

From: The Rabbis at Chicago Torah Network

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To:

Join the CTN Rabbis & friends for the Meggilah reading,
together with our wonderful neighbors at Cong. Shaare Tzedek,
Saturday night at 7pm and Sunday at 8:30am.
Contact rabbikatz@torahnetwork.org

Help needy Jews Celebrate Purim

The Holiday of *Purim* is this Saturday evening, February 27 & Sunday, February 28.

How do we celebrate? We read the Book of Esther. Send gifts of food to friends. Eat a festive meal.

... *And we give charity to the poor.* As Maimonides writes:

"There's no greater or more glorious joy than bringing happiness to the poor ... By doing so, a person emulates G-d, because G-d "raises the spirit of the lowly, and the heart of the depressed."

... The Chicago Torah Network can help you be a part of this great mitzvah.

Make your generous tax-deductible contribution to help needy Jewish families celebrate Purim. Go to www.torahnetwork.org/donate.htm to make a secure online donation, or use the form below.

The money will be distributed on Purim to the Jewish poor. *And you'll not only celebrate a Jewish holiday. You'll do it in a very Jewish way.*

→→ Please complete and fax ASAP to 773.761.9262 or contribute online at www.torahnetwork.org/donate.htm ←←

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THE CHICAGO TORAH NETWORK SHABBAT FAX[©]

A WEEKLY PRESENTATION OF JEWISH THOUGHT PUBLISHED IN MEMORY OF RAE DANIEL

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 19 FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2010 / 12 ADAR 5770 CANDLE LIGHTING: 5:17 P.M. SHABBAT ENDS: 6:28 (CHICAGO)

Hang in there - Shabbos is coming!

TORAH PORTION: TETZAVEH (EXODUS 27:20 - 30:10)

This week's CTN Shabbat Fax is dedicated by the Parkside Estates Community, as a zchus (merit) for a refuah shelaima (a complete recovery) for Rabbi Alswang, Ben Zion ben Gittel Basya.

Special Purim Issue

1. "Haman said to the King: 'There is a nation, scattered and dispersed throughout your kingdom – their laws are different from every other nation 's. If it pleases the king, let them be destroyed ...'" (The Book of Esther, 3:8-9)

'Their laws are different ...'. That's how our enemy Haman described us thousands of years ago. It's something to think about as we celebrate Purim and Haman's downfall.

... Suppose Haman would return today. And take a look around.

Maybe he'd take a look back at world history. The Greeks. The Romans. The Nazis. The Soviet Union.

... And all the other Hamans who followed him.

He'd see that they are gone.

And that we've outlived them all.

He'd notice that there is a State of Israel. After two thousand years of exile.

... And he'd wonder how that happened.

He'd look at Western Civilization. Its laws and its values.

And he'd be shocked by that too.

At what those strange people – with their strange laws – accomplished.

How they taught the world about morality. Ethics. And human dignity.

... How they changed the world.

Purim is more than just a celebration that we are still here.

It's the knowledge that we – and our Torah – are here to stay.

▪ *It was a number of years ago. Back in the days of the former Soviet Union.*

A Russian Jew – one of the few lucky ones who managed to get out – came to the United States.

And as he spoke to Jews in America, he noticed something unusual.

Whenever he would ask people how they were – they would answer: "Thank G-d!"

"How's your family? Thank G-d."

"How's business? Thank G-d."

Finally he asked one them: "What is it with you? Why do you always say: Thank G-d?"

So the American asked him: "Well, in Russia, when someone asks how you are – what do you say?"

"Simple. In Russia, we say: Thank Brezhnev.

How's your family? Thank Brezhnev. The business? Thank Brezhnev."

The American looks at him and says: "You know ... you seem to be forgetting something.

After all, Brezhnev is only mortal. One day, he's going to die.

And then what will you say?"

"When Brezhnev dies?

Then we'll say: Thank G-d!"

... Purim. Our once-a-year opportunity to reflect on the miracle of Jewish survival.

To celebrate.

And to say: Thank G-d.

A DEEPER LOOK

Purim. And *Yom Kippur*. Definitely two very different Holidays.

One, a solemn day of prayer and holiness. The other, a day of gift giving, partying and celebration.

... Yet in Jewish tradition the two days are very connected.

In fact, the Torah's full name for *Yom Kippur* is *Yom Kippurim*. Which, the Jewish mystics explain, can be understood as 'the day that is like *Purim*'.

... There are two ways to relate to G-d. Fear. And love.

And Judaism teaches that a full relationship with G-d requires both.

Yom Kippur is a 'Day of Awe.' And that's how we relate to G-d. Through things like fasting and self-examination.

... But on *Purim* we connect in an even deeper way. Through love. And *simcha* - joy.

It's not just, 'Eat, drink and be merry.'

It's 'Eat drink, and celebrate your relationship with G-d'.

... Celebrate being Jewish. And how Jewish survival is a miracle.

Celebrate when you remember that G-d loves us. That He gave us a beautiful world in which to serve Him.

Celebrate and connect to G-d through love.

... That's what *Purim* is all about.



Shabbat Shalom and have a great week!

Rabbi Moshe Katz

Rabbi Doni Deutsch

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