Purim - Lessons of Purim

In You our fathers trusted; they trusted, and You rescued them.	בְּךָ בָּטְחוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בָּטְחוּ וַתְּפַלְּטֵמוֹ: (תהילים כב, ה)
It repeats the word 'they trusted' to show a strengthening in בטחון, that they only had בטחון in You and no one else Not in השתדלות or other people	וכפל בטחו לחזק הבטחון, כי לא היה להם בטחון באחר אלא בך (רד"ק)

Instructions For Teaching This Lesson:
Present to your class the lessons that we learn from Purim.

Step 1:
Teach the students about the power of בטחון. Emphasize the importance of relying solely on Hashem. Explain how we see that in the מגילה.

Step 2:
Discuss the power of תפילה. Stress the specific power of the תפילות of תנוקות של בית רבן.

Step 3:
Explain the concept of הקב"ה הקדים רפואה לפני המכה.

Purim - Lessons of Purim

בטחון

Before אסתר went to אחשורוש, she said פרק כב in תהילים. Many people say this פרק on תענית אסתר. In this פרק, we speak about how we cry out to Hashem from the depths of despair and Hashem answers us.

<u>תהילים כב, ה</u>
בְּךָ בָּטְחוּ אֲבֹתֵינוּ בָּטְחוּ וַתְּפַלְּטֵמוֹ:
In You our fathers trusted; they trusted, and You rescued them.

<u>רד"ק</u>
וכפל בטחו לחזק הבטחון, כי לא היה להם בטחון באחר אלא בך
It repeats the word 'they trusted' to show a strengthening in בטחון, that they only had בטחון in You and no one else
Not in השתדלות or other people

Clearly if the double language, "בְּךָ בָּטְחוּ אֲבֹתֵינוּ בָּטָחוּ" is strengthening בטחון, there must have been some level of בטחון before. There is a level of בטחון in Hashem where the person relies on Hashem and knows that the salvation is coming from Hashem, yet at the same time he is relying that it will come through his השתדלות or another person - such as a boss, a shadchan, the army.... Trusting in Hashem while at the same time thinking that the השתדלות that you're doing, or the middle man who helps you is the channel in which Hashem will save you is a level of בטחון. The higher level is seeing clearly that it is ONLY Hashem and all the השתדלות is not doing anything. We are only doing השתדלות because that is what Hashem commanded us to do.

Purim - Lessons of Purim

תהילים כה, ב
אֱלֹקַי בְּךָ בָטַחְתִּי אַל־אֵבוֹשָׁה
Hashem, in You I trusted, don't let me be embarrassed

רד"ק
אלקי בך בטחתי ולא באחר, לפיכך תחינתי לפניך: שלא אבושה. שאם לא תתן לי שאלתי הנה יש לי בשת בבטחוני ואם תתננה לא אבוש
Hashem, I trust in You AND NO ONE ELSE, therefore, my plea before You is: that I not be embarrassed. Because, if You don't give me my request, I will be embarrassed of my בטחון. But if you do give it to me, I will not be embarrassed.

When someone puts trust in one specific thing, and that thing doesn't come through, it is embarrassing that they trusted in it. For example, if someone is relying on a lottery ticket to make him rich and he doesn't win, then he is embarrassed that he relied on the ticket. If he wins the lottery, then the trust in the lottery ticket is not embarrassing (even though of course, it was Hashem who made him win). We ask Hashem that when we rely solely on Him, He should come through for us so that we should not be embarrassed that we relied on Him. When we say this we are strengthening our בטחון. And when we turn to Hashem with such strong בטחון, He answers.

Purim - Lessons of Purim

In שמונה עשרה, we say: וְלֹא נֵבוֹשׁ כִּי בְךָ בָּטָחְנוּ
And we should not be embarrassed because we trusted in You.

We should have in mind during this תפילה, to rely solely on Hashem as our Savior. We live in a world where we are constantly being shaken up and losing our security in the economy, the government, and world health. This state of affairs can actually help us improve our בטחון, as we begin to see there is nothing else to rely on, and the only answer is trusting in Hashem.

Story:
A woman was in Eretz Yisrael תשעה באב time, when Iran was threatening to send rockets to destroy us. Everyone needed to know where the safe room was in their building in case of an attack. One day, while on the bus with her son who lives in Eretz Yisrael, she asked him - what happens if there's an attack חס ושלום while we're on the bus? Where do we go?
Her son smiled and replied, "The bus is the SAFEST place to be!" Surprised, she asked why that is so. He replied, "Since on the bus there is NO WHERE to go, we will rely ONLY on Hashem in case of an attack, and that is the best guarantee for protection!" Baruch Hashem, there were no rockets that summer!

Sometimes we are זוכה to see the results of בטחון immediately even in the little things in our lives. This is a true letter from a student to a teacher:

Dear Morah,

The craziest thing happened. We had a big basketball game tonight. We were losing by 15 most of the game so we started davening. With 11 seconds left it was our ball and we were down by two. (This was a game that we really needed to win) All of us were screaming אין עוד מלבדו - *there is NO ONE besides Hashem! and we were thinking about what you taught us that when you trust in Hashem you won't be embarrassed. Girls from the other school were like - "What are you guys saying and why are you guys saying that?" We continued saying it and a kid on the team shot a 3 and scored. We won the game!! We all felt that Hashem really spoke to us! Morah, you got many many shoutouts including when the Rabbi came up to us and said "Wow!" We said "Our Halacha teacher taught us this." Just thought I would share this with you!*

Purim - Lessons of Purim

מגילה טו:
"בָּא הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהָמָן אֶל הַמִּשְׁתֶּה". תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן: מָה רָאָתָה אֶסְתֵּר שֶׁזִּמְּנָה אֶת הָמָן?.... רַבִּי נְחֶמְיָה אוֹמֵר: כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא יֹאמְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל: אָחוֹת יֵשׁ לָנוּ בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ, וְיַסִּיחוּ דַּעְתָּן מִן הָרַחֲמִים.
Why did אסתר invite המן to the party? רבי נחמי said, "So that בני ישראל can't say, 'We have a sister in the king's palace' and they would turn away from relying on Hashem."

אסתר was afraid that during this scary time, בני ישראל would be relying on אסתר, who was one of their own, to go to the king and save them. This would not work! בני ישראל have a much better chance of Hashem helping them if they rely only on Him. Therefore, אסתר wanted בני ישראל to think that she was not interested in the Jews anymore. She wanted בני ישראל to think, "Look, the power got to her! She's becoming friends with המן and is inviting him to her party." If בני ישראל think that, then they cannot rely on אסתר, and then they will rely ONLY on Hashem, and then Hashem will save them.

מגילת סתרים אסתר ד, ב
ויבא עד לפני שער המלך. רימז שלא רצה ליכנס כלל לשער המלך כי נשבע שלא לפשוט השק ואין לבא אל שער המלך בלבוש שק וממילא ידעו הכל שאינו רוצה לחזור אחר סיבות והי' תמיד עסוק בשקו. ובזה הי' ידוע לכל העולם כי אינו נכנס לשער המלך כלל: כי אין לבא אל שער המלך. ומזה ידעו העולם שבנבואה נאמר' לו שכלה ונחרצה ומאת ה' יצאה ויפנו הכל אל הרחמים ולא לחזור אחר סיבות:

מרדכי came UNTIL the king's gate, but did not go inside it. He wore sackcloth and ashes to show everyone that he wouldn't go into the palace. Everyone knew that you are not allowed to go into the palace dressed in sackcloth. He was making it clear to בני ישראל that he was not going to try to help them. Now, בני ישראל would not rely on him and they would rely solely on Hashem.

Purim - Lessons of Purim

Story by Rav Shaya Cohen:

We were living in Los Angeles at the time and it was a few days before Purim. I had invited about twenty-five guests for the סעודת פורים and a day or two later, which was very close to Purim, my wife calls me.

She askes, “Can I serve milchig at the seudah?”

Puzzled, I ask her in return, “What’s this all about?”

“I don’t have money for meat”

Gulp, “ה’ יעזר. You know we must have בטחון, what else can we do? Without a doubt, Hashem will provide. We will have meat for the סעודה.”

The following day the doorbell rang. My young daughter opened the door and there was Eliyahu, a young man who worked for the butcher shop in the city, with a delivery for us. It was two cases of wine and a large box of meat! He explained that it is a gift for Purim from a certain prominent family in the city. Eliyahu told me the following story:

A woman from the prominent family in the city wanted to send us two cases of wine. The employee who worked in the butcher shop knew that in the past we used to buy from them, but no longer did. She figured that since the shop was sending a delivery of two cases of wine to us in the Valley anyway, she would take the initiative and gift us a full box of meat as well. She hoped that this generous gesture would reinstate our business relationship.

Eliyahu’s story ended here.

Well, what do you know? That box full of meat was truly a gift from the butcher shop, which in and of itself was amazing. But I knew the dots didn’t connect with the wine delivery because although the woman who had ordered it was indeed from a prominent family in the city, she didn’t know me. Something smelled fishy.

I called that woman and as we spoke, she realized what had happened. A shul was located two blocks away from the butcher shop where she ordered the wine, and the name of the Rabbi of the shul was Rabbi Cohen. The woman had walked into the butcher shop and said, “I’d like to send two cases of wine to Rabbi Cohen for Purim.”

The butcher shop employee immediately thought of Rabbi Cohen in the Valley (aka me), which was rather ridiculous because there was a Rabbi Cohen in the community right there in the city!”

The woman and I argued at length about the right thing to do. I wanted to return the wine and she wanted me to keep it. Finally, we agreed that I would keep one case and she would take back the other.

That year, because of the “mistake,” the food and drink at our Purim סעודה was positively lavish!

Purim - Lessons of Purim

אסתר ו, יא

וַיַּרְכִּיבֵהוּ בִּרְחֹוב הָעִיר וַיִּקְרָא לְפָנָיו כָּכָה יֵעָשֶׂה לָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הַמֶּלֶךְ חָפֵץ בִּיקָרֹו׃

And he paraded him through the streets; and he proclaimed before him: This is what is done for the man whom the king desires to honor!

What was the significance of the part of the מגילה when מרדכי was honored on the king's horse and led through the streets? After it was over, בני ישראל were in the same predicament as before.

אבני אליהו (אישי ישראל גר"א)

משען ומבטח לצדיקים, גם שהוא מבטח לצדיקים הבוטחים בו ונותן שאלתם לאחר זמן, קודם יבא שאלתם הוא משען להם שלא יאבדו בטחונם בו יתברך.... וכן באחשורוש קודם שנתלה המן הראה להם גדולת מרדכי אשר קראו לפניו ברחובות, ככה יעשה לאיש אשר המלך חפץ ביקרו (אסתר ו, יא), סעד אותם בבטחונם קודם יצאו מאפלה לאורה

We say in davening 'משען ומבטח לצדיקים' - Hashem is a support and security for the צדיקים. What is the difference between them? מבטח לצדיקים means that Hashem gives those who rely on Him what they ask for. However, Hashem does something more than that which is very encouraging. ה' משען - Hashem is a support. Even before they get their ישועה, He gives them something so that they don't lose faith in Him. Something that they can lean on until the ישועה comes. This is what happened in the time of the מגילה with מרדכי when he was led through the streets by המן in the royal clothing on the king's horse. It was not time for the ישועה yet, but Hashem was giving בני ישראל encouragement to keep trusting in Him that the true גאולה was on its way.

In life, we should look out for these little things that Hashem gives us to lean on. We should let it give us strength as we wait for our ישועה.

Purim - Lessons of Purim

תינוקות של בית רבן

בטחון - fully relying on Hashem leads to תפילה. Another lesson that we learn from פורים is the power of תפילה.

<u>אסתר ד, יד</u>

לֵךְ כְּנוֹס אֶת־כָּל־הַיְהוּדִים הַנִּמְצְאִים בְּשׁוּשָׁן וְצוּמוּ עָלַי וְאַל־תֹּאכְלוּ וְאַל־תִּשְׁתּוּ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים לַיְלָה וָיוֹם גַּם־אֲנִי וְנַעֲרֹתַי אָצוּם כֵּן

Go, assemble all the Jews who live in שושן, and fast in my behalf; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens will observe the same fast.

<u>מדרש אבא גוריון ה</u>

בסוף ג' שעות בלילה נשמעה בכייתם לפני הקב"ה, אמרו מלאכי השרת לפני הקב"ה רבש"ע קול גדיים וכבשים אנו שומעין, באותה שעה עמד משה רבינו בבכיה לפני הקב"ה ואמר, רבש"ע גלוי וידוע לפניך שלא קול גדיים וכבשים הם, אלא קול קטני עמך ישראל ששרויין בתענית היום ג' ימים, ... ולמחר עומדין בשחיטה כגדיים וכבשים, ולב אויב שמח עליהם, באותה שעה נתגלגלו רחמים של הקב"ה, ושיבר החותמות וקרע האיגרות, וגידע קרן רשע, והשיב מחשבתו הרעה בראשו, והרים קרן ישראל והצמיח להם ישועה.

After three hours at night Hashem heard the crying of בני ישראל. The מלאכים said to Hashem, “We hear the bleating of goats and sheep.” משה רבינו got up before Hashem and said, “Hashem, You know those are not the sounds of goats and sheep, they are the sounds of the children of בני ישראל who have been fasting for three days... and tomorrow they will be slaughtered like goats and sheep and the enemies will rejoice in it. At that moment - the moment of the collective תפילה of the small children which was so pure and sincere - Hashem had רחמנות. He broke the seals and tore the decrees, and cut off the wickedness, and returned the evil decree around, and raised up the glory of בני ישראל and caused salvation to come to them.

<u>שלחן ערוך יורה דעה רמה</u>

שאין העולם מתקיים אלא בזכות הבל פיהם של תינוקות של בית רבן

The world only exists because of the breath of the mouths of children learning תורה This demonstrates how precious young children are to Hashem.

Purim - Lessons of Purim

הקב"ה הקדים רפואה למכה

The מגילה also teaches us the merciful way that Hashem works. He prepares the salvation before bringing in the צרה.

<u>אסתר ב, כא</u>

בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם וּמָרְדֳּכַי יוֹשֵׁב בְּשַׁעַר־הַמֶּלֶךְ קָצַף בִּגְתָן וָתֶרֶשׁ שְׁנֵי־סָרִיסֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ מִשֹּׁמְרֵי הַסַּף וַיְבַקְשׁוּ לִשְׁלֹחַ יָד בַּמֶּלֶךְ אֲחַשְׁוֵרֹושׁ:

At that time, when מרדכי was sitting in the palace gate, בגתן and תרש, two of the king's guards who guarded the threshold, became angry, and plotted to kill King אחשורוש.

<u>מלבים</u>

טרם יבא אל ספור הצרה אשר היה לישראל, הקדים רפואה למכה, להורות כי המכה אינו למען הכות רק למען ירפא

Before it comes to the story of the distress that the Jewish people experienced, it had the cure precede the injury, to teach that the injury is not in order to injure but rather in order to heal.

When we see that Hashem already planned the רפואה before the מכה, we understand that the purpose of the צרה was never to hurt us. Someone who wants to hurt would never plan the healing process first. Therefore, we realize that the purpose of the צרה is to teach us a lesson and make us better. With this understanding, we can better cope with challenges and hardships that come to our lives.

<u>אסתר ג, א</u>

אַחַר | הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה גִּדַּל הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲחַשְׁוֵרֹושׁ אֶת־הָמָן

After these happenings, the King אחשורוש promoted המן

This happened after the רפואה was already in place. ושתי was already killed, אסתר was in the palace, מרדכי already saved the king's life... THEN Hashem began the צרה with the rising of המן's greatness.

Purim - Lessons of Purim

Story told by Rebbetzin Shaindy Cohen:

On ערב יום כיפור, our household was bustling with preparations. My husband, Meir, was eager to get to the shul early, but decided to lend a hand with the little kids and the final arrangements before leaving. Little did we know that this decision would align so precisely with what was about to unfold.

As I stepped into another room, my heart froze at the sight of a toddler, her tiny hand lodged deep in our four-month-old baby's throat. Panic set in as the baby's face contorted, turning a frightening shade of purple and blue, silent and motionless.

Instinct drove me to rush the baby to Meir. In a flash, he recalled a conversation he overheard a few months earlier of בחורים discussing the Heimlich maneuver. He had seized the opportunity and learned the maneuver from Moshe Pearlman, one of those בחורים, without appreciating how pivotal this training would be.

With no time to spare, Meir swiftly took the baby and performed the Heimlich maneuver. In a moment of Divine intervention, a small round marble shot out from the baby's mouth. I never let marbles in the house for this reason. Somehow one had made its way inside unnoticed.

Hashem clearly orchestrated everything so that the רפואה - which was Meir learning the Heimlich maneuver and staying home to help - was ready and waiting to save us when the מכה came.

It is comforting and strengthens our בטחון when in the midst of our great pain and distress, we know that the cure has already been created.