

Rabbi Shaul Feldman



## HALLEL AND PREPARING FOR MODERN-DAY REDEMPTION

**A**lthough Purim and Pesach don't seem to have much in common, we can find many sources throughout *Chazal* that weave together an obvious correlation between the two.

In Masechet Megillah (6b), Rav Yochanan discusses the opinions regarding when to celebrate Purim in a leap year. The question is asked, in which Adar do we celebrate Purim? Rav Eliezer and Rav Yossi are of the opinion that we celebrate in the first Adar, adjacent to Shvat. However, *leHalacha* we follow Rashbag's opinion that the second month of Adar – the month adjacent to Nissan – is the “chosen one.”

The Gemara later explains the logic of Rashbag, in that juxtaposing the celebration of one redemption, Purim, to the celebration of another redemption, Pesach, is preferable.

It's interesting to note that Pesach is our first holiday that is *d'oraita* and Purim is our first holiday that is *deRabanan*. As we know, Rabbinic *mitzvot* were put into place as a means to enhance the *mitzvot d'oraita*. Our Rabbis enhanced our calendar with Purim, perhaps, to bring us closer to the full redemption.

On Rav's famous comment (Ta'anit 29), משנכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה, Rashi similarly makes a connection between the holidays. Just as when Av begins one decreases rejoicing, so too when Adar begins, one increases rejoicing. Rashi explains why: ימי נסים היו: לישאל: פורים ופסח, “Whoever enters Adar – These were days of miracles for the Jews: Purim and Pesach.”

This Rashi seems odd, because Pesach is in Nissan!

There are many ways in which we can understand the correlation between the two holidays. *Hallel* denotes

rejoicing. On Purim, we read the Megillah. According to one opinion in the Gemara, the Megillah is the *Hallel* for Purim. On Pesach, we have the Haggadah, which includes *Hallel*.

Another similarity exists in a key omission. Many struggle with the question of why G-d isn't mentioned in the Megillah. Some explain that actually G-d's name is mentioned, but in a hidden way. The word המלך with the ה"א הקדישה – definitive *the* – is referring to G-d, as it says in the Megillah: בלילה ההוא נדדה שנת המלך, “That night, sleep deserted *the* King.”

The King, *Chazal* explain, is G-d, looking after *Am Yisrael*.

When it comes to Pesach, many struggle with a similar question: why isn't Moshe mentioned in the Haggadah?

Perhaps we can view each holiday as having a unique challenge for us to overcome, and by doing so, we come closer to the full redemption. On Purim, one may assume from the story that G-d isn't part of the equation. It can appear as a completely secular holiday, when our salvation happened naturally or by chance. G-d is hidden in the recounting of the story, and our work on Purim is to connect the outcome to G-d. Pesach, on the other hand, is a holiday of supernatural powers. Miracles occurred that we may think have nothing to do with human work. In the same vein, Moshe is perhaps removed from the Haggadah, for us to work on connecting the miracles to our human actions.

We find an interesting argument in the Shulchan Aruch regarding saying *Hallel* in shul on the first night of Pesach, the opening of the holiday. There is a disagreement between Rav Yosef Karo in *Eretz Yisrael*, who says we say *Hallel* with a *bracha*, versus the Rema, who

points out that in *Chutz LaAretz* we don't say *Hallel* in *shul* as it's said at the Seder. *Minhag Eretz Yisrael* even for Ashkenazi Jews is to follow Rav Yosef Karo and we recite *Hallel* on Pesach night in *shul*.

*Hallel* in *shul*, a holy place, is further connecting the miracles to G-d, in turn setting up a deeper challenge in connecting it to human actions. We find this exact challenge in our modern redemption: *Medinat Yisrael*. A large group in *Am Yisrael* hold that it's completely disconnected from G-d, because they only believe in human power or, and at the other extreme, another group believe in G-d's power alone, and the State is too man-made.

Coming out from Adar and Nissan with the understanding that both human action – *hishtadlut* – and G-d's Providence go hand in hand in bringing the ultimate redemption, allows us to enter Iyar, the month of Yom HaAtzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim, in the right frame of mind.

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