

A Daily Dose of Emunah by Orit Riter

Shalom, Hope you're having an Emuna filled day.

On Purim we can reach the highest of highs in our spirituality; a place beyond intellect and reason. This state is defined as “*ad d’lo yada* (a state in the realm of our mind where we cannot distinguish reasonably between ‘Blessed is Mordechai and cursed is Haman.’) Our holy Sages ask how does this state of mind contribute to one’s happiness?

The Vilna HaGaon ztk’l brings a remarkable answer based on the teaching in Pirkei Avot (4:1), “*HaSamaech b’Chelcko* (Who is happy? The one who is content with their lot in life.)” The Gaon lists *HaSamaech b’Chelcko* as one of Hashem’s attributes. How can this apply to the Master of the Universe? We understand it to refer to a person who lacks certain things in life, yet is not satisfied? But Borei HaOlam?

The Chofetz Chaim ztk’l illuminates this teaching but referring to Hashem’s ‘contentment with His lot’ as Hashem being happy with His people, the Jewish nation. In spite of our lowliness, Hashem is ‘happy’ with his creation. Hashem is happy with every creature since each one contributes to His world in their own special way and plays an integral part in His Divine scheme.

We are meant to emulate this joy in our personal lives. How? By being happy and content if for no other reason other than being aware how vital we are in Hashem’s Divine master plan. We are to celebrate every small achievement we make in life; whether we see it as minuscule or grandiose. It doesn’t need to make any sense to me how I am ‘making a difference’ in this world, yet I should be happy knowing I am.

Inner joy surfaces when we see ourselves growing spiritually and feel we are contributing to this world. *Samaech* is closely related to the Hebrew word *Tzmicha* (growing, sprouting) since we experience the most joy when we actively work through our emotions and develop our G-dly selves.

We are on the road of life. Joy comes from knowing we are traveling faithfully on the right track and are continuously searching for new accomplishments to reach in life.

More from Orit Riter on Happiness

A true test of simcha is when we can find a ‘pocket’ of simcha at a time of distress. According to the *Ner Yisrael* commentary on Tehillim, being grateful when one has lost a lot of money is a sign that one’s life was in danger and has been saved. When we can transform our difficulty to dance, we can be reassured that we have acquired the trait of simcha.

The *Ohr Samaech* ztk’l taught that unhappy people need to look at their situation with fresh eyes. We are to learn to appreciate what we have and not focus on what we think we should have. The art of simcha is the process of finding new perspective upon what is, not acquiring more of what we think ought to be. The key is to see the larger picture without changing the reality of facts.

The Megillah writes, “*Hamin HaEtz asher Tziviticha ... Achalta?* (Have you eaten of the tree...?)” Chazal elucidates on this verse and tell us that this hints to Haman (*Hamin* is very close to the word Haman). Haman symbolizes evilness and temptation of this world. The transgression of Adam and Chava was caused by the snake who wished to lure them into idolatry, separation from Hashem. Haman sought to entice the Jewish people into idolatry by asking them to bow down to him. The intention by both was the same; to cause a weakening in our G-dly connection.

Great joy is found in Purim as this festive holiday offers us a grand opportunity to return back to our G-dliness at a time of trouble. That is why we are instructed to increase our happiness even before Purim begins at the beginning of the month Adar; before we actually experience the ‘end’ to our troubles. We are to see our situation with ‘happy eyes’ even though our reality appears dreary and hopeless. The *yeshua* is coming; even if we don’t immediately see it. It is all in the eyes.

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