

The Weekly Farbrengens



**MERKAZ
ANASH**
מרכז אנש

505 • למען ישמעו • ויקרא תשע"ט
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

PURIM

A POTENT DAY

The *Zohar* notes that Purim is similar to Yom HaKipurim. This means that what is accomplished on Yom Kippur by fasting can be accomplished on Purim by rejoicing. Furthermore, the very name Kipurim ("like Purim"), implies that Purim is the greater *Yom-Tov*, impacting a person more powerfully.

Indeed, *Chazal* teach that when *Moshiach* comes, all the *Yomim-Tovim* will cease to exist; only the *Yom-Tov* of Purim will remain. *Chassidus* explains that the *kedusha* and joy of Purim are so great, that even when we have the *kedusha* and joy of the *geulah*, Purim will still stand out.

(תיקוני זהר נ"ז ע"ב, מדרש משלי פ"ט, ת"מ חט"ז ע' 118 ושי"ג)

The author of *Chiddushei HaRim*, the first Rebbe of Ger, illustrated the powerful potential of Purim with a story:

There was once a Yid who set out on a journey, intending to commit a grievous sin, and took along five hundred gold rubles that he had patiently amassed over the years. On his way, he suddenly heard the heartfelt cries of a family in distress. They were being evicted for not paying their rent. His pity aroused, he gave them all the money that he had intended to use for the *aveira*.

His deed aroused such a great tumult in *Shamayim* that it was decided that whatever this man would decree, would materialize. However, to ensure that the privilege would not be misused, it was ordained that he become a drunkard.

Some time later, a terrible *tzara* descended upon the world. The Baal Shem Tov sent his *talmidim* to beg this drunken Yid to intercede and ask *HaShem* for mercy. They repeatedly found him drunk, until finally, catching him sober, they presented their request and he succeeded in abolishing the decree.

The *Chiddushei Harim* would conclude: Purim is a day of *eis ratzon*, when every Yid – like that drunkard – can accomplish great things, without limitation. However, to allow this to happen, one must make sure that the merrymaking will not

interfere with this mighty potential.

(שפתי צדיק ארת נ"א)

CELEBRATING PURIM

The *Shulchan Aruch* rules that one should wear fine clothes when going to hear the *Megilla*. In fact the holy *talmid* of the *Arizal*, Reb Chaim Vital, would immerse in the *mikveh* and then put on *Shabbos* clothes in honor of Purim.

It is also written that after returning home from *shul* on Purim night, one should have the table set and candles lit, and partake of a *seuda* in honor of Purim.

(רמ"א סי' תרצ"ה ס"ב, כף החיים שם סקי"ג, רמ"א ס"א)

CONSIDER

**How can the merrymaking
on Purim be both a source of
brachos and a distraction from it?
If Purim is really a Yom-Tov why
is it permissible to do melacha?**

Throughout the month of Adar, the conduct of, Reb Shmuel Abba of Zichlin was very joyful, and on Purim his *avoda* expressed extraordinary *simcha*. He had harsh words for those who did not treat the day properly, or who did not dress in their *Shabbos* clothes in honor of the *Megillah* reading.

One year, his *beis midrash* was filled with all the townsmen who had come to hear the *Megillah*. All were dressed in their *Shabbos* best, except for one man, who wore his weekday garb. When some *chassidim* questioned his behavior, the man responded (playing on a common Yiddish folk-expression), "Purim is not a *Yom-Tov* and fever is not a sickness." At that moment, the *tzaddik* entered, gave this fellow a piercing look and said, "Purim is a *Yom-Tov*, and fever is a sickness."

As soon as he arrived home that night, this man suddenly fell ill with a raging fever. When it only

worsened as the days wore on, he sent a message to the *tzaddik*, asking for a *bracha*.

The *tzaddik* replied, "Now he knows that fever is really a sickness, and he needs to know that Purim is really a *Yom-Tov*."

The man suffered in sickness the entire year, until the following Purim.

(סיפור ז'וין מועדים ע' 271, ובס' הצאצאים ע' 62 הביאו על אדה"ו)

LIMITLESS ZEAL

We read in the *Gemara* that on Purim one must drink "until he cannot differentiate (*"ad d'lo yada"*) between 'cursed be Haman' and 'blessed be Mordechai.' "

The Rebbe explains: The goal of *ad d'lo yada* (literally, "until he does not know...") is that a person reach a level of utter subservience to *HaShem*, which is not limited by his own understanding, and through this, all undesirable perspectives will be washed away. As a result, one will have the strength to continue this *avoda* throughout the entire year.

(מגילה ז,ב, לקו"ש ח"ד ע' 1277)

On the first Purim after his *chasuna*, the Alter Rebbe gave a non-literal exposition of the *avoda* of attaining the level of *ad d'lo yada*. On Purim, he said, we must ensure that the *lo* – literally, "the No," that is, the things that are forbidden – should be *yada* ("known"). What we are supposed to do is well known, but one must also know what is forbidden, so that it can be treated with extra caution.

(ס"ה ש"תש"ה ע' 72)

The *Megillah* says that after the miracle of Purim, the Yidden were blessed with *simcha* ("joy"), which *Chazal* understand to mean that they were now able to celebrate the *Yomim-Tovim*. The Rebbe explains that although other nations also have holidays, they celebrate them with drinking and unbridled conduct. Yidden, by contrast, even when they rejoice and drink they become closer to *HaShem*, and heighten their *yiras Shamayim* and holiness.

(לקו"ש ח"ג ע' 920, ח"ד ע' 1274, וראה שו"ע"ר סי' רצ"ב ס"ג)

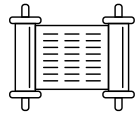


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OPPOSITE GENDER COSTUMES

May I dress up my little boy as a girl on Purim?

It is a longstanding custom that children dress up on Purim, and numerous reasons have been given for this custom. Among them:

(1) Becoming unrecognizable in the spirit of ad d'lo yada (not knowing difference between Haman and Mordechai); (2) Demonstrating that just like there is a good Jew underneath the foreign costume, the yidden in the story of Purim were connected to Hashem deep down even when they sinned; (3) The theme of Purim and its source in Torah is connected with Hashem's hiding Himself (Esther - Hasteir Astir).

It is biblically prohibited for a man or woman to wear clothes of the opposite gender. Doing so can lead to mingling between the genders, and the posuk calls it an abomination.

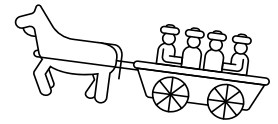
Some poskim hold that the prohibition applies only if one's intention is to beautify, adorn or call attention to oneself. If one's intention is for other reasons (e.g. women's coat for warmth or protection from rain), it would be permitted according to this view. Others prohibit regardless of intent, for it can lead to mingling.

In some 15th century European communities, the men and women would cross-dress on Purim. Some poskim of the time defended their practice as the purpose was solely for the joy of Purim without exterior motives, and it was a one-day thing. Rema quotes a dissenting opinion, but comments that the custom was to allow it on Purim. Yet, since many poskim disagree with this allowance, the accepted custom today is to forbid it. The Rebbe wrote strongly against children dressing like the opposite gender in school plays.

If only one garment is from the other gender and it is still noticeable that they are dressed as their own gender, there is room to be lenient for Purim since many poskim hold the year-round injunction to be only rabbinic.

There are varying opinions amongst the poskim how this applies to children's costumes. Some allow dressing children as the opposite gender, and they understand the leniency of the Rema to be discussing children. Others hold that the prohibition is on all ages and one may not dress even children with clothing of the opposite gender. [The Shelah quotes that clothing affects a person's thoughts and emotions, and wearing clothing of the opposite gender can engender an inclination towards immorality.] In practice, one may be lenient with children under the age of three where there is no concern of intermingling.

1. ספר התודעה, פורים.
2. דברים כ"ב ט"ה, שו"ע י"ד ס"י קפב.
3. ראה ט"ז י"ד ס"י קפב סק"ד.
4. שו"ת מהר"י מינץ סי' יז.
5. דרכי משה וברמ"א א"ח סי' תרצ"ו ס"ח.
6. ב"ח י"ד ס"י קפ"ב שמהר"י מינץ לא ראה היראים סי' צ"ו שאוסר. וראה משגיב א"ח סי' תרצ"ו סק"ל, ברכ"י י"ד ס"י קפ"ב סק"ג, שו"ת יחוזה דעת ח"ה סי' ג. אבל אי אפשר למנות במיקל שהרי יש על מי לסמוך (אהל יעקב על שו"ת מציון תצא תורה על קכ"ח).
7. אג"ק ח"י ע' רלח. וראה אום אני חומה (גרס) ח"ב ס"י עב, ס' בגדי איש פ"ג אות יא.
8. פמ"ג א"ח סי' תרצ"ו משב"ז סק"ה.
9. של"ה כי תצא, דרך חיים תוכחת מוסר אות לו.
10. חינוך הבנים כהלכתו פרק קי"ד סט"ו ובהע' ל"ב בשם מורה הנוראה שעד גיל ג' אין איסור עריות וכן האיסור לא ילבש הוא בגלל עריות.



MAHARIL - SON OF TZEMACH TZEDEK

Reb Yehuda Leib was the second son born to the Tzemach Tzedek around the year 5571 (1811) in Liadi. His great-grandfather the Alter Rebbe was his sandak. He was very close to his grandfather the Mittlerer Rebbe, and would learn with him very often. He was his father's right-hand man, as most of his father's activities would go through him. He married the daughter of Reb Shlomo Friedes of Shklov, a great chossid of the Alter Rebbe. After his father the Tzemach Tzedek passed away, he moved to the city of Kopust and many chassidim flocked to him. After a short time he fell ill and passed away on 3 Cheshvan 5627 (1866).

even dancing. His davening was also at great length. The men davening in his minyan told him that they cannot daven so long, and every time he would promise to keep it short, however once he started to daven he would forget about the deal. Once he decided to tie himself to the omud as a reminder to keep the davening short, but from such great fervor he started walking around and dragged the omud with him to the other side of shul.

(אוצר סיפורי חב"ד ח"ח)

All of the Tzemach Tzedek's sons had business partnerships with various merchants. The Maharil had a partnership with a merchant who dealt with horses. At one point, the Maharil made a calculation of the business. As the total he wrote, "leis asar ponui minei," there is no place empty of Hashem.

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 14)

Throughout the year after the Tzemach Tzedek's passing, each of the sons davened in a minyan of his own. The Maharil's manner of davening was with a lot of excitement, sometimes walking from place to place and

A Moment with The Rebbe



EVERYONE IS A SELF-APPOINTED POSEK

When HaRav Aharon Soloveitchik suggested to the Rebbe that Cheder Chabad of Chicago add limudei chol to their curriculum, the Rebbe responded in a letter of Rosh Chodesh Nissan 5742 (1982).

The Rebbe began by establishing that although some Lubavitch schools teach limudei chol for specific reasons, in a location where there isn't any, there is no reason to introduce it.

The Rebbe continued to describe the risk factor, "since a comparison

will immediately be drawn by other Chabad mosdos, and they will follow suit.

"The Rov is certainly aware that in our age, particularly in America, any opportunity to learn a leniency is instantly seized. It could be based on any fact or logic: a comparison is drawn, without bothering to analyze the specifics...

"And everyone in America is a self-appointed posek, for his own matters."

(Teshurah Avtzon, Shevat 5765)