

Toronto Torah

Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Terumah/Zachor

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This edition of Toronto Torah is dedicated by Arthur and Bev Herzig to commemorate the yahrtzeit of Arthur's father, David Herzig, Moshe David ben Shabtai Yehoshua z"l and the yahrtzeit of Bev's mother, Sara Gorman, Sara bat Yitzchak haKohen z"l, and by Arthur's children, Shira, Atara, Shmuel, Leora and Yosef, to commemorate the yahrtzeit of their mother, Tali Herzig, Talia Rivkah bat Shmuel David z"l

A Friday Purim Seudah?

Rabbi Chaim Metzger

For many, the highlight of Purim is the seudah (feast), when everyone can sit down and relax with good food and wine, after a jam-packed morning. But what happens when Purim falls out on Friday? What do you do when the mitzvah is to eat the Purim seudah, which involves copious food, and possibly more alcohol than at a normal meal, but we must simultaneously enter Shabbat respectfully dressed and with an appetite for Shabbat dinner? Do we have to choose between Purim and Shabbat? Is there a way to dance at both simchas?

Rabbi Yosef Karo quotes three practices, before concluding that one should follow the local practice:

- On Erev Shabbat and Yom Tov, one may not begin to eat a large meal after the beginning of the last quarter of the day (3:13 pm this week), so that one enters Shabbat and Yom Tov with an appetite. (Pesachim 99b) Thus, in order to avoid violating this prohibition on Friday, the Maharil (Responsa 56) says to simply start the Purim seudah before then.
- Rabbi Moshe Isserles (Rama, Orach Chaim 695:2) quotes Sefer haMinhagim of Rabbi Isaac Tyrnau, who states that the minhag is to eat the Purim seudah in the morning hours to properly honour Shabbat. This is because if you begin your meal after minchah you will be improperly interrupting between minchah and maariv, and you will not be hungry for Shabbat dinner.
- Rabbi Menachem Meiri (Ketubot 7b)

quotes a different minhag of starting the meal on Friday afternoon and continuing the meal into Shabbat. Then, when Shabbat hits, you should *pores mapah uMekadesh* (cover the food on the table with a tablecloth and say kiddush) before continuing with the meal. Since the Purim miracle continued into the 15th of Adar, *al haNisim* should be included in the Shabbat meal's *birkat haMazon*.

So, what should we do?

The vast majority of *acharonim* (recent authorities), including Aruch haShulchan, Mishnah Berurah, and Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, recommend beginning the seudah in the morning.

Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon writes that one who wants to attempt to follow the opinion of the Meiri, namely *pores mapah uMekadesh*, would need to take several steps:

1. Start the meal before the tenth halachic hour;
2. Light the Shabbat candles at the proper time (after *plag haMinchah*, until 18 minutes before sunset). Everyone who isn't lighting Shabbat candles should accept Shabbat verbally;
3. Cover the food and make kiddush, but without saying a berachah on the wine (because there is debate regarding the need for this berachah);
4. Uncover the food and break the two bread loaves of *lechem mishneh* in the middle of the meal, without saying

5. Recite Kabbalat Shabbat;
6. Eat at least an olive-sized amount of bread, and ideally at least an egg-sized amount;
7. At the end of the meal, say *Birkat haMazon* with the additions of *al haNisim* and *retzeh*;
8. Daven maariv

As seen from the list above, there are many fine details that must be considered in order to properly perform *pores mapah uMekadesh*. It is also extremely possible that people will be unfit to daven maariv at the end of the meal, and it is most certainly challenging – if not impossible – to arrange a minyan at that point. Therefore, Rabbi Rimon also recommends having a Purim seudah in the morning, as is the most widely accepted custom.

This year: Of course, this year many people will not be able to attend a minyan anyway, because of COVID-19-related regulations and personal health considerations. Nonetheless, the other issues remain. These issues include ensuring a proper Shabbat dinner atmosphere, the various halachic challenges that may occur when trying to combine the meals regarding *kiddush*, *haMotzi*, and whether to say *al haNisim*, and making sure to daven maariv. For practical halachic guidance, please consult your halachic authority.

cmetzger@torontotorah.com

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Summary

The final chapter in this book opens with Hashem being angry with the Jewish People, and commanding King David to count the nation. David appoints Yoav, his general, to carry out this task. After some initial hesitation, Yoav agrees to carry out David's order, with the help of other military leaders. (1-4)

They comb through the land of Israel taking this census, and after just under 10 months, Yoav returns to King David with a tally: 800,000 men of valour who draw swords in Israel, and another 500,000 men in Yehudah. [Note: In Divrei HaYamim I 21:5, the tally is given as 1,100,000 men who draw swords in Israel and 470,000 of the same in Yehudah. Rashi (ad loc.) is of the opinion that the count there, at least for Israel, is more historically accurate; he offers multiple explanations for why the count here was diminished.] (5-9)

After this report, King David realizes that he has sinned by counting the Jewish People in this manner. [See Shemot 30:12 and commentaries ad loc.] He admits his sin to Hashem, and Hashem sends the prophet Gad to him

with a choice of three possible punishments that he will have to endure: (10-13)

- 7 years of famine;
- 3 months of running from his enemies;
- 3 days of plague.

David chooses the final option, which he considers to be "the hand of G-d" and not "the hand of man". Hashem brings the plague immediately, and it kills 70,000 people. Hashem then shows an image of an angel holding a sword stretched out towards Jerusalem to David at the threshing floor of Aravnah (also known as Ornan) HaYevusi. David prays on behalf of the nation, and Hashem pauses the plague before it affects the people of Jerusalem. (14-17, per Radak and Divrei HaYamim I 21:16-17)

Gad returns to David to instruct him to build an altar on Aravnah's threshing floor. When David approaches, Aravnah offers him the land, various materials and sacrificial animals for free. David refuses the offer, and purchases the land and some oxen from Aravnah for 50 silver shekalim. [Note: In Divrei HaYamim I

21:15, David pays 600 golden shekalim; Rashi explains that each tribe provided 50 silver shekalim, and David actually paid Aravnah the monetary equivalent of 600 gold shekalim.] David then builds the altar and offers various sacrifices, and the plague is stopped permanently. (18-25)

Insight

The land which David purchases from Aravnah is actually the future site of the Beit HaMikdash. Why does the text entirely neglect to mention this? Radak (24:25) cites a midrash explaining that the 70,000 people died because the Jews did not demand the building of the Beit HaMikdash. Perhaps this missing detail in the text emphasizes that point; even when David purchased the land that would eventually house the Beit HaMikdash, it still wasn't a focus for the Jewish People. May our prayers to see the Beit HaMikdash rebuilt speedily soon be answered!

ediena@torontorah.com

The Israeli Farmer: Shemita and Purim Meals**Rabbi Alex Hecht**

Although we are, unfortunately, unable to enjoy large Purim seudot (feasts) this year, we hope that G-d will enable us to include many guests in our seudot next Purim! However, in Israel, since next year is a shemita year, it may be challenging for people with different halachic standards to share meals. This is particularly relevant between those who consume produce from farmers who employ *heter mechirah* (sale of Jewish-owned farms to non-Jews for the shemita year, in order to permit operation) and those who do not. May one who does not rely on *heter mechirah* eat in the home of one who does?

Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon (*Shemita*, English ed., pp. 546-51) permits eating in the home of one who maintains different shemita standards, on several grounds.

Rabbi Rimon notes - based on a ruling of Rabbi Moshe Isserles - that a person who observes a stringency may generally trust that one who follows a more lenient practice will not serve him food that does not meet his standards. (Rama, Yoreh Deah 119:7) Rabbi Rimon emphasizes that it is incumbent upon a host to raise his or her kashrut standards to accommodate a guest's stringent practice. He writes that this imperative arises from the perspective of both *lifnei iver* (misleading one who is "blind" to certain facts), and the *mitzvah* of *hachnasat orchim* (welcoming guests). Regarding the latter, Rabbi Rimon compares serving a guest food that does not meet his or her stringent standards to serving meat to a guest who is a vegetarian.

Nevertheless, Rabbi Rimon contends that even one who maintains that *heter mechirah* is halachically invalid may eat with the utensils of a host who relies on this leniency. He

cites Rabbi Isserles, who ruled that those who follow the widespread ruling forbidding consumption of a certain type of fat that adheres to the stomach of a cow, may eat off of the utensils of those in the Rhineland who permit this fat. Since those in the Rhineland follow competent halachic authorities, their utensils are still considered kosher. (Rama, Yoreh Deah 64:9) Additionally, it is generally assumed that utensils have not been used in the past 24 hours - and thus, any positive flavour from the problematic food no longer exists - unless known otherwise. (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 122:6)

Rabbi Rimon emphasizes that adherence to different halachic opinions need not, and should not, serve as a barrier to friendship. He notes that families from Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai married with one another, even though they ruled differently about important issues related to marriage and lineage. If a point of disagreement was relevant, each would inform the other, so that neither parties would violate their standards. (Yevamot 13b-14a) This lesson is particularly relevant for Purim, when we strive to enhance our friendships with, and concern for, all members of our community, regardless of whether or not their halachic practice is identical to ours.

ahecht@torontorah.com

Biography

Rabbi Meir Leibush ("Malbim")

Ezer Diena

Rabbi Meir Leibush ben Yechiel Michel Weisser (**MaLBIM**) was born in Volochysk, Volhynia on March 7, 1809. At the age of 13 he moved to Warsaw, and he married one year later. Unfortunately, his marriage ended a short while later in divorce, leaving behind one young child. He would marry again in 1836, and he had five more children with his second wife, Helena Rosenthal-Lifshitz.

All the while, Malbim was deeply committed to his studies, both secular and religious (under various Rabbis throughout Eastern Europe), and he acquired a phenomenal reputation, leading to his selection as Rabbi of Wreschen, Prussia, around age 30. Seven years later, he was appointed Rabbi of Kempen, Poland, where he remained until he was appointed as Chief Rabbi of Bucharest, Romania, in 1859. However, following great battles with Reform communities in the following cities he lived in, he lasted only a short period of time in Bucharest, Paris, Lunshitz, Kherson, Mogilev, and Konigsburg. In 1879, he was offered a position in Vilna, but the local governor refused since he had been classified as a political criminal based on his previous activities. After he rejected an offer to become Chief Orthodox Rabbi of New York, he accepted a position in Krememnochuk, but he fell ill and died that Rosh Hashanah (September 18, 1879).

A remarkable Torah scholar whose first published work was on Shulchan Aruch (and is quoted extensively by the Mishnah Berurah), Malbim became extremely well-known for his approach to Tanach. He believed that there are no true synonyms in Lashon HaKodesh, and that each seeming repetition in the text serves to illustrate a new point. On this basis, he published commentaries to almost every book in Tanach, in addition to a detailed commentary on the Torah explaining the Halachic Midrashim, connecting the Written and Oral Torah in a way never seen before. Both of these works served as responses to reformers of the day who challenged traditional Jews on many aspects of their texts and traditions, something Malbim idealized in his (tragic) personal life as well.

ediena@torontotorah.com

Torah and Translation

How Haman Deceived Achashverosh Rabbi Meir Leibush, Malbim on Esther 3:8-9 and 7:4

Translated by Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

המבואר שהמן גנב את לב אחשוורוש בשני דברים, אחד שלא הודיע לו מי הוא העם הזה שמשין עליהם, שאם היה אחשוורוש יודע שהם היהודים שהיו מפורסמים לעם חכם ונבון לא היה שומע לעצתו, וכן אף על עם אחר היותר שפל ונבזה אם היה אומר לו שכוונתו להשמידם, ג"כ לא היה שומע לו, אבל המן בערמתו אמר ישנו עם אחד, עם הבלתי מפורסם, עד שאינו יכול לכוונתו בשם...

זאת הדבר השני שגנב לבו שלא אמר לו שרוצה להשמידם רק לאבדם, שפשטות באורו הוא לאבד צורת האומה שהיא דתם לבטל דתם ולהכריחם לשמור דתות של יתר העמים, או יותר ענינים כאלה שיעשו תחבולות שישבת עניני העם ההוא וחוקיהם ונמוסיהם...

טענה שני טענות, א) שעקר המכירה היתה בעבורה שעיקר מחשבת המן היה לאבד אותה וע"י מצא עלילה על עמה כדי שאח"כ יוכל להתגולל עליה לאמר שהיא מבני תמותה ויהרוג גם אותה... ב) גוף המכירה שלא נמכרו לעבדות רק להשמיד ולאבד...

וגם בררה בדבריה איך המן רמה את המלך בשני דברים, א) במה שאמר אליו ישנו עם אחד, סתם עם בלתי מפורסם... ב) במ"ש יכתב לאבדם שהיה כוונת המלך לאבד צורת האומה ודתה לא להשמידם כנ"ל, והוא מכרם להשמיד להרוג ולאבד...

אם עכ"פ לא היה מרמה את המלך רק בדבר אחד במה שלא גלה את אזנו מי הוא העם, אזי החרשתי, ולא הייתי מגלה המרמה והמאנה אחר שכבר יצא הדבר בשוגג מאת המלך, לא כן עתה שהדבר כולו מוטעה...

It is clear that Haman deceived Achashverosh in two matters. First: He didn't inform him of the identity of the nation he was maligning; were Achashverosh to know they were the Jews, who were well-known as a wise and understanding nation, he would not have listened to [Haman's] counsel. Also, even regarding another nation, more lowly and degraded, if [Haman] would have told him he meant to destroy them, [Achashverosh] also wouldn't have listened to him. But Haman, in his trickery, said, "There is a nation," a nation not well-known, such that he couldn't name them...

This is the second area in which [Haman] deceived him: he did not tell him he wanted to entirely destroy them, only to ruin them. The simple meaning of that is to ruin the structure of the nation, their laws, to eliminate their laws and to force them to observe the laws of the rest of the nations. Or similar things, to develop tactics to halt the affairs of the nation and their laws and practices...

[Esther] made two claims: (1) That the essential sale was for her, that Haman's essential plot was to destroy her, and toward that end he had made a claim against her nation so that he could then cause this fate for her, saying that she should die, and he would kill her... (2) The sale itself was not that they were to be sold for slavery, but to be destroyed and eliminated...

And she also clarified with her words how Haman had tricked the king in two ways: (1) By saying, "There is a nation," an unknown nation... (2) By saying, "Let it be written to eliminate them," that the king intended to eliminate the form of the nation and its laws, not to destroy them, as we have explained, and [Haman] sold them to destroy, to kill, and to eliminate...

[And Esther said:] If, at any rate, he had only tricked the king in one matter, not revealing to his ear who the nation was, then I would be silent and I would not reveal the trickster and abuser, since the mistaken decree was already released by the king. But not now, when the entire [decree] is [a product of] deceit...

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SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

**8:00 PM Motzaei Shabbat Feb. 20: Halachah in Modern Israel
Rabbi Alex Hecht, May Israel Sell Weapons to Foreign Countries?**

**10:00 AM Wed. Feb. 24: The Strongest Jew: Samson, a 4-part series
Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, Week 4: Betrayal and Emunah
Register at <https://torontotorah.com/samson>**

**8:00 PM Wed. Feb. 24: Why Do We?
Ezer Dena, Why do we Masquerade on Purim?**

**8:15 PM Wed. Feb. 24: Supernatural Beings, a 5-part mini-series
With Rabbi Chaim Metzger, Week 5: Leviathan and Behemoth**

DAILY

**Mon-Thu 10 AM to Noon, with Rabbi Moshe Yeres, via ZOOM (men)
Monday/Wednesday: Gemara Succah, Orot haTeshuvah
Tuesday/Thursday: Parshah, Tanach: Shemuel**

WEEKLY

Shabbat Feb. 20

After minchah at Shaarei Shomayim, R' Sammy Bergman, Purim: Holiday of Mischief

Sunday Feb. 21

9:20 AM Contemporary Halachah: Purim on Friday, with Netanel Klein

10:00 AM Gemara Shabbat with Rabbi Aaron Greenberg (University)

7:30 PM Gemara Ketuvot with Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner (men)

8:15 PM Midrash on the Parshah with Rabbi Chaim Metzger

Monday Feb. 22

8:30 PM Gemara Shabbat, Chap. 15, with Rabbi Moshe Yeres

Tuesday Feb. 23

1:30 PM Megilat Esther, with Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

7:30 PM Shoftim, with Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner (men)

Wednesday, Feb. 24

6:15 AM Talmud Eruvin, with Rabbi Sammy Bergman

7:30 PM Genesis Journeys, with Rabbi Sammy Bergman

7:30 PM Prepare for Purim!, with Rabbi Alex Hecht

Thursday Feb. 25 Taanit Esther

8:30 AM Daniel, Rabbi Chaim Metzger (University)

12:00 PM Shemitah! with Rabbi Sammy Bergman and Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

1:30 PM Shemuel, with Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner (women) (not this week)

8:00 PM Gemara Beitzah, with Rabbi Eitan Aviner (men, advanced) (not this week)

8:15 PM Gemara Bava Metzia, with Rabbi Sammy Bergman (University women) (not this week)

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