

מחית עמלק

זוכר זה הדין דורע עמלק אין גירותן גירות. ועוד, הרי איתא להדיא בגיטין ד' ג"ז, דמבני בניו של המן למדו תורה בבני ברק, והמן הרי הוא מורע עמלק. ובראיה, דודאי זה הדין דאין מקבלים מהם גרים, אינו אלא מפני המצות עשה של מחיית עמלק. וא"כ, כדיעבד, אם קבלו אותם, ודאי דהוו גרים וחלה גירותן. ובנו גר עמלקי דודי צריך לומר, שלא האמין לו שנתגייר אביו, כיון שאין מקבלים מהם גרים מסתמא שום בית דין לא קיבל אותו לגייר, ומפני זה הרגו. והא דקבלו גרים מבני בניו של המן צ"ל, דלא ידעו תחלה שהם מורעו ולאחר הגירות או נתברר שהם מורע עמלק.

אך קשה מהכתוב בישיעי' פרשה מ"ד פסוק ד': וצמחו בבין חציר כערבים על יבלי מים, ופרשי"י: וצמחו בבין חציר בתוך עמלק ע"י גרים שיתוספו עליכם בין חציר הוא עמלק שנאמר עליו היתה נוה תנים חציר לבנות יענה, עכ"ל, משמע מזה דמקבלים אותו לכתחלה. וצ"ע.

איתא במכילתא, חובא בילקוט בשמואל ב' פ"א: ויאמר דוד אל הנער המגיד לו אי מזה אתה ויאמר בן איש גר עמלקי אנכי נזכר דוד באותה שעה מה שנאמר למשה רבינו אם יבוא אחד מכל אומות העולם להתגייר שיקבלו אותו ומורעו של עמלק אל יקבלו אותו ויאמר אליו דמך על ראשך כי פיך ענה כך לכך נאמר מדור דור. וכן במדרש תנחומא סוף פ' תצא: תני בשם ר' אלעאי שבועה נשבע הקב"ה ואמר ימיני ימיני כסאי כסאי אם יבואו גרים מכל אומות העולם אני מקבלן ורועו של עמלק אני מקבלן לעולם אף דוד עשה כן שנא' ויאמר דוד אל הנער המגיד וגו'. וכ"ה גם בפסיקתא דר"כ פרשה י"ב בשם ר' אלעזר בן יעקב.

הנה לכאורה משמע, דגם כדיעבד אם קבלו גרים מורע עמלק אינם נעשים גרים. דהיי תבן גר עמלקי שרגו דוד כבר נתגייר אביו, ואעפ"כ הרגו דוד מטעם זה שאין מקבלין מהם גרים, הרי דלא חלה הגירות. וזה תמוה מאד, דלא מצינו בכל השי"ס שיחא

סעודת פורים

המצות, אלא הוא שיעור לענין לפטור מהמצוה. ואולי אפשר זה להעמיס בלשון הרמב"ם, שלענין בשר כתב: "שיאכל" בשר, ולענין יין כתב: "ושותה" יין, ולא כתב "ושותה" יין, והיינו משום שהמצוה של יין היא מצוה נמשכת כל היום, ולזה דקוק לכתוב: "ושותה" יין. פעולה נמשכת, לשון הוה, ואינו נפטר עד שישתכר וירדם בשכרותו. אך ברש"י מפורש שהמצוה היא להשתכר ביין. וכן כתב הטור.

ומר"ר הגאב"ד דבריסק שליט"א שמעתי שאמר, הא דנשתנה שמחת פורים מכל שאר השמחות של מועדים, דלא מצינו בשום שמחה דין כזה שיתחייב לבסומי בשתיית יין עד דלא ידע וכו', — משום דבכל המועדות עיקר מצות שמחה אינו אלא לשמח בהשם, ובשר ויין אינו אלא סיבה לעורר השמחה, וכמבואר ברמב"ם פ"ו מה' יו"ט ה"כ, יעו"ש, וכן הוא במדרש רבה שה"ש פ"א: זה היום עשה השם נגילה ושמחה בו איני יודע אם בו כיום או בו בהקב"ה ת"ל נגילה ושמחה בו; אבל בפורים, כיון דכתיב משתה ושמחה, נמצא שהמשתה עצמה היא היא גוף המצוה בלי שום תכליתים של שמחה, ועל יסוד זה של מצות משתה תקנו דין זה שחייב לבסומי עד דלא ידע וכו'.

מגילה ד' ז': א"ר מחייב איניש לבסומי בפורי' עד דלא ידע וכו'. וברמב"ם פ"ב ממגילה הטי': כיצד חובת סעודה זו שיאכל בשר ויתקן סעודה גאה ושותה יין עד שישתכר וירדם בשכרותו. כנ"ל. הנה, אף דבשמחת החג לא בעינן בשר ויין שניתם ביחד, אלא יוצאין ידי שמחה ביין לחודא, כדאיתא בפ' ערבי פסחים ד' ק"ט, וכן כתב הב"י בסי' תקכ"ט, — הכא שאני, כיון דכתיב, "משתה ושמחה" ואין שמחה אלא בבשר ויין, וכיון דכתיב "משתה" והיינו יין הרי יין כבר אמור, א"כ מה אני מקיים, "ושמחה" ע"כ דהיינו בשר, וע"כ בעינן כאן שניהם ביחד בשר ויין.

שמעתי בשם הגאון מרו' ר' ישראל סלנטר ז"ל שאמר, הא דחייב לבסומי עד דלא ידע וכו', אין פירושו שחייב להשתכר ואינו יוצא ידי המצוה אם לא נעשה שכור מחיין, אלא עיקר המצוה היא רק לשחות יין ולהתבסם, אבל אינו נפטר אם כבר שתה ונתבסם, אלא מחייב עוד לחזור ולשתות, וככה נמשכת חיוב מצוה זו של משתה ושמחה כל יום פורים, ואינו נפטר ממנה עד שישתכר ולא ידע בין ארוך המן וכו', שאז נפטר ממצוה זו, כדיו שכור ושוטה שפטור ממצוה. ונמצא שהשיעור עד דלא ידע אינו שיעור בקיום

same time how to thank and serenade God, how to sing praises to Him.

The Jew should be adult and child, grown up and immature at the same time. When called upon to act as Divine agent, to be a history-maker, the Jew must be mature, courageous, and intellectually developed. When it is time to pray, the Jew must shed his maturity and reach out for either the enthusiasm or the grief of the child. The woman is more of an expert in playing this double role. Esther performed it magnificently. She knew how to be cunning and how to pray. Therefore, the Megillah is named for Esther.

The Joy of Purim

Two Kinds of Joy

What is the nature of the obligation to rejoice on Purim? The Talmud teaches:

Rava said: One is obligated to become inebriated on Purim until he cannot distinguish between “Cursed be Haman” and “Blessed be Mordecai” (*Megillah* 7b).

Maimonides writes:

What is the requirement of this [Purim] feast? That one should eat meat and make as nice a feast as he is able to and drink wine until he gets drunk and falls into a drunken sleep (*Hilkhos Megillah* 2:15).

Of course, the *Hayyei Adam* cautions:

Therefore, our Sages obligated one to get drunk, and at least to drink more than his usual, in order to remember the great miracle; but for one who knows of himself that he will then neglect one of the *mitzvot*, like washing

hands, blessings, and blessings after the meal, or that he will not say the afternoon or evening prayers, or that he will act with lightheadedness, it is preferable that he not get drunk and that all his deeds will be for the sake of Heaven (*Hilkhhot Megillah, Klal 155:30*).

But what is strange is that we know the *mitzvah* of rejoicing is applicable not only to Purim, but to the *Shalosh Regalim*, the Three Pilgrimage Festivals, as well. Yet we have never come across a law or a norm that would require a person to become drunk on Passover, Shavuot, or Sukkot. To the contrary, Maimonides emphasizes that we should not get drunk on a festival:

When one eats and drinks and rejoices on the festivals, he must not overindulge in wine, in frivolity, or in lightheadedness, saying that whoever intensifies these activities intensifies the *mitzvah* of *simhah*, happiness. For drunkenness and frivolity and lightheadedness are not *simhah*, but rather licentiousness and folly, and we were not commanded as to licentiousness and folly but rather as to the *simhah* in the service of Creator of all, as it states: "Because you would not serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and a glad heart when you had an abundance of all things" (Deut. 28:47). Thus, you learn that [God's] service is with happiness. But it is impossible to serve God through frivolity, lightheadedness, or drunkenness (*Hilkhhot Yom Tov 6:20*).

Maimonides says distinctly that *simhah* does not include intoxication. Yet concerning Purim, a new concept has been introduced. The concept of joy, or *simhah*, has been modified and converted into hilarity or gaiety. Indeed, one cannot even call this joy or *simhah*. True joy is an internal experience; it has nothing to do with the external behavior of man. Joy does not

express itself in singing or dancing. One can be very quiet or very sedate, very contemplative or meditative, and still have a great deal of happiness and joy. Joy is, indeed, a quiet, meditative experience. On the contrary, when joy somehow explodes, we should question the sincerity and the depth of the person's experience of joy. Sometimes, one demonstrates joy simply to overcome a feeling of insecurity and doubt that lies within.

Also, as far as the Three Festivals are concerned, our Sages introduced the concept of "*hetzyo la-Shem ve-hetzyo lakhem*, Half of the day is dedicated to God and half of the day is dedicated to you" (*Pesachim 68b*). Half of the festival is dedicated to serious worship, to service, to intellectual pursuits, to Torah. In Judaism, everything begins and ends with the intellectual gesture—with Torah study. If a person is drunk, he cannot divide the day into two periods, one dedicated to God and one dedicated to himself. The festival requires too earnest and too solemn a performance to be observed in an intemperate state.

With Purim, then, there is a completely different concept of *simhah*. It is a joy that consists exclusively of eating and drinking. *Mishteh*, partying, becomes the key to *simhah*. As a matter of fact, the *Gemara* tells a very strange story about Rabbah and Rabbi Zera:

Rabbah and Rabbi Zera held the festive Purim meal together. They got drunk, and Rabbah "killed" (*shahateh*) Rabbi Zera. [*Shahateh* does not necessarily mean he killed him, but rather that he inflicted physical harm upon him.] The next day he prayed for him, and he was revitalized. The next year, [Rabbah] said to him: "Let us hold the festive Purim meal together." [R. Zera] said to him: "Miracles do not occur every hour" (*Megillah 7b*).

They evidently drank to self-abandonment. Rabbah, the great scholar, actually inflicted physical harm upon Rabbi Zera. Finally, Rabbi Zera recovered miraculously. The next year,

Rabbi Zera was afraid to join Rabbah. He was afraid that this time he would be killed.

Why is there this idea of self-abandonment on Purim and not on the Festivals? On the *Regalim*, we have measured joy, joy with solemnity and earnestness. It is joy that does not contradict soul-searching, meditation, and a reflective attitude on the part of man, what we call *heshbon ha-nefesh*, introspection. Indeed, there are many *Rishonim*, medieval authorities, who say that there is an obligation of *simhah* on Rosh ha-Shanah, and even on Yom Kippur, a day of fasting and abstention from physical pursuit. The old Ashkenazic prayerbook texts, from before the Crusades, used to have in the Yom Kippur prayers, "You gave us, O Lord, our God, with love, appointed festivals for gladness (*simhah*), festivals and times for joy (*sason*), this Day of Atonement for forgiveness, absolution, and atonement." The Geonim insisted that Yom Kippur should retain the same liturgical text as the Festivals and that *simhah* should be emphasized.

Apparently, what they understood *simhah* to be was not physical pleasure or feasting, drinking or dancing. That certainly could not apply to Yom Kippur, which is a day of mediation and repentance, a day of self-negation and even self-condemnation. Yet for these medieval authorities, *simhah* and the mood that the Torah prescribes for Yom Kippur are not mutually exclusive. *Simhah*, then, seems to be something other than physical pleasure.

On Purim, the popular concept of *simhah* is accepted: joy and gaiety. It has nothing to do with a feeling of tranquility, serenity, or peace of mind. It is not an inner experience. It is more active—as if I were happy. Sometimes we see people acting as if they are happy, but it is a false sense. People try to deceive themselves and deceive others and somehow give the impression as if they were happy, while they are in fact very unhappy and depressed. And this concept of happiness was introduced for Purim.

As a matter of fact, if we look at folklore, Purim is the day of fun-making. If there was dramatic art in Jewish history—theatre in Jewish history—it was on Purim. The Greeks are famous for their theater, their drama, tragedy and comedy. The art of acting to the Greeks was what Torah study is to us. Aristotle said that catharsis, purging, cleansing of the spiritual personality—what we call *taharah*—is attained only through acting, through evoking the emotions of pity (*eleos*) and fear (*phobos*) stimulated by the tragic performance (*Poetics* 1449b:27–28).

The Jews rejected this approach. *Hazal* did not think much of the dramatic theater. They had a very low opinion of the Roman circus:

Our Rabbis taught: One may not attend the theaters and circuses, for they gather there for idolatrous purposes . . . and a location where they do not gather [for idolatrous purposes] it is forbidden [to attend] because it is "a session of scorners" (*Avodah Zarah* 18b).

However, I still remember as a child, the theatrical shows (*shpiln*) that I saw among the Jews on Purim. Many people used to walk around in costume, with masks, some as Haman or Mordecai. They would stage and reenact the story of Purim. We know the ruling of Rema:

It is a custom to wear masks on Purim, and for a man to wear a woman's dress and for a woman to wear men's garments. There is no prohibition in this, because their only intention is happiness (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 696:8).

We see that Purim was not a day of joy, but rather a day of fun-making or light gaiety, of good-hearted fun and unrestricted hilarity.

Joy in the Divine Presence

Why is this? On a holiday, a serious mood is recommended, joy that expresses itself in an inner feeling of peace of mind and serenity, harmony and tranquility. This joy does not contradict meditation and a reflective attitude on life. For instance, on Sukkot, the holiday of joy, we read Ecclesiastes. Apparently, *Hazal* did not see any contradiction between the reading of Ecclesiastes and the joy of the holiday. The reason, I believe, is as follows. Joy, according to the Halakhah, can be experienced only when the person is in the presence of God. Whenever the Torah says “*ve-samahta*, you shall rejoice,” there is always a qualification, “*lifnei Hashem E-lokekha*, before the Lord your God.” For example:

You shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days (Lev. 23:40).

You shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days (Num. 29:12).

The feeling of joy and the awareness of the unseen presence of the Almighty are identical. Man feels that he has come close to the wellspring of Being. He feels very close to his roots, that he is, somehow, in the presence of his Maker. Man experiences His companionship, and then there is joy, in the sense of self-fulfillment.

Joy, according to Judaism, is not an emotion or a mood. Moods are passing and superficial. They are not integrated into the personality, and they do not express the inner-awareness of the personality. Sometimes people can fall into a depressive mood. This does not mean that their I-exist awareness is weakened or undermined. A mood can be due to a smile or a word dropped by an acquaintance, or an item read in the paper. A mood can be provoked by any stimulus. On Purim, it is a mood—not an experience—that is evoked.

However, when Judaism speaks of joy in relation to the Three Festivals, it is a deep-seated *experience* of joy, which expresses itself in a state-of-being, an existential awareness. That awareness of joy is awareness that one's existence has a purpose, that there is self-fulfillment and commitment to a great objective. There is meaning to life. One who feels that life is meaningless leads a day-to-day, hand-to-mouth existence, not solely in the economic sense, but in the metaphysical sense, too. Such a person can have a lot of fun—he can be drunk, he can dance and sing, he can joke around—but he cannot rejoice in the sense of *simhah*.

It is very interesting that joy is attributed to God as well: “Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and *hedvah*, gladness, are in His place” (I Chron. 16:27). When we recite the *Sheva Berakhot*, the Seven Benedictions, at a wedding, we say *She-ha-simhah vi-me'ono*, that “joy is in His abode” (*Ketubot* 8a). This means that true *simhah* can take place only in God's abode, in God's habitation. There is joy only when one is *lifnei Hashem*, before the Divine Presence. When man feels alienated from God, when he feels God is distant from him, when there is no communication between man and God—there is no joy.

A mourner does not observe his *avelut*, mourning, on a festival (*Mo'ed Katan* 14b). Not only does mourning not begin on a festival, but if *shiv'ah* has begun, the holiday suspends it. No matter how briefly one mourned before the holiday, one has to suspend the *avelut* and start celebrating the holiday. No matter how dear and precious the deceased was to him, the mourner must now celebrate the festival. “If one buries his dead even one hour before a festival, the decree of *shiv'ah* is revoked for him” (*Mo'ed Katan* 19b–20a). The idea is that *simhah* and *avelut* are mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, as far as practical observance goes, there is very little contradiction between the two. It is only joy and grief as awarenesses, as experiences, as states of being, that are mutually exclusive. Joy means *lifnei Hashem*; death means the absence of God, *hester panim*, the complete turning

away on the part of God. That is why *avelut* and *simhah* cannot be reconciled. If one is mourning and in grief, if one feels lonely and experiences desolation and despair, he is not in the presence of God.

Joy is an awareness or a state of being, not a mood. One can be very serious, soul-searching, meditating, questing—and still experience joy. This is the joy of communion with God, of being in the presence of God.

On Purim, then, there is apparently no concept of *lifnei Hashem*. The awareness of God's presence is applicable to the Three Festivals and to Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur. This awareness of *lifnei Hashem* has not been emphasized on Purim.

This is why, in principle, *me-ikkar ha-din*, there should be *avelut* on Purim. Rabbi Joseph Caro writes that all matters of mourning are observed on Hanukkah and Purim (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 696:4). *Avelut* is not observed on a festival because a festival is *lifnei Hashem*. But on Purim this concept of *lifnei Hashem* is not applicable, and *avelut* should be observed on Purim. The Rema (*ibid.*) dissents from this ruling, and therefore Ashkenazim do not observe *avelut* on Purim; yet the holiday of Purim does not suspend the *avelut*. We do not observe the public acts of *avelut*—*devarim she-be-farhesya*—but we do observe the private aspects of mourning, *devarim she-be-tzin'ah*. Purim does not relieve a person of his duty as a mourner.

Salvation Without Transformation

We do not say *Hallel* on Purim. One opinion in the *Gemara* explains that this is due to the fact that on Purim, the miracle was not final:

With reference to [the Exodus from Egypt], it is legitimate to say, "Praise, O servants of the Lord" (Ps. 113:1), who are no longer the servants of Pharaoh. But with ref-

erence to [the events of Purim], can we say, "Praise, O servants of the Lord," who are no longer the servants of Ahasuerus? We are still the servants of Ahasuerus (*Megillah* 14a).

Take into consideration Ahasuerus and his changing moods. He killed his beautiful queen at the suggestion of Memucan, who was Haman (*Megillah* 12b). A few months later, he killed Haman at the suggestion of his new, beautiful queen, Esther. He was unstable. No one could be confident that the next day he would not demote Mordecai and appoint a new Haman. There was no sense of security. The miracle was incomplete. There was *hatzalah*, salvation, but no *ge'ullah*, redemption.

That which happened on Pesah and Shavuot changed the people. On Pesah, the bondman became a freeman. The people who were previously committed to the fleshpots of Egypt became an elected community, a covenantal community. The same happened on Shavuot. On Sukkot, we portray the sojourn in the wilderness. Again, we are celebrating the gradual change that came over the people; from being primitive slaves and cowards, they developed into a great people and warriors. They later would engage in battle with thirty-one kings, conquer the Land of Israel, build a future, and forge their destiny. What happened on Pesah, Shavuot, and Sukkot was permanent. No *galut*, no exile, or political changes; no Ahasuerus could undo what happened on Pesah, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

What happened on Purim was not of a permanent nature. They were saved, of course. However, no one could guarantee that the next day the same story would not repeat itself. That is why there is no *Hallel*.

There is another reason given for not reciting *Hallel* on Purim: "*Keriyata zo hallela*, The reading [of the Megillah] is to be equated with the recital of *Hallel*" (*Megillah* 14a). But surely we read the Torah on Pesah, too. Why don't we say that the reading of the story of the Exodus substitutes for the recital of

Hallel, that *keriyata zo hallela*? The answer is that the Megillah has an additional special message. It is a story of triumph and salvation, but also the book of Jewish tragedy and the peculiar Jewish destiny. It is a book of Jewish insecurity:

Esther spoke yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet and besought him with tears to avert the evil intention of Haman the Agagite and his plot that he had devised against the Jews. . . . And she said: If it please the king and if I have found favor in his sight . . . (8:3, 5).

This is not the way that Moses addressed Pharaoh. This was not the way Jews acted during their sojourn in the Land of Israel, when they composed an independent commonwealth.

Rav Amram Gaon records a very strange custom:

It is customary in the *yeshivot* [on Purim] for the reciters to descend before the Gaon and the heads of the rabbinic court and the leaders and the entire *yeshivah*, and to plead profusely and to recite *Tahanun* (*Seder Rav Amram Gaon*, II, 72).

The *Tur* cites his opinion as follows:

* Rav Amram Gaon, of blessed memory, wrote that it is a custom in the two *yeshivot* to recite *Tahanun* [on Purim]; because it is a day of miracles on which they were redeemed, we need to ask for mercy that He will redeem us now as He did then (*Tur, Orach Hayyim* 693).

We rejoice in the miracle that took place, and we pray that God will continue to guard and protect us from our enemies. There is not only one Haman; there are many more who rise up against us.

Hazal detected a sense of insecurity in the Megillah:

One is obligated to read the Megillah at night and to repeat it in the day; as it says (Ps. 22:3), “O my God, I call by day but You answer not, and at night and there is no surcease for me” (*Megillah* 4a).

What does this verse have to do with the Megillah? The Megillah is, on the contrary, *Hallel*, a hymn. Apparently, *Hazal* identified the Megillah not only with a hymn, but with a great prayer as well—a prayer which rises *mi-ma’amakim*, from the depths, from a person in despair.

As a matter of fact, there is a controversy about how much of the Megillah should be read on Purim:

From where does one read the Megillah and thereby fulfill his obligation? Rabbi Meir says: All of it. Rabbi Judah says, From “There was a certain Jew . . .” (2:5). Rabbi Yossi says: From “After these things [did King Ahasuerus promote Haman] . . .” (3:1) (*Megillah* 19a).

If the Megillah is just a story of *hallel*—to celebrate our victory over Haman—then we should begin with: “On that night, sleep deserted the king” (6:1). This is indeed, the opinion of Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai (*Megillah* 19a). This is the turning point, the first defeat of Haman. The fortune of the Jews began to change that night. However, others felt one should begin at an earlier point in the Megillah. The Megillah is not just the story of triumph; it is also a book of despair, of human insecurity—particularly, Jewish insecurity and instability.

The Insecurity of the Jew

For instance, in Ahasuerus’ palace there were two conspirators, Bigthan and Teresh. They hatched a plot to murder the king and to depose Haman (2:21). What did this have to do with the Jews? Yet, we read that somehow the Jew got involved:

And the thing became known to Mordecai (2:22).

As a result, the Jewish people were involved in an internal feud between Haman and the opposition.

The Jew is always involved in struggles that are completely extraneous or irrelevant to his destiny. The Jew of old was involved in the struggle between Babylonia and Egypt. These two great empires fought for supremacy in the ancient Near East. The Jews allied with Egypt, despite the fact that Jeremiah repeatedly warned the Jews not to get involved in international conflicts. The Crusades were essentially a conflict between Christianity and Islam; the Jews did not take any side, yet they paid a high price. In 1648, during the period of Chmielnicki's Revolt, there was a great struggle between the peasantry of the Ukraine and the Polish nobility, and once again the Jews were caught in the middle.

So it was in the time of Esther. Apparently, Haman did not want to destroy the Jews for no reason; he wanted to solidify his political power. We know there were many intrigues in the royal palace. There were Bigthan and Teresh, and Harbona. And, suddenly, Mordecai got involved.

But Mordecai bowed not down, nor prostrated himself before him (3:2).

This was a good excuse for the hatred of Haman. Hitler also used the Jew as an excuse to solidify his power. So did the Communists. That is exactly what Haman utilized the Jews for. There was a political split within the Persian empire and, apparently, the opposing faction threatened Haman and Ahasuerus. In order to pacify the masses, the Jews become the internal enemy.

True, the Jews succeeded in defeating Haman. There was a miracle: the Jews were saved. Of course, we have to celebrate this miracle. But there is no guarantee, no security. That is why

Hazal did not introduce the concept of *simhah* as it was recommended by the Torah vis-à-vis the Three Festivals. Rather, they introduced a different concept of *simhah*—gaiety, fun, which is just “acting” and is not sincere. The concept of *lifnei Hashem* was not applied to Purim.

We do not celebrate Purim like Pesah, Shavuot, and Sukkot. *Hazal* wanted to emphasize the distinctiveness of Purim. It is not the type of holiday that should be celebrated with *Hallel*—with the awareness of being *lifnei Hashem*. The victory is not final; the triumph is not decisive; a repetition is possible. That is why we cannot equate the celebration of Purim with *simhat ha-regel*, the joy of the Festival.