



Chagim uMoadim

— from Masorti Olami & MERCAZ Olami

בס"ד

A New Way to Celebrate Purim

Reading the Megillah on Purim can give the impression that hiding your identity is something to be celebrated. Esther must hide her Jewishness in order to put herself in a position of power and eventually save the Jewish people. We remember this through dressing up as all sorts of characters during our celebrations. However, she must only act in this manner due to the lack of acceptance of Jews in her society. It seems odd to me that this part of the Purim story is what most people want to emulate in our celebrations, as its origins are in Jewish fear rather than Jewish pride.

Through my work with young Masorti Jews at NOAM, I always try to find new and exciting ways to connect people to their Jewish identity. NOAM events create an atmosphere where people can express their authentic selves and break free from the pressures and expectations of the outside world, which often limit our ability to express ourselves.

My new to way to celebrate Purim is this: dress up as yourself! Reading the Megillah reminds us of how the Jewish people in the days of Achashverosh lived in fear because of their identity. I think the best way to honour the story and lessons of Purim is to present yourself proudly in the way you want the world to see you. To see Jewish people not dressed up as Superman or Snow White but wearing their identity without fear, I think that would make Esther and Mordechai happy.

Chag Purim Sameach!

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