

Insights into the Mitzvos of Purim:

First Theme: Cosmic Battle with Amalek Over the Purpose of the World:

1. **Talmud Megilah 30a:** We had Parshas Zachor on the Shabbos before Purim in order to that we remember to destroy Amalek, before we do it on Purim.
2. **Esther 9.28:** וְהַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה נִזְכָּרִים וְנִעְשִׂים בְּכָל־דּוֹר וָדוֹר these days are recalled and observed in every generation.
3. **Shmos 17, 10-12:** Joshua did as Moses told him and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Chur went up to the top of the hill. Then, whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; but whenever he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands grew heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur, one on each side, supported his hands; thus his hands remained steady until the sun set.
4. **Talmud Rosh Hashanah 29a:** Did the hands of Moses make war when he raised them or break war when he lowered them? Rather, the verse comes to tell you that as long as the Jewish people turned their eyes upward and subjected their hearts to their Father in Heaven, they prevailed, but if not, they fell.
5. **Talmud Sanhedrin 106a:** "Refidim" means that their hands were weak in engaging in matters of Torah.
6. **Midrash:** In the merit of the three Patriarchs, Haman's power was "Tash" - weakened.

3 Pillars of World	Avoda	Torah	Kindness
Mitzvos Between Man &	Hashem	Himself	Fellow Man
Zohar - "Are One"	Hashem	Torah	Jewish People
Patriarchs	Yitzchak	Yaakov	Avraham
Leaders in Desert	Aharon	Moshe	Miriam (Chur)
Benefits in Desert	Clouds of Glory	Manna	Well of Water
Haman's Plan	Idolatry (Nevuchadnetzer)	Violating Torah - Party	The Jews Were Scattered
Purim Tikun (Repair)	Fasting / Prayer	Re-acceptance of Torah	Gather Jews Together
Mitzvos of Purim	Megilah	Purim Seuda	Gifts & Charity
Hamantash - 3 Vavs	ו א ו	ו י ו	ו ו
Gematryiya	13	22	12
Meaning	Hashem is Echad	Aleph Beis - Torah	12 Tribes

תְּמַחֶה אֶת־זֵכֶר עַמְלִיק = 1321 = תּוֹרָה וְעִבּוּדָה וְגַמְלִיּוֹת הַסָּדִים

- Hamantash should ideally be filled with poppyseeds entirely concealed by the dough

39 lashes that the penitents apply to themselves; Hoshana Rabba - striking the Aravos; Purim - striking Haman during the Megillah reading.

2. Devarim 13,16: "Hakeh takeh es yoshvei ha-ir" (you will surely smite the inhabitants of that city"), הַכֵּה תִּכֶּה אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי הָעִיר, - and in relation to beating and striking:
3. HAKEH TAKEH - Hoshana Rabba, Kippur, Haman - "Tochlu Kreplach Harbeh" (You will eat a lot of Kreplach!!!) תֹּאכְלוּ כִרְפֶלֶךְ הַרְבֵּה
4. Common theme of judgement. On Yom Kippur, G-d judges us for the upcoming year and on Hoshana Rabba those judgements are officially sealed. On Purim, the Jewish nation was judged, and we emerged victorious against the evil Haman. The hidden meat within the dough represents the Divine attribute of kindness, wrapped within the attribute of justice. On days that we would think would be marked by strict judgement, G-d reminds us that his merciful side is there and will come through. All three of these days are marked by a *klop*, a harsh blow of sorts. We strike our chests on Yom Kippur, our willow branches on Hoshana Rabba and our feet and hands when we hear Haman's name on Purim.
5. Common element of hiddenness. Each of these 3 days are a hidden Yom Tov- special days in which are permitted to do *melacha*. The greatness of these days can often be concealed, given the fact that we are permitted to carry on with our lives in the ways we are used to during the week. We eat kreplach on these days to remind us it is a holiday, one in which the meat, the holiday symbol, is there, but concealed within a dough.
6. The theme of hiddenness runs all throughout Purim. As we know, Hashem's name is notably absent from *Megillat Esther*. Just like the with kreplach, G-d is sending us a powerful message. The meat may not always be visible, but in a kreplach, it is always there. Despite G-d's name not being mentioned, one has to look deeper to find a hint of Him.

Reasons for Mishloach Manos:

1. **Beis Yosef 695:** כדי שיהא שמח ושש עם אוהביו וריעיו ולהשכין ביניהם אהבה ואחוה וריעות **695:** In order to be happy and rejoice with his friends and neighbours and to cause love, brotherhood, and friendship to dwell between them.
 - This is to counter Haman's accusation that the Jews were not united.
 - Based on Rashi's interpretation of Talmud Megilah 7b which states that Abayei & Rav Chanina (brothers) would alternate each year eating by the other person.
 - ומשלוח מנות איש לרעהו - The words "Ish" & "Lera'aihu" both have the Gematriya of 311, teaching us that each person feels that his friend is like himself, and not to feel better than him.
 - You would be able to fulfill your Mitzvah even if the recipient would not want to receive it.
 - This is why we do not make a blessing on this mitzvah, as we can not engender friendship if we say that we have been commanded to do it!
2. **Terumos Hadeshen 111:** In order to ensure that people not be embarrassed and have enough food for their Purim Seudah
3. **Pele Yoetz:** You can double your Mitzvah by giving to someone who will be honoured by receiving it from you...e.g. a student giving to a teacher.
4. **R' Yeruchom Levovitz:** The main Mitzvah is accomplished by sending to someone who is upset with you, so that you can repair the relationship. That is why you send two gifts in order that it be substantial - as opposed to poor person who will be sustained by even one gift.
5. **R' Yitzchak Zilberstein:** **Send your heart** to your friend by sending him a short heart felt note, which will enter into his heart...this will be much more effective than expensive gifts which are a waste of money. The concept of Purim is in two words: "Love & Friendship."

6. **R' Yaakov of Lisa:** The Jews were saved on Purim because of the collective Teshuva that all the Jews did. Collectively they were able to re-accept the Torah. It is well known that the Mitzvos done by a group have more power than if done by an individual. We send Mishloach Manos as a ***show of appreciation*** one to another. The two gifts symbolize that each person has done two favors to the other one in terms of 1) Teshuva, and 2) Mitzvah observance. On Teshuva we show gratitude to each other being part of the collective,, which enables us all to grow more in our religious observance.
7. **Maharal:** Only in our unity can we declare Hashem's oneness in the world.

Revival of the Dead:

1. **Rambam Laws of Yom Tov 6, 18:** While eating and drinking, one must feed the stranger, the orphan, the widow, and other poor unfortunates. Anyone, however, who locks the doors of his courtyard and eats and drinks along with his wife and children, without giving anything to eat and drink to the poor and the desperate, does not observe a religious celebration but indulges in the celebration of his stomach
2. **Rambam Laws of Megilah 2,17:** One should rather spend more money on gifts to the poor than on his Purim banquet and presents to his friends. No joy is greater and more glorious than the joy of gladdening the hearts of the poor, the orphans, the widows, and the strangers. He who gladdens the heart of these unhappy people imitates God, as it is written: "I am ... to revive the spirit of the humble, and to put heart into the crushed" (Isaiah 57:15).
3. **Midrash:** Mordechai told Hasach to tell Esther: "The descendent of "Korohu" has come to them...
בְּנֵינֵנוּ שֶׁל קְרֹהוּ בָּא עֲלֵיכֶם, הֲדָא הוּא דְכְתִיב (דְּבָרִים כה, יח): אֲשֶׁר קָרַךְ בְּדַרְךָ.
4. **Talmud Megilah 12a:** The students of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai asked him: For what reason were the Jewish people in that generation deserving of annihilation? He, Rabbi Shimon, said to them: Say the answer to your question yourselves. They said to him: It is because they took pleasure in the feast of that wicked one....
5. **Rav Yitzchak Hutner:** Just like Hashem revived the Jews and gave hope to a forlorn nation, we have a Mitzvah to emulate Hashem to give comfort, hope, and meaning to broken people.

Getting Drunk on Purim:

1. "When the wine enters, the secret comes out" - a Jew can find his true essence in a drunken state, as he no longer has the filters of his brain blocking out the truth.
2. "Designated driver" - when you are drunk, you know that you can not go anywhere safely without someone else driving you to your destination - a Jew can not go anywhere safely unless he lets Hashem drive his life. Salvation comes to a person when he realizes that he is not able to accomplish anything without Hashem's help....

Summary:

1. **Purim is a day to obliterate Amalek and thereby give meaning and purpose to the world.**
 - The purpose of the world is for Torah, Avoda, and Gemilus Chasadim.
 - These three services bind us with Hashem.
 - Avoda is accomplished with Megilah reading, which is a praise of Hashem.
 - Gemilus Chasadim is accomplished by giving gifts to others & charity to the poor.
 - Torah is accomplished during our Seudah on Purim.
2. **All the Mitzvos of Purim should be done with joy and alacrity in spite of how difficult it may be...**
 - Hearing the Megilah perfectly even though you have been fasting all day.
 - Hearing the Megilah two times perfectly.
 - Giving charity to the poor even though they may not be worthy.
 - Giving gifts to people who you are not friendly with.
 - Getting drunk, even though you are not in control then.
 - Adherence to Halacha even when you are drunk.