

PURIM - TALKING TO THE NEGIAH-SHEEP TO THE SLAUGHTER

Background

One of the most barbaric tyrants who ever ruled over man was Achashverosh. Not only wasn't he above murder and wholesale slaughter, if anyone walked into his throne room uninvited, the inevitable result was that he would be slain on the spot. In fact, when Esther did walk in, despite the fact that she was queen, the guards immediately moved forward to kill her. They stopped only because the king lowered his scepter.

Based on this understanding, when Mordechai asked Esther to seek mercy from Achashverosh, Esther said, "I will wait for the king to call me," to which Mordechai responded, "Do not feel secure in the fact that you are the queen."

Questions

The Rosh HaYeshiva observed: Esther seems to be logical in her position and Mordechai almost reactionary. He is certainly not addressing her concerns.

Despite the danger that it implies, Esther agreed to go to the king. However, she wisely pointed out: "I haven't been called by the king for thirty days. Likely he will call me shortly, and I will have a greater chance of success if he calls me because then I would be doing his bidding, and secondly, I would avoid the possibility of being killed for the *chutzpah* of walking in uninvited."

Clearly, Mordechai felt that she shouldn't wait, but rather go in immediately. However, not only doesn't Mordechai address the logic of her point, he reacts with unwarranted criticism: "Don't think that you will escape because you are queen."

Esther wasn't claiming that she herself wasn't in danger. She was making a logical point: strategically, it is wiser to wait. So why did Mordechai react as he did?

ספר אסתר פרק ד

יג) וַיֹּאמֶר מְרֹדֶכַי לְהָשִׁיב אֶל אֶסְתֵּר אֵל תְּדַמִּי בְּנַפְשִׁי לְהַמְלִיט בַּיִת הַמֶּלֶךְ מִכָּל הַיְהוּדִים:

יד) כִּי אִם הִחַרְשׁ תַּחְרִישִׁי בַּעַת הַזֹּאת רוּחַ וְהַצְלָה יֵעָמוּד לַיהוּדִים מִמְּקוֹם אַחַר וְאֶת וּבֵית אָבִיךָ תֵּאבְדוּ וּמִי יוֹדֵעַ אִם לַעַת כְּזֹאת הִגַּעְתָּ לְמַלְכוּת

And Mordechai said to Esther, "Do not imagine in your mind that you will be saved in the palace from the fate of all Jews. If you are silent at this time, salvation and rescue will come to the Jews from another source, and you and your father's house will be lost. And who is to know if you were not brought to the palace for this very moment?"

רש"י אסתר פרק ד פסוק יג

יג) אל תדמי בנפשך - אל תהי סבורה להמלט ביום ההריגה בבית המלך שאין את רוצה לסכן עצמך עכשיו על הספק לבא אל המלך שלא ברשות

Rashi – Don't imagine in your mind- *Don't think that you will be saved on the day of the killing and therefore you shouldn't endanger yourself.*