



Purim

Asking for Miracles

Reb Noson evokes the connection between Purim and Pesach in several different contexts in this emotional prayer, pleading with God to deliver us today with the same wonders and miracles that He performed in days of old.

May it be Your will, O God and God of our fathers, Who performs miracles and wonders in every generation, fighting our battles and adjudicating our judgments, avenging our grievances, repaying all those who hate us, and compensating us for our sufferings – shower Your abundant mercy upon us and deliver us with Your awesome wondrousness, so that we may receive and uphold the holy days of Purim in their season, as is befitting. Let us fulfill all the holy mitzvot performed on Purim in great holiness and purity, joyfully and wholeheartedly, “with mirth, glad song, pleasure and delight,” according to all their detailed laws, fine points and intentions, as well as the complete structure of 613 mitzvot that depend on them.¹

Master of the Universe! You have already made known to us that the miracles and wonders You performed for our ancestors, which our holy festivals commemorate, are all reenacted and revealed and shine forth in every generation, in every person and time. We need to elicit the holiness of Purim and all the festivals, as well as the miracles and wonders that took place at these times, in every year, in every generation, and in every person.

Therefore I have come before You, Who performs miracles and wonders in every generation, as well as in

every day and every hour, with this request: Teach me, instruct me, be gracious to me, and grant me the privilege to rejoice on Purim truly and completely; to rejoice with all my heart and soul on the holy days of Purim, each and every year, with boundless joy!

Through the joy and holiness of Purim, may I draw upon myself and upon all Israel the holiness and purity of the *Parah Adumah* (Red Heifer),² which purifies from contact with the dead. For You commanded us to read the Torah account of the *Parah Adumah* after Purim; and You disclosed to us that through Purim, we merit to attain the spiritual purification of the *Parah Adumah*, so that we will be in the necessary state of purity to receive the holiness of the *Korban Pesach* in its season.³

Master of the Universe! You know how deeply we have fallen during this bitter exile, and how many spiritual sufferings have overwhelmed each Jew, including myself. The depths of the sea threaten to drown me; they engulf me from all sides. I am in such dire straits that I cannot think of any way to solve my problems and be saved from all this. I need miracles and wonders and awesome salvations, such as those You performed for Israel long ago – awesome miracles and wonders that have not been seen since the days of Mordekhai and Esther, when the evil Haman, may his name be blotted out, rose up against us. As You informed us through Your holy sages of blessed memory, the miracle of Purim was greater than all the miracles You ever performed. And, “All the festivals will be cancelled in time to come, but the days of Purim will never be cancelled.”⁴ And, “At first all beginnings were from Pesach, since all the holidays commemorate the Exodus from Egypt; but now... .”⁵

■ ENTERING THE LIGHT

Master of the Universe, Ruler of the entire world, Master of Wonders, Who causes all deliverances to sprout forth! You know the truth, that of all the miracles and wonders You have performed for us – the Exodus from Egypt, the battle with Amalek in the days of Moses and in the days of Mordekhai and Esther, and all the miracles and wonders You have performed on our behalf during the days of Chanukah, as well as in every generation – the greatest miracle and salvation is the deliverance of the soul. For the jealousy and hatred of all our adversaries and persecutors, both physical and spiritual, focus squarely on our belief in the Lord, our God, and our desire to walk in Your holy ways, to fulfill Your awesome mitzvot, and to reveal and publicize the truth of faith in Your Divinity, Your Providence and Your Sovereignty. For this reason exclusively, “not one alone arose against us to destroy us; rather, in every generation, they have arisen against us to destroy us – but the Holy One, blessed be He, rescued us from their hands.”⁶ Display Your zealousness to save us from all our troubles, and perform miracles and wonders in order to uphold Your Torah and mitzvot, so that they should not cease from the world, God forbid, according to the desire of anti-Semites and atheists, all of whom come from the kelipah of Haman-Amalek,⁷ may their names be blotted out.

Now, what can I say before You, Who dwells on high, and what can I relate before You, Who sits in the heavens, if after all these miracles and wonders, I alone persecute myself more than all our enemies? For I did not overcome my desires, but even welcomed the evil inclination – and then I did what I did, until I brought upon myself all these afflictions; sufferings of the soul that are more difficult

and bitter than all sufferings. There is no suffering like the suffering of the soul. Indeed, this is the greatest reason for pity: to extricate a Jewish soul from sins and spiritual damage.

Master of the entire world! Primordial One! God of truth! You alone know the true implication of my words, for I am “empty and know nothing”⁸ of the full scope of the miracle of Purim, physically and spiritually – and in particular, how to imbue me with this miracle and deliverance. You alone know all this, and with glimmers of intuition and various hints without measure, You constantly beckon to me from afar as to how I may come closer to You. But I, in my stubbornness, still have not turned back from my straying. Yet this is my consolation in my bitter poverty: that I persist in speaking words such as these before You, and trill my words from the dust unto You, and still hope for Your mercy and deliverance.

Master of the Universe, You alone know the magnitude of the miracle that took place in the days of Mordekhai and Esther, who were privileged to win the war against Haman-Amalek, in order to blot out their name and memory from the world; how, in so doing, they were able to transmit a wondrous illumination and awesome salvation from generation to generation; and how, even now, all our vitality and hope to leave our exile in body and soul can only be found through the power of this miracle. We stand and long for Your deliverance. Just as You helped them in former times to subjugate and destroy the kelipah of Haman-Amalek – to uproot, eradicate and conquer this great force of corruption, to reveal faith in Your Providence to the world, and to return and uphold and receive anew the holiness of Your Torah – so may

■ ENTERING THE LIGHT

You come to our aid in every generation until we win the war completely, and utterly wipe out the memory of Amalek. Remove the spirit of impurity from the earth, return us to You in truth, and speedily bring us forth from our bitter exile!

Therefore I have come before You, Master of Wonders, begging You to take to heart the great anguish of our souls. Gaze upon our misery and travail, and do not gaze upon our deeds! Work miracles and wonders for us, “Purim miracles,” and set into motion chains of cause and effect for our benefit so that we may return to You during our lifetimes, immediately, without a moment’s delay, and never again return to our folly.

Master of the Universe, Who gives life to the living, Living God, Eternal King! Have mercy on us, grant us life, preserve us, sanctify us and purify us from the impurity of contact with the dead, which is the primary source of impurity. This corresponds to immoral thoughts and fantasies, which have come to proliferate throughout the world to the point that “we are drowning in the watery abyss without a foothold; we have entered deep waters, and the rushing current sweeps us away!”⁹ In the power of the holiness of Purim, enable us to receive and imbue ourselves with the holiness and purity of the perfect *Parah Adumah*, which purifies from contact with the dead, both in this world and in the World to Come. And then grant us the merit to receive the holy festival of Pesach, the “season of our liberation,”¹⁰ with great sanctity and immeasurable joy.

In Your mercy, may we merit to fulfill all the mitzvot of Pesach with great holiness, and with great joy and gladness. Protect us from even the smallest amount of

chametz and leavening, so that even the least speck of chametz or leavening cannot be found in our domain throughout the days of Pesach. For it is revealed and known to You, Master of the entire world, that it would be impossible for a human being of flesh and blood to be sufficiently vigilant about the least amount of chametz, were it not for Your deliverance and mercy. Have mercy on us in Your abundant compassion, Mighty Redeemer, Truly Merciful One, and guard and save us from even the least amount of chametz throughout the holy days of Pesach. Help us and grant us the privilege to go out “from slavery to freedom, from grief to joy, from mourning to Yom Tov, and from darkness to the greatest light!”¹¹ Let us celebrate the Pesach Seder with deep fervor, wondrous, fiery enthusiasm and boundless joy! May we be found worthy of receiving the most wondrous illumination of all states of expanded consciousness and constricted consciousness, which shine forth on Pesach with the most awesome, wondrous radiance!

All-Merciful One, help us to fulfill the mitzvot of Purim with such holiness and joy that in this merit we succeed in protecting ourselves from even the least trace of chametz, and fulfill the awesome mitzvot of Pesach with great holiness and profound joy. Have compassion for the sake of Your Name and enable us, even now, to evoke Your mercy. Help us and save us, according to this Torah, to return and draw close to You immediately and truthfully. In the power of the holiness of the miracle and the wondrous deliverance of Purim, save us, so that we may be transformed, this very moment, from evil to good, and from profuse darkness to great light.

Enable us to complete the Fast of Esther before Purim in great sanctity, to recite the Selichot with intense

■ ENTERING THE LIGHT

concentration, and to call out and scream to You from the depths. Open my heart, so that I may truly feel the pain of my sins and the profound travail of my soul, which is beyond measure, until I merit to scream a loud and bitter scream, as befits me according to the enormity of my sins and transgressions and the tremendous damage I have done to my soul – until You awaken Your mercies upon me in truth, and hasten to rescue and redeem me from myself, thus to perform “in Your statutes I will walk, and Your mitzvot I will heed,”¹² in truth and with a whole heart.

My Father, my King, my Former, my Creator and my Maker! Teach me the way to begin anew from the holiness of Purim, as You have hinted to us through Your holy sages.¹³ Help me in a miraculous manner, through a wondrous deliverance, through a wondrous and awesome innovation, so that from now on I will return to You in complete teshuvah and make a completely new start in serving You with all my heart and soul. Instruct me and teach me how to begin in truth; in which way, and according to which advice, I may return to You.

Master of the Universe, “great in counsel and mighty in deed,”¹⁴ send me good advice and save me quickly for the sake of Your Name, so that I will merit from now on to attain perfect teshuvah all the days of my life, and from this moment on never veer from Your will, “neither to the right or the left.”¹⁵ May I merit “to study and teach, to heed, perform and fulfill all the words of Your Torah with love.”¹⁶ May I fulfill all mitzvot and all holy tasks, and perform each service in its proper season, and do everything at the appropriate time, with great holiness and purity.

Strengthen me with joy and gladness constantly. In the power of the true tzaddikim, may I banish and nullify from me and from all Israel the kelipah of Haman-Amalek, may their names be blotted out; and may I draw upon myself the holiness of the miracle and deliverance of Purim. Have mercy on us in every generation and in every year, that we should be privileged to rejoice greatly during the days of Purim with the greatest delight, and that we may fulfill the mitzvot of reading the Megillah in great holiness and purity and boundless joy. May we contemplate this awesome miracle and astounding redemption, and publicize the miracle to every people and assembly.

Grant us the privilege of fulfilling the mitzvot of sending foods (*mishlo'ach manot*) to our friends and neighbors, giving charity to the poor, and celebrating the festive meal in honor of Purim, wholeheartedly and with great joy.

Enable us to fulfill the mitzvah of drinking to the point of intoxication on Purim, as our sages of blessed memory have instructed us,¹⁷ and help us and protect us so that absolutely no harm befalls us from drinking on Purim, neither physically nor spiritually, and no harm befalls any person or property as a result of our drinking. Rather, let us attain only the greatest joy and delight through drinking on Purim. May we experience the true joy of Purim, when an awesome spiritual illumination shines on us – the light of Mordekhai, the likes of which cannot be glimpsed at any other time of year. Let us rejoice with all our hearts and gladden the hearts of others, and cause all Israel to rejoice with the joy of Purim in absolute ecstasy! Let us delight and rejoice in

■ ENTERING THE LIGHT

Your salvation with true joy, in a manner that You will find gratifying, favorable and a source of pleasure, due to our drinking and celebrating on Purim.

Even now, may we be privy to the great miracle and wondrous deliverance of Purim every year, and may we subjugate, uproot and eradicate from our midst the kelipah of Haman-Amalek and its tremendous corruption, and blot out its name and memory from the world. Help us to cleanse ourselves of this corruption with the greatest sanctity and purification, and imbue ourselves with the holiness of Mordekhai and Esther.

May we transmit the joy of Purim to the rest of the year entirely, and rejoice in You constantly with the greatest delight. Through this, may we be privy to the holiness of the *Parah Adumah* and the holiness of Pesach, and be happy always. Fulfill in us the words of the verse: "For in Him our hearts will rejoice, for in His holy Name we trusted."¹⁸ "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, my Rock and my Redeemer."¹⁹

(LT II, 37)

Notes

- 1 The Talmudic sages state that the 613 mitzvot parallel the human form. The 365 veins and tendons correspond to the 365 negative mitzvot, and the 248 limbs correspond to the 248 positive mitzvot; see *Midrash Tanchuma, Ki Teitzei*, 2; *Targum Yonatan* on Genesis 1:27; *Zohar* I, 170b; *ibid.*, II, 25a, 228b; *Tikkuney Zohar, Tikkun* 30 (74b). Since the mitzvot, like the body, make up a unitary whole, it is axiomatic that the whole depends on each of its parts; thus the entire 613 mitzvot depend on each individual mitzvah. The Kabbalistic understanding of this paradigm is discussed by Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, *Pardes Rimonim*, 31:8; Rabbi Chaim Vital,