

*All the king's courtiers in the palace gate knelt and bowed low to Haman, for such was the king's order concerning him; but Mordechai would not kneel or bow low.*

(Esther 3:2)

The Meforshim ask: Why didn't Mordechai simply avoid being in Haman's presence? Why was he allowed to put all of klal Yisroel in danger by provoking Haman? After all, it is forbidden to rely on miracles.

Mordechai's actions can be understood in light of the following Gemara:

Abaye heard that Rav Acha bar Yaakov was coming. There was a certain demon in the study hall of Abaye, which was so powerful that when two people would enter, they would be harmed, even during the day. Abaye said to the people of the town: Do not give Rav Acha bar Yaakov lodging [*ushpiza*] so that he will be forced to spend the night in the study hall. Since Rav Acha bar Yaakov is a righteous man, perhaps a miracle will occur on his behalf and he will kill the demon. Rav Acha found no place to spend the night, and he entered and spent the night in that study hall of the Sages. The demon appeared to him like a serpent with seven heads. Rav Acha bar Yaakov began to pray, and with every bow that he bowed one of the demon's heads fell off, until it eventually died. The next day Rav Acha said to the townspeople: If a miracle had not occurred, you would have placed me in danger. (*Kidushin* 29b)

The Maharshah asks: How did Abaye rely on a miracle that might not have occurred? He answers: Abayah was sure that Rav Achah would be saved through his prayers and in that case it isn't even considered a miracle. When he said, "Perhaps a miracle would occur," he meant before Rav Achah would begin praying and in that case it would use up his zechusim. Perhaps we can suggest based on the above that Mordechai's defiance of Haman was not considered a danger to himself or klal Yisroel and relying on a miracle because he had Bitachon Hashem would save them. According to this the entire miracle of Purim was based on Bitachon!

Perhaps this is the meaning of the piyut of Shoshanas Yakov we read upon completing the reading of the Megillas:

*The rose of Yaakov thrilled with joy and exulted when they beheld Mordechai garbed in royal blue. You were their salvation forever, their hope in every generation, to make known that all who trust in You shall not be shamed, (some say that Mordechai was originally blamed for putting all the Jews in danger) nor shall all those who place hope in You be disgraced forever.*

Perhaps we can suggest that we find several places in the Gemara that tzaddikim relied on miracles because they had Bitachon.

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The question is asked: “You were” is past tense, therefore it should say, “You are their salvation forever.” Why does it instead say “You were their salvation forever”? It seems that in Hashem’s salvation of klal Yisroel in the story of Purim lies their salvation from every predicament until the end of time. How is this so?

The Rambam explains the reasoning behind the establishment of Purim as follows: *The prophets with the assembly of Sages enacted and commanded to read the Megilah in its proper time in order to proclaim the praise of Hashem and the salvation that He brought about for us and that He responded when we called out. (The mitzvaah was created) in order that we should bless Him and praise Him and in order to make known to future generations that the promise made to us in the Torah – “For who is the great nation whose G-d is close to it like Hashem our G-d at any time that we call out to Him?” – is true... (Mishne Torah, Introduction)* For in the story of Purim, the *seforim* write, klal Yisroel’s annihilation was even decreed in Heaven above and nevertheless the salvation was brought about through Bitachon, as the Medresh (Esther Rabah 9:1) describes the turning point in klal Yisroel’s salvation, “Hashem turned to the pain of the yesomah (Esther) who had Bitachon in Him...”

The gift of the salvation of Purim is a gift that keeps on giving, being that it is the key to our salvation in every situation for all eternity, for it “makes known to future generations that the promise made to us in the Torah – ‘For who is the great nation whose G-d is close to it like Hashem our G-d at any time that we call out to Him?’ – is true...!” This is the meaning behind the words of Shoshanas Yaakov: “You were their salvation forever, their hope in every generation,” for through Your salvation even then You “make known that all who trust in You shall not be shamed, nor shall all those who place hope in You be disgraced forever.”

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