day. Because one cannot be a "*Shayna un Fayna Yid*" just by going through the motions of *Yiddishkeit*. Of course, we keep *Shabbos* we eat kosher and we *daven* daily. But HOW do we keep *Shabbos*, eat kosher and *daven*? How do we keep all the *mitzvos*? Do you want to know HOW to do it right? Remember Amalek! Remember what he did and then you will know how to act towards *Hashem!* Don't be a straggler! Stragglers get cut off! Serve *Hashem* with passion, with determination and a sense of mission. This is the greatest revenge we can take on our enemies!