

## The Special Significance of the Happiness of Purim

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Leah Kohn

Chazal say, "*Mishnechnat Adar marbim b'simcha*-When Adar comes increase you joy." This is something unique to this month. The Torah tells us to be happy on the three festivals but there is no special obligation to start celebrating at the beginning of the month. Why do we increase simcha in Adar? In *addition*, although there is a special mitzvah to be joyous on Sukkot, it's not the essence or definition of the yom tov. But Purim is a day when we have to get on a high, when we have to rejoice more than on any other holiday. Why and how do we get there? On other holidays, we are obligated to help others monetarily to the extent that we can. But on Purim *matanot l'evyonim* is one of the *mitzvot* of the day. In addition, it doesn't have to do with having or not having. We send *shalach manot* to people of means too. What is unique about sharing with others on Purim?

When the *beit hamikdash* stood, the *mitzvah* to give *machazit hashekel* (half a shekel) was announced on the first day of Adar. Beginning on the first day of Nissan, the money was used to buy the communal offerings for the coming year. How does this relate to *simcha*? Chazal say that Hashem foresaw that Haman would offer Achashveirosh money to destroy the Jews. Therefore, he preceded the decree with the *mitzvah* of the *machazit hashekel*

which was already given to the Jews in the desert, so that its merit would nullify Haman's evil plans. The Sefas Emes explains that the month of Adar is the month of *nedivut*-generosity. All of Klal Yisrael exercised their giving muscles, the poor and the rich gave alike. Hashem directed the lot of Haman to fall in this month because when we are generous, it awakens a spirit of beneficence from above. Hashem overlook things that should be punished and nullifies decrees that we might not deserve to have reversed.

Rav Dessler divides people in two categories. There is the *noten*, the giver and the *notel*, the taker. The common attitude is that wealth and happiness go hand in hand. Many people mistakenly devote their lives to making as much money as possible thinking it will bring them happiness.

Rav Moshe Leib Sassover once said that you can learn three things from a child. When he wants something he cries, so too when a Jew needs something he should cry to Hashem. Secondly, he never sits idle. So too we must learn to utilize every moment to serve Hashem. Thirdly, when you give a child something, he's happy. Human nature is the more you get the more you want. *Chazal* say there is no such thing as a person who dies

with half of his desires fulfilled. A child is satisfied with what he has. So too *Chazal* say, "Who is rich, one who is happy with his lot." However, it's not so simple, it's natural for a person to desire more. We see this in the *Megilah*. *Chazal* say Haman was one of the wealthiest people in the history of mankind. He lacked nothing. He had honor, riches, and a wife and ten children. He said, "All of this is nothing...", because there is one person who refuses to bow to me. The nature of a taker is that he's never satisfied. It's about entitlement-I want, I desire, and it never ends.

When Haman tried to convince Achashveirosh to sign the decree to kill the Jews, he intimated that it wouldn't be much of a monetary loss for him as the Jews were dispersed in little groups in many locations. It didn't pay for him to let them live. Haman's view was that if a person doesn't give you physical benefit there's no reason to let him live. His definition of human life was about taking, how much he could gain.

Rav Hirsh says, the fact that Hashem made it so that we can never fulfill all our physical desires is a great kindness. If we're sensitive to what's happening inside us, we will see that it isn't satisfying us and that will lead us to search for something greater on a spiritual level.

## Mishlei

### The Nature of Temptation and Social Pressure Part III

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller Gottlieb

In Mishlei it says, "My son do not go in their path..." The Midrash says there are three things that a person does not have dominion over, his eyes, ears, and nose. Sometimes you might end up seeing, hearing, and smelling things without planning or wanting to. But there are three things a person does have authority over. They are his mouth, hands, and feet. You can choose what you will say, where you will go, and what you will do with your hands. You can choose whether you'll be a giver or a taker, a thief or someone who benefits others.

Shlomo Hamelech tells us in Mishlei, don't

think that if you define yourself as a taker and your victim as invisible, you'll remain innocent. You won't. You could end up a thief or a murderer. Do you think that an 8-year-old thinks- I want to be a thief or murderer when I grow up? No, but because gain seems very accessible and making the victim invisible is convenient, sliding down fast and very far is inevitable. Imagine a 14-year-old boy from a poor, traditional, family who's desperate for money. He goes to shul, notices the charity boxes, and stealthily empties its contents when no one is looking. He doesn't see the victims, the people who were expecting this charity to provide them with necessities. He only sees

his gain.

On the next level, we could take it to Yosef's brothers where the picture is more complex. The brothers were spiritual giants but they still fell into the same trap of wanting gain and validation by turning their victim into something quite not like them. Hashem did make Yosef superior. The *avot* did have a history of one son that was accepted and one that was rejected (Yishmael, Eisav) and it seemed as if Yosef was taking them there too. The brothers were far above seeing Yosef as invisible. The question evolved into- was he an illusion or was he the enemy. Unlike on the first level,

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when the poor boy impulsively took the charity, the brothers acted mindfully and decided to wait and see how things would work out. Yet they still ended up on the wrong path because they had the agenda of seeing him as an enemy. When Yosef came to Dothan, the brothers validated that he was the enemy. They sat and had a *din Torah* and nowhere in the text are they blamed for this, because up to this point the situation almost forced them to respond this way. Although the brothers reacted in different ways, nobody saved him and Yosef was sold and brought down to Egypt. Hashem intended this to

happen. It was part of a greater picture meant to bring them all down to Egypt. Yosef was the vehicle and he became a *tzadik* through the various temptation he faced. But for the brothers, the big mistake was the mentality of us against the one who acted superior. And we still suffer from this. The story of the *asara harugei malchut* attests that the crime was never completely paid for. Be careful, don't create the mentality of otherness, don't try to destroy other Jews just because they are different, if they are within *shivtei kah* and the parameters of the *Torah* we must never exclude them even in our minds.

You could think the circle could expand to include everyone in the entire world. Maybe all visions should be accepted? But the *Torah* says -no, don't go after their senseless culture. We have to influence the nations, not less ourselves be drawn in by them. How do you avoid being affected culturally? There are things you can't control such as what you see, hear, and smell. But you can control what you say, where you go, and what you do. The choices are yours. Choose wisely.

## Categories of Muktzah Part V

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Shimon Isaacson

The Shulchan Aruch writes that after the *Shabbat* morning meal, the practice was to go back to shul and listen to a discourse on *Agadata*. Therefore, he adjures people not to have their meal during that time so that they can go back to shul to attend the lecture. He emphasizes that laborers who don't study *Torah* all week long should spend even more time than *Torah* scholars engaging in learning on *Shabbat*. The Rema notes that a *talmid chacham* has the pleasure of learning all week long. Therefore, on *Shabbat* he can engage in a little more eating and drinking as a way of *oneg* (pleasure) that he doesn't have all week. But the working person who doesn't learn much all week should reserve *Shabbat* for Torah learning.

Let's look at some more examples of a *keli shemelachto l'heter*. The Shulchan Aruch tells us that a broom is not *muktza* and may be moved, says the Mishna Berura, even to protect it from the elements. One may sweep a tiled floor on *Shabbat*. One may not sweep a dirt floor as one can come to flattening out bumpy surfaces. Although dirt is considered *muktza* one may move it with a broom

exercising the leniency of *tiltul min hazad*-handling *muktza* indirectly. The Shulchan Aruch rules that *kisvei kodesh* (holy books) and food are never *muktza* and may always be moved. This also applies to a Megilat Esther. Although our practice is not to read it on *Shabbat*, it still retains its status of *kisvei kodesh* and may be moved.

What is the status of *tefillin* on *Shabbat*? The Shulchan Aruch writes that *Shabbat* is "*Lav zeman tefillin* -Not a time to don *tefillin*." This is because both *tefillin* and *Shabbat* are a sign of our relationship with Hashem. If you wear *tefillin* on *Shabbat* it's a kind of denigration of the sign and sanctity of *Shabbat*. *Tefillin* is a *keli* whose sole function is for the *mitzva* which doesn't exist on *Shabbat*. Therefore, it would be classified as a *keli shemelachto l'issur*. Because it has no permitted function on *Shabbat* it may be *muktza machmat gufo* and so perhaps you might not be able to move it *l'tzorech gufo* and *mekomo*. In addition, *tefillin* is a precision object that has great value and you would never use it for anything else. Therefore, one might classify it as *muktza machmat chisoron kis*. *Tefillin* may also have

the status of *kisvei kodesh* as it contains verses from the *Torah* which would make it a *keli shemelachto l'heter*.

There is a disagreement among the Poskim whether it is prohibited to wear *tefillin* on *Shabbat* or whether there is just no obligation. If one assumes it's not prohibited, it may be a *keli shemelachto l'heter*. According to *halacha*, we treat *tefillin* as a *keli shemelachto l'issur*. Therefore, if you want to bring it in to protect it, it would seem to be prohibited. However, the Rema notes the issue of *bizui* (disgracing) *tefillin* and the Mishne Berura rules that in this case one can rely on it being a *keli shemelachto l'heter* and bring it in. The Taz and Magen Avraham rule stringently that one may only move it *l'tzorech gufo* or *mekomo*.

If you left your *tefillin* and *talit* in the same bag and you need the *talit* or if *tefillin* is blocking a sefer you need, you may move it *l'tzorech mekomo*. We do not treat *tefillin* as *kisvei kodesh* as one cannot easily access the *parshiyot* and it is not classified as *muktza machmat chisoron kis*.