



Likkutei Sichos

Volume 21 | Purim Tetzaveh

Reading in the Wild

Translated by Rabbi Moishy Goldman

General Editor: Rabbi Eliezer Robbins | Editor: Rabbi Y. Eliezer Danzinger

Content Editor: Rabbi Zalmy Avtzon

© Copyright by Sichos In English 2023 o 5783

A note on the translation: Rounded and square brackets reflect their use in the original *sichah*; curly brackets are interpolations of the translator or editor. The footnotes in curly brackets are those of the translator or editors and do not correspond to the footnotes in the original. Bolded words are italicized in the original text.

Considerable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the translation, while maintaining readability. As in all translations, the possibility of inadvertent errors exists.

Your feedback is appreciated — please send comments to: info@projectlikkuteisichos.org

1.

ACTION IS SUPERIOR

Shabbos is related (not only to the preceding days of the week, as Shabbos is called “the seventh day,” but it is also related) to the subsequent days of the week. As it says in *Zohar*,¹ “All six days are blessed from the seventh day,” meaning, Shabbos blesses the subsequent six weekdays.

The relationship of this Shabbos {Shabbos *Zachor*} to the subsequent days of the week is even more pronounced considering the obligation to read {an additional *parshah* in} the Torah:² We read *parshas Zachor*, since this is the Shabbos that precedes Purim,³ and the remembrance of Amalek’s {evil} exploit is connected to the days of Purim⁴ to the extent that the Torah reading on Purim⁵ is the *parshah* describing what Amalek did (“Amalek came”).⁶ Reading *parshas Zachor* before Purim — as the Gemara tells us⁷ — is “remembering,” that precedes “doing” Purim (“{These days should be} remembered and done.”)⁸

The relationship between this Shabbos and (the subsequent weekdays, and primarily, the relationship between this Shabbos and) the days of Purim, is especially prominent in the reading of *parshas Zachor* this year, more so than this reading in other years: This year,⁹ Shabbos falls on the 11th of Adar — the day of the month that marks the beginning of the period suitable for reading the Megillah. As the Mishnah says:¹⁰ “The Megillah is read on the 11th, the 12th, the 13th, the 14th, and the 15th,” and, “villages advance their reading to the day of assembly” (and the earliest date to which the reading may be advanced is the 11th

¹ *Zohar*, vol. 2, 63b, 88a.

² According to some opinions, this is biblically mandated — see *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, “*Arba Parshiyos*” and “*Zechiras Maase Amalek*.”

³ See Rashi on *Megillah* 29a, s.v. “*umafsikin*”: “To juxtapose wiping out Amalek with wiping out Haman.”

⁴ See *Chinuch*, “*mitzvah 603*”: “It (*parshas Zachor*) ought to have been read **on the day of Purim**, since it speaks about the theme of the day, as Haman descended from Amalek.”

⁵ Mishnah, *Megillah* 30b (end); *Magen Avraham*, “*Orach Chaim*,” end of sec. 685 — by doing so {reading the Torah on Purim}, one fulfills the obligation of reading *parshas Zachor*.

⁶ *Shemos* 17:8 ff.

⁷ *Megillah* 30a.

⁸ {*Esther* 9:28.}

⁹ {This *sichah* was delivered in 5739 (1979)}.

¹⁰ *Megillah* 2a.

of Adar). And the fact that the 11th of Adar is suitable for the Megillah reading does not apply only “when the years are established {properly} and the Jewish people dwell {securely} on their own land”¹¹ (only then does the law that “villages advance {their reading} to the day of assembly” apply), but it also applies “nowadays.” As *Shulchan Aruch* rules:¹² “One who sets sail upon the sea, or one who sets out in a caravan, and cannot find a Megillah to bring along, should read the Megillah on the 13th or on the 12th or on the 11th without reciting a blessing.”

It is true that “the entire month is valid for the reading of the Megillah”¹³ post factum¹⁴ (as Rabbi Moshe Isserles¹⁵ rules, “this is the custom”). Nevertheless, there is still a fundamental difference between reading the Megillah on the 11th, the 12th, or the 13th, and reading it “from the beginning of the month”:¹⁶

True, reading the Megillah on the 11th, 12th, and 13th is only valid in extenuating circumstances and is only valid post factum nowadays. [Moreover, even the principle that “villages advance {their reading} to the day of assembly” is only an **allowance**, in the sense that “the Sages **permitted them** to advance the reading to the day of assembly;”¹⁷ “they were **lenient** with the villages.”¹⁸ The **designated time** for Megillah reading is only on the 14th or 15th.]¹⁹ Nevertheless, reading the Megillah on the 11th, the 12th, or the 13th has a deeper connection to the days of Purim than reading it on other days of the month, as will be explained.

¹¹ *Megillah* 2a.

¹² *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*” sec. 688, par. 7.

¹³ *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Megillah*, ch. 1 halacha 1.

¹⁴ {In the original Aramaic, “בדיעבד”; although at the outset, the Megillah should be read on its designated day, if a person reads the Megillah on any day of the month of Adar, he fulfills his obligation.}

¹⁵ {In the original, the acronym, “Rama.”}

¹⁶ *Shulchan Aruch*, “*Orach Chaim*” sec. 688, par. 7; Simply understood, this extends until the 15th but not beyond, for it says, “וְלֹא יִצְבוֹר,” {*Esther* 9:27} as interpreted in the *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Megillah*, ch. 1 halacha 1.

¹⁷ Rashi on the mishnah, *Megillah* 2a, s.v., “*ella*.”

¹⁸ {Beginning of the Gemara in} *Megillah* there. It is clear from the conclusion of the Gemara (4b) that the reason {for the leniency} is because they {the villages} supply water and food to the cities; as Rashi explains, this is a reward for them, as will be expounded in Sec. 3.

¹⁹ See *Megillah* 5a, and Rashi, loc. cit., s.v., “*shelo bizmanah*.”

2.

WHERE TO START?

This will be clarified by prefacing with an explanation of the teaching in the mishnah: “The Megillah is read on the 11th, the 12th, the 13th, the 14th, and the 15th”:

If reading the Megillah on the 11th, the 12th, or the 13th is only a leniency and a rabbinic provision that is limited to specific dates and applies to specific people, why, when establishing the dates for reading the Megillah, does the mishnah begin with “the 11th,” and not with the designated dates for reading the Megillah — the 14th and the 15th?

Although the mishnah follows the sequence of the days of the month, the flow of the mishnah seems difficult. Since the mishnah lays out the laws of observing the **mitzvah**, it would have been more logical to have begun with the designated dates followed by the dispensatory²⁰ dates, etc.

Especially, since the mishnah could have maintained the **sequence** of dates, but going from later to earlier: “The Megillah is read on the 15th, the 14th, the 13th, the 12th, and the 11th” — which is how the mishnah actually organizes the sequence further on, when it delineates specific dates: “Walled cities... read on the 15th, villages and large cities read on the 14th.” The mishnah then goes on to explain when the reading is advanced to the day of assembly.

We also need to clarify, as the commentaries²¹ ask: Why does the mishnah use the passive construct, “the Megillah is read,” and not the active construct, as used in multiple places, “we read the Megillah”?

²⁰ {Dispensatory — exemption from a rule or from the usual requirement.}

²¹ *Ritva* and *Turei Even* on beg. of *Megillah*.

3.

EQUAL STATUS

The following explains all the foregoing:

The mishnah is emphasizing that the earlier Megillah reading (for villagers) is also (within the parameters of) the time for reading the Megillah. Meaning, although the reading the Megillah on the 11th, the 12th, and the 13th was allowed, it was because “the Sages were lenient with villagers, by advancing {their day of reading} to the day of assembly, so that they could supply food and water to their brethren in the cities.” Or, in more novel terms,²² as the Gemara²³ concludes in its final analysis, “Rather, say that it is **because** they supply water and food to their brethren in the cities,” making this a matter of “a reward for them.”²⁴

[Put differently: Although the reading of the Megillah on the 11th, etc., originated as an ordinance for the benefit of the *gavra*,²⁵ the ordinance still changes something in the *cheftza*²⁶ (the reading of the Megillah), making it a valid time (for the villagers) to hear the reading of the Megillah.]

Reading the Megillah, then, is not just a case of the villagers fulfilling a mitzvah (reading the Megillah) that is incumbent upon **them**. Rather, these dates are (also) {a time during which} “the Megillah is read” — a proper {time for} reading of the Megillah. It is also clear from the Gemara²⁷ that “the Men of the Great Assembly” “in the days of Mordechai and Esther”²⁸ established the mitzvah of reading the Megillah, and they were the ones who (also) established all these dates.

²² It is more novel than the first reason, because the first reason, “so that they could supply food and water to their brethren in the cities,” is at least a reason that is relevant to providing for the needs of the mitzvah of Purim.

²³ *Megillah* 4b.

²⁴ Rashi on *Megillah* 4b, s.v. “*ella*.”

²⁵ {Lit. “person.”}

²⁶ {Lit., “object” or “item.”}

²⁷ *Megillah* 2a.

²⁸ Rashi on *Megillah* 2a, s.v. “*michdi*.”

This explains the mishnah's wording, "the Megillah is read" — not, "we read the Megillah" — as well as the sequence of the 11th, the 12th, and the 13th: Reading the Megillah on these dates is (not merely {something *we* do}, "we read the Megillah" — a law [and leniency] regarding the act and mitzvah observance from the perspective of the *gavra* — but rather) {something that *is done*,} "The Megillah is read" (without mentioning the reader, the *gavra*). It is a valid reading time for the **Megillah**.

Additionally, on the basis of the statement in the Gemara that the Men of the Great Assembly alluded to these dates in the Megillah — "*To observe these days of Purim in their times*"²⁹ — they enacted multiple dates for them,"³⁰ it turns out that the 11th, the 12th, and the 13th are not only valid dates for reading the Megillah; rather, reading the Megillah on these dates is (fundamentally) equivalent to reading on the 14th and 15th (they are all subsumed in "their times"). These days do not resemble *tashlumin*³¹ days (nor are they considered "other times").³² Rather, they are just like the core dates (the 14th and the 15th).

4.

THE ENTIRE MONTH

Now we can understand that reading the Megillah on the 11th, the 12th, and the 13th is different from {reading it on other days of Adar}, "the entire month is valid for the reading of the Megillah" (which is also relevant nowadays for "one who sets sail upon the sea and one who sets out in a caravan," as mentioned above):

²⁹ *Esther* 9:31.

³⁰ {*Megillah* 2a}; Rambam writes something similar in *Mishneh Torah*, "*Hilchos Megillah*," ch. 1, par. 4: "When is the time for its reading? The Sages enacted multiple times for it, as it says: 'In their times.'"

³¹ {Make-up dates. The Torah sometimes provides opportunities to make up missed obligations, and those dates are known as days of *tashlumin*. E.g., if one didn't offer his *olas re'iyah* sacrifice on Shavuot, he was given an additional 6 days on which to offer it.}

³² Rabbi Yonah's opinion based on the *Jerusalem Talmud*, *Megillah*, ch. 1 halachah 1, is that the verse says "their times" in order "to give them other times."

The reason that “the entire month is valid for the reading of the Megillah” is derived in the *Jerusalem Talmud*³³ from the verse,³⁴ “And the **month** that was transformed for them from a month of agony to a month of joy.” Meaning, throughout the entire month, a person may fulfill the obligation incumbent **upon him** during the “time” of “these days of Purim,” but this does not change the *cheftza* of time. This permission {to read the Megillah throughout the entire month} does not transform the other days of the month into a **valid time** for reading the Megillah.

In halachah, there is a practical difference: If a person is obligated to perform another mitzvah (aside from reading the Megillah) whose designated time is a day on which he must also read the Megillah, or the like, which of these mitzvos should be performed first? If the date falls sometime during the beginning of the month, then precedence must be given to the mitzvah whose time is on that day. But if the date is the 11th, the 12th, or the 13th, then there is room to reason that the Megillah should be read first.

5.

THE MEGILLAH IS FOREVER

Concerning the Megillah reading, the reason that even the essentially undesignated days for reading (as per the explicit verse) become a valid date for reading the Megillah is because the entire nature of the Megillah, both in its composition and reading, is similar: The Megillah was written differently than the other books of Scripture: the *Prophets* and the *Writings*, and particularly, the *Five Books of the Torah*. From the outset, Hashem instructed (through Moshe, etc.)³⁵ that those sacred books should be written. The writing of the Megillah, however, came about through Esther’s request: “Inscribe me for

³³ *Jerusalem Talmud, Megillah*, ch. 1 halachah 1.

³⁴ {*Esther* 9:22.}

³⁵ *Bava Basra* 14b: “Moshe wrote, etc.; Yehoshua wrote, etc.”

generations.”³⁶ And, as the Gemara³⁷ records, the Sages — the Men of the Great Assembly — debated the matter and held various opinions about it, etc.

[The same is true regarding the very holiday of Purim and the reading of the Megillah. These, too, came about because of Esther’s request: “Establish me for generations,”³⁸ and the Sages debated this request, as well.]

Yet, once the *Megillas Esther* was written, it was integrated into Scripture, and enjoys equal status to all other books in the *Writings*. In fact, it is superior to, and has an advantage over, the other books of Scripture. As Rambam says:³⁹ “All the books of the *Prophets* and all the *Writings* will be abrogated in the Messianic era, except for *Megillas Esther*. It will continue to exist, just like the *Five Books of the Torah*.” Alternatively, Raavad says⁴⁰ that the abrogation in the future relates to the reading of the sacred texts. Meaning, “even if we will no longer read from all the other books, we will not cancel the public reading of the Megillah.”

6.

A LOFTIER BOOK

This idea is also expressed in the writing of *Megillas Esther*. Unlike all other books of Scripture, Hashem’s name, the name⁴¹ *Havayah*,⁴² is not mentioned in the Megillah. Understood simply, (a sacred text) lacking the sanctity of the name *Havayah* reflects its level of sanctity.

³⁶ *Megillah* 7a.

³⁷ *Megillah* 7a. See Rashi there. For a detailed analysis of this topic (and a discussion of the dispute between the *Babylonian Talmud* and the *Jerusalem Talmud*), see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 16, p. 352 ff.

³⁸ *Megillah* 7a.

³⁹ *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Megillah*,” end of ch. 2.

⁴⁰ Raavad {on *Mishneh Torah*}, “*Hilchos Megillah*,” end of ch. 2.

⁴¹ See Ibn Ezra’s preface to his commentary on *Esther*: “In this Megillah, there is no mention of the Name, though it is one of the Holy Books.”

⁴² {The four letter name of Hashem, also known as the Tetragrammaton.}

[On the level of *pshat*,⁴³ the reason for this omission was that since “the Persians transcribed it, and it was written in their royal chronicles, and they were idolaters who would substitute Hashem’s name with the name of their deities..., for the sake of safeguarding the **honor of Hashem’s name**, Mordechai did not include Hashem’s name in the Megillah.”]⁴⁴

At the same time, it is known⁴⁵ that (on a deeper level) the absence of Divine names in the Megillah indicates that the Megillah evinces a level of Divinity that is not grasped by a name, a level that transcends the level of Divine names. And what’s more (using the known wording),⁴⁶ the Megillah evinces a level of G-dliness that is not alluded to by any letter or serif at all; I am who I am. As the Gemara puts it,⁴⁷ “What is the Scriptural source for *Esther*? ‘I will conceal, yes conceal.’”⁴⁸ The double concealment in the Megillah derives from the “I” of Hashem’s Essence, which cannot be discovered nor defined — even by the Divine names, including even the name *Havayah*.

In other words, this fact (that Divine names are not mentioned in the Megillah) derives from the Megillah’s internal bond with Hashem’s Essence, which transcends the ambit of Divine names.

7.

BREAKING THROUGH THE CONCEALMENT

Now we can understand why the Mishnah begins with “the 11th,” for the reading on the 11th of Adar, which is the reading of the villagers, alludes to the deeper, overarching message of the Megillah.

[For seemingly, while it’s true that by doing so, the mishnah teaches us that the 11th, the 12th, and the 13th are also times for reading the Megillah,

⁴³ {The plain meaning of Scripture.}

⁴⁴ Ibn Ezra’s preface to his commentary on *Esther*.

⁴⁵ See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 6, p. 190.

⁴⁶ *Likkutei Torah*, “*Pinchas*,” 80b (“as is known”). See also *Zohar*, vol. 3, 257b.

⁴⁷ *Chullin* 139b.

⁴⁸ *Devarim* 31:18.

nonetheless, they are not altogether similar to the primary dates of the 14th and the 15th, when most people read the Megillah. Therefore, it follows that the mishnah ought to have begun with the primary dates, and not with the “11th.”]

To explain:

Regarding reading the Megillah, the three sectors — walled cities, large {open} cities, and villages — correspond to the following spiritual paths in Divine service:

In brief, a walled city symbolizes *avodah*⁴⁹ that is secure — its wall prevents the incursion of all enemies and adversaries, etc.

A {large, populous} inhabited city symbolizes the *avodah* that comprises building a place for Hashem to **dwell** by a person living as a city dweller, who does not need to **plow, plant,** or wait until wheat grows in the **field** . From ready-made, pre-existing elements of the world, the person needs only to make a home and build a city, “the city of our G-d.”⁵⁰

A village symbolizes the *avodah* that comprises plowing the hardened earth of the world’s **concealment** — to enable planting, etc.

⁴⁹ {Divine service.}

⁵⁰ {*Tehillim* 48:2.}

8.

SPIRITUAL WORLDS

This also corresponds to the spiritual worlds. In the lexicon of Chassidus:

A walled city symbolizes the world of *Beriah*,⁵¹ the place of the divine service of the *Serafim*;⁵² a large city symbolizes the world of *Yetzirah*,⁵³ where the *Chayos Hakodesh* perform their divine service; and a village symbolizes the world of *Asiyah*,⁵⁴ where the *Ofanim* carry out their divine service.

The distinctions between the three levels in the psyche and *the avodah* of a person are as follows:

The *avodah* of a walled-city resident is based on intellect — meditation and comprehension of Divinity. Therefore, there is a sense of pleasure in this *avodah*, stemming from an understanding of Divinity, which resembles and parallels the *avodah* of the *Serafim*, who are “consumed” and made subservient to Hashem with great yearning and desire, due to their perception of Divinity (“*Serafim* stood above Him”).⁵⁵

The *avodah* associated with large cities derives from the **emotions**⁵⁶ — love of Hashem and reverence for Hashem — which are associated with the world of *Yetzirah*, where Hashem’s emotive attributes are most radiant. This is why the *avodah* of the *Chayos Hakodesh* is “with a great roar”⁵⁷ — due to the intensity of emotional experiences.

⁵¹ {Lit., “creation,” the second of the four spiritual worlds, the realm of spiritual existence which represents the beginnings of a consciousness self.}

⁵² {Scripture describes various types of angels, and they are generally divided into the three categories presented here.}

⁵³ {Lit., “formation,” the third of the four spiritual worlds, the realm of spiritual existence in which the finite nature of the created beings takes on form and definition.}

⁵⁴ {Lit., “action,” this refers to the fourth and lowest of the four spiritual worlds, the final level in the creative continuum, which also encompasses the physical universe, where *mitzvos* are performed.}

⁵⁵ *Yeshayahu* 6:2.

⁵⁶ The most important area of a person’s *avodah* (see the *Maamar Shalosh Arim (v’Im Yarchiv) 5565 (Sefer HaMamaarim 5565*, p. 798 ff); *Siddur im Dach*, p. 189b; Mitteler Rebbe’s *Maamar Al Totzar* at length (*Maamarei Admur HaEmtzai*, “*Devarim*,” vol. 1, beg.).

⁵⁷ {*Yechezkel* 3:12.}

The *avodah* of villagers — *Ofanim*, in the world of *Asiyah* — exemplifies the quality of “acknowledgment.”⁵⁸ The comprehension and meditation of the mind, and the excitement of the emotions in the heart, lead a person to, and necessitate, the quality of acknowledgment {of Hashem}. For villagers, their *avodah* of {being excited} “with a mighty sound” does not originate from {deep} heartfelt feelings, but rather, they express themselves {excitedly} as would a villager who comes to see the king.⁵⁹

True, there is no palpable perception of Divinity (either in the grasp of intellect or in the heartfelt enthusiasm) in the *avodah* of the villagers — at the level of *Asiyah* — and for that reason, their *avodah* and excitement takes the form of acknowledgment (*Asiyah*). Nevertheless, their *avodah* is also characterized by *bittul*⁶⁰ to Hashem. Actually, in a certain sense, the *bittul* at this level of acknowledgement (as it is by the *Ofanim*) is even deeper than the *bittul* and *avodah* of the *Serafim*, which derives from comprehension and understanding of Divinity. Therefore, the *Ofanim* declare (and elicit {the Divine flow alluded to by the verse}), “Blessed is Hashem from **His place**,”⁶¹ more so than (the flow elicited by) the *avodah* of the *Serafim*.

Therefore, the Mishnah begins with the reading on the “11th” — the villagers’ reading — because the overall theme of the Megillah is embodied by this reading: Despite the fact that superficially, it is a matter of “Esther, אסתר,” {which is etymologically and conceptually related to} concealment, הסתר, and obstruction, with no revelation {of Divinity} (the world of *Asiyah*), nonetheless, the Essence which transcends revelation is found in it, and this is elicited by the *bittul* of the *Ofanim*.

⁵⁸ {“*Hodaah*” in the original; this refers to a degree of awareness that is characterized by **submission** to truth, as opposed to **comprehension** of truth.}

⁵⁹ *Chagigah* 12b.

⁶⁰ {*Bittul* connotes self-nullification, humility, and the negation of ego.}

⁶¹ {*Yechezkel* 3:12.} See *Chullin* 91b ff., and Rashi’s commentary there.

9.

MOSHE CONNECTS US TO HASHEM

On this basis, we can understand the relationship between this Shabbos (concerning its connection to the days of Purim and the Megillah reading, etc., as discussed above) and the regular *parshah* read on this Shabbos — *parshas Tetzaveh*:

Parshas Tetzaveh is the only *parshah* in which Moshe Rabbeinu's name is not mentioned (from the *parshah* in which Moshe's birth is recorded until the book of *Devarim*). Our Sages⁶² teach that Moshe's name isn't mentioned because Moshe had exclaimed, "Erase me from Your book which You have written,"⁶³ and this request was fulfilled by Hashem in this *parshah*.

On the surface, the omission of Moshe's name is not something positive. But since "Scripture does not even speak disparagingly of animals,"⁶⁴ it is clear that even this (the omission of Moshe's name) is connected with something positive and wholesome.

And we can understand this from our *parshah* itself: Even though Moshe's name is not explicitly mentioned, the **entire** *parshah* is called *Tetzaveh* (or "*VeAtah* {you will} *Tetzaveh*"), which alludes to Moshe.

The explanation: "The righteous emulate their Creator."⁶⁵ Just as it is Above — Hashem's holy names are associated with emanations and revelations {of Divinity}, but His Essence transcends names — the same is true for the righteous, such as Moshe Rabbeinu, etc. It follows that the absence of any explicit mention of Moshe's name in *parshas Tetzaveh* is because the theme of *parshas Tetzaveh* is associated with Moshe's essence which transcends a name, beyond all the (five)⁶⁶ names of the soul.

⁶² *Baal Haturim* and *Rosh*, beg. of *parshas Tetzaveh*.

⁶³ *Shemos* 32:32.

⁶⁴ *Bava Basra* 123a.

⁶⁵ *Midrash Rabbah*, *Rus* 4:3.

⁶⁶ *Midrash Rabbah*, *Bereishis* 14:9.

It is specifically the essence of Moshe, “**ve’atah, and you,**” that enabled Moshe to “**tetzaveh, connect**⁶⁷ the Jewish people.” That is, Moshe’s essence enabled the union and bond of all Jews with Hashem’s Essence, as explained elsewhere at length. Moshe did so even for those who had worshiped the Golden Calf. (Moshe had willingly placed himself in peril for these Jews, imploring Hashem, “If You do not {forgive them}, erase me,” a request that was fulfilled in *parshas Tetzaveh*, as discussed above).

10.

SERVING HASHEM WITH *BITTUL*

Based on all the above, we can also understand the connection between the teaching, “the Megillah is read on the 11th” and the theme of *parshas Zachor* — remembering what Amalek did:

Shelah writes that the number eleven {the first day for Megillah reading} has “the same numerical value as the letters “ה-ו, *Vav-Hei*”⁶⁸ of the name (*Havayah*). And the larger number {the final day in the month of Adar for the Megillah reading} is 15, which has the same numerical value as “ה-י, *Yud-Hei*.”⁶⁹

For this reason, the mishnah begins, “The Megillah is read on the **11th**,” because wiping out Amalek, from whom Haman the Aggagite descended, is primarily connected with {the number} 11, corresponding to *Vav-Hei*. As our Sages expound the verse,⁷⁰ “*For there is a hand on the throne of Hashem, Hashem’s war against Amalek — His Name will not be complete... until the name of Amalek is wiped out.*”⁷¹ As long as Amalek exists, Hashem’s name is incomplete, as it were, consisting of the letters *Yud-Hei*. This means that Amalek (primarily) stands in opposition to the letters *Vav-Hei* of the name *Havayah*.

⁶⁷ {The word תצוה, commonly translated as “command,” is etymologically related to the word “צוותא,” which denotes *connection*. Accordingly, Moshe *connects* the Jewish people with Hashem.}

⁶⁸ {When pronouncing even part of the Tetragrammaton (Hashem’s name ה-ו-ה-י), common practice is to avoid enunciating the letters as they appear, so the letter “hey” is intentionally mispronounced as “kay.”}

⁶⁹ *Shelah*, “*Chelek Torah Shebichsav*,” 329a, 330b.

⁷⁰ *Shemos* 17:16.

⁷¹ Rashi on *Shemos* 17:16.

For Amalek's character is that they "know their Master and yet, they deliberately rebel against Him."⁷² His aim is that a person's knowledge of Hashem and feelings for Him, which correspond to *Yud-Hei*, should not influence a person's thought, speech and actions in the observance of Torah and mitzvos, which correspond to *Vav-Hei*.

Therefore, in order to remember Amalek properly, such that we are led to fulfilling the command, "you shall surely wipe out the memory of Amalek," it is necessary to engage in the *avodah* symbolized by the number 11 — *Vav-Hei*. This level alludes to "true service of Hashem with Torah study and mitzvah observance, with voice and speech, or with deed."⁷³ And "true service" is performed when it is accompanied with self-submission, acknowledgement, and *bittul*, similar to the *avodah* of the villagers. It is precisely this approach that empowers us to be victorious and to wipe out the *kelipah*⁷⁴ of Amalek.

In this way, we can achieve the level alluded to by the number 15 — *Yud-Hei* of Hashem's name — the *avodah* of the intellect, {corresponding to} the *avodah* of the residents of walled cities. This *avodah* brings about the wholeness and the **correct sequence** of Hashem's name. As the mishnah continues: "{Walled} cities... read on the 15th" — corresponding to *Yud-Hei*. The mishnah continues, until the last *kevius*⁷⁵ (in the mishnah), when Purim falls on Sunday, in which case the villagers read on the **11th** — corresponding to *Vav-Hei*, which brings about the complete L-rdship of Hashem in the world (11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 add up to {65,} the numerical value of "ו-י-ג-ד" {a name connoting L-rdship}).⁷⁶

This will be fully revealed, in reality, with the coming of King Moshiach. Then, "in the generation of King Moshiach,"⁷⁷ "Hashem's war against Amalek

⁷² This is how multiple sources throughout Chassidus describe it.

⁷³ *Tanya*, "Iggeres Hateshuva," end of ch. 4.

⁷⁴ {Lit., "a shell" or "a peel." The term refers to anything that conceals, and thus opposes, G-dliness, just as a shell or a peel conceals the fruit within. *Kelipah* is often used to refer to evil or impurity.}

⁷⁵ {The *kevius* is the way the Jewish calendar is set up each year, which affects the day of the week upon which festivals fall. The mishnah (*Megillah* 1:2) goes on to delineate who reads the Megillah on which day of the week, "if the fourteenth (of Adar) falls on Monday... on Tuesday," and so on. The last case recorded in the Mishnah is when the fourteenth falls on Sunday.}

⁷⁶ *Shelah*, "Chelek Torah Shebichsav," 329a, 330b.

⁷⁷ See *Targum Yonason Ben Uziel*, end of parshas *Beshalach*.

from generation to generation”⁷⁸ will end. For Moshiach will wage the war of Hashem and emerge victorious,⁷⁹ speedily in our days, in actuality.

— Based on a *sichah* and a *maamar* delivered on *Motzei Shabbos parshas Tetzaveh*,
5739 (1979)

⁷⁸ *Shemos* 17:16.

⁷⁹ Rambam, “*Hilchos Melachim*,” ch. 11, par. 4.