



RABBI SHALOM

ROSNER

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Purim – Kippurim

PURIM COMPARED TO YOM KIPPUR

The *Tikunei Zohar*¹ draws a striking comparison between Purim and Yom Kippur:

פּוּרִים אֲתִקְרִיאַת עַל שֵׁם יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים

“Purim is named after Yom HaKippurim.”

The very name “Yom HaKippurim” can be read as **Yom K’Purim** - a “day like Purim.” The implication is that Yom Kippur resembles Purim, not the other way around. But how can that be? These two days could hardly appear more different.

TWO OPPOSITE WORLDS

Yom Kippur is the most solemn day of the year. It is a day of fasting, introspection, and

1. Tikunei Zohar 57b

**We mourn the passing
on כ"ה שבט, Feb. 15th, 2026 of**
Dr. Ruth Freeman Lewis a"h
רוּת בַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאִיר ע"ה
**Mother of Debbie Isaacs,
Adina Garbuz,
Dr. Beth Greenbaum,
Grandchildren
and great-grandchildren
Sister of Jenny Michael,
Alfred Freeman
and Rachel Freeman Steiner**
**The funeral took place
at the Young Israel of New Rochelle**

withdrawal from the physical. On that day we abstain from food, drink, and social interaction, seeking to emulate the purity of angels.

Purim, by contrast, is marked by the most physical of mitzvot: eating, drinking, feasting, and rejoicing with others through *mishloach manot* and *seudat Purim*. Yom Kippur is the only sacred day defined by a fast; Purim is the only weekday festival defined by a feast.

Yom Kippur and Purim represent two halves of a spiritual whole. Yom Kippur is a day of transcendence, when we rise above the physical world to serve God in angelic purity. Purim, its mirror image, calls us to serve God *within* the physical world and to reveal holiness precisely through joy, human connection, and the sanctification of the ordinary.

INFUSING THE MUNDANE WITH HOLINESS

Rav Kook, in his *Siddur Olat Re'iyah*,² notes that there is no prohibition of work on Purim. To forbid labor, he writes, would contradict the essence of the day. Purim is not about withdrawing from life's daily rhythm, but about elevating it. It teaches that eating, drinking, and even working can become acts of divine service when suffused with awareness of God.

This idea finds subtle expression in a halachic discussion. We recite the blessing of *Shehekheyanu* when reading the *Megillah* on Purim night. But what if one lacks a *Megillah*—should *Shehekheyanu* still be recited to mark the day itself?

Rav Rimon³ offers a creative insight. The

2. Rav Kook, *Olat Re'iyah* p 440

3. Rav Rimon, *Purim* p 148

blessing of *Shehekheyanu* is said over something exceptional that stands apart from ordinary time. Yet the essence of Purim is that it should **not** stand apart. Its very goal is to erase the boundary between sacred and secular, to show that joy, friendship, and celebration can themselves become vessels for holiness.

If we were to recite *Shehekheyanu* merely for the day, we would imply that Purim is a rare, unusual moment. But the true message of Purim is that such holiness need not be rare at all. Every day can be a Purim imbued with gratitude, connection, and spiritual joy.

TRANSCENDENCE AND TRANSFORMATION

Purim, then, is the complement, and in a sense, the completion of Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur elevates us by removing us from the physical; Purim elevates us by transforming the physical itself. On Yom Kippur, we strive to become angelic; on Purim, we learn to be truly human and serve God with body and soul united.

That is why, in the language of the Zohar, **Yom Kippur is only “like Purim.”** For the ultimate goal of holiness is not to flee the world but to sanctify it. To find God not only in heaven, but in laughter, in friendship, and in the fullness of life itself.

May this Purim inspire us to open our eyes wide and see the divine not only in the extraordinary but in the everyday, and to live each day as a quiet *Megillah* of God’s hidden presence, written through the joy and faith of our daily lives. ■



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