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DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

Detailed instructions on the
laws and customs for the

Festival of Purim 5780

FROM THE BADATZ
OF CROWN HEIGHTS



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לזכות

הרה"ת יעקב יצחק דוב הלוי בן חיה רחל
להצלחה רבה בכל ולנחת יהודי חסידי מכל
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Detailed instructions on the
laws and customs for the

Festival of Purim
5780

Distilled from a series
of public shiurim delivered by
Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita
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לרפואה שלימה

In a sichah on the second day of Rosh Hashanah in the year 5752, the Rebbe stated:

“We need to focus on studying the laws that apply to this time of year, during which many changes are made to the standard prayers and there are numerous customs that apply. We should make certain to study these laws in the Code of Jewish Law.

Recently, yearly calendars have begun to include many of the laws that apply to the relevant time of the year and that are necessary to know. This is particularly useful for those who, for whatever reason, do not have sefarim or do not know how to find what they are looking for in the sefarim that they own. Now, however, they can simply examine such calendars and easily find the relevant laws.

It is therefore extremely appropriate for every single person to peruse the contents of these calendars, such as the Kollel Chabad calendar (available both in wall size and pocket size formats) in such a manner that the laws that apply to this time of year will become fixed in his memory. After all, it sometimes happens that a halachic question arises precisely at a point during which it is forbidden to interrupt and ask for someone’s guidance – or when there is nobody around to ask. Furthermore, [not having familiarized himself with the relevant laws beforehand,] it can happen that one does not even realize that there is a problem to begin with.”

* * *

The basic laws and customs presented below are derived from multiple sources. Due to a dearth of space only some references and halachic notes have been added. Primary sources include: *Shulchan Aruch* and commentaries, *Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad*, *Luach Colel Chabad*, *Sichos* and *Igros Kodesh*. Please see the footnotes in the Hebrew section for more halachic discussion of the topics mentioned.

The intention of this summary is to inform you of some of the relevant laws, not to replace each person’s

obligation to review the Halachos comprehensively.

Please note: Specific laws are usually mentioned only the first time that they become relevant, although they may apply to subsequent dates as well.

* * *

This guide incorporates several reminders about laws that will only be applicable during the Era of Redemption, with the hope that Moshiach will come speedily and allow us to implement these laws in practice. The concept of studying these *halachos* is based on several *sichos*, some of which are quoted below.

“Hashem **begs** the Jewish people,” the Rebbe passionately states,¹ “to occupy themselves with the study of the laws of the sacrificial orders ... which [as our Sages state] is considered as if we had actually offered the sacrifices. This study will bring about the actual offerings because it brings [to quote the Rambam] ‘King Moshiach [who] will build the *Beis Hamikdash* ... and restore the laws of the Torah ... so that the Jewish people will again offer the sacrifices ... in accordance with all the mitzvos that are stated in the Torah,’ speedily, in our time—literally! [Then, to quote the festival liturgy] ‘We will offer before You there the offerings of our obligations ... in accordance with the commandments of Your will.’”

“We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption,” the Rebbe demanded.² “One of the ways this is accomplished is through studying more Torah on the subjects of the Redemption and the *Beis Hamikdash*. Studying these topics greatly hastens their actual realization, to the extent that we will go directly from studying these subjects to greet our righteous Moshiach. We will inform him, ‘We have just completed studying the laws associated with your coming!’ An additional motivation to study these laws is that we

1) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 341—emphasis in original.

2) from a *sichah* addressed to Nshei uBnos Chabad, *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 2, p. 485

must expect Moshiach's arrival each and every day. In that case, these laws [concerning the Redemption and the *Beis Hamikdash*] are matters that every Jew—man and woman alike—must know in order to put them into practical use on a daily basis, such as many of the laws of the offerings.”

* * *

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Note: The times listed below are for Crown Heights only. Many factors influence the calculation of *zmanim* (halachic times) and it is not possible to achieve complete precision. It is therefore recommended to begin earlier than the time listed and not wait until the last minute (e.g., for the start of the fast), or to wait extra time when that is the appropriate precaution (e.g., the close of the fast).

THURSDAY, 9 ADAR

The 9th of Adar (Sheni) is the day - 80 years ago! - that the headquarters of Chassidus Chabad was relocated from what is referred to as “top half of the globe” [Europe] to the “bottom half of the globe” [America] when the Frieddiker Rebbe arrived in the United States to settle permanently.³

SHABBOS ZACHOR, PARASHAS TETZAVE, 11 ADAR

On the *Shabbos* before Purim, we utilize two *sifrei Torah*. The weekly *parashah* is read from the first *sefer Torah*. The second is used to read *Parashas Zachor*, which can be found at the end of *Parashas Ki Seitzei*.

Every Jewish person has a biblical obligation to hear

3) see *sichah* of 9 Adar 5750; *Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 1, pg. 326

the reading of *Parashas Zachor*, which records Amalek's attack on the Jewish people on their way out of Egypt, in order to fulfill the mitzvah of remembering Amalek and obliterating their name. *Chazal* established the rule that this *parashah* is read from a *sefer Torah* in a *minyán* of at least ten people, and on the Shabbos prior to Purim. In this way, we first hear the commandment to destroy Amalek and then hear the actual downfall of Amalek, i.e., the downfall of Haman, as recorded in the Megillah.

According to many opinions, women are also obligated to hear *Parashas Zachor*.

It is essential to have intention to fulfill the biblical obligation to remember Amalek while listening to *Parashas Zachor*; the Torah reader should also have in mind to let those listening fulfill their obligation.

The listener should understand at least the general idea of the reading. If a few words of the reading were missed, the obligation is still fulfilled, provided that the general theme of the reading was heard.

Someone who is unable to come to *shul* to hear the reading should still recite the verses from a Chumash. Some *poskim* maintain that the mitzvah may be fulfilled with the reading of the Torah on Purim which precedes the Megillah. These two options should only be used if they are absolutely the only choices.

The general custom is that if there are six (or more) people who have not yet heard the Torah reading it can be repeated, as long as there are a total of ten people participating.

Av Harachamim is recited during Shacharis and *Tzidkascha* is recited during Minchah.

The Torah reading for Minchah is the first section of *Parashas Ki Sisa*.

Law of Redemption: According to many authorities—and indeed it is the final halachic ruling—the biblical commandment to recall the

deeds of Amalek remains in effect today, although its practical application (the eradication of Amalek's descendants) cannot be fulfilled. Some authorities, however, consider this biblical commandment currently dormant, and that its obligation will be renewed only in the Era of Moshiach, when its implementation will become possible.⁴

Regarding the obligation to remember Amalek even after Amalek will be fully eradicated after the coming of Moshiach, the *Minchas Chinuch* states:⁵ “After the coming of our righteous Moshiach with the result that Amalek will be entirely eradicated, leaving no remnant behind, it is possible that the Torah's positive commandment to remember Amalek will remain an eternal commandment—to remember and not to forget.” The Rebbe quotes this and comments,⁶ “It is difficult to understand why he offers this as a possibility when it is apparently a certainty.”

MOTZEI SHABBOS

Vihi Noam is recited.

Kiddush Levana is recited after Maariv, if not recited yet.

4) See the relevant references in the Hebrew section of this publication.

5) Mitzvah 603

6) In *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 14, p. 91, fn. 24. The Rebbe discusses this issue at length, along the same lines, in *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Tetzaveh* 5740. For further discussion on this topic, see the following sources: *Melech Shlomo* to *Megillah* 3:4, offering an alternate view. He is quoted in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 21, p. 191, fn. 26; see, however, the rest of that *sichah*. See also *Targum Yonason* to *Ki Seitzei* 25:19, regarding the prohibition, “Do not forget,” he states, “Even during the Era of Moshiach, do not forget.” *Rabbeinu Bachaye* explains that verse contrarily, as is also implied by *Ramban*. In *Sichas Leil Simchas Torah* 5746 (see also *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Tetzaveh* 5747), the Rebbe explains the statement of *Targum Yonason* to *Beshalach* 17:16—and a similar statement appears in the *Mechilta* to this verse—that the commandment to eradicate Amalek applies “in the generation of Moshiach and the generation of the future world.” Note that *Maharsha* states that whenever the Torah instructs us to recall a particular matter, the matter will not be entirely cancelled even in the Future Era (*Chiddushei Maharsha, Berachos* 13a (beg.)).

Someone who sets out on a lengthy journey must take a Megillah with him, so that he can read it on the fourteenth of Adar. If he is unable to do so, but will have access to a Megillah on the thirteenth, the twelfth, or even the eleventh of Adar, he should read the Megillah on one of those dates. In that case, however, he may not recite the blessing before and after the Megillah. In addition, the Megillah may only be read on one of these earlier dates in the presence of a *minyan* of ten Jews.

If an individual cannot possibly delay his journey to accommodate these dates either, he may as a last resort read the Megillah on any earlier date in the month of Adar, from its first day and on.

When reading the Megillah before the fourteenth of Adar, there is a dispute whether the obligation extends also to the night reading. In actual practice, he should read it by night as well.

A traveler who read the Megillah on an earlier date in Adar believing that he would not have access to a Megillah during Purim, but subsequently obtained a Megillah, he should read it again on Purim. Furthermore, because his original reading took place on the incorrect date, he should now recite the blessings over his Purim reading.

MIVTZA PURIM:

Purim is an excellent opportunity for *mitvzoim*. You can provide people in old age homes, neighbors and business associates with *mishloach manos* and *matanos l'evyonim* for them to give out.

“*Mivtza Purim*, our Purim campaign,” the Rebbe says⁷, “is to ensure that each Jewish person fulfills all the mitzvot of Purim according to halachah. We should campaign in speech and in action. In speech, we should address our fellow Jews with words that come from the heart to

⁷ *Michtav Klali, Yud Alef Adar 5737*—printed in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 16, p. 619

impress upon them the importance of observing these mitzvot. In action, we should take whatever action is needed as the location and occasion demand: Finding someone to read the Megillah (as well as *Parashas Amalek* during the day); preparing pre-packaged food gifts with which they can fulfill the mitzvah of *mishloach manos*; and preparing coins with which they can fulfill the mitzvah of *matanos l'evyonim*. It would be best to include a publication that offers a brief overview of the laws of Purim, or at least a summary of the story that we celebrate on Purim, explaining the magnitude of the miracle.”

“[To express our Purim goals] in concrete terms,” the Rebbe writes elsewhere,⁸ “We should strengthen and expand our preparing for the Purim campaign, to ensure that every Jew [to quote the Megillah], “the youth and old, the infants and the women” will celebrate Purim to the fullest extent, so that everyone participates in the mitzvot of Purim ... including children—*many* children, *all* children, the boys and the girls! It goes without saying that we must reach out to enable those Jews who find themselves in certain situations (such as the army, senior homes, orphanages, hospitals, and prisons) to observe Purim in this manner.”

PURIM PREPARATIONS

Tevilas Keilim (New-vessel Immersion): Utensils that are purchased with the intent of gifting them to someone else should receive *tevilah* (immersion) only when they become the property of the giftee.

A gift-giver who wishes to immerse their gift may do so in a halachic manner with the following stipulation: they should first hand the utensil to a third party (who accepts it on the recipient’s behalf), thus ensuring a transfer of ownership prior to *tevilah*. (It would then behoove the gift-giver to note the steps taken for *tevilah* on the

8) *Michtav Klali, Yud Alef Adar Sheni* 5741, printed in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 21, pp. 489ff

recipient's behalf, so it is clear that the gift does not need to be immersed again.)

Even if the utensil is being used as a receptacle for food at the time of the giving, such as is the case on Purim with *mishloach manos*, the gift-giver is absolved from being obligated in *tevilah* from a purely halachic standpoint. This *heter* (dispensation) is especially applicable to glass utensils, which only require immersion by rabbinic ordinance.

However, there are those who argue that the giver is required to immerse a food-filled utensil before using it for the first time. On account of this *safek* (doubt), the giver should avoid placing the food in direct contact with a utensil—especially one of metal, which requires biblical immersion—presenting it within a separate bag. (A piece of parchment paper or cellophane does not constitute a proper *hefsek*—separation—between food and tray). When the gift reaches the recipient, they should then immerse the utensil and make a brachah, if required.

The giver has the alternative of performing a transfer-of-ownership procedure with a third party, as outlined above, and then can use the gift as a food receptacle without qualification. However, a utensil immersed by the gift-giver without a conditional transfer of ownership—whether presented with food or not—should be re-immersed without a brachah after receipt.

Hafrashas Challah (Separating Challah Dough): A recipient of a large amount of cakes and baked goods as *mishloach manos* should be careful when storing them. Individual baked gifts may have derived from batches of dough that lacked the required quantity for the baker to separate *challah*. Nevertheless, if the accumulated products are the kinds that require *hafrashah*, combining them in a single container will trigger the requirement post-baking. Halachah is lenient with regard to storing baked items in a fridge or freezer, and they are not considered as placed in a single container.⁹

9) See One Minute Halacha #503 from Harav Braun, shlita, where this issue is discussed comprehensively.

Baking a large quantity of dough (normally sufficient for *hafrashah*) with the intention of distributing the products to a number of individuals in fulfillment of *mishloach manos*, does not require *hafrashas challah* (with a blessing).¹⁰

SUNDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 13 ADAR

As on every fast day that begins in the morning, it is permissible eat throughout the preceding night, up until the crack of dawn. However, if a person had a proper sleep—as opposed to momentarily nodding off or taking a power nap and the like—they may not eat or drink upon awakening, even if awakening before dawn. The exception to this rule is if someone stipulates before sleeping that should they awaken before dawn, they will continue to eat and drink. If an individual regularly rises from sleep during the night to take a drink, they may do so on the night preceding a fast, even if no specific condition was made before going to sleep.

We may not begin a formal meal within half an hour of dawn, even those who are eating close to the beginning of the fast. At this point, only snacking is permitted, such as eating fruits or vegetables or drinking non-alcoholic beverages. Do not eat a large quantity of such foods and if eating *mezonos*, limit the amount to the size of *kebeitzah*.

The latest time for reciting *Kiddush Levanah* is tonight, *l'chatchilah* (in regular circumstances).

MONDAY, 13 ADAR, TA'ANIS ESTHER

Ta'anis Esther commemorates the thirteenth of Adar, the day the Jews fasted and prayed to Hashem when they defended themselves from their enemies. Alternatively, it commemorates the three days Esther and the people of Shushan fasted during the month of Nissan before Esther went to King Achashverosh.

10) This is discussed at length in One Minute Halacha #231 #318.

All men (from age thirteen) and women (from age twelve) should refrain from eating and drinking on *Ta'anis Esther* from daybreak, 5:55 am, until nightfall, 7:24 PM.

The following individuals are exempt from fasting: pregnant and nursing women, women who are within thirty days of birth, and people who are ill. Consult a Rav if necessary. Many are lenient also regarding a groom and bride during their seven days of *sheva brachos*.

There are also halachic opinions lenient regarding a father whose son's *bris milah* coincides with *Ta'anis Esther*, as well as the *mohel* and *sandek* who officiate at the *bris*. However, the custom is to be stringent and fast.

There is no obligation for a person who is exempt from fasting to deny themselves delicacies or good meat or wine. Nevertheless, eat and drink a little less than usual in order to feel included in the experience of the community.

Law of Redemption: Rambam states in his *Laws of the Fasts*:¹¹ “All these fasts are destined to be cancelled in the Era of Moshiach. In fact, they will be transformed into festivals and days of rejoicing and gladness, as it is stated: ‘*The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth will be [days of] happiness and celebration and festivals for the House of Yehudah; and they will love truth and peace.*’”

It's the custom to give additional *tzedakah* on a fast day. The common practice is to estimate the value of the cost of meals on that day, and give that to the needy in the evening.

11) *Ta'anis Esther* is not mentioned in the above verse, nor does it commemorate destruction or exile. See the following sources: The Rebbe's letter in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 6, p. 371, fn. *Ve-zichrom*; *Hisva'aduyos* 5746, vol. 2, p. 696. On the other hand, it is possible that this fast will also be cancelled in the Era of Moshiach. See the *ma'amor* entitled *Ki Sisa* 5747; *Hisva'aduyos* 5751, vol. 2, p. 288; *Sefer HaSichos* 5748, vol. 1, p. 292 (in the *sichah's* title). See also *Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 1, p. 349, fn. 109.

Shacharis: Only the *chazzan* says *Aneinu* during *chazaras hashatz*, between the brachos of *go'eil Yisroel* and *Refa'einu* [as well as during Minchah, as we shall see further].

If the *chazzan* forgot to say *Aneinu*, see footnote.¹²

Selichos are recited in middle of *davening*, as on all fast days. *Va-yechal* is read from the Torah.

The order of *davening* for Shacharis: After *chazaras hashatz*, *Tachanun*, *nefilas apayim*, *V'hu Rachum*, *Selichos*, the long *Avinu Malkeinu*, *Va'anachnu lo neida*, half *Kaddish*. The *sefer Torah* is taken out and three *aliyos* are read in the section of *Vayechal Moshe*.

MACHATZIS HASHEKEL

It is customary to give three coins to *tzedakah* on *Ta'anis Esther* before Minchah to commemorate the half-shekel donated annually to the Temple treasury during the month of Adar. This collection was made in Adar so that by Nissan the *korbanot tzibur* (communal sacrifices) could be purchased for the following year.

It is customary that each donation should be half the value of the country's standard currency. Some people prefer to donate silver coins. It is also preferable that the coin should be labeled "half" (e.g., half-dollars). It is customary to give three coins since the word *Terumah* is mentioned three times in *Parashas Shekalim*.

A person may exchange three coins worth of their own money for the silver coins customarily made available by the *gabba'im*, using the (temporarily) acquired silver for *machatzis hashekel*.

12) If the *chazzan* forgot to say *Aneinu* and he didn't conclude *Baruch Atah Hashem* of *Refa'einu*, he should go back and say *Aneinu*, and then begin *Refa'einu* again. But if he finished the brachah, he should say it during *Shma koleinu* like everyone else, and conclude the brachah with "*ha'oneh b'eis tzarah v'shomeia tefila*". If he forgot to say it in *Shma koleinu* - he should say it as a separate brachah after concluding *Sim shalom*.

Some authorities maintain that we should avoid referring to the coins as “*machatzis hashekel*,” but rather as “*zeicher l’machatzis hashekel*” a token half-shekel (to the one used when there is a *Beis Hamikdash*), or another form of alternative description. Other authorities are concerned even with the description of a *zeicher*, but the accepted custom is not to be concerned over this matter altogether.¹³

The obligation for *machatzis hashekel* begins at age twenty (and according to some opinions, thirteen). Some also give on behalf of their wives and children—this custom is mentioned in the Rebbe’s *sichos*. Many have the custom that a father should also give the *machatzis hashekel* on behalf of his unborn child during the mother’s pregnancy.

Once a father begins giving for a child, he must give every year until the child becomes responsible to give on his own, unless he explicitly makes a condition the first time that that he is not accepting it upon himself as a vow.

The Rebbe encourages training children to give their own *machatzis hashekel*.

Someone who did not manage to give *machatzis hashekel* before Minchah may give it after Minchah, before the Megillah reading on Purim night or before the Megillah reading on Purim morning.

Maaser (tithe) money should not be used for *machatzis hashekel*.

Minchah: The Torah reading and *Haftorah* for a fast day are read.

The order of Minchah today is as follows: *Va-yedabeir* (*Karbonos*), *Ashrei*, *chatzi Kaddish*, *Va-yehi binso’a*, the Torah reading, *Haftorah* (with blessings before and after), *Yehallelu*, *chatzi Kaddish*, *Shemoneh Esrei* (with

13) In *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Shekalim* 5726, the Rebbe explains why we are not concerned that our present custom of donating *machatzis hashekel* may have the appearance of arranging to offer sacrifices outside the *Beis Hamikdash*.

Aneinu), *chazaras hashatz*, *Kaddish tiskabel*, *Aleinu*, *Kaddish yasom*. *Tachanun* and *Avinu Malkeinu* are not said at Minchah as it is *erev Purim*.

Aneinu is said in *Shemoneh Esrei* in *Shema Koleinu*. If *Aneinu* was omitted, see footnote.¹⁴

The *chazzan* recites *Aneinu* during *chazaras hashatz* after the blessing of *Goeil Yisrael*, before beginning the blessing of *Refa'einu*. He also recites *birchas kohanim* before *Sim shalom*, as he ordinarily does during *Shacharis*.

Divrei Kevushin (words of inspiration) follow Minchah.

The fast ends at 7:24 PM, but it is nevertheless prohibited to eat before the Megillah reading, as will be detailed below. Work and sleep are also forbidden from half an hour before nightfall until after reading the Megillah.

MONDAY NIGHT, EVE OF 14 ADAR, PURIM

The Rebbe emphasizes the superior quality of the festival of Purim that occurs on a Tuesday, a day which indicates a “double portion of goodness”.

We should not eat a meal before Megillah reading, even for those who find fasting difficult. If there is great need, there is room for leniency for snacking (eating fruits and vegetables and drinking non-intoxicating drinks or even mezonos if it's less than a *kebeitzah*). If an individual is weak and waiting to eat can harm him—and a snack is insufficient—eating is permissible. But it is important, in such a case to appoint someone to remind them to hear the Megillah. A woman who is fasting, and is waiting to hear the Megillah reading from her husband when

14) One who forgot to recite *Aneinu* and has already recited Hashem's name in the blessing of *Shomei'a Tefillah* should recite *Aneinu* in the paragraph of *Elokai Netzor*, before reciting the second *Yihiyu L'ratzon*.

The *chazzan* recites *Aneinu* after the blessing of *go'eil Yisrael*, before beginning the blessing of *Refa'einu*. He also recites *birchas kohanim* before *Sim shalom*, as he ordinarily does during *Shacharis*.

he returns from Shul, may be lenient with snacking, as above.

In the *List of Novel Purim Customs* prepared by the Rebbe under the heading “Customs of the Rebbeim,” it is written:¹⁵ “A silk *kapote* is worn as on Shabbos and Yom Tov,” but also that: “these practices are of course not intended as directives for the public.”¹⁶

There is a custom to wear masks on Purim. The Rebbe points out¹⁷ that this refers mainly to young children.

It is important to ensure that costumes, masks, and other Purim wear do not contain *shatnez*. Some authorities are lenient regarding the kinds of *shatnez* that are forbidden only *mid’rabanan* (rabbinically) as well as men and women wearing clothing designed for the opposite gender, in deference to the joyful celebration of Purim. However, the great majority of authorities vehemently forbid either scenario.¹⁸

It is unclear whether *tzitzis* are required on Purim costumes with four corners, such as a *me’il* worn as part of a *kohen gadol* costume. (As an aside, there is a debate regarding the requirement of *tzitzis* on the *me’il* that is actually worn by a *kohen gadol*.) Since there is a doubt in this matter, is it prudent to round off a corner.¹⁹

A blessing is not recited over a *tallis gadol* (prayer shawl) that is donned only as a costume.

Maariv: Maariv in shul should begin as soon as possible after the fast. *V’al Hanissim* is added in *Shemoneh Esrei* of Maariv. Do not interrupt between the brachah of *Hashkiveinu* and *Shemoneh Esrei* in order to make an announcement about *V’al Hanissim*. The laws for

15) *Sefer HaMinhagim* p. 74

16) For an elaboration upon this matter, see references printed in the Hebrew section of this publication

17) in *Sichas Ta’anis Esther* 5749. See also *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Vayikra* 5748 regarding wearing crowns on Purim.

18) see Hebrew section for extensive sources

19) see Hebrew section for extensive sources and reasoning

someone who forgets *V'al Hanissim* are explained below.

After *Shemoneh Esrei*, *Kaddish shalem* is recited, and the Megillah is read. After the Megillah and the subsequent brachah, we say *Shoshanas Yaakov*, *V'atah kadosh*, *Kaddish shalem* - without *Tiskabel*, and *Aleinu*.

An overview of the laws and customs of reading the Megillah are described below in conjunction with the other mitzvos of Purim.

It is customary to eat a small *seudah* on the night of Purim. It is proper to set the table with a tablecloth and light candles to emphasize the meal's festive nature. Some do not eat meat in the evening, so as not to mistake the meal with the *Seudas Purim* eaten on the morrow.

THURSDAY, 14 ADAR, PURIM

The mitzvos of Purim day may be performed from sunrise (about **7:15 AM**) to sunset (about **6:57 PM**).

Morning *Shema* must be recited before **10:08 AM**.

It is customary to arise early for Shacharis. We avoid eating before hearing the daytime Megillah reading—in fact, the daytime reading is more stringent than nighttime—though there is some room for leniency regarding drinking. If it is truly necessary to eat, an individual may be lenient in snacking (eating fruits or vegetables, or non-alcoholic beverages, even in large quantities, or a small amount of *mezonos* products, up to the quantity of *kebeitzah*).²⁰

Tachanun is not said. After *Shemoneh Esrei*, *chatzi Kaddish*. *Vayavo Amalek* is read from the Torah. If anyone didn't hear *Parashas Zachor* on Shabbos, they should have the mitzvah of remembering Amalek in mind during the Torah reading.

²⁰) see Hebrew section for a detailed discussion, along with multiple sources and reasoning.

After the Torah reading, the Megillah is read while still wearing *Rashi tefillin*.²¹

If *machatzis hashekel* was not yet donated, it should be given before the Megillah reading.

The mitzvos of *mishloach manos*, *matanos l'evyonim* and the Purim *seudah* should be kept in mind when the brachah of *Shehecheyanu* is recited before the daytime reading of the Megillah.

After the reading of the Megillah, followed by its final blessings, the congregation recites *Shoshanas Yaakov*, followed with *Ashrei*, *U'va letziyon*, and *Kaddish shalem*. The *sefer Torah* is then returned to the *aron* (ark).

Reminder: In view of all the efforts involved in the mitzvos of the day, be careful to remember to daven Minchah.

Reminder: Remember to complete personal daily Torah studies, and especially the daily Chitas and Rambam. (Today's Chumash is *shlishi* of *Parashas Ki Sisa*; today's Tanya is associated with Purim, as explained in *Sichas Purim* 5723.)

Minchah is recited with *V'Al Hanissim* before the Purim meal.

Work-related activity should be avoided on Purim, and our Sages warn that someone who works will not see any blessing in it. Having a non-Jew do the work is permissible. Small tasks that don't take time are permitted (like laundry in a machine), but we should take

21) This is done in deference to the Megillah's familiar verse (recited in *Havdalah*), "*La-Yehudim hoysah orah ve-simcha ve-sasson, v'yekar*—The Jews had light and joy, and gladness and honor" (Esther 8:16). Our Sages explain that *yekar*, honor, refers to the head-*tefillin*. Some are even of the opinion that someone who already completed *Shacharis* should continue wearing *tefillin* when he subsequently hears the Megillah. *Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad* notes that he who reads as well as those who hear the Megillah should be wearing *Rashi tefillin*. Some have the custom of touching their head-*tefillin* when the reader reaches the word *v'yekar*, and the Rebbe was indeed observed doing so.

care not to be distracted from the simcha of the day. If it's for the sake of Purim, then even major work may be done throughout the day. Business matters are permitted because they bring simcha, but care should be taken not to get distracted from the simcha of Purim. There are some who have the practice of being stringent with all types of work unless it's for the purpose of earning money for the Purim meal. Similarly, taking a haircut—since it's for the sake of Purim and it leads to simcha, there is room for leniency.

Law of Redemption: In the future era it will be prohibited to perform any work that is currently prohibited on Yom Tov on this day, for Purim will then attain the status of Yom Tov.²²

Our Sages teach that “all the festivals will become nullified in the future era, whereas the days of Purim will never be nullified.” This concept is explained in dozens of sources, and it is addressed at length in the many teachings of Chassidus that focus on the concepts of Purim.

THE MAJOR MITZVOS OF PURIM:

I. LISTEN TO THE READING OF THE MEGILLAH

The requirement is for all men and women, as well as children who have reached the age of chinuch to hear the Megillah twice during Purim: once at night and a second time during the day. The Megillah may be read at night anytime from *tzeis hakochavim*--when the stars come out--until *alos hashachar*, the break of dawn, and on the day of Purim anytime from sunrise until sunset.

If a daytime reading of the Megillah Begins so late so it is

22) See *Machsheves Charutz*, 20 (88c in Piotrkow 5672 Ed.). A similar statement appeared earlier in *Ya'aros Devash*, vol. 2 (*Drashos in the Communities of AH"U, Drasha 1* (p. 120b in Warsaw Ed.)). Also note *Derashos Chasam Sofer*, vol. 1, Purim 5564, 197c and *Zayin Adar Sheni* 5586, 153d

certain that it will extend beyond sunset, do not recite the blessings before and after reading.

If it will be impossible to read the Megillah twice, by night and then again by day—as is often the case when reading for Jews we meet on *mitzvot*—do not neglect the night reading for the sake of securing the daytime reading. Rather, the listener is obligated to hear the night reading, even if it will jeopardize the opportunity to read the Megillah by day.²³

Children should be encouraged and trained to listen to the Megillah. It is customary to bring even small children to shul to hear the Megillah reading if they won't disturb others who need to hear the reading. Children should be taught that the main purpose of going to shul is to listen to the Megillah, and they should be supervised so that they pay attention to the Megillah without disruption.

Every attempt should be made to hear the Megillah in shul “among the multitude” rather than having it read at home. It is preferable that the Megillah be heard in a shul where there are many people. Someone who regularly prays in a shul which does not have many people need not go to a larger shul to hear the Megillah. It is best to read the Megillah with at least a *minyan*, but it is permissible to read the Megillah even in the event that there are less than ten men.

The *ba'al koreh* (reader) unrolls the Megillah and gently folds it into three, folio over folio, like an old-style letter. Chabad custom is that the listeners also unroll and fold their Megillos.

Megillah reading is preceded by three brachos: *al mikra megillah*, *she'asah nissim*, and *shehecheyanu*. It is proper for everyone, not only the reader, to stand when the brachos are recited. The *ba'al koreh* says the three brachos with the intention that he is saying the brachos and reading the Megillah on behalf of all the listeners.

23) This is explained at length in the Adar 5764 edition of *HaTamim*.

The Alter Rebbe states in his *Shulchan Aruch* that “when many people observe a mitzvah together, such as listening to the Megillah, it is mitzvah for one of the participants (either the reader or one of those listening) to recite the blessings on behalf of the others.

“However, if they wish to perform the mitzvah individually, such as when there are less than ten men present and each of them will be reading from his own Megillah, then each person may recite his own blessings.

“Nevertheless, it is best [even in such circumstances] for one person to recite on behalf of them all, in fulfillment of *berov am hadras melech* [the King’s honor is magnified when a multitude of His subjects obey His instruction together]. This is not a binding obligation, however, because we cannot force a person who is obligated in a particular mitzvah to make use of a *shaliach* [such as forcing him to rely on someone else reading for him] instead of performing it himself.”

Practically speaking, someone who listens to the Megillah reading in Shul, but would rather not rely on the reader’s recital of the blessings, is permitted to quietly recite them himself. However, he must have his own Megillah, and he must read the entire text at the same time as the reader, word by word, in an undertone. (This is what the Rebbe would do.)

Pay close attention to the brachos, and do not intercept with *Baruch Hu u’varuch Shemo*, but answer *amen* and have in mind to fulfill the mitzvah through the *ba’al koreh*.

Someone who arrives for the Megillah reading after the *ba’al koreh* already started saying the brachos should say the brachos on their own, making sure to complete them before the actual reading begins.

A *ba’al koreh* who already fulfilled the mitzvah of Megillah and is now reading for other people should not recite the brachos. It is preferable that one of the listeners recite the brachos aloud on behalf of the others. When women recite the first brachah, they should say “*lishmoa*

megillah". (Some opinions maintain that women should instead recite "*al mikra megillah*".)

A microphone may not be used for the Megillah reading, nor can the obligation of hearing the Megillah be fulfilled via telephone or live hook-up.

For those who require hearing aids, a hearing aid that uses a battery may not be used to listen to the Megillah. Most authorities state that an individual who is able to hear the Megillah without the use of an aid, should remove the hearing aids prior to the reading. Solutions are: 1) move as close to the reader as possible; 2) have the Megillah read privately and loud enough for the person to hear the reading without the use of hearing aids.

Unless someone made a conscious effort to keep their hands from contacting any of the many things that would make them impure, it is assumed that hands did contract impurity. Therefore, it is best to be stringent and to always wash hands before touching a Megillah.

Someone who touches a Megillah (or *tefillin* or a *sefer Torah*) in the middle of the meal (for which they already washed for bread), does not need to rewash hands for the continuation of the meal.

We are not permitted to speak at all while the Megillah is being read, starting from the first brachah before the Megillah reading until the completion of the brachah of *haraves riveinu* after it. To fulfill the mitzvah, every word of the Megillah must be heard.

Every word of the Megillah reading must be heard, from start to finish, in the correct order. Someone who did not hear even a single word that was read by the *ba'al koreh* has not fulfilled their obligation. If they heard every word, but failed to concentrate, they have still fulfilled their obligation—but not if attention wanders to other matters. It is therefore appropriate to closely follow the reading, word by word, from a kosher Megillah, or at least from a printed text.

A listener who has a kosher Megillah may read along with the *ba'al koreh* (it should be audible to himself, but quietly so that others can hear the *ba'al koreh*) if he is proficient in proper enunciation. It is preferable to have a kosher Megillah (i.e., handwritten on parchment) so that in case he misses a word or two (or more) he will be able to read it from his own Megillah.

If the Megillah scroll is found to be missing words or sentences it remains valid (although not ideal *l'chatchilah*—in the first instance), as long as it includes more than half of the total words it should contain. The scroll is invalid if the missing words or sentences (even if they are just a few) are absent from the scroll's beginning or conclusion, or if it is lacking an entire theme recounted in the story of Purim.

A listener following the reading from a printed text should not read along with the *ba'al koreh*. If someone in this scenario misses a few words or a *possuk*, they may then read it from the printed text and still fulfill the mitzvah. This can be done only for less than half of the Megillah's total words.²⁴

In such a case, read from printed text only until catching up to the *ba'al koreh*.

Chabad custom is to make noise only when reading Haman's name followed by a title or epithet.

The *ba'al koreh* must be sure to wait until all the noise making has stopped before continuing the reading.

24) For a more detailed discussion regarding one who missed the beginning, ending, or an entire episode of the Megillah reading, see these sources: *Bi'ur Halacha* 690:3, s.v. *Davka*; *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Emek HaTeshuvah*, vol. 3, 62. Some consider the list of Haman's ten sons an independent episode in this regard. See *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Shevet Halevi* vols. 3:97 and 7:9. (The latter resolves a difficulty of the *Pri Megadim*. See also *Nachal Eshkol, Hilchos Sefer Torah*, 15.) See *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Teshuras Shai*, vol. 1:79. Apparently, it would be better to read the list in more than one breath than to recite them from memory (according to *Bigdei Yesha, Orach Chayim* 690:4. Certainly, this must be true of one who is listening to the Megillah. See *Emek HaTeshuvah*.) However, see *Kanei Bosesem*, vol. 4:37

Safety Alert: Dangerous games such as caps and firecrackers can cause serious damage. Do not keep them in your pockets in case of a spontaneous explosion and do not “shoot” them near the ears and eyes.

There are four *pesukim* of *ge’ulah* that the congregation reads out loud. They are the verses beginning: 1) *Ish Yehudi*, 2) *U’Mordechai Yatza*, 3) *LaYehudim hoysah*, 4) *Ki Mordechai haYehudi*. These are read quickly by the congregation, so that they finish reading before the *ba’al koreh* begins to read these verses.

The names of Haman’s ten sons are also read out loud and in one breath by the congregation, from the words *chameish mei’os ish*. The *ba’al koreh* reads them in one breath only after the congregation has finished.

When the *ba’al koreh* reads the words “*igeres hazos*” (“this letter”) and “*igeres haPurim hazos hasheinis*” (“this second Purim letter”) he and those with kosher Megillos, shake the Megillah.

After he finishes reading the Megillah, the *ba’al koreh* says the brachah “*haraves rivenu*” aloud. This brachah is recited with Hashem’s name when there are ten or more individuals hearing the Megillah.

It is stated in *Minhagei HaAdmor* that the Rebbe’s custom is to recite this blessing even when reading the Megillah privately. This is not a directive for the public to adopt.²⁵

The brachah is recited before beginning to reroll the Megillah.²⁶

Law of Redemption: At the conclusion of his *Laws of the Megillah*, Rambam states,²⁷ “All the books of the prophets and all of the scriptures are destined to

25) See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 31, p. 279. (See also *Shabbos Parshas Toldos* 5748 regarding customs that were revealed only to specific exalted individuals, because the practice was meaningful for them at their advanced degree of spirituality.)

26) see the *sichah* of Purim 5716.

27) Regarding the source of this teaching, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 26, p. 222. The concept is explained on pp. 226ff.

be nullified in the Era of Moshiach. The exception is Megillas Esther, which will remain like the five books of the Torah and like the laws of the Oral Torah, all of which will remain forever.”

II. SAYING V'AL HANISSIM

V'al Hanissim is added in *Shemoneh Esrei* and *Birchas Hamazon* to thank Hashem for the miracle of Purim.

In *Shemoneh Esrei*, *V'al Hanissim* is said in the brachah of *Modim*. Someone who forgot *V'al Hanissim*, see footnote.

Do not skip *V'al Hanissim* in order to catch up to the *chazzan* and respond to *Kedushah* or *Modim*.

In *Birchas Hamazon*, *V'al Hanissim* is said in the second brachah. Someone who forgot *V'al Hanissim*, see footnote.²⁸

Some authorities are of the opinion that when *Birchas Hamazon* during Purim we must pronounce the word *migdol* (*yeshu'os malko*), as is done on Shabbos and Yom Tov. However, the Rebbe pronounced²⁹ the word *magdil* during Chanukah (as is done during the weekdays), and it is logical to assume that this should be done during Purim as well.

III. SENDING MISHLOACH MANOS

On Purim Day every person sends at least two different foods to at least one other person of the same gender. This is done to demonstrate friendship and brotherhood among the Jewish people. This obligation pertains to

28) If one didn't say *V'Al Hanissim* and hasn't said Hashem's name at the end of the brachah, they can say *V'Al Hanissim* at that point and continue *V'al hakol*. If one forgot and has gone further, realizing it before he reached the *Harachaman* at the end of *benching*, he should recite it together with the *Harachamans* as follows: Before *Harachaman Hu yezakeinu* etc. he should say “*Harachamon Hu ya'aseh lonu nissim k'mo she'asah la'avoseinu bayomim haheim biz'man hazeh.*” and begin *V'Al Hanissim* from the words “*Biyemei Mordechai V'Esther.*”

29) during the *farbrengen* of *Zos Chanukah* 5738.

every man, woman and child from the age of *chinuch*. All children should be encouraged to participate in this mitzvah, even if it is unclear whether they have reached the age of *chinuch*. It is praiseworthy to increase the number of *mishloach manos*.

Sefer HaMinhagim notes that the Rebbe's custom is to send *mishloach manos* consisting of a food and a drink to three individuals.

It is customary to reciprocate when receiving *mishloach manos*.

Mishloach manos must be sent during the day of Purim, not the previous or following night.

It is customary that *mishloach manos* be sent through a third party, even a child, and not delivered by the donor themselves.

It has become the accepted practice to be lenient and rely on the presumption that the *shaliach* delivered the *mishlo'ach manos* as instructed. It is unnecessary to ascertain that this is the case, because a *shaliach* works under the halachic presumption of fulfilling his mission. The same is true when a *shaliach* is used for the distribution of *matanos la-eyyonim*.³⁰

Send foods that can be eaten immediately without any further preparation (e.g. fruit, cooked fish or meat, cake, candy, wine or other beverage etc.). The two foods must be of different types, but may have the identical brachah.

It is proper that each gift should be substantial enough to convey a feeling of respect and not something that might insult the recipient. Each item should be at least the size of a *kezayis* (halachic measurement of the volume of an olive).

Mourners within the period of mourning (i.e., a year for a parent, thirty days for other relatives) are obligated to send *mishloach manos*. They should send only simple

30) See explanation at length in the Hebrew language version of this publication.

foods, not “luxurious treats that are designed to bring joy,” and they should not send *mishloach manos* to many people. But a mourner should not be a recipient of *mishloach manos*; rather, send to other (non-mourning) members of their family. A mourner who is sent *mishloach manos*, however, is permitted to accept it.

Even an individual so poor as to be supported from public funds, must fulfill the mitzvah in the minimal manner. Someone who is not able or cannot afford to send their own *mishloach manos* can make an exchange with another and in this way they both fulfill the mitzvah.

If someone sends *mishloach manos* to another individual and the recipient is not home and does not receive it until after Purim, that gift might not be considered as *mishloach manos*.

A married woman should not rely on her husband's *mishloach manos*, but she should rather give *mishloach manos* of her own. The same is true of children; although they are dependant upon their parents, they should send their own *mishloach manos*.

IV. GIVING MATANOS L'EVYONIM

Every person is required to give gifts or money of at least a nominal sum to two poor people on Purim day (not at night). The obligation can be fulfilled through any type of gift: money, food or clothing. The gifts should be worth at least a *perutah* (approximately five cents). That is the minimum requirement; it is proper to give more. Giving to the poor further demonstrates the spirit of unity among the Jewish people.

Children, even if it is unclear whether they have reached the age of *chinuch*, are similarly obligated to give *matanos l'evyonim*.

A woman should not rely on her husband to fulfill the mitzvah for her. She should personally give *matanos l'evyonim*. Children also should not rely on their parents; they should personally fulfill this mitzvah.

If a poor person cannot be found, the money can be designated on Purim or given to someone collecting for the needy.

Matonos l'evyonim may be given to poor men, women or children (who have reached the age of understanding). It may also be given to a poor mourner.

On Purim, we do not weigh the appropriateness of the recipient of our *tzedakah*. Whoever stretches out a hand and asks should be given *tzedakah*.

It is customary to distribute money to those who fill religious roles in the community, such as Rabbanim, *chazzanim*, *shamashim*, Torah teachers, as well as Torah educational institutions. Indeed, they depend on Purim *gelt* to ensure that they can continue fulfilling their duties on behalf of the community. However, *matanos l'evyonim* is not fulfilled with these contributions.

The minimum amount of *matanos l'evyonim* must be given from money that is not set aside for *ma'aser*.

It is preferable to give generously to the poor rather than to prepare a lavish Purim *seudah* or to give many *mishloach manos* to friends. "For there is no greater or more glorious joy than to gladden the hearts of paupers, orphans, widows, and strangers, and one who brings happiness to these low-spirited individuals is comparable to the *shechinah*."³¹

Law of Redemption: The Rebbe raises the question³² of how we will fulfill the mitzvah of

31) Rambam

32) See *Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 1, p. 310, fn. 114. For further discussion on this topic, see the following sources: *Me'il Tzedakah*, 1338 and 1573; *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Si'ach Yitzchak*, 378; *Eretz Tzvi*, *Mo'adim*, *Zachor* 5683; *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Va-Yitzbor Yosef*, 45:102. See also *Kovetz Nezer Torah*, Adar 5767, p. 291. Also note *Sefer Oholim (Maharil Diskin)* on *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim*, 694 (end). See *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Mahari Asad*, O.C. 206 who notes that initially Purim was accepted as an actual day of Yom Tov, and *matonos l'evyonim* could not have been fulfilled, because it would have been forbidden to handle money due to its *muktzah* status. (See however, *Ya'aros Devash*, vol. 2 (*Drashos in the communities of AH"V*,

matanos l'evyonim during the Era of Redemption when there will not be any poor Jews, in fulfillment of the Torah's promise, "For there will not be a pauper among you".³³

V. EATING THE FESTIVE PURIM MEAL

Purim is a time for feasting and rejoicing. We do not fast or eulogize on Purim. The joy of Purim is far greater than the joy of the Festivals.

Minchah is davened early (reciting *V'al Hanissim* and omitting *Tachanun*), followed by the festive Purim meal.

The custom is to eat this meal after Minchah after midday, usually in the late afternoon, since we are busy with reading the Megillah, giving out *matanos l'evyonim* and *mishloach manos* in the morning. The meal should begin during daytime and preferably continue into the night of *Shushan Purim*.

It is permitted to hold his Purim *seudah* in the morning instead of the afternoon if preferred. The main thing is to hold the majority of the meal during daylight hours. Someone who is running late should at least make certain to sit down to a meal and eat an amount equivalent to a *kebeitzah*, or at a minimum, a *kezayis*, before *shekiah* (sunset).

We are required to make a feast—eat at least one meal—during the day of Purim to rejoice in the Purim spirit. Invite family and friends to join in the meal in order to make it a more joyous one. Many have the custom to light candles for the meal. It is a *mitzvah* to hold the Purim meal in a lavish manner.

Preferably, the *seudah* should consist of washing for bread and meat should be served. The *minhag* is to eat *kreplach* at the *seudah*.³⁴

Drasha 6, [p. 142a in Warsaw ed.] Accordingly, we could suggest that since, according to some, Purim will indeed attain the status of Yom Tov in the Future Era (see "Law of Redemption" in previous section); as a result, money will not be used.

33) *Re'eh* 15:4

34) This custom has to do with the concept, explained in numerous

It is proper to learn Torah before beginning the meal. Some begin to study the laws of Pesach on Purim day since it is thirty days before the start of the *Yom Tov* of Pesach.

Now is also the time to begin donating, preparing, and organizing to provide *ma'os chittim*, supplies for those who cannot afford the Pesach expenses, providing them with *shmurah matzos* for the *sedarim* and for Pesach, as well as providing their other Pesach needs.³⁵

Law of Redemption: The Alter Rebbe states³⁶ in his *Shulchan Aruch*: “During the times of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the early Sages instituted that the laws of each festival should be explained to the public starting thirty days prior to each festival. Therefore, they would begin teaching the laws of Pesach from Purim onwards ... Each person living in Eretz Yisrael was obligated to bring three offerings (*olas re'iyah*, *shalmei chagigah*, and *shalmei simchah*) on each festival. Each sacrifice has to be free of any blemish or other disqualification. The Sages therefore instituted the practice of publicly explaining the laws of the festivals thirty days in advance, to remind the people of the festival so that they do not forget to prepare animals that are fit for offering. They then had a full thirty days to prepare.”

Matzah is not eaten from today (thirty days prior to Pesach) until the Seder on the first night of Pesach.

Care should be taken from this day onwards to prevent *chametz* substances from becoming firmly attached or entrenched in our possession, which would frustrate our subsequent efforts to clean for Pesach. (Many *poskim* refer to scenarios in which care must be taken to avoid *chametz* throughout these thirty days—such as not using

sources, that *Yom HaKippurim* is *Ki-Purim*, “like Purim.” On the day preceding Yom Kippur, it is customary to eat *kreplach*. See footnote to entry in *Sefer Minhagei Chabad* for Yom Kippur.

35) See *Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 1, p. 351, fn. 134; *Sichas Purim* 5726; *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Parah* 5740.

36) beg. *Hilchos Pesach*

a *chametz* utensil to collect wine from a barrel that has been set aside for Pesach use, or preventing *chametz* from entering a location that will be exempt from *bedikas chametz*, not laundering clothes with a *chametz* agent, not gluing paper with a *chametz* substance, care for a property that will be vacated within the thirty days and not returned to until after Pesach, storing things away in a place that will not be cleared until after Pesach, and so on.)

LAWS REGARDING INTOXICATION

Our Sages state that “one should drink wine until one reaches the point where he can no longer differentiate between “cursed is Haman and blessed is Mordechai.” It is customary to drink at least more than is usual. The main thing, however, is not the amount of drink, but the *kavanah* (intention) to do the will of Heaven and that all actions reflect that intention. The joy must be *simchah shel mitzvah*. While it is a mitzvah to drink more than usual during the meal, it is important to remember that we must *bentch* and do other mitzvos (such as *daven Maariv*) after the meal.

Someone who is weak by nature, or who knows that drinking will cause him to neglect a mitzvah, a brachah or a *tefillah*, or that he may act or speak inappropriately, should not drink too much—or even at all.

In many *sichos*, the Rebbe explains the significance of physically drinking wine on Purim. However, there is much debate whether this applies to wine in the broader sense of all alcoholic beverages, or whether it is strictly reserved to actual wine. Although the basic reason for drinking wine is because the main miracle of Purim transpired through Queen Esther’s wine party; nevertheless, there is room to suggest that all alcoholic beverages have the same halachic status as wine.³⁷

In *Sichas Zos Chanukah* 5739, the Rebbe implies that

37) See extensive sources in the Hebrew edition

specifically wine and not any other alcoholic drink should be used on Purim. Similarly, in *Sichas Purim* 5739, the Rebbe instructed those present to say *lechaim* on wine specifically.³⁸

A person who regurgitated all they ate and drank should not recite a *brachah acharonah*. Some say that the obligation to eat a festive meal on Purim is not fulfilled if the food has all been vomited. If the body failed to retain as much as the quantity of a *kezayis*, he should eat again. (Needless to say, if he had eaten the quantity of a *kezayis* in the course of the day, he has fulfilled his obligation. After all, according to the strict letter of the law, he is not required to wash and eat bread.)

Halachah differentiates between someone who is shasui (slightly intoxicated), shikur (very intoxicated) and shikruso shel lot—an individual so completely drunk, they have lost control of what they are doing. The following laws refer to the slightly intoxicated, unless otherwise specified.

1) Prayer

Someone who has drunk a *revi'is*³⁹ of wine is not permitted to pray. They must not pray until the effect of the wine has dissipated, even if they can speak perfectly lucidly before a king while under the effect of his wine. Wine drunk in the course of a meal is, generally, not considered intoxicating. However, it all depends on each individual's nature. All authorities agree that at least as far as prayer is concerned, all other intoxicating drinks share the same law as wine. In order to pray, it is sufficient for the intoxicated person to wait until they feel the effect has worn off.

Someone who drank more than a *revi'is* but is lucid (able to speak coherently before a king) and went ahead and prayed, the prayer is valid and need not be repeated when completely sober. Someone who has become completely drunk cannot judge himself coherent enough to lucidly

38) See also *Sichas Leil Beis de-Chag HaPesach* 5725.

39) halachic measurement of fourth of a *lug* and the amount necessary for kiddush

address a king until his sober friends inform him of this fact.

Nowadays, we do not manufacture the same kind of wines of the strength commonplace in earlier periods of history. We are therefore no longer concerned with someone who has drunk wine—prayer is permitted even if **more** than a *revi*'s was imbibed. Certainly, someone capable of holding a *siddur* and praying from it need not worry about being slightly intoxicated. If the only option is to recite the prayers from memory, and waiting for the effect of the wine to dissipate will result in missing the proper time the prayer, they should pray in the present state. After all, we do not concentrate that perfectly in our prayer nowadays regardless of the wine.

However, someone who is intoxicated to the point that they is unable to speak lucidly before a king, is called a *shikar* (drunkard). Praying in such a state is an abomination and it is comparable to idol worship. A *shikar* must repeat their prayer once intoxication has worn off. This is something we must be careful to avoid nowadays as well, despite the comparative weakness of our wines.

If a *shikar* remains in the state of drunkenness as the deadline for prayer approaches, he should let the time pass rather than pray, and then make up for the missed prayer at the time of the next prayer—by which time intoxication will have subsided. Although this delay was avoidable, a *shikar* is nevertheless considered an *ones* (one who was forced by circumstances beyond his control), because when he began drinking, he believed that he would have time to sober somewhat before the deadline arrived; he subsequently got carried away with the feasting and drinking, losing proper awareness of time, until there was insufficient time to sober.

2) The Shema and its Blessings

Some authorities maintain that the laws of reciting the *Shema* are identical to the laws of prayer, as above, for someone who is slightly intoxicated. Similarly,

the blessings surrounding the recital of the *Shema* are treated identically to the actual paragraphs of the *Shema*. According to the final halachic consensus, however, even someone who drank strong wine should nevertheless recite the *Shema*. This is because reciting the *Shema* is *d'araisa* (a biblical obligation), and we must err on the side of fulfilling the obligation in the face of an uncertain cause for invalidation.

When reciting the *Shema* to fulfill an obligation in these circumstances, it must be recited along with its appropriate blessings, even if uncertain that the obligation is truly being fulfilled.

A *shikar*, by contrast, must treat the *Shema* like prayer and is forbidden to recite either of them.

3) Birchas Hamazon

Someone who is able to address a king, even if they cannot speak as properly as usual because their speech gives away the fact that they are slightly intoxicated, nevertheless should recite *Birchas Hamazon*, as long as there are no errors or fumbling over words.

There is a disagreement among the authorities regarding a *shikar* who cannot speak lucidly before a king without making errors. Some are of the opinion that he must not recite *Birchas Hamazon* and that doing so is considered an abomination. Others maintain that a *shikar* who is entirely incapable of addressing a king should nevertheless recite *Birchas Hamazon*.

Practically speaking, all attempt should be made to end the meal and recite *Birchas Hamazon* before reaching such a state. Someone who has already reached a state of *shikrus*, should go ahead and recite *Birchas Hamazon* because it is a biblical obligation and we are stringent to fulfill it in the face of an uncertain disqualification.

In the above case, once the *shikar* has recited *Birchas Hamazon*—and then sobers before the meal has been fully digested—should not repeat *Birchas Hamazon*.

This is because when faced with an uncertain obligation to recite blessings (it is not certain that the previous recitation was invalid), we err on the side of not reciting blessings in vain.

4) Other Blessings

Even a *shikar* may recite all other blessings. Even a blurry intention is sufficient for these blessings, and even with mistakes, the blessings remain valid.

5) An Extreme *Shikur*

A drunkard who arrives at the state achieved by Lot, at which point he is utterly unaware of what he is doing, is no longer obligated in any mitzvah. He may not recite a blessing of any kind. He may not be included in the ten men required for a *minyan*, or in the *zimun* for *Birchas Hamazon*. (Some authorities are stringent and do not permit even a lesser *shikar*, as described earlier, to participate in the required number for a *minyan*.)

6) Responsibility and Liability

A *shikar* of any level, even that achieved by Lot, is considered a rational person for all matters, and the Torah's penalties for transgressing its laws will apply in his case. In this regard, he is treated as if he had willfully intended to perform whichever actions he takes.

Even on Purim, someone who inflicts damage or injury while intoxicated is fully liable. (This applies even to damage caused by the rejoicing of Purim, as is customary in some places, and not simply due to sheer drunkenness.⁴⁰)

Law of Redemption:

Firstly, even nowadays, a Kohen who is aware of the precise *beis av* (family lineage) and the precise *mishmar* (rotation of service) his family belonged to is prohibited from drinking wine on the day

⁴⁰) See *Magen Avraham*, 695: 7-8; *Aruch Hashulchan*, 10; *Mishnah Berurah*, 13. See also *Eliyahu Rabbah* 696, quoting the *Shelah*.

that he would have served in the *Beis Hamikdash*. In *Likkutei Sichos*, the Rebbe points⁴¹ to this law as proof that it is entirely possible for the *Beis Hamikdash* to appear instantly, quicker than it takes the average person to walk a *mil*—the time required for an slightly intoxicated Kohen to sober enough to perform his service, which is why he must avoid wine that entire day.

A Kohen who drank wine but is otherwise deemed fit for service in the *Beis Hamikdash* according to the requirements of halachah must not proceed deeper into the Courtyard beyond the place of the Altar. If he performs the duties of the Kohanim while in this state, he is liable to death by the hand of Heaven.

The above applies only to a Kohen who drank at least a *revi'is* of wine. He may, however, drink less than this amount without concern.

The law of the disqualifying *revi'is* applies only to a Kohen who drank that quantity of raw wine that has fermented for at least forty days, and when he drinks it in one shot. If he diluted the wine, or if he drank it in stages, he is spared the above penalty.

A Kohen who is intoxicated from beverages other than wine may not enter the *Beis Hamikdash*. According to *Minchas Chinuch*⁴²—and it appears that the Alter Rebbe shares this view—there is no limit to the quantity of liquors other than wine, and a Kohen intoxicated from even a lesser amount than a *revi'is* of liquor is prohibited from entering the *Beis Hamikdash*.

If a Kohen intoxicated from beverages other than wine performs the service in the *Beis Hamikdash*, the duties he performed remain valid, but he receives the penalty of lashes. However, some authorities consider him equal to someone intoxicated with wine, in which case, the duties he performed are invalid, and he is liable to death at the hands of Heaven.

41) vol. 2, p. 618

42) Mitzvah 152

Every person, whether he is a Kohen, a Levi or a Yisrael, is forbidden to enter any part of the *Beis Hamikdash* if he is a *shikar*, or even if he is slightly intoxicated. This applies from the start of the section in the *Beis Hamikdash* called *Ezras Yisrael*, for it is considered disrespectful for one in a disgraceful state to enter into the great and holy House of Hashem.

As is well known, the Rebbe enacted a strict limit on drinking alcohol. This enactment remains in force on Purim.

Safety Alert: Excessive alcohol consumption can cause poisoning and even worse, Heaven forbid. There is also a serious danger to drive under the influence of alcohol. Parents should be aware about the incidence of drinking alcohol among young people and explain to them the dangers involved.

In the *sicha* of Purim 5748, the Rebbe suggested⁴³ that following the Purim *seudah*, “It would be highly appropriate to organize the largest possible *farbrengen*, in the spirit of [Esther’s call to] ‘gather all the Jews,’ with the participation of ‘youth and seniors, children and women.’ Needless to say, the men must gather in the men’s section and the women in the women’s section, with the children present in both locations. The *farbrengen* will enable the joy and unity of Purim to continue into *Shushan Purim*.”

During the *farbrengens* of Purim, the *Rebbeim* would make an appeal for the *Kupas Rabbeinu tzedakah* fund.

During a Purim *sichah* in 5713, the Rebbe stated⁴⁴: We try to hold onto and reestablish the customs of earlier times. If we would have “broad shoulders” (i.e., if we were able to rely on our own strengths), if we had “eyes to see and ears to hear,” a perceptive heart and an understanding intellect, then we would not be forced to specifically use the well-paved paths. We would be able to forge new paths in order to reach the same goal, to “ascend to the House of Hashem.” Since, however, these things remain

43) *Sefer HaSichos* 5748, vol. 1, p. 303

44) See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 2, p.p 537-8

lacking, we must tread the paths that have been already worn down for us. We rely on the responsibility of those who indicated and paved these paths, which they did relying on their own strengths. We therefore seek to implement these customs, even if, for a number of reasons, these practices were interrupted for some time:

The Rebbe [Rashab] would collect funds or direct people to donate funds during a *farbrengen* three times a year: On Simchas Torah, Yud Tes Kislev, and Purim...On Purim, he would collect for his own affairs—Torah institutions, the support of private individuals, and so on...Similarly, if we will collect for those same things that the Rebbe has collected, and on the same occasions as the Rebbe, occasions which are *eis ratzon* and a *segulah* (auspicious times) for these collections, it will bring additional blessing and success. We can then approach the Rebbe and demand that he elicit all the promises in actuality.

Someone who begins the *seudah* by day and the meal extended into the night still recites *V'al Hanissim* during *Birchas Hamazon*, as long as he didn't yet *daven* Maariv.

Poskim state that in such a situation, recite *birchas hamazon* with *V'al Hanissim* first, and then go to Shul for Maariv, and then return home to eat, drink, and rejoice further, for the mitzvah to rejoice extends over both days of Purim and Shushan Purim.

In a number of *sichos*, the Rebbe mentions⁴⁵ that at the conclusion of the Rema's Purim meal, he would remind all present of their obligation to recite Maariv in its correct time.

Krias Shema of Maariv: It's best to recite it immediately at nightfall. *Sof zman* (latest time) is midnight, **1:05 AM**.

If the recital of Shema (as part of the Maariv service) was

45) See *Sichas Purim 5727*. *Sichas Chof Kislev, Yud Shevat, and Yud Alef Nisan 5737*; *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 39, p. 282

"It was the Rema's custom each Purim to wear a mask and disguise himself in different clothing and to go around the houses shouting that Maariv would be prayed at its proper time."

delayed beyond midnight, even unintentionally, it may be recited any time before dawn at **5:52 AM**. Someone who was a victim of circumstances beyond his control, or he was drunk or ill, and failed to recite Shema by dawn, may recite it after dawn but prior to sunrise at **7:13 AM**. In the latter scenario, he should not recite *Hashkiveinu* (“Let us lie down in peace...”), because after dawn it is no longer considered the time for retiring. Nevertheless, he may recite the rest of the blessings—the two blessings before Shema, and the blessing (*Emes ve-emunah*) that follows it, until *Hashkiveinu*. As far as reciting the *Amidah* is concerned, some authorities allow someone who has not recited it before dawn to recite it before sunrise.

WEDNESDAY, 15 ADAR, SHUSHAN PURIM

No *Tachanun* nor *Tachanun*-related sections of *davening* are recited.

Someone who was on a sea voyage or other such journey and did not have access to a kosher Megillah on the fourteenth of Adar (Purim), but is able to obtain a Megillah on the fifteenth (Shushan Purim), should read the Megillah on that day. However, he should not recite the blessings over it.

A person should add slightly to their joy and celebration during the meals of this day.

It is forbidden to fast or eulogize today.

We do not recite *Al Hanissim* today.

The Rebbe encourages us to utilize the day of *Shushan Purim* to “make up” for anything that may have been missed out on Purim.

Laws of Redemption:

In the *Beis Hamikdash* everyone must stop what they are doing—*Kohanim* interrupt the service of the *Beis Hamikdash*, *Levi'im* descend from their platform, and *Yisra'elim* turn from observing the sacrifices—to attend the reading of the Megillah.

On the fifteenth of Adar the Beis Din sends emissaries throughout the Land of Israel to repair the roads and pathways (for the sake of the Jews ascending to Yerushalayim for the festivals or for the sake of those fleeing to a City of Refuge), and to repair the *mikvaos*. They turn their attention to the needs of the public, to investigate and take whatever action is needed for the public benefit and for matters concerning consecrated property. The emissaries also check for compliance with the laws of *kila'im* (prohibited mixing of plant species).⁴⁶

On this day, the money-changers would take up positions in every city and gently encouraged the people to donate their obligatory half-shekalim to the *Beis Hamikdash*. Donations that were given voluntarily were accepted, but no-one was forced to give at this point.⁴⁷ Interestingly, *Sefer Ma'aseh Rokei'ach* explains⁴⁸ that in the Future Era, each person will donate a **complete** shekel to the third *Beis Hamikdash*, instead of a half-shekel.

The half-shekalim collected from all Jews were used to fund the communal sacrifices. Regarding offering the communal sacrifices from a new collection this year with the immediate coming of Moshiach, when “the *mikdash* will be speedily built,” despite the fact that there was not an opportunity to collect the required donations from all Jews—see the discussion

46) For further clarification of this topic, see the following sources: *Mishnah, Shekalim* 1:1 with *Bartenura*; *Rambam, Hilchos Sotah* 4:1; *Hilchos Rotzei'ach* 8:6; *Hilchos Arachin* 8:1; *Hilchos Kila'im* 2:13. See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 17, pp. 228ff. See *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Binyan Shlomo*, 55, regarding why the Beis Din saw fit to dispatch emissaries specifically on Shushan Purim. However, Rambam's wording in *Hilchos Arachin* seems to negate his explanation. See also *Aruch Hashulchan Ha'asid, Hilchos Arachin*, 49:2; *Haga'os Harashash, Shekalim* (beg.); *Haga'os Rabbi Elazar Moshe Horowitz, Mo'ed Katan*, 6a.

47) See *Rambam, Hilchos Shekalim*, 1:9, based on *Mishnah, Shekalim*, 1:3

48) beg. of *Shekalim*. See *Midrash HaGadol, Naso*, 6

in *Sichas Yud Gimmel Nisan* 5738 and *Leil Daled d'Chag HaSukkos* 5751.⁴⁹

In the Future Era, Yerushalayim will extend all the way to Damascus.⁵⁰ We can wonder how this will impact the required date for reading the Megillah in the future city of Yerushalayim. On one hand, its extended areas cannot be considered having been encompassed by a wall in the times of Yehoshua.⁵¹ On the other hand, the extended area will be considered visibly close to Yerushalayim to the point that they share the same halachic obligations; there will not be the required measure (approx. 70 *amos*) of empty land between Yerushalayim's original areas and its extended areas due to the "abundance of people" living there in the future.⁵²

The Rebbe states⁵³ that: "Although regarding the reading of the Megillah, the latest date on which it can be read is the fifteenth of Adar,⁵⁴ nevertheless, the instruction to increase in joy is associated with the entire month of Adar, as our Sages state, 'From when we enter the month of Adar, we increase in joy',⁵⁵ and as stated in the Megillah, Adar is 'the month that was transformed for them'.⁵⁶ If that is the case, we should increase in joy on each day of the month of Adar, adding each day to the previous day's level of joy. After all, if the joy was to remain at a constant throughout, without augmentation

49) *Hisva'aduyos* 5751, vol. 1, p. 118

50) See *Sifrei, Devarim*, 1; *Rashi to Zechariah* 9:1. See also *Rashi to* 14:8.

51) although other laws of a walled city will indeed apply to its extended areas. See *Maharsha, Megillah* 6:2. Also see the conclusion of the *ma'amor* entitled *Megillah Nikreis* 5739, regarding reading the Megillah in Yerushalayim in the Future Era, when the city will be surrounded by a "wall of fire."

52) See *Zechariah* 2:8. See *Sha'alos u'Teshuvos Bnei Tziyon*, vol. 3, *Kuntras Shelom Yerushalayim*. See also *Toras Chaim, Beshalach*, 340a.

53) *Sichas Shabbos Mevarchim Nisan* 5717, printed in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1274. See also *Sefer HaSichos* 5752, p. 391

54) *Megillah* 2a

55) *Ta'anis* 29a

56) *Esther* 9:22

or amplification, it cannot be considered a perfect state of joy—it has grown old and repetitive...The meaning of the phrase ‘From when we enter the month of Adar, we increase in joy’ is that from the start of the month we must continuously increase in joy with each passing day. It is clear from this that on the fifteenth of Adar, we must experience a happiness that is even greater than that of Purim. And then an even greater joy on the sixteenth, and so on. By the time we reach the final day of Adar, our joy should be truly wondrous.”

The Rebbe explains⁵⁷ that, “it is specifically the joy experienced after Purim, in the latter half of the month of Adar, that carries the quality of Redemption. As our Sages state, ‘We draw [one] redemption close to [another] redemption,’ so that from the redemption of Purim, an incomplete redemption because ‘we are still subject to Achashveirosh,’ we reach the redemption of Pesach—a complete redemption, and a redemption that is not followed by exile, for it is the true and complete Redemption.”

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57) *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Vayakhel-Pikudei, Parah, 5731*