

Rabbi's Column – February 26, 2018

This past week the Torah Portion focused on clothing. During the coming week, on Wednesday night at 6 pm, we will have an opportunity to focus on clothing as well. It's PURIM! Time for a bit of costuming. (costumes are also clothes, after all) We imitate God when we dress up on Purim, as God did not appear directly in the text as being in charge at all, but dressed up, as it were, in Mordechai, Esther and other actions within the text.

If Purim is here, then Pesach cannot be too far behind (a month, to be precise). Any questions, feel free to ask.

To briefly review - four commandments concerning Purim - 1) hear the story 2) celebrate the event with food 3) make donations for the impoverished 4) give gifts of food to people you know. The community has helped make #4 possible, and if you come on Wednesday night #s 1 and 2 are out of the way. #3 is up to you.

Connected to Purim, although not a Purim commandment, is the relationship with Amalek. On Purim itself the story of our first run-in with Amalek is reviewed. In case you forgot, while we were on the road following the Exodus, Amalek came and attacked the group of people there. Everything stopped - Joshua led the defense and Moses went up a hill to oversee it all. God declares eternal war upon Amalek. When Moses retells the story, he reminds the people concerning Amalek's attack, and tells them to always remember to erase the memory and memorials to Amalek. I tend to think this nice Zen Koan is designed to help us improve the world, so that just as the seven good years in Egypt were erased by the seven years of famine, the memory of what Amalek has done will be erased by how much more perfect we help the world become.