

# Weekly Teaching

*March 10, 2017*

Purim is a time of great joy and merry-making.

Our celebrating of Purim is not limited by any sense of unique sacredness, but rather with an almost “free expression,” enjoying the carnival-like celebration that is this festive holiday.

The happiness and light-hearted spirit which prevails during Purim expresses a central truth about the character of the Jewish people.

On Purim, we will recall from the Book of Esther the story which records the rescue of the Jewish community in Persia.

What is most striking about the Biblical Book of Esther is that nowhere within the story does God speak or act. In fact, God is never mentioned in this Biblical book; the only Biblical book that this is the case.

The omission of God’s name is the primary point of the story.

Theologically, Purim is teaching: “Only through the actions of people is God’s presence manifest in history.”

The Book of Esther reminds us of the hidden hand of God working quietly with His faithful human partners in order to redeem the world.

During Purim, we acknowledge that God has retreated behind the curtain of history, and we human being are now the ones on the center stage.

The human actions of the Mordecais’, Esthers’ and Ahasuerus’ of the world are the manifestations of God’s redemptive involvement in history.

The Talmud teaches that “God created human beings to be His partners in creation.”

Redemption is the result of a Divine-human effort and our celebration of Purim emphasizes humanity’s unique role in history.

This year, as we celebrate Purim, may we further be inspired to partner with God in helping to redeem our world.

Shabbat Shalom & Chag Purim Sameach,

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