NO FORCE COULD EVER FRUSTRATE

by Rabbi Label Lam

When Adar enters we increase in joy! (Taanis 26B)

It seems there is a requirement to turn the dial of joy higher during the month of Adar. However, beyond the obligation, there must be something native to the month of Adar that invites or inspires an uptick of joy. As we swiftly glide through time it is much like traveling through space, moving from place to place. Each country has its own currency, customs, language, risks, and opportunities. It is worthwhile to consult a guide when crossing boundaries from one nation to another. How disappointed we would feel to have gone to France and miss out on the Louvre? How painful would it be to leave Israel without ever having gone to the Kossel? We could then only look back with regret. I only wish I knew what was available in that locale! So too when visiting certain times in the Jewish calendar we are alerted to the rich deposits of golden goodness to be mined from a Shabbos through its proper observance, and a Pesach, and a Purim too. The way to approach Purim is by entering the month of Adar with increased Joy!

Why is Joy mixed in with Adar? Is it because of the drinking? It could well be that the joy is the cause of drinking more than drinking is the cause of the joy! I once heard from Rabbi Avigdor Miller ztl. that wine is like rocket fuel. It takes the drinker more quickly in the direction in which he is already heading. If the person is melancholy and blue the wine will amplify and intensify that feeling.If he is elated to begin with, then the drink will launch him to an even higher altitude of exaltation.So, one had better do some mental exercise to ready himself to encounter that first sip of wine.

The pursuit of happiness is an elusive drive that frustrates many but there are a few factors that everyone can agree upon.

Victor Frankl in Man's Search for Meaning outlines a formula that may help us gain leverage in our own drive for joy. How do you turn it on and how do you turn it off? Where are the buttons to be found? What are the keys?

At the risk of oversimplifying, his equation goes like this: S-M=D.Got it yet? Let's explain the variables. Suffering -(Minus) Meaning= Depression. When a person feels the futility of his efforts life becomes overly burdensome. Even the slightest set back or disappointment is enough to feel rejected by the universe and grant a license to give up!

Suffering here does not mean the grandiose suffering of Job or a virtual Holocaust of misery. It can

be a delayed flight or lost pen that invites the roof to cave in!When there is no perceived meaning to the "suffering" no matter what the size, then nothing seems worth the effort. If there is no "why" to motivate then any amount of unexpected effort can halt the "how"!

The opposite can be inferred as well! S+M=J. Got it yet! Suffering plus meaning yields joy! When the "why" is clear then even the most impossibly difficult "how" is achievable. Why? Because the motivation is there! It's worth it! The cost benefit makes deep personal sense. It's worth it to go through the risk and discomfort of a pregnancy to hold and raise a child the mother appreciates.

Nothing becomes more clear, through reading the Megilla or experiencing a Purim, than the simple truth that HASHEM is with us, we are not alone, and everything we do has profound significance. Not only is it comforting, but once imbibed it excites our psyche with a new jolt of joy, a joy that **no force could ever frustrate**. DvarTorah, Copyright © 2007 by Rabbi Label Lam and Torah.org.