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[Home](#) > Getting to Know Your Simcha - 007 Purim: Happiness In Spite Of Pain

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What is happiness? Basically, it is to fulfill a lacking. The more lacking we feel, the greater happiness we feel when we fulfill what we're missing.

It's easy to be happy on Purim – after all, we experienced a redemption! We were saved from death. But how can we be happy today when we are in exile, and we are full of suffering?

In Tehillim we say, “Serve Hashem with joy”. This means that we *can* always be happy – but how? When we experience failure and we are down, how can we be happy?

It's nice to say, “*Gam Zu L'Tovah*” -- “This, too is for the best”. But that doesn't yet prove we are **happy**; that would definitely show Emunah in Hashem, but how can we be actually happy in spite of all the suffering we have?

The way we can always be happy, even amidst pain, is by **nullifying our will** completely to Hashem.

What does it mean to nullify our selves?

It doesn't mean simply to give up what we want for Hashem, to sacrifice for Him, (which is indeed commendable). It means that **my entire existence is completely for Hashem!** Let us elaborate further.

Why is it that most people don't feel that Hashem is always with them? How come people don't feel Hashem in their life?

Many people will answer – “I must have many sins, therefore I don't feel Hashem next to me.” That is true, but there is a more inner reason.

The true, inner reason is because most people simply never realize that Hashem even exists! How then can a person recognize Hashem in his life?

If a person nullifies his ego, he will **automatically** come to realize Hashem's existence. The “Me, me me” in a person is what prevents a person from experiencing the simple awareness of Hashem's existence.

When a person suffers -- let's say a person becomes ill – it is a time to “accept suffering”; the *Mishna* in *Avos* says that we must accept suffering. But what does it mean to accept suffering? Does it mean

that a person should think, “Let my suffering be an atonement for all my sins?” That is not the purpose of suffering (although it is definitely true that suffering does atone one’s sins). The purpose of accepting suffering is **to give up one’s very self to Hashem.**

When one suffers, he has the opportunity to give up his very self, bringing himself ever closer to Hashem. This is how a person can rejoice even while he is suffering – by giving up his very self to Hashem.

What is Purim to us?

For many people, Purim is a day of strict halachic observance and nothing more. Purim can be a day of observing the *mitzvos* with all their *dikduk* and *chumros* – hearing the Megillah this way and that way, giving this and that for *Mishloach Manos* and *Matanos L’evyonim* – it can remain at that, a day of superficial *mitzvah* observance!

We are not trying to make fun of those who are very *frum* to carry out every halacha of Purim! We are not saying these are not good things. It is very commendable to observe and carry out all the halachos of Purim as best as possible. But there is a lot more to Purim than just the *mitzvos* of Purim!

The question we must ask ourselves every year is: “Did Purim change me?” Did you simply rejoice over the fact that the Jews were saved on Purim, celebrating the same celebration every year... or did you succeed in realizing that you have to give your self up for Hashem?

If you are simply happy on Purim because there was one time in history that the Jews were saved on this day, your happiness on Purim is only on Purim – that’s it! You will remain the same sad person after Purim ends, not having changed a bit.

The halacha is that “A person is obligated to get drunk on Purim until has lost his *daas*”. Why?

By getting drunk on Purim, we can come to a level of recognizing Hashem in our lives, by realizing that we must give our selves up for him. The Purim of today that we see is very far from the truth, from the way it is supposed to be. In fact, there is no day further from the truth than modern-day Purim; we are failing to use it properly. Let’s turn it around – *V’nahafoch Hu!*

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