

# LESSON IN A BOX



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ToraH Cafe



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PURIM EDITION 5778

LESSON 4 // SERIES 3

## MIRACLES: NATURAL & SUPERNATURAL

**W**hile both Purim and Passover commemorate momentous occasions of Divine deliverance, their respective stories are extremely dissimilar. During the Egyptian exile, the Jews were condemned to an existence of slavery and were at the mercy of an evil tyrant. Their socioeconomic status and morale could not have been lower. Contrast that with the setting of ancient Persia, where the Jews enjoyed religious freedom, prosperity and acceptance in the broader society, to the point that they were invited to participate in the royal feast at the court of King Achashverosh.

Although in Pharaoh's Egypt and Haman's Persia our ancestors faced the threat of annihilation, the similarity ends there. The path to liberation was quite different. The story of Passover is replete with mind-boggling miracles. Through the plagues and the splitting of the sea, the destruction of Egypt was swift and breathtaking. The hand of G-d was recognized by all.

The Megillah (scroll of Esther) on the other hand, can be read as a typical palace intrigue. In fact, G-d is not mentioned even once throughout the entire scroll. One could easily interpret the story as lucky coincidence. King Achashverosh gets angry at his wife and selects Esther as queen in her place; Mordechai happens to overhear a plot to kill Achashverosh and saves the king's life; Haman happens to be "in the wrong place at the wrong time" just when Mordechai's deed is being read to the sleepless king; Esther uses her position and influence to turn the king against Haman; and so on.

In truth, the Purim miracle is deeply significant, even compared to the miracles of Passover. On Passover, G-d interfered with the rules of nature that He had set up at creation. Seemingly, nature was an obstruction to Divine revelation. On Purim, the Divine miracles occurred seamlessly within the rules of nature. The natural world itself reflected the Divine. This miracle is greater in that the Divine, harnessed nature, to accomplish His will rather than break the rules of nature.

Celebrating these two holidays close to each other emphasizes that miracles-both without and within nature-are worthy of recognition and gratitude. Let's open our eyes to the miracles that are constantly occurring all around us. And let's be grateful.

*(Chabad.org)*

# PURIM JOY

There is a quiet happiness: an inner sense of bliss, the innocent joy of a small child, one of wonderment and gratitude. It is a happiness to carry with you at all times.

Then there are those seasons when happiness blooms for all to see, bursting out in song, in dance, in celebration: A festival, a wedding, a time to feast and rejoice with family and friends.

But the ultimate happiness is the joy of Purim. It is no longer about you, your family- your life. It is about making others laugh, bringing smiles to the weary, celebration to those who feel abandoned, a feast to those who had lost all hope.

It is a season for breaking out of yourself, out of your character, out of all those bounds you have set for yourself—"beyond knowing." The light of Purim knows no bounds.

*Likkutei Sichot, vol. 16, p. 371.*

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## CELEBRATE PURIM

**Wednesday night, February 28- Thursday, March 1, 2018**

- Reading the megillah
- Charity to 2 needy people
- Shalach Monot-gift of 2 ready to eat foods to a friend
- Eat a festive meal

For further Jewish learning check out [www.TorahCafe.com](http://www.TorahCafe.com)

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Thank you!

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