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FEDERATION

משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה

The song that is the staple of every Purim Seuda belies a profound idea. Or at least it would, if it were given a fighting chance. Besides for having to fight against the competing attractions of alcohol and tasty food, this poor מאמר חי"ל doesn't really stand a chance. Whoever made it popular, has a lot to answer for. For this is only a partial quote. To understand it, one would need to quote it in its entirety.

הגמרא quotes רב as connecting and contrasting the משנה that instructs us to 'dial down' *simcha* upon the entry of the month of Av, that *in the same manner* one ought to increase *simcha* during Adar¹.

אמר רב כשם שמשנכנס אב ממעטין בשמחה כך משנכנס אדר ממעטין בשמחה

There appears to be an innate connection between the two. The language of כשם and כך would appear to indicate an existential link. I would like to suggest that it could be read as follows; for the very same reason that the tragic events of the month of Av force us to reduce *simcha*, the events of Adar allow us to reappraise those self-same events and gain a new and utterly joyous perspective.

The גמרא in his classic פירוש (א' - י"ב) on פיורוש tells a parable of a king who, under pressure from vindictive ministers, feels compelled to banish his wayward son to a forbidding forest. Partly to protect the crown prince from the constant barrage of ministerial criticism, and partly in response to his rebellion, the king reluctantly relents and denies himself the companionship and immediacy of his son's presence. His paternal love is however, undiminished. He instructs MI5 to continue to offer the prince 'close protection', but this time with an additional caveat. The prince, and indeed the ministers must not become aware of the continued protection. This makes the task of the secret service detail much more complex. The covert nature of the operation requires them to ensure his absolute safety, but, ironically, more agents are needed to perform the same task, and their vigilance must be heightened to maintain the same outcome.

The distraught and lonely prince takes a stroll in the forest, only to be confronted by a vicious grizzly bear, who pounces, and then strangely falls down dead. The bewildered prince attributes the bear's demise to a lucky coincidence and strolls on. He is then challenged by a gang of armed thugs, who fortuitously, are themselves attacked by a rival gang, and driven off. After a string of lucky escapes, the prince begins to smell the proverbial rat. He soon realises that, in actuality, he is living a charmed existence. He is now able to appreciate the depth of commitment and love that his father had for him. He perceived the banishment now in a new light. Rather than viewing the expulsion as an act of rejection, he now understood that, all long, it was driven by an unshakeable, eternal love.

The משנה מסכת פסחים in צ"ח utilises this concept to stunning effect. He contends that, after the revelation and the reappraisal, the re-evaluation that משיח will bring in its wake, we will feel compelled to recite the ברכות גלות in its wake, viewed through the lens of the הטוב והמטיב we had previously recited the ברכה of האמת!

¹ בספר פרקי השנה (ח"א עמוד ריא) הביא שמון בעל הקהילות יעקב נשאל על זה שלא הביאו השו"ע והרמב"ם כמו שהביאו הר דאב (ובאמת במג"א וחיי אדם ומ"ב כן מובא) ע"ש

Adar

We can now cast new light on the song, and really appreciate the גמרא.

The Purim story gave us fresh perspective on גלות, allowed us to see it as a survival mechanism, and that, far from being rejected, we are being watched over with love and affection². Even as the veil of history serves to mislead, it parts briefly in Shushan of old, to reveal the quiet orchestration of politics, the covert care, the loving protection of a committed Father. We are now thoroughly confused, we cannot distinguish between the blessing of a Mordechai and the curse of a despotic Homon. Both serve to illuminate our lives and highlight the eternity of a Nation that is never abandoned and can never be destroyed.

We now re-evaluate the very cause for our lack of *simcha* as we usher in Adar and perceive it as an opportunity to choose to reconnect to השם through תשובה and תפילה and perceive Hashem's love for us.

Cause for *simcha* indeed!

² ע"י מהרש"א יומא ס"ט: ד"ה אתא דניאל

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