

The Jewish Weekly

In Loving memory of
Mendy Klein
 ר' מנחם משה ז"ל
 בן ר' נפתלי הירצקא
 נפטר ל"ג בעומר
 י"ח אייר תשע"ח
 ת.נ.צ.ב.ה

The Haunted House

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles

In the city of Posen, Reb Baruch Batlan, (the great grandfather of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the Baal HaTanya) lived as a tenant in the multi-dwelling house, of the goldsmith Avigdor Tuvia, and his wife Gittel. These two, though they gave much tzedaka ("charity") and helped many, were not refined people; he played cards, drank and used bad language, and his wife also spoke in an unrefined way, and would curse when angered. People trembled in fear at her curses, for they were known to materialize.

In the year 5442 (1682), Avigdor Tuvia and his wife passed away, without children. Neighboring residents began hearing wild screams and drunken laughter, coming out of the apartment the couple had lived in. Stamping and dancing feet would shake the house. Reb Baruch and his family moved to another area, because they were unable to fall asleep at night.

On his next visit to his Rebbe, Reb Yoel Baal Shem of Zamostch, Reb Baruch told him about the haunted house in Posen, and about its past residents Avigdor Tuvia and Gittel. Reb Yoel Baal Shem said, that the only way to drive the demons from the house, was to turn it into a "Beit Midrash" Hall for Torah Study.

Reb Yoel Baal Shem, then gave clear directives. Ten of his disciples should fast the following Sunday, read the Torah passages for fast days, that begin Vayechal, at the beginning of the Mincha Afternoon prayer, and then spend the night learning Torah continuously. The following morning, five Torah scrolls, each wrapped in a tallis, should be carried by two students each, and they should march from the shul, to the goldsmith's house. At the door, they should call out to the demons, telling them, "Leave the house; make way for the holy Torah." They should then go inside, and say certain chapters of Psalms, even if the demons had not yet exited. A prayer minyan should be convened there three times a day, and Torah classes for young and old should be organized. "Then everything will be in order," concluded Reb Yoel Baal Shem.

Meanwhile, the Mayor of Posen, who was friendly to the Jews, came one evening to see for himself. When he heard the sounds of screaming, drunken singing and wild clapping of hands and banging on tables, he recoiled in horror. Being a devout Christian, he hurried to ask the bishop, for a special prayer, to remove the demons from the town. The bishop called together his priests, and they walked in a procession, carrying their

crosses and icons, until they reached the house, where they sprinkled water on the walls and closed their eyes, mumbling a prayer.

The apartment was on the first floor, and had four windows facing the street, where the priests were standing. Suddenly, the windows flung open and terrible faces popped out, with blood-curdling yells, so frightening, that some priests fainted and many of the onlookers fled in terror.

That Sunday, the ten followers of Reb Yoel Baal Shem did as he had instructed. Hundreds of men and women, both Jews and non-Jews, crowded outside, waiting to see what would happen. Unafraid, the disciples called out three times for the demons to leave. When the noises from the house did not stop, they broke down the door and entered. At that moment, every window pane was shattered, as the weirdest collection of evil-looking creatures, flew out in a stampede, as if fleeing for their lives.

They left a sickening smell in the room, which they had just occupied, and a stinking smell pervaded the atmosphere. But as soon as the special minyan entered the room, the smoke disappeared, taking the awful smell with it.

For six weeks, everything went smoothly, but then the terrifying sounds were heard once again, this time, coming from the cellar. The neighbors, who had been enjoying the relief, were horrified to once again hear loud barks and noises, giving them no peace, by day or night. One tenant, a dealer in furs, was an opponent to Reb Yoel Baal Shem, and denied the miraculous nature of the demons' departure the month before. Now that they had returned, he was delighted. When the neighbors suggested inviting Reb Yoel Baal Shem himself, to resolve the matter, he became furious and declared he would fight to prevent this.

One day, soon thereafter, a customer came to see some fur skins, so the dealer sent his son, with the customer, down to the cellar, where his pelts were stored. As soon as they moved to open the cellar door, it flew open on its own, and out jumped the most frightening creature they had ever seen. The customer turned white as snow, and the son lost his mind. They both ran screaming into the street, eventually fainting from fright. When they came to, the son had to be tied with rope, to keep him from damaging himself or others. Now, even the opposing tenant did not object to have Reb Yoel Baal Shem come and get rid of the demons.

Reb Yoel Baal Shem, traveled to Posen, and arranged three Rabbinical Judges, for a Torah trial he intended to instigate with the demons. It was to take place in the newly established Beis Medrash in the apartment. The room was prepared with a special area for the demons, sectioned off by heavy furniture and curtains.

It Once Happened..

Reb Yoel Baal Shem called out for the demons to appear, warning them not to hurt anyone. As soon as the demons made their presence felt, Reb Yoel Baal Shem began, "I have called you to a trial according to the laws of the Torah, for you have exceeded the limits the Creator has set, by coming among humans."

The response was strange incomprehensible sounds. At the instructions of Reb Yoel Baal Shem, the head of the rabbinical panel stood up, and decreed that one of the demons be granted the capability to speak clearly.

"We have every right to come here," the representative demon began their defense. "We were created by the curses of Avigdor Tuvia and his wife, Gittel. As they have no living children, and we are their spiritual inheritors, their house rightfully belongs to us. We left the upstairs apartment, only because the light of the Torah scrolls, was too dazzling for us to tolerate."

The demons then began to roar and hiss loudly, terrifying all those present. Reb Yoel Baal Shem called out loudly, "I command you, in the name of the Holy Name that emerges from the verse (Psalms 91:7), 'A thousand may fall at your [left] side, and ten thousand on your right, but it shall not reach you,' that you be silent immediately, and remain hidden from human eyes. And you are to cease emitting your nasty odor. I bind you to obey the decision of the Rabbinical Court."

The shul became absolutely silent, and the demonic figures vanished from sight. The rabbinical judges ruled, after a few moments of consultation, that, as non-humans, the demons had no legal right to the property. Reb Yoel Baal Shem promptly ordered the intruders to depart peacefully, without harming anyone or anything, and instructed the townsmen to recite the Ketoret "Incense" passages, from the sacrifice sections of the daily prayers, and then to convene a minyan for the Afternoon Prayer.

The demons were never seen or heard from again.

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	5:00	6:13	6:53
Tel Aviv	5:15	6:15	
Haifa	5:05	6:14	
Be'er Sheva	5:18	6:16	

Do Not Disturb...Unless..

By Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles.

1) The Gold Fifteen-Ruble Coin

Reb Avrohom Yitzchok, the regular shamash (attendant), of the Sochatchov Rebbe, was once called to Warsaw for an important matter. Reb Moshe David ("Duvid'l") temporarily served in his place, and tended to the Rebbe's needs.

Early one morning, the Rebbe approached Reb Moshe Duvid'l and told him, "Quick! Bring me some water to wash. But hurry, the air is now pristine and clean of all sins and crimes, and from all worldly desires. It is an opportune time to learn Torah. Take care that no one disturbs me at all. No one! Even if a person should come with a golden crown, do not bring him before me."

And so the Tzaddik sat himself down to learn, aflame with the fire of Torah.

Soon after, a person arrived in modern dress, clean-shaven and wearing a short jacket, and asked to see the Rebbe.

Moshe Duvid'l laughed. "Right now you want to see the Rebbe? The Rebbe expressly forbid me to admit anyone this morning."

But then, the guest offered him fifteen gold rubles for his trouble, a vast sum. Moshe Duvid'l was awestruck. He took the gold fifteen-ruble coin, entered the Rebbe's study, and told him what had transpired, showing him the coin he stood to earn.

The Rebbe wondered aloud, "What? You can really earn such a vast sum through me? Bring him in! Just remember: three minutes and no more."

Moshe Duvid'l pocketed the coin, and brought the guest before the Rebbe. He waited. After about ten minutes, he could no longer hold back, and came in to extricate the man from the Rebbe's room. What he heard, was the Rebbe telling him, "Remember to fulfill these three things that I said, and she will have a salvation!"

The man left. The Rebbe, of course, did not disclose to Moshe Duvid'l what they had spoken about.

One day, in the following year, Moshe Duvid'l happened to be in Kalisch. A Chasidic-looking, bearded Jewish stranger, in a long frock-coat, approached him and asked, "Do you come from Sochatchov?" When he applied in the affirmative, the stranger asked further, "And do you sometimes attend to the Rebbe?"

"Yes," answered the bewildered Moshe Duvid'l, whose astonishment only grew, when the Jew

grasped him warmly and said, "If so, you must come to my house to celebrate with us, and enjoy a fancy meal."

So saying, he steered Moshe Duvid'l to his home. When the stranger entered, he ordered his wife to quickly prepare a lavish feast. "For the man who saved your life - here he is!"

And so it happened, that the bearded, long-froked host, was none other, than the formerly beardless, short-jacketed stranger, who had once paid Moshe Duvid'l handsomely, to get in to see the Rebbe. He explained that his wife had been very sick, almost at death's door, and he had traveled to Sochatchov to seek the Rebbe's blessing and advice.

Among the three things that the Tzaddik had told them to do, to save his wife's life, was to transfer his sons, from the modern schools, into the traditional cheder (Torah-based elementary school). At first, his wife had resisted, but eventually she agreed, and as soon as she did, she got better and better. "And now she is as fit as a fiddle, and healthy as can be!"

They gifted Moshe Duvid'l handsomely, and sent him off in style.

Such was the love that Rabbi Avraham Bornstein, the Sochatchov Rebbe showed his fellow Jews. In order that Moshe Duvid'l earn a nice tidy sum, the Tzaddik gave up a precious ten minutes of his holy morning learning.

Just how precious that time was, can best be illustrated by two brief stories:

Not Even the Rain

Once, Reb Gronim, the Shabbat Torah-reader for his Rebbe, the Sefat Emet of Gur, told of how he had visited the Sochatchover for Sukkot, when he still lived in Kroshnivitz. He was the Rebbe's guest and he slept in the Rebbe's sukkah.

"The Rebbe himself made the bed, and patted down the sheets and blankets, to guarantee a comfortable and warm repose. I lay down to sleep, and the Rebbe sat down to learn, aflame with excitement and devotion.

The Rebbe kept checking to see I was asleep, so I made myself as if I were sleeping. Just then torrential rain began to fall. It was so strong and buffeted the sukkah so hard, that the floor was already full of water. I peeked out and saw the Rebbe approach the window in the sukkah. He opened it and called out, "What chutzpa (disrespect) these clouds have, that they dare disturb me, and interfere with my learning!"

No sooner had the Tzaddik uttered this admonishment, than the rain stopped, and the clouds discontinued their downpour!" See how precious the Sochatchover's Torah study was, in the Heavens!

Better Than a Blessing

It is a well-known fact, among all who came to Sochatchov, that the Rebbe would often say, "If people only knew and realized, what good favors I could accomplish for them through my Torah study, no one would ever dare cross my threshold again [to ask for a blessing]."

Reprinted from an email of KabbalaOnline.org.

Editor's Note: Rabbi Avraham Bornstein of Sochatchov, known as "The Sochatchover" ז"ל's 110th Yahrzeit is next Shabbat, 11th Adar - March 7th of this year.

This week's Torah portion, Terumah, says: "דבר אל בני ישראל ויקחו לי תרומה מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי - Speak to the children of Israel, and they shall take for Me a contribution; from every person whose heart inspires him to generosity, you shall take My contribution."

There is an obvious anomaly here. "Have them take for me a contribution," is a peculiar choice of words. A more appropriate expression would have been, "they shall give Me a contribution."

The Midrash explains: Since G-d really owns everything, it is impossible to speak of giving Him anything. Giving usually implies, I have ownership, and I transfer the ownership to someone else. When we talk about the Master of the World, we don't use the expression "giving." Instead, we use the expression "taking." We are taking from G-d in order to give to G-d. "Take for Me a contribution" means to take the contribution from Me, in order to give it to Me.

Rabbi Moshe Alshich says, there is an important message here. Giving is a form of taking. You are not giving Me a contribution, says G-d. By giving for My causes, you are taking. Or, as the Midrash famously puts it, more than what the benefactor does for a poor person, the poor person does for the benefactor.

When we give, we get much more. When we give, our lives are elevated to a higher, more dignified, more Divine plane. If one gives a person a donation, the money is temporary. Perhaps it pays for the next meal, or rent, or tuition. It comes and goes. On the other hand, the person who is giving, is receiving something eternal. He gives something to his soul that is priceless, he acquires a relationship with G-d that is timeless, and he receives a reward both in this world, and the world to come, that lasts for eternity.

This point is underscored, the first time the Torah relates a story of giving. It is when Abraham invited three guests to his tent, to relax under the shade, to eat and to drink. This is the first overt mention of an act of kindness in the Torah.

The Torah repeats the phrase "taking." "Let water be taken," "I will take bread," etc. Why this expression? Abraham should have said: "I will give water!" "I will give bread!"

The answer, of course, is that Abraham is guiding his children of all future generations. My children, you must know that, when you help someone else, you are not giving; you are taking. The greatest gift we can give ourselves, is a life filled with love and caring for others. More than the host does for the guest, the guest does for the host.

This is true in our marriages as well. When a husband and wife are committed, to giving to each other, they themselves are often surprised, by how much they receive, by the sheer act of giving to somebody, outside of themselves. The love we give away, is the only love we keep.

So let us continue to give by praying for our soldiers who go out to protect us, and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children or parnassah, and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, happy, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual and sweet Shabbat.

Yessie

תרומה פרשת

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לע"נ ר' אליעזר בן יצחק יהודה ע"ה

And Co-Sponsored by Melech Pery

in honor of his granddaughter, Noam Leah's 1st birthday (5th Adar) May she be blessed with many years of health and happiness

The Jewish Weekly's PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 3
MITZVOT ASEH: 2
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 1

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 96
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1145
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 4692

HAFTORA:
Melachim I 5:26-6:13

Laws and Customs: Taanit Esther/Purim

The Jewish
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For the year 5780

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Compiled by Yossi Fraenkel in memory of his grandparents

ר' ראובן בן הרב משה אליעזר הלוי ע"ה וחייה ברכה בת ר' נפתלי משה ע"ה רבינוביץ

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🕊 MONTH OF ADAR

Some say it is a big Segula to fast on Erev Rosh Chodesh Adar and to say the whole Tehillim.

משכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה - When Adar Begins we increase our joy. We increase our joy throughout the month of Adar, some say to increase the joy throughout Nissan too.

Some have the custom to hang up a sign of משכנס אדר מרבין בשמחה.

🕊 7TH ADAR (באדר, ז)

7th Adar is the fast day for Tzadikim and most say Tachanun, however some have the custom not to.

There are those who are particular if possible not to make a wedding on the 7th Adar, due to it being the fast day for the Tzadikim as well as being the Yahrzeit of Moshe Rabeinu.

One should try to learn and do Mitzvot in memory of Moshe Rabeinu.

Most Chevra Kadishot have the custom to fast and go to graves of Tzadikim and to ask forgiveness from the dead in case they didn't handle the person with respect when burying, some also say Selichot.

In some communities, the Rabbi would give a Dvar Torah in memory of Moshe Rabeinu as well as other rabbis and Tzadikim who died during the year.

A child who is born on 7th Adar should not be named Moshe after Moshe Rabeinu.

🕊 PURIM PREPARATIONS

An inspiring *Purim* is the product of diligent preparation. In the days prior to *Purim*, one should review the *Halachot* of *Purim*.

🕊 PARSHAT ZACHOR

It is a *Torah* obligation for all men and boys over the age of *Bar Mitzvah* to hear *Parshat Zachor*. [One who absolutely cannot attend a *Minyan* should read this passage from a *Sefer Torah* or *Chumash*, with the *Trop* (cantillation) if he knows it.]

Although women are ordinarily exempt from *Kriat Hatorah*, there is a dispute with regards to *Parshat Zachor*. Therefore, it is ideal for women to attend *Shul*. However, a woman who is unable to easily attend *Shul* (e.g. she is tending to her small children) may instead read this passage from the *Chumash*.

Ordinarily, a *Sefer Torah* may not be moved to another location for one time use. Nevertheless, one may be lenient if necessary to facilitate the *Kriah* of *Parshat Zachor*.

Ideally, the *Ba'al Koreh* should be old enough to have a beard. [If this is not possible, a *Bar Mitzvah* boy should serve as *Ba'al Koreh* only if puberty is established.]

The *Ba'al Koreh* should read loudly and clearly, and have in mind to be *Matzeh* everyone listening to the *Kriah*. Similarly, all the listeners should have in mind to be *Yotzei* the *Kriah* and

to fulfil the *Mitzvah* of remembering to eliminate *Amalek*.

The word *זכר* is first read with a *Tzeirei זְכָר* - , and then repeated again with a *Segol זָכַר* - .

Some repeat just the word, some repeat the phrase *זָכַר וְתִמְחָה אֶת זְכָר עַמְלֹק* whilst others repeat the whole *Passuk*.

🕊 TAANIT ESTHER (MONDAY 9/3/2020)

Taanit Esther is not one of the four public fasts instituted by the *Nevi'im*. Therefore, a *Chattan* and *Kallah* during the week of *Sheva Brachot* need not fast. Pregnant mothers, nursing mothers and anyone considerably weakened by illness or advanced age need not fast. [One should not be unduly strict in this regard.] Mothers who have difficulty fasting while tending to their young children should consult with a *Rav*.

When a *Brit* occurs on *Taanit Esther*, the *Baalei Habrit* (i.e. the *Mohel*, the *Sandak*, and the father of the baby) need not fast. However, all other attendees must fast. Therefore, the *Seudah* takes place at night, after the fast.

Aside from the exceptions enumerated above, all healthy adults must observe *Taanit Esther* scrupulously. If one inadvertently ate during the fast, one must immediately resume fasting.

Anyone below *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* need not fast. From the age of nine upwards, the custom is to train children to fast for several hours, as per the child's abilities. [One should not be unduly strict in this regard.]

An individual exempt from fasting should eat in private only, and avoid meat, delicacies or excessive intake. Children old enough to understand the concept of a fast should avoid delicacies and meat.

🕊 EATING PRIOR TO THE FAST

One may eat and drink the entire evening until dawn (4:44am), provided that either of these conditions are met (this does not apply to water which can be drunk anytime up to the beginning of the fast):

- One didn't go to sleep for the night. [Dozing off is not regarded as such.]
- One stipulated (preferably verbally) before going to sleep that he would eat upon waking. In this case, one recites the morning *Brachot* before eating.

🕊 LAWS OF FASTING

One shouldn't brush one's teeth nor rinse one's mouth. [If this will cause great aggravation, there is room to be lenient, provided that one leans forward to prevent any liquid from flowing down one's throat; that one uses substances unfit for consumption (e.g. Listerine); and that one rinses with less than 86 ml.]

One may take non-chewable pills for medical purposes, without water. A *Rav* should be consulted regarding other medicines.

One may shower, bathe and apply ointments and creams. [Even one who is strict on other fast days may nevertheless be lenient on *Taanit Esther*.]

One may not taste food to determine whether it requires salt/spices. However, when preparing food for a *Seudat Mitzvah* scheduled for the night following the fast, one may taste the food, provided that all these conditions are met:

- One expels it without swallowing.
- One tastes only an absolute minimum.
- One does not taste more than 86 ml in total throughout the day.

🕊 TAANIT ESTHER: SHACHARIT

During *Shacharit*, only the *Chazzan* recites *Anenu*. Therefore, a non-fasting individual shouldn't serve as *Chazzan*.

[In the unlikely event that the *Chazzan* is not fasting, or less than three congregants are fasting: Instead of reciting *Anenu* between *Goal Yisrael* and *R'faenu*, the *Chazzan* includes *Anenu* in the *Brachah* of *Sh'ma Kolenu*, and concludes the *Brachah* regularly; i.e. *Shomea Tefillah*.]

A *Chazzan* who forgot to recite *Anenu*:

- if he remembered before reciting *Hashem's* name at the conclusion of the the *Brachah* of *R'faenu*, he recites *Anenu* immediately, and then repeats the *Brachah* of *R'faenu*;
- if he already concluded the *Brachah* of *R'faenu*, he recites *Anenu* in the *Brachah* of *Sh'ma Kolenu*, and concludes the *Brachah* with a double conclusion; i.e. *Ha'one B'eit Tzarah V'shomeah Tefillah*;
- if he already concluded the *Brachah* of *Sh'ma Kolenu*, he recites *Anenu* as a separate *Brachah* immediately after the *Brachah* of *Sim Shalom*.

One who is not fasting must still recite *Selichot* and *Avinu Malkeinu*.

One who *davens* without a *Minyan* omits the *Yud-Gimel Midot-Harachamim*.

Some hold that if *Tachnun* is not recited (e.g. when a *Chattan* is present), *Selichot* is still recited, whereas *Avinu Malkeinu* is not recited and some hold that *Selichot* ends after *Viduy*.

🕊 TAANIT ESTHER: KRIAH

The passage of *Vayechal* is read, provided that at least three congregants are fasting.

A non-fasting individual must still hear *Kriat Hatorah* of *Vayechal*, but is not called up for an *Aliyah*. [If he is the only *Kohen* or *Levi*, he should absent himself.] If he is called up, and refusing the *Aliyah* will cause him discomfort or minimize the honor of the *Torah*, he may accept the *Aliyah*. In any case, he may perform *Hagbah* or *Gelilah*.

A non-fasting individual shouldn't serve as the *Ba'al Koreh*, unless there is no one else who can do so.

When the congregation recites the verses aloud, the *Ba'al Koreh* waits for silence before resuming. The one receiving the *Aliyah* begins these verses with the congregation, but ends with the *Ba'al Koreh*.

🌀 CONDUCT ON TAANIT ESTHER

One should learn *Torah* connected to the topic of the fast.

One should give increased *Tzedakah*, especially before *davening*. It is proper to give the value of the forgone meals – especially if one is exempt from fasting.

The purpose of fasting is to arouse one to do *Teshuvah*. Idling away one's time, or partaking in joyous or entertaining activities, is not in the spirit of the fast.

One should be especially careful not to become angered.

🌀 MACHATZIT HASHEKEL

Before *Mincha*, all males over *Bar-Mitzvah* give three halves of the local currency. [In Israel, three half-shekel pieces.]

One should not use *Maaser* money for his own *Machatzit Hashekel*.

In some communities it is also a custom to give *Machatzit Hashekel* on behalf of their wives and daughters, as well as for their sons under the age of *Bar Mitzvah*.

Where possible, boys below *Bar Mitzvah* should personally give *Machatzit Hashekel*.

It is preferable that the proceeds go to a *Shul* or *Beit Midrash*, just as the *Machatzit Hashekel* of old would be used for the *Beit Hamikdash*. Otherwise, the proceeds are distributed to the poor.

🌀 TAANIT ESTHER: MINCHA

Mincha is longer than usual (due to *Kriat Hatorah* and *Haftorah*); care should be taken to conclude before sunset (5:47pm).

Ideally, *Kriat Hatorah* should not begin prior to *Mincha Gedolah* (12:19pm). *The Amidah* may certainly not begin before then.

After *Haftorah*, most communities return the *Torah* to the *Aron Hakodesh* before *Kaddish* and in some communities, the *Chazzan* slowly recites *Kaddish* while the *Torah* is returned to the *Aron Hakodesh*.

If an individual forgot to recite *Anenu* in the *Brachah* of *Sh'ma Kolenu*, he may recite it in the passage *Elokai N'tzor*, before the second *Yih'yu L'ratzon*. If one didn't remember until he concluded *the Amidah*, he does not repeat it. [A non-fasting individual does not recite *Anenu*.]

The *Chazzan* recites *Anenu* between *Goal Yisrael* and *R'faenu*. [see TAANIT ESTHER: SHACHARIT] According to some, if after *plag Hamincha*, *Birchat Kohanim* with *duchening* is done. Chabad do not *Duchan*, however, the *Chazzan* does recite *Birchat Kohanim* towards the end of the *Amidah*.

Tachnun and *Avinu Malkeinu* are **not** recited, since it is *Erev Purim*.

🌀 END OF FAST

The fast concludes according to

R' Tukaccinsky at 6:10pm, others hold up until 6:20pm.

🌀 PURIM DRESS (IN JERUSALEM PURIM STARTS ON TUESDAY NIGHT 10/3/2020 WHILST FOR THE REST OF ISRAEL PURIM STARTS ON MONDAY NIGHT 09/03/2020)

One should wear *Shabbat* clothing throughout *Purim*. However there is a custom especially for children to wear masks or costumes. One should ensure that costumes do not contain *Shatnez*.

Cross-dressing is absolutely forbidden throughout the year. Although the *Rema* and several other early *Achronim* rule leniently with regards to *Purim*, the overwhelming majority forbid it. This prohibition applies to all adults and children who are of the age of *Chinuch*.

Some people encourage children to shy away from dressing as *Haman* or other wicked people. [When a *Purim* play requires a child to act the part of *Haman*, the Lubavitcher *Rebbe* indicated that this role be played without considerable enthusiasm.]

🌀 V'AL HANISSIM

V'al Hanissim is recited in each *Amidah* of *Purim*.

If one forgot *V'al Hanissim* at the appropriate place in the *Amidah*, he may still recite it if he did not yet say *Hashem's* name at the end of that *Brachah*. After that point, he does not recite it.

If one forgot *V'al Hanissim* at the appropriate place in *Bentching*, he may still recite it if he did not yet say *Hashem's* name at the end of that *Brachah*. After that point, he should recite it as a *Harachamon*, as per the *Nusach* printed in many *Siddurim* and *Birkonim*.

🌀 MAARIV (TUESDAY NIGHT 10/3/2020)

One should endeavor to hear the *Megillah* as soon as possible. [If circumstances require it to be read beforehand, a *Rav* should be consulted.] Nevertheless, the *Megillah* may be read the entire night until (4:42am).

One may not perform any activity that may distract him prior to reading the *Megillah*. Therefore, one may not eat, drink, nap or perform work from half-hour prior to *Tzeit* (6:19pm) until after hearing the *Megillah*. [Nevertheless, if one feels ill or weak, one may eat or drink between *Maariv* and the *Megillah* reading. Even so, one should not eat more than a *K'beitzah* (57 grams) of bread or *Mezonot* – unless there are health concerns, in which case he should appoint a *Shomer* (guardian) to remind him to hear the *Megillah*.]

In many communities an *Avel* (within 12 months of a parent's passing or within 30 days of a spouse, child or sibling's passing) may not serve as *Chazzan* on *Purim*, in some communities (including *Chabad*) an *Avel* does act as *Chazzan* on *Purim*.

The *Chazzan* recites *Kaddish Titkabel* immediately after *the Amidah*. The *Megillah* is read immediately afterwards.

After the *Megillah* is concluded, *V'atah Kaddosh* is recited, followed by the entire *Kaddish* but without *Titkabel*.

🌀 MEGILLAH READING

All men and women over the age of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* must hear the *Megillah*.

Children (both boys and girls) should also attend the *Megillah* reading and quietly follow along according to their ability, unless they are too young and will create a disturbance. [An infant who cries or makes noise should be taken out of *Shul*.]

Ideally, one should attend a *Megillah* reading in a *Shul* where a large crowd has congregated. However, one can hear *Megillah* anywhere.

At the very least, one should hear the *Megillah* with a *Minyan*. [This applies even if he will be reading the *Megillah* later for individuals who could not attend a *Minyan*.] If this is also not possible, one should still endeavor to hear the *Megillah* with as many people as possible.

One does not fulfil the *Mitzvah* of *Megillah* when hearing it with the aid of a microphone, or over the phone or radio.

A perfectly *Kosher Megillah* should be used. [If that is unavailable, a *Megillah* may still be used if disqualified words or altogether missing words do not occur at its beginning or end, nor do they comprise an entire section or the majority of the *Megillah*. Needless to say, the *Ba'al Koreh* must still recite every single word even when using a *Megillah* with missing words.]

One may assume that his friend consents to his *Megillah* being borrowed for the sake of performing the *Mitzvah*, as long as it remains in the vicinity at all times and it is returned to exactly the same place in the same condition.

It is preferable that the listener follows along in a proper *Megillah* and recites the words in a barely audible whisper – but only if he is sufficiently familiar with the proper pronunciation of the words.

One who follows along from a *Chumash* should **not** recite the words at all, but must rather pay especially close attention to the *Ba'al Koreh*.

The *Megillah* is unrolled before the first *Brachot* are recited. [This also applies to everyone else following along with a proper *Megillah*.]

It is permissible to touch the parchment of the *Megillah* directly, unlike a *Sefer Torah*.

The *Ba'al Koreh* in *Shul* should be flanked by at least one person on his right and another on his left.

An *Avel* (within 12 months of a parent's passing or within 30 days of a spouse, child or sibling's passing) should not serve as the *Ba'al Koreh* in *Shul*, unless this is his regular function, or there is nobody as fluent as him.

Everyone should stand for the *Brachot*, unless it is too difficult. During the actual *Megillah*

reading in *Shul*, the *Ba'al Koreh* must stand (and may lean for support if necessary), but those listening don't need to stand. Nevertheless, most people do stand.

When the *Ba'al Koreh* recites the *Brachot*, he should have in mind to be *Motzeh* everyone who is listening to the *Brachot* and the entire *Megillah*. Similarly, everyone in attendance should have in mind to be *Yotzeh* the *Brachot* and the entire *Megillah*, and should not say "*Baruch Hu u'Varuch Shmoh*". [If one accidentally did so, he does not recite the *Brachot* again.]

If the *Ba'al Koreh* already heard the *Megillah*, the *Brachot* are recited by another man who did not yet hear the *Megillah*, and he is *Motzeh* everyone. If none of the men present are able to recite the *Brachot*, the *Ba'al Koreh* may recite it for them (or prompt them word by word).

When the *Megillah* is read for less than a minyan of men or for women only, and the *Ba'al Koreh* already heard the *Megillah*, the women recite the *Brachot* themselves (standing), however some hold that the last *Brachah*, *Harav Et Riveinu* is not said. They may either recite the *Brachot* individually, or have one woman be *Motzeh* all the others. The same applies when reading the *Megillah* for children under the age of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

One should not speak from the time of the *Brachot* until after the *Megillah* reading (and the last *Brachah*) is concluded, because unnecessary speech is considered an interruption, and also prevents him from hearing every word of the *Megillah*.

Whenever *Haman's* name is mentioned (according to Chabad only alongside a title), one stamps his feet vigorously. Children should be encouraged in spinning their *graggers* and stamping out *Haman's* name. The *Ba'al Koreh* should wait for absolute silence before resuming.

The following *Pesukim* are read aloud by the congregation, followed by the *Ba'al Koreh*: 2:5, 8:15, 8:16, 10:3.

The *Ba'al Koreh* raises his voice at "*Balailah Hahu*" (6:1).

The *Baal Koreh* reads "*Laharog Ul'abed; V'Laharog Ul'abed*" (8:11) and "*V'ish Lo Amad Bifenyhem; V'ish Lo Omad Lifeneyhem*" (9:3).

The congregation reads the ten sons of *Haman* quickly in one breath, from the words "*Chamesh Meot Ish*" until "*Aseret*" (9:6-10), followed by the *Ba'al Koreh*. [Despite the speed, the *Ba'al Koreh* should ensure that he is looking at each word in the *Megillah* as he pronounces it.]

Some give the *Megillah* a light shake at the words "*Ha'igeret Hazot*" (9:26) and "*Ha'igeret Hapurim Hazot*" (9:29). [This also applies to everyone else following along with a proper *Megillah*.]

The final *Brachah* is recited by the *Ba'al Koreh* only when the *Megillah* was read with a *Minyan*. [Some would recite this *Brachah* even

when they heard or read the *Megillah* without a *Minyan*.]

At the end of the *Megillah* reading, some hold it should remain unrolled until the conclusion of the *Brachah* recited afterwards and some hold it should be rolled before the concluding *Brachah*. [This also applies to everyone else following along with a proper *Megillah*.]

❧ INTERRUPTION DURING MEGILLAH

One who misses hearing even a single word is not *Yotzeh* the *Megillah* reading. Therefore, one should pay absolute attention whilst the *Ba'al Koreh* is reading the *Megillah*.

If one missed hearing a word, the best solution is to read from that word onwards, until he catches up with the *Ba'al Koreh*. [This is necessary because each word of the *Megillah* must be read/heard in the correct order.] This should be done even when one is following along in a *Chumash* and not a proper *Megillah*.

One need not recite the words with the *Trop* if this will detain or prevent him from catching up to the *Ba'al Koreh*. However, one must ensure that all the words are properly enunciated and vowelized.

If one missed a word and did not follow the guidelines above, or he left during the *Megillah* reading for even a short time, he must hear the *Megillah* again. Nevertheless, he does not need to start again from the beginning, but may instead resume hearing it from the place where he was interrupted. In such an instance, one does not repeat the *Brachot* unless he diverted his attention from the *Mitzvah* of *Megillah*.

As mentioned above, one should not speak during the *Megillah* reading. If one said anything unrelated to the *Megillah* between the *Brachot* and the very **start** of *Megillah*, he needs to recite the *Brachot* again. If one spoke after this time – even matters unrelated to the *Megillah* – he does not repeat the *Brachot* again. Nevertheless, being that he could not have properly heard the words that the *Ba'al Koreh* was reading whilst he was talking or repeating the *Brachot*, he must follow the guidelines above for one who missed a word.

One should not pause unnecessarily whilst reading the *Megillah*. Nevertheless, if one paused even for an extended period of time, he may resume from the place where he paused. The exception is if he was forced to pause due to circumstances beyond his control, and the pause was for more time than it would have taken him to finish reading the *Megillah*. In such a case, one needs to start reading the *Megillah* again from the beginning.

❧ PURIM NIGHT

The table should be set with a tablecloth and candles. Even though there is no requirement to eat a festive meal, one should still rejoice and eat something special in honor of *Purim*. [One should moderate any festivities in order that they do not interfere with *Purim* morning.]

It is customary to eat seeds on *Purim*, such as poppy *Hamantashen*, to commemorate the seeds that Esther ate when keeping *Kosher* in the king's palace.

❧ SHACHARIT (WEDNESDAY 11/3/2020)

Ideally, *Megillah* should be read after sunrise (5:54am). *Shacharit* should be timed to read the *Megillah* as soon as possible. In extenuating circumstances, one may read the *Megillah* after dawn (4:42am).

Ideally, men should not eat before hearing the *Megillah*. If this is difficult, or there is any concern that one will be unable to concentrate during *davening*, one may snack, but should not eat a *K'beitzah* (57 grams) of *Mezonot*. Nevertheless, one should not be stringent if there are any health concerns.

Al Hanissim is recited in the *Amidah*, and *Tachnun* is not recited.

If one did not hear *Parshat Zachor* on *Shabbat*, he should have in mind to fulfil his obligation through the *Kriat Hatorah* of *Purim*. [For this reason, the *Ba'al Koreh* should intend to be *Motzeh* anyone who did not hear *Parshat Zachor* on *Shabbat*.]

During *Kriat Hatorah*, the word זכר is first read with a *Segol* - זָכַר, then again with a *Tzeirei* - זָכַר.

Some repeat just the word, some repeat the phrase זָכַר נִמְלֵק עִמָּלֵק whilst others repeat the whole *Passuk*. (the reverse of *Parshat Zachor*).

Some hold the *Sefer Torah* is returned to the *Aron Hakodesh* and some including *Chabad* hold that the *Sefer Torah* remains out during the *Megillah* reading, and is returned only after *Kaddish Titkabel*, as usual. [The one who holds the *Sefer Torah* remains seated throughout the *Megillah* reading and associated *Brachot*.]

If one did not yet give *Machatzit Hashekel*, he should do so before the *Megillah* reading.

When the *Brachah* of *Shehecheyanu* is recited, all should have in mind the other *Mitzvot* of *Purim*; i.e. *Mishloach Manot*, *Matanot Lo'evyonim* and *Seudat Purim*. [Preferably, the *Gabbai* or *Ba'al Koreh* should announce this.]

One should wear his *Tefillin* until after the *Megillah* reading (and *davening*).

❧ WORKING ON PURIM

One should not perform manual labor on *Purim*, unless for the sake of *Purim* or a *Mitzvah*; or he is so poor that he is without food; or in order to prevent a real loss.

One may also do light office-work or sell goods and merchandise, but should not allow that to distract him from the joy of *Purim*.

One may instruct a non-Jew to perform manual labor on *Purim*.

❧ MISHLOACH MANOT

All men and women over *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* should send at least one *Mishloach Manot*. Children (of the age of *Chinuch*) should also do so. [The *Lubavitcher Rebbes* would distribute

three *Mishloach Manot* packages – to a *Kohen, Levi and Yisrael*.]

The *Mishloach Manot* should contain at least two types of (respectable) ready-to-eat foods and/or beverages other than water. [The Lubavitcher *Rebbs* would include a food item as well as a beverage.]

Men should send their *Mishloach Manot* to men, and women should send their *Mishloach Manot* to women.

Some authorities hold that *Mishloach Manot* should be delivered through a *Shliach*. The *Shliach* may even be a child.

The *Mishloach Manot* should be both sent and delivered during *Purim* day (and not the night before or after).

It is praiseworthy to give *Mishloach Manot* to many people. [Technically, one doesn't need to adhere to the above-mentioned *Halachot* with regards to any additional optional *Mishloach Manot* that one sends. Nevertheless, it is commendable to do so.]

When giving *Mishloach Manot* to one who is not yet observant, one should remind him to make the appropriate *Brachot* on each food item.

Mishloach Manot may not be sent to an *Avel* (within 12 months of a parent's passing or within 30 days of a spouse, child or sibling's passing). However, the *Mishloach Manot* may be sent to an *Avel's* spouse or child. The *Avel* himself is required to send *Mishloach Manot*, but should send simple food items.

When sending *Mishloach Manot* in a new (non-disposable) utensil that requires *Tevilat Keilim*, it should be performed by the recipient and not by the sender. This is because *Tevilat Keilim* needs to be performed by the end user.

If the sender already *Toveled* the utensil, the recipient must still *Tovel* the utensil, but without a *Brachah*. The same applies if the recipient doesn't know whether the sender already *Toveled* the utensil. Therefore, the sender should inform the recipient (e.g. with a label) that the item has not yet been *Toveled*, in order that the recipient may *Tovel* it with a *Brachah*. [It is also best that the *Mishloach Manot* food not directly touch a non-*Toveled* utensil.]

🕯️ MATANOT LO'EVYONIM

All men and women over *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* should give *Matanot Lo'evyonim* to at least two needy people. Children (of the age of *Chinuch*) should also do so.

One should use the local currency, and not use *Maaser* money. [This does not apply to any additional optional *Matanot Lo'evyonim* that one gives.]

Matanot Lo'evyonim must go specifically to needy people (or *Tzedakah* organizations devoted to that purpose), and not to other *Tzedakah* causes.

One need not assess the financial circumstances of a poor person before giving him *Matanot Lo'evyonim*. Rather, "we give to whomever extends a hand."

Matanot Lo'evyonim should be delivered during *Purim* day (and not the night before or after).

If there are no poor people present, one must physically set aside *Matanot Lo'evyonim* – a verbal pledge is insufficient – and distribute it at the earliest opportunity.

It is preferable to allocate more of one's funds to *Matanot Lo'evyonim* than to *Mishloach Manot* and *Seudat Purim*.

🕯️ SEUDAT PURIM

One must feast and rejoice on *Purim*. In fact, the joy of *Purim* is even greater than the joy of a regular *Chag*.

The feast is conducted in the late afternoon. Hence, *Mincha* is davened earlier than usual, prior to the *Seudah*.

Despite the hustle-and-bustle of *Purim*, one should make a point of learning *Torah* prior to the *Seudah*, for a short period of time. Since *Purim* is thirty days before *Pesach*, one should begin reviewing the laws of *Pesach*.

A fair part of the meal should take place during the daylight hours. At the very least, one should eat a *Kezayis* before sunset (5:49pm).

If circumstances do not allow one to conduct his *Seudah* in the late afternoon, he may eat this meal anytime during the daylight hours.

One should feast among family and friends, because a larger crowd increases the joy. One should also invite guests to the *Seudah*.

The table should be set with a tablecloth. Some have the custom of lighting candles.

The prevalent custom is to wash, and eat meat and other delicacies. It is also customary to eat *Kreplach*.

If one wishes to begin the *Seudah* in one place and continue it and *bentch* elsewhere, he must have this in mind when reciting the *Brachah* of *Hamotzie*. [If he did not have this in mind, he should not relocate during the meal. However, if he already did so, he may *bentch* in the place where he concluded eating.]

One should share words of *Torah* at the meal, especially words of *Torah* that are connected with the *Purim* story.

It is customary to share a *Purim Torah*. The intention is not to use *Torah* to make a joke or mockery, G-d forbid. Rather one should share a *Dvar Torah* of the sort that brings joy to those who hear it.

🕯️ WINE AND ALCOHOL

Chazal instituted that one should drink wine on *Purim* "until he doesn't know the difference between *Arur Haman* and *Baruch Mordechai*". Many *Poskim* understand this to mean that one must drink to the point of intoxication.

At the same time, the *Poskim* caution against becoming inebriated when there is even the slightest chance of negative consequences. This especially applies to anyone with a medical issue or a weak constitution; to young

teenagers; to anyone whose behavior may not completely conform with *Halachah* when inebriated (such as forgetting to make a *Brachah* properly, *bentch* or *daven Maariv*); to anyone who may cause damage or injury to himself or others; or to anyone who may cause a *Chillul Hashem* when inebriated. Anyone in this category should discharge their obligation by drinking only slightly more wine or alcohol than usual.

It goes without saying that drinking and driving can be deadly and is a severe violation of *Halachah*. It is also dangerous for an intoxicated person to cross the road himself, and he should therefore be escorted home safely.

The *Mitzvah* of drinking wine or alcohol does not apply to women and children.

The Lubavitcher *Rebbe* established a year-round ban against people under the age of forty drinking more than four *Kelitchlach* (shot cups) of alcohol. Some years, the *Rebbe* made an exception for *Purim*. However, on many other occasions, the *Rebbe* stated explicitly that this ban extends even to *Purim*. The *Rebbe* would especially caution the *Bochurim* about this, and suggested that they fulfil their obligation by increased involvement in "*Yeyna shel Torah*" (the wine of Torah).

🕯️ MOTZOEI PURIM

V'al Hanissim is recited even when *bentching* after dark, as long as the meal began before nightfall and one has not yet *davened Maariv*. [For this reason, it is preferable to *bentch* before *davening Maariv*.]

On the night following *Purim*, one must not forget to *daven Maariv* as soon as possible. In any case, one should certainly *daven* before midnight (11:48pm).



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