

INSIGHTS from the SEDRA

Insights from the Sedra is a project of the Scholar's Kollel of Great Neck. It aims to provide several questions and answers about the Sedra, culled from various commentaries, including the following: Baal Haturim, Darash Moshe, Vedibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky, Torah Treasures by Dov Furer, Wellsprings of Torah by Alexander Friedman, and Kol Dodi by Rabbi Dovid Feinstein, Great Torah Lights by Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Goodman, Something To Say by Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser, The Vilna Gaon, Growth Through Torah by Zelig Pliskin and The Call of the Torah.

**INSIGHTS from the SEDRA for the year 5783 is being dedicated by
Ruvane & Stephanie Vilinsky in memory of Tzvi Ben Yakov & Shimon Ben Pinchus z"l**

לכבוד ולתפארת

"For glory and splendor..." (28:2)

Seventy years after *Nevuchadnetzar* exiled *King Yehoyachin* from Jerusalem, the Persian King *Achashveirosh* made a lavish banquet in *Shushan*, the capital of his kingdom. At the banquet, he displayed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honor of his splendid majesty (*Esther* 1:4). The word *תפארת* tells us that he brazenly wore the holy garments of the *Kohen Gadol*, which our verse refers to as vestments...for glory and splendor. Those garments had been looted from the *Beit HaMikdash* by his wife's grandfather, *Nebuchadnetzar*. (*Teachings of the Talmud, Megillah* 12a)

ואתה תדבר אל כל חכמי לב אשר מלאתינו רוח חכמה

"And you shall speak to all the wise-hearted people whom I have invested with a spirit of wisdom..." (28:3)

The verse introduces for the first time the term *חכם לב* - "wise of heart," after which it is found several times. What does it mean, and how is it attained? *Rav Chaim Shmulevitz*, legendary *mashgiach* of the *Mirrer Yeshiva*, discusses this subject in his *Sichas Mussar*.

We find later (*Shemot* 31:6) G-d's assertion: "in the heart of every **chacham lev** I conferred wisdom." This indicates that one must ready himself with a wise heart in order to be granted wisdom. How is this done? We must examine one case that will enlighten us. King *Shlomo* was asked by G-d to choose one gift, and rather than wealth or long life, he chose wisdom. G-d was pleased to give it to him and complimented him for his choice. Thus, we learn that one attains wisdom by a great yearning for it. *Shlomo* understood that wealth or long life are valueless without wisdom. (Something to Say)

INSIGHTS TO PURIM

בשושן הבירה

"In Shushan, the capital..." (Esther 1:2)

QUESTION: In the *Megillah* we find the expression "*Shushan Habirah*" – "Shushan the Capital" – ten times, and nine times "*Ha'ir Shushan*" – "The City of Shushan" – or just plain "*Shushan*." Obviously, this is intentional. Why the distinction?

ANSWER: *Shushan Habirah* was the capital of *Achashveirosh's* kingdom. Near it was a suburb known also as "*Shushan*". The two cities were separated by the Ulai River (see *Daniel* 8:2). It was forbidden for Jews to live in the capital city, but they were permitted to live in the city of *Shushan*. Therefore, when the *Megillah* speaks about *Achashveirosh* or the issuing of decrees, *Shushan Habirah* – *Shushan* the Capital – is mentioned. Whenever the *Megillah* speaks about the Jewish people, *Ha'ir Shushan* – the city of *Shushan* is mentioned. (Vedebarta Bam)

יבא המלך והמן היום

"Let the King and Haman come today..." (5:4)

QUESTION: The first letters of these words are an acronym of Hashem's holy four-letter Name. Why, however, isn't His Name written explicitly anywhere in the *Megillah*?

ANSWER: The *Megillah* was written by *Mordechai* and sent to the Jews in all the King's provinces. It contained a piece of current history which was of interest to all, and it was therefore entered in the Book of Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia, out of concern that when it would be translated the writers would exchange the Name of Hashem with the one of their gods' names, *Mordechai* omitted His Name entirely. (Eben Ezra)

ויתלו את המן על העץ

"So, they hung Haman on the gallows..." (7:10)

Haman was in power for a total of seventy days. It is interesting to note that from the verse "After these days the King promoted Haman" (3:1) till "They hung Haman on the gallows" (7:10) there are a total of seventy *psukim*. The word "*ha'eitz*" – the gallows – has the numerical value of 165, which alludes to the name *Haman*, numerical value of 95, plus the seventy days of his reign.

The Jew suffered from *Haman* for seventy days as punishment for attending *Achashveirosh's* feast, at which they drank from the "royal wine which was in abundance" (1:7). The word "*yayin*" – wine – has the numerical value of seventy. *Esther* rectified this through inviting *Achashveirosh* and *Haman* to the *mishteh yayin* – wine feast (7:2) and thus one is obligated on *Purim* to achieve a joyful state through drinking wine (see *Megillah* 7b, *Rashi*). (Orah V'Simcha)

SHABBAT SHALOM!

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