



ESCALATING JOY

IN PREPARATION FOR PURIM

*This month we celebrate the yom tov of Purim Katan. In addition to all its own virtues, Purim Katan also marks thirty days before the real Purim in Adar II. The Rebbe calls on us to utilize this month preparing a *shturem'dike Purim*.*

When suggesting that a focus be put on Purim throughout the preceding month, one often gets an apathetic response. After all, is there a source in Torah or *halacha* for such a concept?

Granted, in a leap year Purim Katan occurs thirty days before Purim, thus injecting the following month with a *Purim'dike* feeling, but is there really a message behind the amount of days in between?

In fact, an argument can be made to the contrary:

In the beginning of Hilchos Pesach, the Alter Rebbe writes: “In the times of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the Chachamim instituted a practice of *darshanim* lecturing about the laws of the upcoming yom tov thirty days beforehand. I.e. from the Fourteenth of Adar one should begin to *darshan* on the laws of Pesach, from the Fifth of Iyar the laws of Shavuos, and on the Fourteenth of Elul we begin to study about Sukkos.”

But there is no mention at all regarding Purim.

In light of the above, is it really appropriate for us to establish a new *minhag* without any precedence?

Indeed, it is worth noting that Yidden have invariably been extremely cautious about instituting new customs or rituals. With all the many commitments that we are already struggling with, wouldn't it be wiser to focus on our pre-existing obligations without adding new ones to the list?

In truth however, we don't need to rush to search for any citations or sources when obvious logic will do, by introducing a simple premise.

The simple fact is, that however great the *shturem* surrounding Purim has been in the past, there is always room for it to grow. It is fair to say that Purim last year saw some wonderful accomplishments—even more than in previous years—and it was certainly



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לזכות

הילד החייל בצבאות ה' הרך הנולד בן הרה"ת ר' שמואל זוגתו מרת נחמה מטיא פלס
נולד ד' שבט ה'תשע"ו
שיגדל להיות חי"ל כרצו"ק כ"ק אדמו"ר

a worthy effort, relative to what came before.

But much of that can be attributed to the accomplishments of those that have come before us. Like in the parable of the “dwarf standing on the shoulders of a giant,” our small and otherwise insignificant contribution, augmented and magnified by those upon whom we stand, can go further than if—and in this case, when—the giant was alone.

Nevertheless, upon reflection one will realize, that even with the limited power that each of us yields, we are still able to do more than what was achieved in the past, even compared to the not insignificant accomplishments of last year.

Consequently, we must ensure that whatever we aim for this year, it should be of incomparably greater magnitude to what preceded it.

Therefore, the suggestion is to begin to involve and excite ourselves with the

spirit of Purim throughout the thirty days beforehand. Indeed, when one is constantly made aware of the greatness of the upcoming yom tov during that period, he can be sure that his actions and achievements will match and reflect his increase in excitement.

In case that answer is not satisfactory; in case one insists on a Torah-based source, this idea is in fact contained—explicitly—in a Mishnah in Maseches Shekalim.

“On the First of Adar, they would begin announcing about the Shekalim. Why on the first? in order to ensure that everyone brings it on time, before Rosh Chodesh Nissan.”

Evidently, the Torah takes into account the tendencies of human nature. Namely, when individuals — both those who are eager and those who procrastinate—have something to achieve, a bit time, in this case thirty days, serves to help get it done. Note that the Mishnah doesn't say

to “speak,” it says to “announce”—a stronger, more emphatic term.

It is obvious what this means for us: We all know what our shortcomings are. [The Rebbe smiled and added:] As I know concerning myself, and presumably others also feel the same. Last year for whatever reason, there was no *shturem* about Purim for the month preceding it.

With all this being said, it is important that the efforts that go into this Purim be exponentially greater than what has been done up until now. The suggestion being: The month leading up to Purim should be full of tumult and *shturem* regarding the specialness of the yom tov, beginning today on Purim Katan.

Certainly, by raising awareness about these ideas in a heartfelt manner, it will have its desired effect in creating an unprecedented passion and excitement in this regard. **T**

(Based on sichas Purim Katan, 5746)