

# Sacred Time: (Re-in) Venting Your Spleen – Adar 4

written by Yehudis Golshevsky

March 9, 2014



**Adar 4**

## (Re-in) Venting Your Spleen

The organ that is associated with the month of Adar is the spleen. Its function in the body is to filter and cleanse the blood of worn or deficient blood vessels. The *Zohar* explains that a filter is, by definition, an expression of *Gevurah*—restraint. When the spleen does its job, old blood is replaced, its iron is recycled, and a healthy reserve is maintained for emergencies. If it isn't fit, however, that most essential of vital fluids deteriorates. Since ancient

times, the spleen and its *gevurot* have been associated with negativity. Wherever *gevurot* prevail, there is a strong potential for negative expression.

Reb Nosson explains that the spleen is the, “laughter of fools who lack understanding,” as we find in the Talmud (*Brachot*) This is the empty laughter of a person who lusts after money, which stems from depression and melancholy—the traditional forces associated with the spleen. The heart doesn’t feel joy from that kind of empty laughter; the smile of a person driven by wanting that which he doesn’t have doesn’t light up his eyes or convey anything but his insatiable hunger.

Conversely, the authentic joy of Adar—which should really be felt all year long—is accessed through giving charity, which nullifies money-lust. Letting go of my grasping after more brings me happiness, as the clouds of worry and insecurity dissipate. I work to know that whatever I have comes from Hashem. When I know that my Creator is taking care of me, I feel the deep joy of His presence in my life. This applied *emunah* is itself the only real wealth. To paraphrase our sages: “Who is wealthy? One who is happy with whatever Hashem sends.” While I do need money, I always work to remember that it cannot buy happiness or even the most important things in life. Although I need to spend time earning a livelihood, I maintain a healthy perspective by recalling my purpose: I work to support my family and give charity, great *mitzvot* in their own right. The more aware I am of this, the more I live the good life of *emunah* and *simchah*—of faith and deep joy. (*Likutei Halachot, Hilchot Treifot* 2:2)

“A Sacred Time” emails are sent twice-weekly and focus on finding inspiration and meaning throughout the Jewish calendar. To receive these in your inbox, [click here.](#)