

עדת אש קודש

Adass Aish Kodesh



THE AROMA OF SHUSHAN

By Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita

As most will be reading these words on Shabbos, a day after Shushan Purim, allow me to add my best wishes to you and yours. I hope Purim brought you all the simcha you sought and that all the blessings you shared with others will find fruition in your own lives as well.

Purim is the powerhouse of joy that raises our neshomahs to the highest levels of Teshuva and connection with Hashem. The expansiveness that is true unbridled joy in Hashem's protection makes us aware of how much Hashem loves us, and brings us closer to our spiritual selves. At such a time, with all the ahavas Hashem welling up, we truly regret our misdemeanors and bind ourselves to the will to do better. Then comes Shushan Purim, and in some ways this day can raise our spirituality even higher.

As a youngster I had the merit to witness how the 'old timers' did it. I mean those special Yidden, many who had survived the Churban that were part of that special breed that knew all too well how precious life was. In Bobov there was a Shushan Purim minhag quaintly called "Rimpling", which basically called for the olam to join in home visits that the Rebbe Rav Shlomo Zt"l would undertake to family members and other select elders. I expect that today this is no longer done as it was then, but I speak of simpler times where we all lived within a block or two of one another. Shushan Purim was seen as an extension of Purim, Shabbos clothing was worn, and spirits were high. We would go from house to house. The Rebbe would give out cake and bronfin (whisky), the host receiving warm blessings and then, we would all dance about the table. In the midst of what could only be described as a taste of Shomayim here on earth, the dancing and singing was at its highest pitch, we all felt as if we were climbing up towards Har Sinai, led by the Tzadik, with no borders keeping us from Hashem. As the dancing reached its crescendo, the Rav would lift his silver handled walking stick and crash it

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down on a glass placed for just this purpose. The crash would spur us to yet another level, Brochas spewing, tantzing harder, song veering into heartfelt pleas, voices crying out, one felt so close, it just couldn't get better! But it did, in the next house, again, the cake, the lechiam, the dancing, the open hearted togetherness, the stick rising, Lechiam, more, tantz briderlach, beitt ous alles guttes! (Brothers plea for only good) This went on and on, till exhausted yet so elated, went straggled back to the Bais Medrash for a final seudah.

This hieliga chaos took place for me over fifty five years ago, yet those moments are still throbbing in my heart.

Rav Avraham Eiger of Lublin Zt"l explains that when a Yied makes an honest accounting after Purim he may feel he hasn't really taken the fullest advantage of the day's spiritual potential. Perhaps he feels there are areas in his avodah that are still left wanting and that although Purim has the unique ability to clean oneself of all ills, he has just missed out. It's as if he has lost the full potential of this most special day. So we have the next day of Shushan Purim, to repair any such loss. The word Shushan shares the root of the word shoshana, which means rose. The greatest attribute of the rose is its aroma, a scent that can linger on for some time. Just as Purim has such potency for kedusha on this unique day, so its aroma can continue into the day of Shushan Purim, and allow us to extend its special blend of holiness.

This then may be why Shushan Purim has so much capacity for huge spiritual growth.

This year Purim is on Thursday, Shushan Purim obviously falls on Friday, Erev Shabbos. So what do we do with this unique Shabbos itself, does it have any bridge to all this spiritual joy? The Chassidishe Rebbe's used to say that because the Gemorah discusses the mere possibility that the sixteenth and seventeenth of Adar could also be days that one can read the Megilah, these two days become connected to Purim and Shushan Purim. Therefore, as the Amshinover Rebbe Zt"l Rav Yosef would relate, "he knew Alter Chasidim that in the time period surrounding Purim they "would Chapp a pourre teige" (grab a few days) so as to spread the sense of kedusha as far as possible.

Let us catch hold of the aroma of the kiddusha of Purim on this special Shabbos, and allow the expansiveness of our hearts to remain open so we can set ourselves in the direction of a bond with the Eibishter that will be effervescent , and ever sizzling with the 'bren' of true joy.

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