

# STANDARD SHEET FOR TYPEWRITING ALL COPY FOR PRINTED BULLETIN

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## HAPPY - DESPITE ALL!

The mood in Israel has changed somewhat, as we hear from press reports and as those of us who were there recently can testify from their own experience.

The somber, disheartened, and gloomy mood of the twelve or thirteen months since the Yom Kippur War has lifted perceptibly - but not radically. The mood is no longer black, just gray. There is no longer fear, just anxiety; no longer anger, just resentment.

Circumstances may suddenly improve, but that does not seem likely. The defence, diplomatic and economic realities do not promise to change for the better in any unexpected manner.

What a way to enter the festival of Purim! "When Adar (the month of Purim) comes, one should increase his joy." How - with prices soaring, Arabs rattling sabers, the Russians holding back its Jews, and the U.S. blowing hot and cold?

How shall we be authentic in celebrating Purim -- the only time Jews are permitted a bit of controlled abandon -- in a year of such depressed morale?

But it can be done. Purim itself, despite the joviality and occasional jocularly, is not an exercise in detached fantasy. There is a healthy realism underlying all the joy and happiness.

Why, the Talmud asks, do we not recite the Hallel on Purim? One answer offered is that the Hallel begins with, "Praise the Lord, you servants of the Lord." This, however, we cannot recite on Purim, "because we are still the servants of Ahasuerus." Only those who are completely free men can qualify as "servants of the Lord" and extol Him for it. But the triumph commemorated on Purim was not a complete one: "we are still the servants of Ahasuerus."

No self-delusions here about the avoidance of Haman's genocide being the equivalent of ultimate freedom. NO



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1 impetuous conclusions about a temporary relief from oppression  
2 constituting the "beginning of redemption."

3 Yet, despite these limitations, and notwithstanding  
4 the qualified nature of the victory -- we must be happy in  
5 Adar, and must surrender to joy on Purim, even if we have  
6 to force it on ourselves! No Hallel yet, but fun and singing  
7 and feasting nevertheless!

8 So, conditions may not suggest euphoria, and problems  
9 abound, but -- let us be happy despite all!

10 We can do it. And we should do it. And, with the  
11 help of the Rock of Israel, we shall yet be able to recite  
12 the Hallel as "servants of the Lord." Ahasuerus doesn't  
13 live forever. Praise the Lord!

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