

JOY ON SHABBAT AND FESTIVALS

written by Chaim Kramer
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“Are you happy on Shabbat?” asked me Rebbe Nachman... Seize every opportunity to be happy on Shabbat and the festivals!

Rebbe Nachman once said: Even the most average Jew feels great joy and happiness when sitting down at his Shabbat table (*Rebbe Nachman’s Wisdom* #155).

Reb Noson once attended the funeral of someone whom he hardly knew. When asked why, he said, “A person should always cry out before God. Whenever an opportunity presents itself, I make the most of it.” (*Siach Sarfei Kodesh* 1-635). We must do the same when it comes to happiness: seize every opportunity. Rebbe Nachman’s writings are replete with teachings about being joyous, especially on joyous occasions. He encouraged us to take advantage of Shabbat and the festivals by making an

even greater effort to be happy and joyous on these days.

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Reb Noson writes: Once, when the Rebbe was about to give a lesson about being happy on Shabbat, he asked me, “Are you happy on Shabbat?” “Sometimes I get an arousal of fear and awe on Shabbat,” I answered. The Rebbe said, “This is not the way. The main thing is joy!” He then spoke to me a lot about being happy on Shabbat. Afterwards, the Rebbe understood what I was thinking and he said to me, “Now you have what to be depressed about!” He knew that now that I had to be joyous, I would worry about whether I could do it. How would I get myself to be truly happy on Shabbat? This helped me a lot, for it made me realize that I should at least not become depressed over having to be joyous... When the Rebbe told me to be joyous on Shabbat, I told him, “At least I want to be happy.” That is, even if I do not feel true joy, at least I want to feel it (Rebbe Nachman’s Wisdom #155).



*(taken from the book: Crossing the Narrow Bridge, chapter 2:
Joy, pp. 30-31)*