



Harav Shaul Israeli zt"l
Founder and President

Joint Rachel/Leah Leadership and Megillat Esther

Harav Yosef Carmel

Before the finish of our discussion on unity and leadership shared between the descendants of Leah and of Rachel, we will take a quick look at relevant material in Megillat Esther.

The co-hero of Megillat Esther, Mordechai, is introduced in a perplexing way (Esther 2:5). He is called an "ish Yehudi" in Shushan and, after listing his genealogy, is called an "ish Yemini." The *gemara* (Yevamot 12b) notes that the beginning of the *pasuk* sounds like he is from the Tribe of Yehuda, and the end sounds like he is from the Tribe of Binyamin. The *gemara* answers that Mordechai's father was from Binyamin and his mother from Yehuda.

This fits beautifully with the thesis we have been promoting – to bring salvation, one needs a mix between the families of Rachel and Leah. Mordechai achieved his mixture through his mother and father. To this we add the unity call of his cousin, Esther, who said: "Go gather all the Jews" (Esther 4:16).

Let us return to the period of David. In addition to the chance of partnership with Shaul, Yonatan, and Michal, David had the possibility of partnership with Shaul's cousin, Avner ben Ner. Even in Shaul's lifetime, Avner and Ner thought that Avner was the one who was fit to be king. After Shaul died in battle, Avner coronated Shaul's weak son, Ish Boshet (Shmuel II, 2:8-9), as king of 10 tribes. While titularly, Ish Boshet was king, in practice, he was a puppet of the actual leader, Avner. Avner eventually took a step toward becoming full king, and to show this, he took Shaul's concubine, Ritzpa bat Aya. Ish Boshet, sensing what was transpiring, protested Avner's action (ibid. 3:7). The slighted Avner decided that he preferred being David's junior partner than to lead through Ish Boshet. The powerful Avner informed Ish Boshet and took immediate steps to reach out to David, then the King of Yehuda.

Under Avner's plan, there would be a reuniting of all of the tribes, under David's leadership (from Leah), with Avner (from Rachel) as his number 2. David accepted, but he made it conditional on the return of his wife Michal (ibid. 3:13). David phrased it, that Avner could "see my face" only if Michal returned and implied that Avner must be the one to bring her.

The term "seeing the king's face" returns us to Megillat Esther. Achashveirosh's cabinet were called the seven ministers "who see the king's face" (Esther 1:14). Indeed, for a monarch of that magnitude, not just anyone had the right to see the king's face (comparing the incomparable – "... for a man will not see Me and live" (Shemot 33:20)).

When David demanded of Avner to bring Michal, David was hinting that David could unite the descendants of Rachel and Leah through his marriage with Michal. Thus, he did not need Avner's partnership to do this. Still, David offered Avner a role in his cabinet in return for Avner's support. Avner, who had already burned his bridges regarding Shaul's family, was ready for a deal, but not one involving Michal. David arranged to get her back on his own, through Ish Boshet, now Avner's rival. Unfortunately, the building of intertribal partnerships did not reach fruition, not through Avner and not through Michal.

Hemdat Yamim is dedicated to the memory of Eretz Hemdah's beloved friends and Members of Eretz Hemdah's Amutah:

Rav Shlomo Merzel z"l Iyar 10, 5771	Rav Yisrael Rozen z"l Cheshvan 13, 5778	Mr. Moshe Wasserzug z"l Tishrei 20, 5781	Rav Reuven & Chaya Leah Aberman z"l Tishrei 9, 5776 / Tishrei 20, 5782	Prof. Yisrael & Shlomit Aharoni z"l Kislev 14, 5773 / Cheshvan 9, 5786
R' Yaakov ben Abraham & Aisha and Chana bat Yaish & Simcha Sebbag z"l	R' Yitzchak Zev & Naomi Tarshansky z"l Adar 28, 5781/ Adar II 14, 5784	Mr. Shmuel & Rivka Brandman z"l Tevet 16 5783/ Iyar 8, 5781	R' Meir ben Yechezkel Shraga Brachfeld z"l & Mrs. Sara Brachfeld z"l Tevet 16, 5780	
Rabbi Dr. Jerry Hochbaum z"l Adar II 17, 5782	Rav Asher & Susan Wasserteil z"l Kislev 9 / Elul 16, 5780	R' Abraham & Gitta Klein z"l Iyar 18 / Av 4	R' Benzion Grossman z"l Tamuz 23, 5777	
R' Eliyahu Carmel z"l Rav Carmel's father Iyar 8, 5776	Mr. Shmuel & Esther Shemesh z"l Sivan 17 / Av 20	Mrs. Leah Meyer z"l Nisan 27, 5782	Mrs. Julia Koschitzky z"l Adar II 18, 5782	Rav Moshe Zvi (Milton) Polin z"l Tammuz 19, 5778
Mr. Zelig & Mrs. Sara Wengrowsky z"l Tevet 25 5782 / Tamuz 10 5774	Harav Moshe Ehrenreich zt"l Nissan 1, 5785	Hemdat Yamim is endowed by Les z"l & Ethel Sutker of Chicago, Illinois, in loving memory of Max and Mary Sutker & Louis and Lillian Klein z"l		
Mr. Yitzhak Aharon & Mrs. Doba Moinester z"l Elul 5, 5782 / Elul 23, 5774	Nina Moinester, z"l, Nechama Osna bat Yitzhak Aharon & Doba z"l	Mrs. Shirley Rothner z"l Sara Rivka bat Yaakov Tzvi HaCohen / Tevet 15 5768		

Mr. Gershon (George) ben Chayim HaCohen Kaplan Adar II 6

Yehudah ben Naftali Hertz Cohen (Kamofsky) Adar II 12

Those who fell in wars for our homeland. May Hashem avenge their blood!



Ask the Rabbi

Tetzaveh

by Rav Daniel Mann

Booing Haman

Question: During the noise-making breaks after Haman's name in Megilla reading, some people now vocalize their disdain for Haman with sounds and even words. Is that permitted? If words are forbidden, is "Boooo" a word?

Answer: We bend or break normal rules in order to make Purim "lively" in multiple ways. There are the ideas of drinking wine well beyond the norm and that one is exempt from payment for damages caused during the Purim celebration because the mayhem is part of the *mitzva* (Rama, Orach Chayim 695:2). Regarding Megilla reading, the *minhag* that the congregation reads out loud four *p'sukim* was designed "just for happiness, to make the youngsters happy, and encourage them to ... listen to the reading" (Hagahot Maimoniot, Megilla 1:7). There, words are being said in a fundamentally unnecessary manner, but they are the words of the Megilla. The idea of putting down Haman finds expression in several statements of *Chazal*.

Is showing disdain for Haman grounds to bend any rules? The practices of "banging for Haman" has undergone changes over time, but is codified in the Rama (Orach Chayim 690:17). Normally, it is forbidden to do actions in a juncture where *hefsek* is forbidden (Shulchan Aruch, OC 97:4 regarding returning a *tallit* that fell off). Much of the non-vocal noisemaking is as much of an action, so we see a bending of the rules. However, *hefsek* exists on a scale, and speech is at its top (Mishna Berura 104:10), so we must look for precedent for speaking due to Haman's name.

The Magen Avraham (690:21) cites a *minhag* from the Levush (OC 690:17) to say "*Shem resha'im yirkav*" when Haman's name is read, so there is indeed strong precedent. While "boo" lacks the profundity of words from Tanach, the fundamental underpinnings seem the same. On the other hand, the Pri Megadim (ad loc.) criticizes the practice, and it is not cited in the body of the Mishna Berura. In its footnotes (Sha'ar Hatziyun 690:57), he explains that he opposes the practice – however, his grounds (like the Pri Megadim's; they both disapproved the pause in the *leining*) are that the confusion the proclamation brings can cause one to miss part of the *leining*. However, he suggests the following proof that *hefsek* is not a problem. The Shulchan Aruch (ibid. 13) validates a practice to elucidate the Megilla reading during the reading; in other words, with proper justification, one can speak things related to the reading. Igrot Moshe (OC I 192) discusses a deflection of the proof, and leaves the propriety of the Levush's *minhag* unresolved. Regarding the complaint about confusion, in most shuls, vocalization is not going to "push the envelope" (see Living the Halachic Process VI, D-11).

Is wordless vocalization better than speaking with word(s)? *Poskim* treat communicating through *remiza* (hinting) as normally a problem, but when needed, preferable to speaking or even moving from one's place during *Shemoneh Esrei* (Mishna Berura 104:1). That refers to hinting with hands or eyes, not to vocalization. Although I have not found a source for it, it is a longstanding practice (probably overused) for when you must not speak to say "Nu, nu" with gestures and intonations, meaning, "Do as I expect you to understand." This is apparently worse than *remiza* and better than speaking. In some ways, "Boo" is more like speech, as the interjection "boo" is an entry in dictionaries and has a specific meaning (of disapproval), whereas "Nu" can mean anything, depending on context and intonation. If stretched out greatly, "Boooo" is more of a sound than a word, making it is more similar to "Nu." Animal sounds are definitely not speaking, and would be not too different from mechanical noisemaking.

In summary, there are enough ways to put down Haman without the more problematic use of words. On the other hand, words might be okay, even unrelated speech does not disqualify Megilla reading (Rama, OC 690:5), and cramping children's style has a price. Each *shul*/rabbi should act according to its character and the religious/experiential needs of the Purim celebrants.

"Behind the Scenes" Zoom shiur

Eretz Hemdah is offering the readership to join in Rabbi Mann's weekly Zoom sessions, analyzing with him the sources and thought process behind past and future responses. Email us at info@eretzhemdah.org to sign up (free) or for more information on joining the group.

Do not hesitate to ask any question about Jewish life, Jewish tradition or Jewish law.

▶ **SEND NOW!**



Moreshet Shaul

(from the works of Hagaon Harav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l)

Spiritual Self-Improvement – part I

Based on Siach Shaul, Pirkei Machshava V'Hadracha p. 405-7 (from the 1930s)

There are two paths to spiritual self-improvement, with varied stages of elevation. One manner is from above, and the second is from below.

How is this done from above? [It begins with] a broad perspective on the works of Creation. One is amazed by everything around us and realizes the importance of man's ability to grasp everything and of the power of life which percolates through all the universe, in the realm of the living and the inanimate. All of this fills a person with holy bliss and spiritual elevation and brings him to a world that is fully good and fully festive, as the *pasuk* describes, "One who has a good heart drinks [wine] regularly" (Mishlei 15:15). The energetic life takes over his internal spirit, and he is purified and improved, until the spirit is no longer able to see the dark side of things. Rather, he is able to see only the flow of light, just the dancing of bliss and loving emotion; only festivity and happiness.

He sees immediately that what Hashem did is very good (based on Bereishit 1:31). He immediately raises himself above the trite daily nuisances, which disturb most people. His spirit becomes like a violin for the world of existence, and the tones that he captures with his strings are so fine so that he does not know what sadness is, or what worries are. The "mosquitoes" that disturb others in the marketplace are not a factor in his life.

This lofty refining of his personality purifies and refines his spirit so much that there is no place for all of the attributes that lowly, self-centered humans are affected by. It is not just that such a person sees it as lowly, but rather that he does not fully grasp the attribute. Haughtiness, lust, and pursuit of honor, which destroy spirit and body for the masses, do not serve for the ideal person even as grounds for argument.

All of these attributes, which are just creations of living beings to feel that they exist, and serve for the common person as their spiritual food, which he needs no less than the physical food to sustain him, are not necessary for the complete person to feel his own existence. He is, after all, connected to eternity, to the existence of the world. It is from this that he finds his sustenance.

There are, though, moments in which even such a person falls from his high standing. Even his eyes can become puffy and stop seeing well, and then he can sin like anyone else. However, it is easier for him to overcome the challenges by strengthening his connection to existence. Then, within a short time, all these sins fall off him, and a new spirit is renewed within him.

This path to spiritual self-improvement is both long and short. In order for such a person to become elevated in this manner, he must stand promptly on the broad platform that embraces the broadness of the world. Then he must succeed in quickly being elevated to the highest level. This is because, with this approach, there are no compromises, and there is no half a job. It is an enormous service of Hashem, which only very special people are actually able to do.

This is the path from above. The high position that the appropriate person reaches quickly removes all of the difficulty of the earlier stages from him. Things that others can acquire only with great toil are a joke for the ideal person. He passes through all the stages with one bold sprint and at once is beyond all boundaries.

We daven for a complete and speedy refuah for:

Itamar Chaim ben Tzipora

Nir Rephael ben Rachel Bracha

Arye Yitzchak ben Geula Miriam

Tal Shaul ben Yaffa

Ori Leah bat Chaya Temima

Neta bat Malka

Meira bat Esther

Together with all cholei Yisrael

P'ninat Mishpat

Dividing Parents' Resources when Mother Still Alive

(based on ruling 82017 of the Eretz Hemdah-Gazit Rabbinical Courts)

Case: The plaintiff (=pl) and the defendants (=def1, def2) are brothers. The family has a business in Europe. Their mother (=mtr) owns 40% and their deceased father (=ftr), who died recently without a will, owned 30%; def2 bought 30% ownership. According to the country's laws, a widow inherits a third of the estate, and the children split the rest equally. Pl demands several things: 1. 300-400 euros monthly that pl claims his father promised him. Def claim this was offered to help pl buy an apartment, which he did not do, but they agree to give it to pl if he stops the adjudication. 2. His part in the inheritance – A. 6.6% of the company, which pl claims is worth approximately 600,000 euros; B. His part (2/9) of a bank account with 37,000 euros; C. 2/9 of a stock portfolio; D. His part of the household possessions in the family house; E. His part in money mtr received from her family. 3. Return of pl's payment toward funeral. 4. 1500 euros to give up rights to a car, which might have been bought with the parents' money.

Ruling: Monthly stipend: Pl admits that ftr did no more than make an oral pledge to give a present, with no act of *kinyan*. This is not binding (Bava Metzia 58a). This is strengthened by the (unrefuted) claim that it was conditional on its use by pl for an apartment, which pl admits to have not acted on.

Part of the business: One point of disagreement is whether the value pl ascribes to the business is correct. However, the question is not operative. The entire estate is to be protected to ensure support of mtr (Shulchan Aruch, Even Haezer 93:3), and therefore, nothing needs to be paid to pl at this point.

Part in the bank account: Ftr set up this bank account to finance medical expenses of his and mtr's. Since this money is likely earmarked for mtr's needs, it would not be divided with the general estate. In any case, the resources of the estate must be set aside for possible use for the widow's medical needs (ibid. 79:1).

Stocks: Pl will get his part, but there is a technical problem taking it out now.

Household possessions: Mtr's right to live in the joint house after ftr's death includes the right to use the household possessions (ibid. 94:1).

Funeral expenses: Pl admits that he took part in financing ftr's funeral without an explicit stipulation that if he has financial complaints, he can get it back. While things one only thinks of are not halachically significant (Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat 207:4), the Rama (ad loc.) says that if it involved a present, then thought can make them conditional. However, the Aruch Hashulchan (CM 207:12) says that each case must be considered on its merit. In this case, it is natural that one chip in towards a father's funeral, and pl cannot come much later and say it was conditional.

Rights in a car: Def2 bought and uses a car but put it in pl's name (for technical reasons). Since pl admits that he has no direct rights in the car, he cannot demand money for it. It makes no difference if def2 used his own money to buy it or whether his parents decided to pay for some or all of it, as they had the right to use their money as they liked.

Comments or questions regarding articles can be sent to:

info@erezhemdah.org

Eretz Hemdah is the premier institution for training young rabbis to take the Israeli Rabbinates' rigorous Yadin Yadin examinations. **Eretz Hemdah**, with its distinctive blend of Religious Zionist philosophy and scholarship combined with community service, ensures that its graduates emerge with the finest training, the noblest motivations resulting in an exceptionally strong connection to Jewish communities worldwide.