



A Jewish Leader's Greatest Calling – Education

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The Midrash relates that Mordechai gathered 22,000 Jewish children, very young children, and studied Torah with them.

This caused a commotion on High; it “disturbed God’s sleep,” and that became the essence of the miracle and not only was the decree abolished, it was reversed: “The Jews had light, joy, gladness and glory,” and “masses of non-Jews converted to Judaism.”

Every detail in the Megillah is a lesson; each “remembrance” is a “lesson,” a directive for this Purim and the days that follow — in every generation, forever.

The lesson: first and foremost, whatever the situation, you must see to it that wherever a Jewish child may be, he should study Torah.

Even if you are Chief Justice of the Judaic High Court, as Mordechai was in his time — though later on he wasn’t the leader, but a member of the High Court — and notwithstanding the fact that he was a minister in Achashverosh’s court, an adviser to the king — a position which influenced the entire world, all 127 lands — at first glance, it would have been sufficient for him to hire a teacher for the children.

These were youngsters well under Bar Mitzvah age who had no need for the wisdom of Mordechai — a member, and even Chief Justice, of the High Court.

Why, then, become involved in teaching Torah to small children?!

The Megillah tells us: Quite the contrary! Esther’s success in her plea before Achashverosh; Mordechai’s success in guiding Esther properly; the reversal of the decree; “the essence of the miracle” — it all came about because Mordechai did not seek excuses: “I’m an eminent Rosh Yeshiva, it is inappropriate to deal with small children;” “I’m a prominent activist: I should become involved with a Talmud Torah, a small school with little kids?” “After all, he is a major player and the entire world depends on him...”



פרשת כי תשא

Mordechai's success in convincing Esther and her own success with Achashverosh resulted from Mordechai's efforts to bring together Jewish children and turn them into Torah students.

From this decisive event everything else unfolded, leading ultimately to the miracle.

This is a lesson for our daily lives — this Purim and Shushan Purim, and all the days that follow.

If one claims, "I am busy! How can I be disturbed with the education of young children that can be delegated to my assistant? I'll direct him to make an appeal, and that will suffice"

The Megillah teaches: No! As long there is a Jewish child who has no teacher, you have no choice. Sit down and study with him!

"He's only a child," you say, and you're the "Chief of the High Court?" That's nothing new. Mordechai did it — and he was the Chief Justice at the time of the Holy Temple!

And this is what was discussed earlier:

If a child is allowed, Heaven forbid, to "oversleep," if he is not educated in the proper way, it is uncertain whether the loss will ever be recovered.

This is true in any time.

But in our own time when strong winds are raging, when every child is confronted by those attempting to lead him astray;

if the child is allowed to "oversleep" even a few minutes, or by allowing the parents to "slumber" for a few minutes — or for fear of insulting the parents, one refrains from providing the child with a true Jewish education,

it is possible that a moment later, or a day later, you may not be able to reach this child. Will he be receptive at that time, or will he already be a "captive" of unfavorable circumstances?

On the other hand, we can be certain that if we only desire to achieve, then, as in the Purim story, even those who "bowed to the statue," Heaven forbid; those "who indulged in the royal feast" — not only will their children study Torah without the parents' objections, but the parents, as well, will be happy and proud.



פרשת כי תשא

And "it shall not depart from their descendants": parents and children together will speedily greet Moshiach, with the true and ultimate redemption, with joy and gladness of heart!

