

Okay let's talk about Purim

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CO:

Okay let's talk about Purim. What especially does the Rebbe teach us about Purim? Can you give us an idea or two? Can you speak about how you will be celebrating Purim this year, anything special? How can we have a particularly rewarding Purim?

OB:

Maybe we'll start at the end. To have a particularly rewarding Purim, it pays to daven (pray) to ask Hashem (God) for help to not only do all the mitzvot that are done on Purim, but to feel the Purim. Reb Noson says that we should be misbonen (ponder): what were the miracles of Purim? What is it that we are really celebrating? Are we just celebrating being saved, which of course is something worth celebrating, but how did that happen? Was there anything in particular that was the key moment(s) or was it really a whole chain, a whole process? Was there a point in the process, a critical moment when the process took a turn for the better? or for the worse? That's too much to think about on Purim. You have to think about it before Purim.

How will I be celebrating Purim this year? By drinking as much as I can. I will try to do that with friends and people I spend time with during the year, people I learn Torah with. I want to sing with them. I have a song list in my mind of songs I would like to on Purim.

I have a son-in-law and a son that are Toldos Aharon Chasidim. For a couple of years I made it to the tish (mealtime gathering of chasidim and their rebbe) and there's a lot of singing. (I'm sure this is true of other chasidim as well.)

They're not singing drinking songs or even Jewish drinking songs, but Nishmas (from Shabbos morning davening) and other nigunim (songs, liturgical or otherwise). That is something I would like to do at my own tish (table). I have a list of songs that are particularly meaningful to me that I would like to sing over the course of the Purim seudah (meal).

I think that's something that most people have, at their own level, some song that makes them feel more Jewish, that tugs them to be more Jewish. For some it will be Adon Olam and for some something from Fiddler on the Roof (lehavdil—pardon the comparison), or whatever Yiddishe nigunim, from this singer or that, Bentzion Shenker or someone else, from this chasidus or that. Wherever it will come from; I think everyone has a song that touches him.

A Shabbos song is not out of place on Purim. Nothing is out of place on Purim except being unhappy. So singing of that sort is what I will try to incorporate in celebrating Purim this year.

As far as what the Rebbe z"l teaches us about Purim—well as you know because you've read the "[How to Learn Likutey Moharan](#)" piece and wrote the "[Reach Up](#)" piece—the Rebbe says that any of his lessons can be applied to the whole gamut of Torah. So you can hold a lesson up to the Purim light and see Purim. You mentioned Lesson #8 before. Mordechai and Esther's various prayers and wailing are like the deep sigh and groans that the Rebbe z"l teaches become the vessel of salvation.

I was thinking today about Lesson #5 (Likutey Moharan I). The Rebbe says that sometimes after a decree has been sealed and tzaddikim need to camouflage or disguise a tefillah (prayer) as a story. This is very much reflected in the Megillah itself. The decree was sealed and the story about it doesn't even mention God at all anywhere in the text. Just the telling of the story, reading the Megillah, itself is a tefillah, a prayer that Hashem should save us. Plus in tractate Megillah, the

Gemara asks why we don't say Hallel on Purim. A miracle took place right? One of the answers is that the reading of the Megilah is the Hallel! We see that in a very real sense, Chazal (our Sages) tells us that reading the Megilah is a tefilah, so of course when the Rebbe says that you can tell a story and intend it to be a tefilah in disguise. Here we have an example of it.

I think it's important for us to be aware that the Rebbe just doesn't mean the reading of the Megilah and he just doesn't mean the super-duper tzaddikim. The Rebbe means that you and I also can have a certain degree of awareness when we tell our troubles and the troubles of others, that we're not talking just to the person in front of us, or on the other end of the modem, but that we are also addressing Hashem, that He should please hear our concern and translate that into salvation for another Jew. I think that is something that we can really take to heart.

Even telling a story that somebody was saved and somebody did have something happen. Somebody took a medical test, and the results were favorable, just telling that can be expressed as a thanks to Hashem; a person should be aware of that.

Ozer Bergman

Breslov Research Institute

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