

## דרכים בפרשה תצוה-זכור

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**ואתה תצוה את בני ישראל ויקחו אליך שמן זית זך**  
**תמיד** - *You shall command the B'nei Yisrael and have them bring you clear olive oil, crushed for lighting, to keep the lamp burning constantly.*

Parshas Tetzaveh opens with the mitzvah of lighting the Menorah in the Beis HaMikdash. Chazal tell us that although each of the neiros received the exact same measured amount of oil, the Ner Ma'aravi continued burning well beyond what nature would allow. It was a constant neis. And yet, everything about it was set up to look normal. The oil was measured. The wick was ordinary. If someone wanted to say "that's just how it worked," they could. But if someone wanted to see yad Hashem, it was impossible to miss.

This idea is not unique to the Menorah.

The Sefer HaChinuch wonders regarding the mitzvah of **eish tamid**: if the fire of the Mizbe'ach was sustained through a neis, why was it necessary to supply wood at all? He explains a fundamental yesod. When Hashem performs nissim, He does so in a way that allows them to appear natural. This is deliberate. Hashem wants the world to run in a way that preserves bechirah. A person can recognize yad Hashem, or he can dismiss what he sees as coincidence. The neis is real, but the choice to see it is ours.

The Chinuch brings a proof from Krias Yam Suf. The Torah tells us that there was a strong eastern wind at the time. A non-believer is more than happy to explain that the sea split because of the wind. Of course, that explanation collapses the moment one considers the countless Chazal that describe what happened after the waters split. The ground was solid and smooth like glass. Fruit trees emerged from the walls. Nissim occurred at every step. But someone who does not want to see yad Hashem is satisfied pointing to the wind. The choice is always there.

This idea comes up time and time again. The meforshim explain that this is a major focus of Amaleik. In Parshas Zachor, we read their mantra: **אשר קרן בדרך** - to make us believe that everything is mikreh, that there is no yad Hashem, only coincidence and nature.

Now we see this idea come alive in the Megillah itself.

**ויספר המן לזרש אשתו ולכל אהביו את כל אשר קרהו**  
And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his loved ones everything that had occurred.

Haman had just gone through the most humiliating experience of his life. As second to the king, he certainly

did not expect to be walking through the streets shlepping the reins of the horse carrying his arch-enemy Mordechai. And as if that was not enough humiliation for one day, Haman's daughter assumed that it was her father on the horse and Mordechai doing the shlepping. As a good daughter, she threw her garbage from a rooftop, scoring a direct hit. When she realized it was her father, she jumped to her death.

Walking into his home like this, the pasuk tells us that Haman related to Zeresh and his family **את כל אשר קרהו**, everything that had happened. The Malbim asks a simple question: why would Haman tell everything? Wouldn't this be something he would much rather hide?

If we look a little deeper, it becomes very clear. The last time Haman's family saw him, he was on his way to the king to get permission to hang Mordechai. They naturally assumed that things had gone badly, that the king had refused him. So Haman walks in, with the egg yolk still dripping from his glasses, and explains that they have it all wrong. This was no setback at all.

"No no... oh you thought...? No, not at all... I just walked in at the wrong moment. Coincidentally, the king happened to be checking his books and realized he owed Mordechai a favor. Bad timing. That's all. It means nothing. I will still get permission to hang him."

The Malbim explains that this is the worldview of Amaleik. Hashgachas Hashem does not exist. Everything is coincidence. **אשר קרן בדרך**. It's all mikreh. And that is why Haman emphasizes **את כל אשר קרהו**. To him, nothing meaningful has happened. The word **קרהו** itself says it all. Haman is not worried.

Zeresh, however, sees what Haman refuses to see. The Yidden live with a special hashgachah guiding their destiny. If Mordechai is from that nation, then you will keep falling before him. Your only hope is when the Jews relax, when they weaken in teshuvah and tefillah. Only then can you overcome them.

The Menorah teaches the very same lesson every single day. The neis is quiet. It can be ignored. The oil looks measured. The setup looks natural. But the one who wants to see understands that the light is not burning on its own.

Let us be mechazek ourselves in emunah, that Hashem runs the world and that there is no such thing as coincidence. In that zechus, may we be zocheh to a renewed **קימו וקבלו**, and to finally stamp out the name and the worldview of Amaleik once and for all.

**Good Shabbos and ah freilichen Purim!**

**מרדכי אפפנל**