

Purim: The Holiday of Oneness

by Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Dearest Friends,

The main *tikun* (rectification) on Purim is to reach the level of: “*ad d’lo yada...*” – “until we do not know the difference between Haman being cursed and Mordechai being blessed” (*Babylonian Talmud* 7b). This is a very unusual mitzvah indeed. What does it mean? How are we supposed to reach this place of consciousness? The answer is always to be found in the root of the Hebrew word itself. The main word in the expression “*ad d’lo yada...*” is the word “*yada*” (know) which shares the same root as the word “*da’at*” used in “*Etz hada’at*” – the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Thus the secret of the Purim *tikun*, is about reaching beyond the Tree of Knowledge consciousness, where all reality is split into good and evil. On Purim we have the ability to catch a glimpse of the truth of Hashem’s oneness hiding beyond the mask of our fragmented world.

Our normal mental state affected by the Tree of Knowledge is about dividing, categorizing and judging between good and evil, righteous and wicked, religious and non-religious, Chassidic, and *Misnagid*, black *kipa* and knitted *kipa*... and the endless list goes on and on full of all the divisions we make for each other and ourselves. Purim is about “*Go, gather together all of the Jews...*” (*Megillat Esther* 4:16). All of the *mitzvot* on Purim are for the sake of bringing the Jewish people together. We all need to gather at the synagogue to hear the *Megillah* being read, we rejoice together through giving Purim gifts, and we overcome any possible feeling of jealousy when we become the messenger bringing gifts from others to a third party. We include the poor in our united celebration when we remember them through our generous *tzedakah*, and we all unite in happiness and good spirits during the Purim feast.

Having reached this level of unity on Purim, we may aspire to understand the oneness of G-d within all reality, including the “evil”. The *Megillah* teaches us that things are not what they appear to be. In reality, as hard as it is to say, Haman and his evil decree is what caused our ultimate *teshuvah* and refinement. Had it not been for Haman the Jews may have completely perished into oblivion through assimilation. His evil decree brought us up from the very lowest level when we were integrated into the gentile culture in our environment, to a renewal and re-

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acceptance of the Torah. The Talmud learns out from the order of the verse in the *Megillah* which reads, “*They established and accepted*” (*Megillat Esther 9:27*) – “They established that which they had already accepted.” At the time of Esther and Mordechai the Jews established the Oral Law which they had already accepted, however, when they first accepted the Oral Law it was out of coercion, only at the Purim story did all the Jews accept the Oral Law out of love. (*Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 88a*).

We are not looking for tests and suffering, however, retroactively we know that the difficulties we had to go through and still endure are what shape and refine us. So in reality we cannot judge between good and evil. It is all from G-d, and it is all one. Even within the uttermost “evil” come forth sparks of tremendous light.

May we merit this Purim to experience the truth beyond division, may our hearts bubble over with true joy and un-judgmental love for each other and Hashem.

Purim *Sameach* to you all!!!

Chana Bracha on behalf of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin



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About Us



Rebbetzin Chana Bracha Siegelbaum

Rebbetzin Chana Bracha, a native of Denmark, is the Founder and Director of Midreshet B'erot Bat Ayin. She holds a Bachelor of Education in Bible and Jewish Philosophy from Michlala Jerusalem College for Women, and a Masters of Art in Jewish History from Touro College. For more than a decade, Rebbetzin Chana Bracha has taught Bible studies with special emphasis on women's issues in Israel and the United States. She creates curricula emphasizing women's spiritual empowerment through traditional Torah values. Rebbetzin Chana Bracha has a married son and two granddaughters, and lives with her husband and younger son on the land of the Judean Hills, in Israel.

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