

THEY DON'T MAKE ANTI-SEMITES LIKE THEY USED TO

Background

As Bnei Torah, we often come across issues that we studied in our youth, but when we re-visit them with our more developed grasp of life, we realize they make little sense. One of the challenges of growth is to re-analyze issues that we took at face value, go back and study them in a new light, and understand the depth of what the Torah is really teaching us. Megillas Esther is a classic example of this. While the storyline is told over to four-year-olds, the actual meaning and message behind the Megillah is hidden.

תלמוד בבלי מסכת מגילה דף יד/א

משל דאחשורוש והמן למה הדבר דומה לשני בני אדם לאחד היה לו תל בתוך שדהו ולאחד היה לו חריץ בתוך שדהו בעל חריץ אמר מי יתן לי תל זה בדמים בעל התל אמר מי יתן לי חריץ זה בדמים לימים נזדווגו זה אצל זה אמר לו בעל חריץ לבעל התל מכור לי תילך אמר לו טול אותה בחנם והלואי

The following moshol describes Achashveirosh and Haman:

Once there were two men. One had a field with a mound of dirt in it, and the other had field with a ditch in it. The man with the ditch would say, "If only I could purchase that mound in his field." The man with the mound would say, "If I only I could pay him to put my mound into his ditch." One day they met, and the man with the ditch said to the man with the mound, "Would you allow me to purchase your excess dirt?" The man with the dirt said, "Take it for free. Please."

Questions

AREN'T we taught that Achashverosh was the "foolish king," the one who didn't even know about the Jews? Wasn't he surprised when Esther told him that Haman had planned to kill out the entire Jewish Nation? Yet this Gemarah seems to tell us that he was in on the plot as much as Haman. What was Achasverosh's real stance on the Jewish problem?