

Purim: Psalm 22 Gets A Lot More Meaningful

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Hey hey ladies, can you believe Purim is already here? I know... busy busy. But I wanted to quickly share an insight I got last week that I'm so excited about because it's going to take the spiritual side of my Purim to the next level.

It's always been hard for me to really feel in my heart the joy of the miraculous salvation that the Jewish people received in the days of Purim. I wasn't there, you know what I mean? So, it's kind of hard to relate. I get it on an intellectual level – but I'd love to feel it more deeply in my

heart so that my Purim celebration is as genuine as possible.

Also, Purim is known to be a day of tremendous holiness and it's therefore encouraged to pray as much as possible. So I say Psalm 22 throughout the day since it is associated with Purim. But again, I wish I could feel more emotion when I say it, just as the Jewish people back then must have felt upon hearing about the terrible decree against them.

Verse 2-6 in Psalm 22 are as follows: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? (You are) far from my salvation (and) from the words of my moaning. My God, I call out by day and You do not reply and at night I do not keep silent. But You are holy; You await the praises of Israel. Our ancestors trusted in You; they trusted, and You rescued them. They cried out to You and they escaped, they trusted in You and they were not shamed."

Well, THIS Purim – it's going to be different. This Purim is going to be infused with a lot more emotion and *kavana*.

Warning: what I'm about to share with you may sound depressing but if you really think about it, it's not at all. However, just in case you are feeling down after reading this, I have got the most awesome, fun, and delicious Purim cocktail recipe at the end of this article. You can make it for now or for Purim – I promise it's going to put you in a cheery mood!

Okay so getting back to my spiritual Purim issues. Honestly, this year, feeling the joy of salvation and the emotion of Psalm 22 should not that hard to do. At this point, I'm definitely feeling some of the doom and gloom that must have weighed heavily in the air leading up to the salvation of the Jewish people on Purim and I am beginning to relate to how emotional their prayers must have been. And I don't think I'm alone.

The entire world it seems is in a precarious state of collapse. As a matter of fact, Purim last year was the last

holiday celebrated NOT under lockdown. Since then, at least here in Israel, we've been in full or partial lockdown for every holiday. The coronavirus crisis is continuing to take its toll in various and deeply-felt ways. There is the health scare of course. Life has not been the same for an entire year and no one knows when or If it will ever return to normal. The ensuing financial crisis has hit across the board from small businesses being destroyed, to unprecedented travel restrictions leading to airlines losing billions, to the erosion of the hospitality industry, to people losing their jobs, to the devaluation of the US dollar and the banks bracing for big loan defaults. Depression and suicide are up as is political conflict and instability. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Can you imagine if tomorrow, life somehow, by some miracle, got back to normal and the health scare and economic and political upheavals were gone? Can you imagine being free again?

I live in Israel where we have been in lockdown three times for a total of nearly five months and counting within a year. Surveillance is way up and the skies have been sealed twice already and not just for a few days. Foreigners have been denied entry and the *aliyah* process has become longer and more complicated. Tourism is gone. Public transportation has become very problematic during lockdowns. *Simchas* have turned into one big question mark. Kids have been learning on the phone or zoom for months and many parents are complaining that it has been almost a complete and total waste of time. The government is talking about mandatory vaccination and the people are divided and fighting over this issue.

No one knows what is going to be, but many are feeling the darkness, pain, fear, and demoralization.

All of this has allowed me to finally feel in my heart just a

little bit of what the Jews in the time of Purim must have been feeling. What a state of impending doom and gloom with no way out other than an open miracle! They fasted, did *teshuva* and *davened* their hearts out. And in the end – a miraculous salvation. WOW – the joy, gratitude, relief, and raw emotion they must have felt! WOW!

Can you imagine if tomorrow, life somehow, by some miracle, got back to normal and the health scare and economic and political upheavals were gone? Can you imagine being free again? Free of the constant high-level stress. Free to make a *simcha*, to plan the future, to spend time with grandparents, go to a restaurant, work out at the gym, start a business, go to school, travel. Free to go outside without a mask!



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I would be dancing for joy literally the entire day! Singing praises to Hashem! I would make a *seuda* to give thanks! I would pour on the *tzedakah*! I would laugh and cry! I would break out the champagne, hug and high five, make my family their favorite meal!

Hey that kind of sounds like Purim in a way, doesn't it?

The current crisis has awakened me, enabling me to relate, if only just a little bit, to how the Jewish people must have felt during the impending Purim crises as well as when they received their miraculous salvation. I can relate so much more palpably now to their joyous celebration as well as to how emotional their fasting, *teshuva* and praying must have been!

That is why for me, the celebration of and *davening* throughout Purim 5781 will be so much more meaningful and emotional. Perhaps it can be for you too?

Wishing you and yours a *freilichin* Purim!

FROSÉ RECIPE

Ingredients:

750 ml bottle of rosé

1 cup brown sugar

12 oz bag of Bodek frozen strawberries, thawed

2 oz lemon juice

Directions:

Pour the rosé into a 9×13 pan and freeze for about 5 or 6 hours until almost solid.

Place the sugar and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water in a pan and bring to a boil, stirring for a few minutes until the sugar has dissolved. Add the strawberries and remove from heat. Strain through a sieve into a bowl and chill for 30 minutes.

Scrape the rosé into a blender. Add the lemon juice, 3.5 oz of the strawberry liquid and 1 cup ice and blend. Place in freezer until the mixture is thickened but not solid, about 30 minutes. Take out of freezer and blend again for a slushy consistency.

Now, either pour into glasses and serve or place in freezer for maximum 1 week.