**Shabbos Stories**

**For Purim 5770**

**The Secret of Why the**

**Baal Shem Tov Got**

**Angry on Shabbos Night**

**By Rabbi Tuvia Bolton**

 In last week's Torah portion we read about G-d's commandments to Moses to make a Tabernacle in the desert and its various vessels; The Menora, Altar, Ark etc.

 This week's Torah portion deals with His commandment to make garments for the priests (Cohanim) who worked in the Tabernacle.

 But there are many questions here. First why does the portion begin with G-d telling Moses to take pure olive oil for the Menorah and end with the commandment to build an 'inner' golden altar for burning incense? Neither of these have anything to do with the garments, which are the topic of the portion, and seemingly should have been dealt with in last week's portion with the vessels!

**What Exactly is the Purpose of the Priestly Garments**

 Also it is not very clear what exactly is the purpose of these garments and why did they have to be so detailed and precise? Why couldn't all the priests just dress in white plain robes? What difference could it possible make to G-d what they wear?

 Also, this Shabbat is Parshat 'Zachor' when, in preparation for Purim, we add a paragraph (Deut. 25:17) to the Torah reading to remind us how Moses defeated the anti-Semitic nation of Amalek from which Haman stemmed.

 Is there a connection between all these? To understand, here is a story (Stories of the Baal Shem Tov vol. 5 pg 155)

 Some 300 years ago after the Chmilnitzki massacres and the Shabatai Tzvi False-Messiah-fiasco, Judaism was in a state of shock and regression. Like a patient in intensive care, the reigning Rabbis wanted only to protect Judaism by rejecting all change.

 In this time lived one Rabbi Yechiel of Kovli. He was a great scholar and holy Jew, but when rumors began going around that there was a Jew called Rabbi Yisroel Baal Shem (Baal Shem Tov or Besh't for short) who claimed to have special powers and was teaching a new type of rejuvenated Judaism called Chassidut he was suspicious. And so were the majority of Talmudic scholars.

 But unlike most of them he decided to find out for himself whether this Baal Shem was another faker or a perhaps a true leader like Moses who also had big problems changing the mindset of the Jews of his time.

 The more objectively Rabbi Yechiel investigated the more he realized that the latter was true and the reason for the opposition was that Chassidut was almost too good to be true.

**Becomes a Convinced and Devoted Follower**

 He became a convinced, devoted follower of the Baal Shem Tov, but when he tried to convince others he found it was a different issue altogether, Jews just don't want to leave Egypt.

 For instance, one Motzi Shabbat (Saturday night) he met a Jew who had spent a Shabbat by the Besh't and was totally turned off. He had been very impressed with the Baal Shem's erudition, deep insight, memory, total command of all aspects of the Torah and the communal prayers were incomparable to anything he had ever experienced. But he was repulsed at the fact that Besh't lost his temper!

 And not just for a second or two. He related how, on Friday night, shortly after the Sabbath began, the Besh't called his gentile servant Alexi and began screaming and cursing him for not wanting to go out immediately into the cold and brush the horses! The servant was so shocked he almost fainted! He meekly tried to defend himself by saying that he had just brushed them a few minutes ago and it was freezing outside but the Baal Shem Tov just kept shouting that if he didn't go immediately he would burn in hell and become blind and crippled and similar things!

**All the Chassidim Felt So Bad for Alexi**

 It was just shocking. You could see that all the Chassidim, felt so bad for the poor gentile but the Baal Shem Tov just kept yelling "'Go! go! Leave NOW! I'll kill you! get out!" etc. until Alexi ran out into the cold to again brush the horses. "I mean, who cares about horses?! What type of tzadik is this?" the guest complained, "Why, it says clearly in the Talmud that getting angry is equal to idolatry; forgetting about G-d!"

 Rabbi Yechiel tried to calm the fellow down, he assured him that the ways of the Besh't were hidden, that it was impossible that he 'lost' his temper etc. but it didn't help until promised he would personally go and ask.

 The next day Rabbi Yechiel went to the Baal Shem's Synagogue, waited for him to finish the Morning prayers, took him aside and asked him to please reveal the secret behind his yelling and screaming the day before.

 Immediately after he asked he regretted it. How could he mix in to things he had no understanding of? It was like asking Moses why he had a staff!

 "Ahh that!" the Baal Shem replied to Rabbi Yechiel's surprise "Of course I'll tell you. You are right, it really was shocking but I had no choice. I'll explain.

 "That Friday I noticed that about a hundred miles from here in the middle of the forest there was a simple Jew who had lost his way and, as he noticed that night was falling, had no choice but to stop his carriage and spend the Holy Shabbat where he was (it is forbidden to travel, carry in an open place or use horses on the Shabbat).

 "But shortly after nightfall a band of robbers noticed his lone wagon and, not sure if he was armed or not, cautiously began to surround him. Of course the only weapon the poor fellow had except for the stick he used to ocassionally prod his horse was prayer and when he saw that he was surrounded and any second was about to be attacked, he began crying out to G-d for help.

**Projecting Alexi’s Fright on the Goyish Robbers**

 "And that is why I yelled at poor Alexi. I saw that the Jew in the forest didn't have sufficient merits to save himself and I knew I had to do something to help. So I threatened my servant Alexi in order to project his fright on to the robbers! In other words I arranged it so that they felt the same fright he did! They became so insane with fear that they ran away in all directions and didn't dare approach him or his wagon again for the entire Shabbat."

 Just as the Besh't finished talking the doors of his synagogue burst open and a wide-eyed Jew who looked as though he had just escaped the angel of death staggered in. He was out of breath, trying his best to say something but it was impossible to make out a word. Someone sat him down, someone else brought him a hot glass of tea, he took a few sips, calmed down, said thanks and began to tell his story to the large crowd of Chassidim that gathered around.

**Reveals How the Robbers Fled as**

**Though Chased by Demons**

 On Friday, just two days ago, he was on the way home driving his wagon through the forest and somehow got lost. So he stopped just before sunset to set up for Shabbat and a band of robbers surrounded his wagon! Then suddenly for no reason their eyes bolted open in fear, they began clutching the sides of their heads screaming 'No! No!' and ran away as though they were being chased by demons!"

 This was the man the Baal Shem had saved! The story was verified before Rav Yechiel's eyes!

 When Rav Yechiel returned, found the guest and explained what the Besh't had said and what he had seen with his own eyes the guest at first did not believe it, but after a few minutes of thought decided he needed a few more days to think.

 Finally the guest became a follower of the Baal Shem Tov and admitted that when he had seen the Besht's scholarship and spirituality, although he had never seen anything like it, it wasn't enough to make him change his entire life. But now that he saw how he used anger to save that traveler it made him realize that the Besh't had the secret to making Judaism was more real than he had ever dreamed.

 This answers our questions.

This week's portion deals with the priestly garments but begins with the oil for the Menorah and ends with the inner Altar. The garments were a correction for the sin of Adam which brought shame and egotism into the world. Preceding the commandment of oil accentuates that the reason for these garments is, like the Menorah, to illuminate the world with the awareness of the Creator.

 In a more personal sense; the 'garments' of our soul are thought, speech and action (see Tanya Chapt. 4) . These three garments have the purpose of illuminating our surroundings.

 Therefore our portion ends with the inner Altar to show that in every thought, word and deed there must be an inner purpose. Something like how the Besht's actions and words really contained the deeper intention of saving that Jew in the forest.

**The Connection to Amalek and Purim**

 And that is the connection to remembering Amalek in preparation for Purim.

 The purpose of the Baal Shem's miraculous transportation of fear a hundred miles away was not only to save the Jew in the forest (like Mordechi saved all the Jews from Haman) but also to save that visiting Jew from his own doubts.

 As Chassidut points out that the Hebrew letters for 'Amalek' have the same numerical value as 'Safek' which means 'doubt'. Doubt can be the worst enemy of Judaism; Judaism is joy and love while and doubt is coldness and egotism.

 This is the purpose of the Holy Temple, the priestly garments, the shining Menorah, the Inner Altar and Purim; to dispel all doubts about the goodness, closeness, omnipotence of G-d.

 And so this is the job of the Baal Shem Tov and all the Chassidic masters after him; to dispel all doubts so the entire world will worship only the Creator; the G-d of Israel, with Joy.

 We just have to have no doubts; we must do, say and think positively. Even one more good deed can tip the scales and insure that....the Joy of Purim will never cease!!!

*Reprinted from this week’s Torah Online – Yeshiva Ohr Tmimim email.*

**Story #639**

**Purim Treats from Heaven**

**From the Desk of Yerachmiel Tilles**

 In the town of Berdichev, the shul of the famous Rabbi Levi Yitzchak began to fill up even before the sun had set. Eagerly people crowded in to hear the reading of Megilat Esther that would take place that night.

 A feeling of excitement filled the air. Children experimented whirling their graggers, to see how much noise they made. Some men spoke together quietly. Others took out books of Tehillim and began reciting Psalms.

 But where was Rabbi Levi Yitzchak? The day before Purim is The Fast of Esther, and so the evening service ought to have begun a little earlier than usual. Everyone was waiting for their beloved Rebbe to lead the prayers, but he was not there.

**A Poor Woman Asks the Berdichever Rebbe**

**To Examine if Her Chicken is Kosher**

 In fact, the Berdichever had been ready to join every-one else in shul, when his secretary told him that a woman wanted to see him. In a glance, the Rebbe realized that she was very poor. She stood there apologetically, holding a chicken in her hand, asking the Rebbe if it was kosher.

 Rabbi Levi Yitzchak examined the chicken carefully. Then he sighed. No, the chicken was not fit to be eaten. It was not kosher.

 Tears welled up in the poor womans eyes. Oh no, she sobbed. What will I do now? My husband is sick, and there is no food in the house for the children. We spent our last pennies to buy this chicken. I hoped the soup would help my husband, and fill the stomachs of the children. They are so hungry. Now what will I do? the woman cried.

 Do not worry, said the Berdichever. G-d is very great. He manages to feed the whole world every day. He will feed you and your family too.

**The Rebbe Assures that G-d Has**

**Many Way to “Take Care of You”**

 Then he smiled kindly. Now go to shul, and listen to the Megilah, and don’t worry about a thing. Purim is a time of miracles, and G-d has many ways of taking care of you.

 After the woman had left, the Rebbe put on his overcoat, and went quickly home. Delicious smells of the Purim meal filled the house. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak went straight to the kitchen, and began gathering up all the food he could find, fish, chicken, potatoes,

soup, vegetables, hamantashen (triangular Purim pastries), and other baked goods. Then he took a large white table-cloth, bundled the whole lot together, and then carried it out

in his arms.

 He made his way through the streets of Berdichev till he came to the outskirts of town where the poor woman lived. The door to her house was not locked, and Rabbi Levi Yitzchak went in.

 Is that you, Sara? her husband called weakly from the room where he lay in bed. What happened with the chicken?

 Dont worry. A happy Purim, the Berdichever called back.

 “Who is that?,” the surprised husband called.

 G-d has sent you Meshalach Manot (the traditional edible presents) for Purim, the Rebbe replied. Then he quickly set the table neatly and hurried back to shul.

 As soon as Rabbi Levi Yitzchak took his usual place in shul, the evening service began, followed by the reading of the Megilah. Nobody had left early, even though they had waited so long, and their stomachs gnawed with hunger. Every-one wanted to hear the Rebbe read the Megilah.

**The Rebbe Pleases Everyone With His Megillah Reading**

 They were not disappointed. That year the Megillah reading seemed full of new meaning, especially when Rabbi Levi Yitzchak read the parts about celebrating Purim by sending presents of food to friends, and giving charity to the poor.

 Everyone seemed to get the point. In their hearts they realized that they had to try to have more feeling for others, more Ahavat Yisroel (love of fellow Jews), and to care for the needs of others. Somehow, listening to the Berdichever, everyone found themselves deciding to make extra efforts to fulfill these mitzvot better.

 After shul, when the Rebbes wife went home, she was startled to see that all the food she had prepared was gone! Had they been robbed?!

 Aghast, she turned to her husband. But Rabbi Levi Yitzchaks face was glowing with pleasure. The Rebbetzin knew her husband well, and understood immediately what happened.

**The Rebbe Goes to His Study to Learn Torah**

 Since there was nothing left in the house to eat, the Rebbe went to his study to learn. His wife put up a kettle of water for tea for them to break their fast. Then she pulled out leftovers from here and there, and scraped together some food for a Purim meal.

 Meanwhile the poor woman returned to her home. To her amazement, she found her husband and the children all excited. The table was decked with food, and delicious aromas filled their little cottage.

 “Wha- where?,” the woman gasped, lost for words.

 “I heard someone come in. He said it was Meshalach Manot from Heaven,” her husband explained. “By the time I got up to see who it was, he was gone. It must have been... Eliyahu HaNovi (Elijah the Prophet) himself! Can you believe that?,” he laughed. “Its a miracle. You see, G-d has not forgotten us after all!”

 The woman, her husband, and the little children all began to laugh and dance with joy that they had not known in years. With deep gratitude in their hearts, they ate their Purim meal.

**The Rebbe’s Secret Mission Becomes Revealed**

 The next morning, unable to contain their excitement, the children told their friends about the great miracle, that Eliyahu had visited their home. The children of the town told their parents. And their parents understood why their Rebbe had been so late in coming to shul the night before. He had been Eliyahu HaNovi.

 Taking their hint from the Rebbe, people outdid them-selves sending generous presents of food to the poor family, and in sending food and charity to all the poor of the city.

 Of course, they did not forget their own Rebbe, who had given away his own last morsels of food. Everyone knew that he did not like to accept presents, but on Purim it was a Mitzvah. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak received so much that he had enough for his own Purim meal, and plenty left over to distribute to the poor of the city.

Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from www.berdichev.org including the drawing.

Connection: Seasonal - the festival of Purim

Biographic note: Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Deberamdiger of Berdichev (1740 - 25 Tishrei 1810) is one of the most popular rebbes in chassidic history. One of the closest disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch, he is best known for his love for every Jew and his active efforts to intercede for them against (seemingly) adverse heavenly decrees. Many of his teachings are contained in the posthumously published, Kedushat Levi.

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**RABBIS' MESSAGES**

**How to Handle the**

**King’s Invitation?**

**By Rabbi Reuven Semah**

“*And it came to pass in the days of Ahashverosh*.” (Esther 1:1)

 As I sit in my hotel room in Jerusalem a few days before Purim, I put pen to paper and try to express some of my feelings that I have. The overwhelming emotions I feel as I live amongst the Jewish people in Israel is Ashrechem Yisrael, how great are you , Israel. After all is said and done the Jews in Israel live as Jews. The greatness of the Jews in the period of Purim is what turned it around to save them.

 The miracle of Purim took place during what was surely the darkest period in Jewish history up to that time. The first Temple was destroyed and the all important ingredients of Jewish leadership were thrown into question. Let’s put forth two ways of thinking, one is common knowledge and the other is Torah knowledge. Common knowledge is of the opinion of the man in the street that interprets the events of the day. Torah knowledge is the opinion of Torah that interprets the events of the day. Torah knowledge is known by Torah leaders who have learned vast amounts of Torah knowledge.

 Rabbi Yosef Viener quotes Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler and explains that Mordechai declared that it was forbidden to attend the feast, but unfortunately people did not listen. They knew that there might be issues of immodesty and improper interaction, but they decided to go because they felt it would be politically dangerous not to go. They did not want to appear unpatriotic. “Mordechai Hasadik knows halachah well,” they said among themselves, “but he does not know politics.”

 They did not realize that by going, they would be party to the enormous hilul Hashem that would take place there. One of the reasons why the king made the party was to celebrate the downfall of the Jews and that the second Bet Hamikdash will not be rebuilt. In addition to this, there was tremendous immorality displayed. Although the Jews felt terrible to witness this, they still felt it was necessary to be there. One can be sure that after it was over, many of them remarked, “It is a good thing we went for now the king is happy. Who knows how many decrees were averted?” This was common knowledge.

 Hashem didn’t punish them right away. Nothing happened a month later or a year later or even eight years later. After nine years Haman gained power and decreed all shall bow down to him. Mordechai refused and Haman became angry and decided to kill all the Jews. Many Jews felt that again Mordechai was exhibiting bad leadership. This again was common knowledge. Mordechai explained that Haman’s decree was not due to his actions but because of what happened nine years earlier at the banquet. This was Torah knowledge.

 Whose side would we be on? To criticize Mordechai’s actions or to attribute the events to what took place nine years earlier? The truth was that Mordechai had connection to heavenly knowledge which the common knowledge man did not. At first they didn’t get it, but ultimately they turned it around and made teshubah. At that point the whole story turned around. This is what I meant at the beginning when I said Ashrechem Yisrael, how great are you, Israel.

**The Danger that Comes**

**From a Lack of Torah Study**

**By Rabbi Shmuel Choueka**

 When Haman’s great-grandfather, Amalek, attacked the Jewish people in the wilderness, the name of the place where he was able to fight them was Refidim. This was a station where the Jews were in a weakened state of Torah study, and because of this, Amalek was able to start up with us. Indeed, whenever a tyrant or despot threatens the Jewish nation, it is invariably because of our lack of Torah study. Thus we find that right after the Purim miracle, when Haman and his people were defeated, there was a tremendous resurgence of Torah study amongst the Jews, and this eventually culminated in the compilation of the Oral Law.

 The week before Purim, we read Parashat Zachor, which is to remember what Amalek did to us. It is just as important to remember the cause that led to Amalek’s battle against the Jews, and that is our weakness in Torah study. Let us commit ourselves to Torah study every day so that we can merit to see Hashem’s salvation.

*Reprinted from this week’s Jersey Shore Torah Bulletin email.*

**It Once Happened**

**The Chofetz Chaim Recalls the Rejoicing of Purim During a Difficult Czarist Persecution**

 World War I was into its second year and the Jews of Poland were suffering tremendous deprivation. It was almost Purim and the town of Radin was plunged into darkness and despair. The rabbi of the little town was Rabbi Yisroel Meir HaKohen, the saintly Chofetz Chaim, a great leader of world Jewry in the early years of the century.

 During this black year, conditions in Radin steadily worsened. Food was scarce, taxes were high, and worst of all, most of the young men had been drafted into the military, never to be seen again.

 At the approach of Purim, one Jew came to the Chofetz Chaim and asked, "Rebbe, our lives are so miserable this year. Our sons are off at the front. How can we be expected to celebrate Purim in this joyless, suffering world?"

**Listening to a Man Speaking from**

**His Pain and Fear for a Son**

 The Chofetz Chaim knew that the man was speaking from his own pain and his fear for the life of his own young son who was one of the draftees.

 "Don't worry, my friend," the Chofetz Chaim said. "Even in these terrible and troubled times, we must not lose our faith in G-d's salvation. Even now, we must rejoice in the thought of the great miracles which He did for our people on Purim.

 "Once many years ago when I was a young man in Vilna, it was Purim time and the Czar had issued a bitter decree. He ordered that the Jews must provide double the usual number of young men for the military draft. As you know these draftees, the Cantonists, were little more than children, and were pressed into military service for twenty years. After that long period of time, they often remembered nothing of their Jewishness and were totally lost to their families forever. That year, the draft fell out on Purim and the Jews of Vilna were in virtual mourning.

 "However, in spite of their sorrow, the Jews of Vilna performed the mitzvot of Purim - they distributed mishloach manot - gifts of food to their friends, and tzedaka - charity to the poor. Their only consolation was in reading Megilat Esther (the Scroll of Esther), recounting the miracle of Purim, when G-d brought a sudden and wondrous salvation to His people.

 "It wasn't long, though, until things became even worse. The Czar issued yet another decree against the Jews, ordering them to provide still more young men for the Russian army. All the greatest rabbis and Jewish leaders of the time petitioned the Czar to rescind this terrible decree, but all their pleas were to no avail. The young men were chosen and ordered to report for military service the following Av, the month in the Jewish year when both Temples were destroyed, the month especially marked for tragedy.

 "The orders were drawn up and ready for the Czar's signature which would finalize the fate of the young men. It took only a second for the Czar to affix his name to the document, but as he reached out to blot the wet ink, his hand accidentally knocked over the ink bottle, and it spilled over the paper, obliterating his name.

**The Czar Was Shocked by His Mistake**

 "The Czar was shocked at his mistake. In his mind it seemed an omen from Above, and so he stubbornly refused to have the document redrawn. And so, these young men were freed from the terrible fate which had awaited them.

 "The month of Av [which coincides roughly with August] had already begun when word of the sudden miraculous reprieve reached the Jews of Vilna. The young men, who had already prepared to leave Vilna quickly unpacked. Their families breathed a joyful sigh of relief, realizing how close they had come to losing their precious sons and brothers. That year the month of Av turned from mourning to rejoicing for the Jews of Vilna.

 "How can we tell whether it was the rejoicing of the Jews in Vilna on that dark Purim when the evil decree was issued that had in it the spark of their redemption the following Av? Perhaps our joyous celebration of Purim now will be the seed of a great redemption which will follow in the same unexpected way, as G-d redeems His people once again."

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**The Tour Guide and**

**Hashgacha Pratis**

 **A Frelichen (Happy) Purim Everyone.** Why did the Sages choose to call our celebration of the miracle of Mordecai and Esther - "Purim?" The Sages wanted to emphasize the nature of evil. The evil Persian King Ahasuerus used Purim - lots to randomly choose a date to kill the Jews. This act symbolized the attitude of Ahasuerus, namely, everything in life is chance.

 The idea that everything in life is chance, is the ultimate evil because such an attitude goes against the very foundation of our faith. We Jews believe that Hashem is the Master of the Universe who involves himself in even the pettiest details in the life of a Jew.

**Believing that Everything in Life is Chance is a Denial of Hashem**

 One of the 13 principles of the Jewish faith is "I believe in perfect faith that the Creator, Blessed is His Name, creates and guides all creatures." One who believes that everything in life is chance, is effectively denying Hashem. Thus the name Purim celebrates the victory over those who deny Hashem.

 We are a nation which is guided by the Hand of Hashem. As Dovid Hamelech tells us "Hashem is my Shepherd, I shall not lack... Even when I walk in the valley overshadowed by death, I will fear no evil, for You [Hashem] are with me."  (Tehillim 23:1,4)

 Several years ago on Tisha B'Av, a Jew from Eretz Yisroel Reb Tuvia Chaim Ariel passed away and was buried in Tekoah, a yishuv (settlement) in Eretz Yisroel. During his lifetime, Reb Tuvia experienced some incredible incidents which showed him loud and clear that Hashem is guiding the Jewish people.

 Several years ago Tuvia Chaim moved from America to Eretz Yisroel and worked in a kibbutz factory that made baby formula powder. Due to an accident with a grinding machine, Tuvia Chaim lost his right leg above the knee. Undaunted, Tuvia Chaim studied and became a tour guide.

**Picking Up a Wealthy Man from New York**

 One morning Tuvia picked up an apparently wealthy man from New York at Ben Gurion Airport to bring him to Jerusalem. On the way to Jerusalem it became obvious to Tuvia Chaim that it was not a match made in heaven. Apparently their personalities clashed. Tuvia Chaim pulled the van to the side of the road and told the man that he would get him a different tour guide. The man responded "Listen, you think I am just your typical overbearing New York Jew with gold chains -- I paid my dues." The man then rolled up his sleeve to expose a tattoo from Auschwitz which ended with the numbers 7402. "I lost my mother, my father and all my brothers and sisters."

 Tuvia Chaim looked at the tattoo and turned white. In the carpentry shop on his kibbutz there worked a man who escaped from Auschwitz, fought with the Polish partisans and later made his way to Eretz Yisroel. The man also had a tattoo on his arm -- a number that ended with the same last four digits of Tuvia Chaim's Social Security number and "coincidentally" his telephone number -- 7401.

 "Did you have a brother named Zalman?" asked Tuvia Chaim.

 "Yes, but how could you know that?" replied the shocked man.

 "Was he tattooed before you or after you?" persisted Tuvia Chaim.

 "Before me, but why?" responded the puzzled man.

**“I think Your Brother is Alive”**

 "I think your brother is alive," answered Tuvia Chaim and with that he made a U-turn on the old Jerusalem road and headed back to his kibbutz near Lake Tiberias to reunite the two brothers in what Tuvia Chaim described as the most emotional, G-d-filled moment of his life.

 Tuvia Chaim was so inspired by this incident of Hashgacha Pratis - Divine Supervision, that he became a Torah-committed Jew. He went on to live a fulfilling life as religious Jew doing chessed (kindness) for many other Jews. (Rabbi Kalman Packouz-Aish HaTorah).

**The Simcha of Purim is Knowing**

**That Hashem is Watching Over Us**

 The commentator Yaaros Dvash explains that the simcha of Purim is knowing that Hashem is watching over us. All the miracles that Hashem does is to awaken us to His Torah. Because through the miracles and wonders which happen, we can see that Hashem takes personal interest in every aspect of our lives.  (Yaaros Dvash, Drush 3 for the 7th of Adar, p.75 volume 1, Even Yisroel Edition)

 Knowing that Hashem is with us is a source of happiness. As Ezra tells us "I was strengthened because the Hand of Hashem was upon me" (Ezra 7:28)   Let us be happy on Purim in knowing that Hashem is with us.  Even in these trying times we can be strengthened by a firm belief that Hashem is watching over us. **A Frelichen (Happy) Purim Everyone.**

*Reprinted from this week’s Good Shabbos email.*