One of the more common themes associated with Megilas Esther is Divine intervention. Even those familiar with the story are surprised, from year to year, how Hashem set up a perfect story, with each piece of the puzzle locking in at the right time. All this was done in a hidden manner — hester panim. If we look closely at the Megilah we see an additional theme to the story; one that many of us, our students, and our children need to be reminded of. What is odd, however, is the source for this most crucial lesson.

At the beginning of the Megilah we are told about Achashveirosh’s big party:

וַיְהִי, בִּימֵי אֲחַשְוֵרוֹש… בַיָּמִים, הָהֵם--כְשֶבֶת המלך אֲחַשְוֵרוֹש, עַל כִּסֵּא מַלְכוּתוֹ…

in the days of Achashveirosh … in those days, that King Achashveirosh sat on his throne … in the third year of his reign.

Achashveirosh was well aware of the prophecies mentioned in Sefer Yirmiyahu and Sefer Daniel, which promised a return to Zion seventy years following the destruction. Achashveirosh, according to his incorrect calculations, felt that the seventy years were over, and therefore concluded that the prophecy would not take place. If the prophecy would not take place, then the Jews will not return to Zion, and perhaps the Jewish God is upset at them, or has even given up on them. These conclusions gave Achashveirosh a sense of yishuv haddaas, and as the Gemarah explains, the party only happened after his mind was settled.

Perhaps there were personal benefits to Achashveirosh if the Jewish God did indeed give up on the Jews. If, however, Achashveirosh, as an anti-Semite, wanted to celebrate our continued despair and destruction, why would he celebrate only after our Jewish God is not on our side? His hatred seems to be based on acknowledging Hashem himself!

If we fast forward all the way to chapter 6, this idea returns.
outcome, decide on their own that this is the proper path.

We can now truly appreciate the Medrash Rabbah (similarly quoted in the Gemarah, Megilah 13b).

The Medrash Rabbah, Esther Parshah 7 states:

אמר ריש לולש: בשעת שאמר להם הרשע אסתרא בא ואמסר לי שלשים מגויס אחר, דא אמר לאṭשוש: לא יקבת המן, דבל דאלאלحا, לא ישבן לו כל יעס, ואהו מוה עביד ולמלכת מקומא...แลו מאר דאלאלحا, מלאברידיה וער ענייה מושכל מערעאמ... מהר קרא מגויס אחר לא אמר המן

Reish Lakish states: At the moment that Haman said to Achashveirosh, let us wipe out the Jews from the world, Achashveirosh responded: I can’t overcome their God. I am scared of Him, and will not win, for see what the great previous kings did (Paroh and Sancheiriv) and look what happened to them ... and anyone who tries to wipe out His people, himself gets wiped out of the world.

It seems that although Achashveirosh, at the opening of the Megilah, was under the impression that Hashem had given up on us, he was still cautious and fearful of actively killing Hashem’s people. How did Haman convince him then to step forward? The medrash continues:

מד אמר של לומי: אדם שמע עתרת ביםعضת ניסים ישראל...הוא קורא על עלפשת כלום, שבב על הפרדנימ והרייר בלא שירר או זכר גהל הלא שארא פור,...ברא אומד, והיה במעודה שבב...מד כלבל ברביו כלכלת אשת

Immediately Haman responded: Their God that drowned Paroh in the sea and performed all the miraculous wonders, He is elderly and has no more strength, as we see that Nevuchadnetzar rose up, and destroyed His house, and burned His dwelling place and exiled the Jews and spread them around, so what power does he have left? … Immediately Achashveirosh (and his advisors) agreed to annihilate the Jewish people.

How ironic it is that the only way to convince the enemy that they can successfully hurt the Jews is to remove from within ourselves a fear of Hashem.

We can also use this idea to explain why Haman wanted to originally kill us. In Perek 3 we read:

ומרדכי לא כות לא שיתות...ותיה להמן.

And Mordechai would not bow down (to Haman)... and they told Haman that he was a Jew... and Haman became furious.

Haman was not only upset that a person was not bowing down to him. His anger was not even out of hatred towards the Jews. Rather his fury had some fear mixed in. If a Jew will go against my plan, will I ever become the all powerful entity that I wish to be? Perhaps Haman thinks that the Jewish God might still be on the side of the Jews.

From the oddest of sources — our major enemies — we gain a reinforcement of Hashem’s existence and His involvement in the world.

In yesteryear, many Jews were baalei emunah peshuta. They simply believed, and did not question. In today’s world, many find that approach challenging. Some believe in Hashem but have trouble seeing His hand in the day to day. Others find trouble simply believing. Before researching and studying any proofs or evidence for this fundamental first step of our religion, let us be reminded of how obvious Hashem’s power was from the oddest of sources: those who were against us and our God.