

HALACHOS HATZRICHOS

PACKET #42



THE REASON FOR SHALACH MANOS

Let's learn about one of the four *mitzvos* of Purim, *Shalach Manos*:

At the end of the *Megillah*, we read how Mordechai sent out letters to the Yidden, telling them how to celebrate the *neis* that happened. One of the things to do is to send gifts of food from one person to the other.

The *meforshim* give many reasons to explain why we do this *mitzvah*. One of the basic reasons is to bring friendship and closeness between Yidden. That's why boys give to boys, and girls give to girls — it is appropriate that boys be friends with boys, and girls be friends with girls! (*Matanos L'evyonim* is different, because we are giving money to help a person in need, not to build a friendship. That's why we can give *Matanos L'evyonim* to either men or women.)

The Rebbe pointed out that this is a very easy *mitzvah*! It's an excellent opportunity to make sure as many people as possible — men, women, and children — do this *mitzvah*. On *Mivtzoyim*, we shouldn't just give people *Shalach Manos*, we should make sure that they give to a friend and bring more friendship. A practical way to do this is to have people trade a meal or a *Shalach Manos* package.

(See *Shevach Hamo'adim* p. 151-152, and *Halachos Uminhagei Chabad*, p. 150-151)



HALACHOS OF SHALACH MANOS

The words of the *Megillah* that teach us about the *mitzvah* of *SHalach Manos* are “*Mishloach Manos Ish Le’Rei’eihu*,” “to send portions of food from a person to his friend.”

Mishloach — Because it says the word “to send,” we learn that it can be sent through a *shliach*. However, it is not necessary to use a messenger to fulfill the *mitzvah*.

Manos — Because it says “portions” (not portion), we learn that it has to be more than one type of food. *Manos* means portions of food that are ready to eat, and not something that needs to be cooked or prepared. It is best that each portion be at least a *kezayis*.

Ish Le’Rei’eihu — Because it says to his friend (not friends), we learn that it is enough to give *Shalach Manos* to one friend. But we are taught, “*Kol Hamarbeh Harei Zeh Meshubach*” — someone who gives to more people, and brings more friendship, is praised! (Still, giving more *Matanos L’evyonim* is even MORE important.)

Women also need to keep this *mitzvah*, and we should teach even small children to do it too!

(See *Shevach Hamo’adim* p. 151-152, and *Halachos Uminhagei Chabad*, p. 150-151)



HOW MUCH MATANOS LA'EVYONIM

*There are many different levels in fulfilling mitzvos. The lowest level is the way the mitzvah is kept **beshachadchak** (in hard circumstances) or **bedieved** (after the fact), then there is **lechat'chila** (the ideal way to do it), then being **yotzei lechol hadeios** (fulfilling the mitzvah in a lechat'chila way according to all opinions), then **mehadrin**, and the highest level is **mehadrin min hamehadrin**.*

As Chassidim, we try to keep all mitzvos behidur, in the most beautiful way. Part of that hiddur is to make sure that as many Yidden as possible keep the mitzvos (even if they can't do it in the best possible way), especially the mitzvos the Rebbe set up as mitzvoyim!

For Matanos La'evyonim, we should try to give as much as we can. The minimum we need to give is at least one penny to at least two poor people.

The minimum needs to be at least one *perutah* for each, and the smallest definition of *perutah* is one penny. Other opinions say that a nickel or a dime is enough, or all the way up to fifty cents.

Other *Chachomim* say that you should give the worth of a meal to the poor people. There are also opinions on how much money that would be, starting from \$2.50 and going up to \$7.00.

(See Shevach Hamoadim p. 152, Halachos Uminhagei Chabad p.150-151, farbrengen Chai Elul 5737)



HALACHOS OF MATANOS LA'EVYONIM

Matanos La'evyonim is done during Purim day, after the *Megillah*.

If you live in a place where you can give the money directly to the poor people, or where an organization can give the money for you on Purim, that is the best way. If you can't, you can give the money before Purim to an organization that will give it out on Purim (you can already take care of that today!), or you can put it aside (like in a *pushka*) for when you will be able to give it to the poor.

From all of the *mitzvos* of Purim, this is the one we should increase in the most, because there is no greater *simcha* for Hashem than to bring joy to the people who need it most!

This is a very easy *mitzvah* to do! Every man, woman, boy and girl should keep this *mitzvah*. We should help as many Yidden as possible fulfill the *mitzvah* on Purim! One practical idea is to bring coins and a *pushka* with you on *mitzoyim*.

(See *Shevach Hamoadim* p. 152, *Halachos Uminhagei Chabad* p.150-151, *farbrengen Chai Elul* 5737)



SEUDAS PURIM

After the *neis* of Purim, Mordechai Hatzadik wrote up a *takana* for all of the Yidden, which he sent out, that every year the Yidden should celebrate the miracle that Hashem made. The instructions were, “*Laasos Osam Yemei Mishteh VeSimcha, Umishloach Manos Ish Le’rei’eihu, Umatanos La’evyonim.*” “To make them days of feasting and joy, and sending gifts of food to a friend, and gifts to the poor.”

It’s a *mitzvah* to eat and drink and be happy on Purim! This includes having some kind of celebration on Purim night after the *Megillah*, but the main *mitzvah* is having a *seudah* — *Mishteh* — during the day.

We light candles at this meal to show our *simcha*. In fact, the *simcha* of Purim is greater than any other *Yom Tov*!

Since we are busy during the day with hearing the *Megillah*, giving *Shalach Manos* and *Matanos La’evyonim* (and *mitvzoyim*!), the *seudah* is made later on in the day. Still, we can do the *mitzvah* by having a *seudah* anytime during the day! If we have the meal later in the day, we *daven Mincha* first.

It’s appropriate to learn a little bit of Torah before the *seudah*, as the *Chachomim* explain the *posuk* from the *Megillah*, “*Layehudim Haysa Orach Vesimcha...*” “The Yidden had light and joy,” that light (*orach*) is talking about Torah, and *Simcha* refers to the meal. We should try to have our *orach* by learning something, and then have our *simcha* at the *seudah*!

It is our *minhag* to eat kreplach during the meal on Purim. (Did you know that there is a *maamar* from the Alter Rebbe that explains kreplach?) It reminds us that the *neis* of Purim was hidden, like the kreplach filling! (It is also a *minhag* to eat hamentashen on Purim, which also reminds us of this!)

The *Chachomim* said that a person needs to drink wine on Purim, “*Ad D’lo Yada Bein Arur Haman U’boruch Mordechai.*” This is done at the Purim *seudah*.

As long as we haven’t *davened Maariv* yet, we say *Ve’al Hanisim* in *bentching* from this *seudah*, even if it ends very late!

The Rebbe encouraged making big *farbrengens* on Purim to strengthen *Ahavas Yisroel* and bring to good *hachlatos*, including preparations for *Mivtza Pesach*, since Purim is exactly 30 days before *Pesach*. After everyone finishes their *seudah* at home, they can be a part of these *farbrengens*!

(See *Shevach Hamoadim and Halachos Uminhagei Chabad - Purim*)



AD D'LO YADA

We learned yesterday about *Seudas Purim*, today we'll finish up the *inyan* by learning about the *mitzvah* to drink wine on Purim — *Ad D'lo Yada*.

The *Chachomim* tell us that a person needs to drink wine on Purim until he won't know the difference between *Arur Haman* ("cursed is Haman") and *Boruch Mordechai* ("blessed is Mordechai")!

If a person is sure that he is drinking wine for the *mitzvah*, and he is sure it won't stop him from doing any *mitzvos* properly, then it's a *mitzvah* to drink enough wine to become *shikker*. However, for most people that is not the case, and drinking too much can cause a person to not behave properly. For such a person, he can do the *mitzvah* by drinking more wine than he usually does to show our joy at the great *neis* that Hashem did!

The Rebbe would say many times that the *gezeira* of not saying more than four *lechaims*, especially for younger people, should also be kept on Purim.

(See *Shevach Hamoadim*, *Halachos Uminhagei Chabad - Purim*, and *Halacha newsletters from Chabad communities*)



THE MITZVAH OF KRIYAS HAMEGILLAH

We know that there are 613 *mitzvos* from the Torah. The *Chachomim* also added another 7 *mitzvos* for Yidden to keep. One of these seven *mitzvos* is reading the *Megillah* on Purim!

After the *neis* of Purim, Mordechai wrote the *Megillah*, and Esther asked that it should become one of the 24 books of *Tanach*. Her request was accepted, and it became the *sefer* called *Megillas Esther*.

The year after the *neis*, Mordechai and Esther sent out a letter to the Yidden, asking them to keep Purim as a permanent *Yom Tov*. They should keep it by celebrating with their families and the people of their cities, giving presents to each other and eating a *seudah* together, and remembering the story by reading the *Megillah*.



HALACHOS OF HEARING THE MEGILLAH

The best way to do the *mitzvah* of hearing the *Megillah* is to hear it read in a *shul* with many people (“*Berov Am Hadras Melech*,” “the beauty of the King is when there are many people”), or at least a *minyan*. But the *mitzvah* can be kept by hearing it from a kosher *Megillah* anywhere. Men and women both have to keep this *mitzvah*, and children should also be taught to listen. (Very little children who will make noise so other people can’t hear should not be brought to *shul*.)

The *Baal Korei* has everybody else in mind, and everyone listening should also have in mind to be *yotzei* the *mitzvah*. You need to listen to every word. If you missed hearing a word, you can read it right away (even from a *Chumash*) and catch up to the *Baal Korei*.

There are four *pesukim* we say out loud, before the *Baal Korei*, to bring more *simcha*:

- *Ish Yehudi* (2:1)
- *U’Mordechai Yatza* (8:15)
- *LaYehudim* (8:16)
- *Ki Mordechai* (10:3)

The ten sons of Haman are supposed to be said in one breath. Since the *Baal Korei* can’t be *yotzei* everyone for holding their breath, only that they should hear the *Megillah*, everyone should read the 10 sons of Haman in one breath themselves! (We shake our graggers after we say the name of Haman this time, NOT after the *Baal Korei* reads it again after saying the 10 sons.)

Minhag Chabad is only to make noise by the name of Haman if we also describe him, like “*Ho’agagi*” or “*HaRa*.”

It’s our *minhag* that the *Baal Korei* raises his voice when he says “*Balayla Hahu*,” because that’s the main part of the *neis* (see today’s *Darkei Hachassidus!*).

You will see that we fold the *Megillah* like a letter (since it is called an *Igeres*), and don’t read while it is rolled up. The *Baal Korei* also shakes the *Megillah* when we say “this letter” (“*Ha’igeres Hazos*”) that Mordechai and Esther sent out, to show that this is what they sent out!



V'AL HANISIM

On Purim, we add a special part to *davening* and *bentching*, called “*Ve’Al Hanisim*.” It has a paragraph that starts “*Bimei Mordechai*,” which talks about the incredible *nissim* Hashem did for us at the time of Purim!

In *Shemoneh Esrei*, we say *Ve’Al Hanisim* after the paragraph that starts *Modim*, and in *bentching* it is after the paragraph of *Nodeh*. (Both of these are the paragraphs where we thank Hashem, *hoda’ah*!)

If a person forgets to say *Ve’Al Hanisim* in *Shemoneh Esrei*, he only goes back to say it if he realized right away, before saying Hashem’s name in the *bracha* right after.

If a person forgets during *bentching*, if he realizes before saying Hashem’s name in the *bracha* at the end of the next paragraph, he should go back and say *Ve’Al Hanisim*. If he realizes after that, he should add a special *Horachaman* in the place we add for Shabbos and *Yom Tov* (“*Horachaman Hu Yaaseh Lanu Nisim Kemo She’asa La’avoseinu Bayomim Haheim Bizman Haze*h”), say *Bimei Mordechai*, and then go back to “*Horachaman Hu Yezakeinu*.”

(See *Shevach Hamoadim* p. 142, *Halachos Uminhagei Chabad* p. 166, and Chabad.org/1456808)



DRESSING UP ON PURIM

It is a *minhag* of Yidden that we dress up on Purim, especially children! One of the reasons we dress up is to remind ourselves about how Hashem was “hiding” in the *neis* of Purim.

It is such an important *minhag* that boys are even allowed to dress up as girls, which is usually *asur* (“*Lo Silbash*”)! Of course, we still need to keep the *halachos* of *tznius*.

If someone is not wearing a Purim costume, he should wear Shabbos clothes on Purim night.

The Rebbe asked that Yiddishe *kinderlach* should NOT dress up like Haman, or any other *rasha*.

One year, the Rebbe said that many children wear crowns on Purim, and “*Tavo Alav Bracha!*” (Those that do it are blessed.)

(See *Shevach Hamoadim* p. 142, *Halachos Uminhagei Chabad* p. 166, and Chabad.org/1456808)



MIVTZA PURIM

There are four *mitzvos* of Purim, and many other *halachos* and *minhagim* which we learned about. It is very important for us to keep them all. But the Rebbe told us that especially because *Moshiach* is about to come, we also need to have *Ahavas Yisroel* and make sure other Yidden can keep these *mitzvos* too!

Over the years, the Rebbe spoke about Purim *mitzvoym* many times! Here is a collection of some of the things the Rebbe told us about:

1) **Teach about Purim:** We should make sure that people are able to learn more about Purim! We should not only teach about the *halachos* of Purim, but about the *Ruchnius'dike* meaning of Purim. *Some ways to do this are by teaching classes, and including information about Purim in things we give or send out.*

2) **Do at least the easy mitzvos:** Some of the *mitzvos* of Purim are very easy for almost ANYONE to do, like giving *Shalach Manos* and *Matanos L'evyonim*. We should make sure we are getting as many people as possible to do these *mitzvos* — including children! *Some ways to do this are by bringing coins and a pushka along with us, and having people GIVE (not just get) Shalach Manos.*

3) **Help people do the harder mitzvos properly:** If someone is ready to hear the *Megillah*, we should make sure they have a *Baal Korei* who can *lein* it the way *halacha* teaches!

4) **Spread Simchas Purim:** It is a *mitzvah* to be happy on Purim! So even if a person isn't able to do the *mitzvos*, at least they should be happy! Especially in a place where there isn't much happiness, like in a hospital or nursing home, we should share the joy of Purim so they can celebrate it too!

(Based on Sichos of Purim throughout the years — see Otzar Minhagei Chabad, Purim)



TAANIS ESTHER

Most of the fasts during the year are connected with the *Churban* of the *Beis Hamikdash*. *Taanis Esther* (and *Yom Kippur*!) are the only ones which are not.

There are many reasons brought for why we fast on *Taanis Esther*. A main one is that before the Yidden went to fight against the *goyim* at the time of Purim, they fasted so that Hashem would have *Rachmonus* on them and help them win. To remember that, we also fast.

This fast also helps us remember all of the other fasts the Yidden fasted, as part of their doing *teshuvah*.

Taanis Esther not only helps us remember what happened in the past, but is important for now as well:

Another reason is brought that on Purim, we eat a lot of good food (and nosh!) and drink *lechaims*. If people do that for the wrong reasons, it can make them *chas veshalom* not behave like they should. We fast beforehand, to help keep us from doing *aveiros* on Purim.

Another reason we fast is to ask Hashem to take away any *gezeira* that we might have nowadays, from any new “Hamans” that may exist! We are asking Hashem to help us and get rid of those “Hamans” too.

Since this fast is not talked about in *Navi* in connection with the *Churban*, it is not such a strict fast. A sick person, even if he is not dangerously sick, is allowed to eat. A woman who is pregnant or nursing a baby, or one who had a baby not long ago, doesn't have to fast either. Still, they should eat a little bit less than usual, to be part of the Yidden who are fasting. They also shouldn't eat extra things like nosh (and kids shouldn't either — save it for Purim!).

Just like on every fast day, there is a special *Kriyas HaTorah* in *shul*, and parts are added to *davening*.

(See *Piskei Teshuvos and Halachos Uminhagei Chabad - Taanis Esther*)



MACHATZIS HASHEKEL

Every year, the Yidden would give a *Machtzis Hashekel* to help pay for things needed for the *Beis Hamikdash*. The *Beis Din* would start collecting it on *Rosh Chodesh Adar*.

Nowadays, even though we don't have a *Beis Hamikdash* yet, we still give a *Machtzis Hashekel* to remember the one we hope to be giving soon!

We give it now, right before Purim, because the *Machtzis Hashekel* is connected to Purim! The Medrash says that the *Machtzis Hashekel* the Yidden would give cancelled out the *shekalim* that Haman gave to Achashveirosh in order to destroy the Yidden (*chas veshalom*).

Since the *Machtzis Hashekel* was given for the *Beis Hamikdash*, it is best that ours should be used for a *Mikdash Me'at*, for the *shul*. Still, it can be given to any *tzedakah*.

The *minhag* is to give three half-coins of the place you live (like a half-dollar or half-euro). Usually they have these coins in *shul*, and people exchange them for their own money.

There is a *minhag* that everyone, not just parents, should give the *Machtzis Hashekel*. The Rebbe says that the best thing to do is for the parents to give money to the children, more than what we need for the *Machtzis Hashekel*. Then the children should give from their own money for the *Machtzis Hashekel*, but they should still have some left — so they will remember that we don't lose out from giving!

If someone couldn't give the *Machtzis Hashekel* before Purim, he can give it before the *Megillah* reading at night or during the day.

(See *Piskei Teshuvos and Halachos Uminhagei Chabad - Taanis Esther*)



PURIM

A brief overview of the halachos and minhagim of Purim day:

The first thing we should do on Purim day is to go to *shul* and *daven*. Don't forget to say *Ve'al Hanisim!*

If you didn't hear *Parshas Zachor*, some say that you can do the *mitzvah* by listening to the Torah reading on Purim (which also talks about Amalek).

The *Megillah* is read after we read the Torah, while the men are still wearing their Rashi *tefillin*. (If someone didn't give *Machtzis Hashekel*, he should give it before the *Megillah* reading.)

When the *bracha Shehecheyanu* is said before the *Megillah* reading, also have in mind the other *mitzvos* of Purim — *Shalach Manos*, *Matanos L'evyonim*, and the *Seudah*.

The *mitzvah* of being happy on Purim is a *mitzvah* all day, like it says, "*Yemei Mishteh Vesimcha*" — days of feasting and joy! All day we should look for opportunities to bring the *simcha* and *mitzvos* of Purim to as many Yidden as possible.

It's a *minhag* among Yidden to eat hamentashen.

Children especially should follow the *minhag* of dressing up.

Make sure to do the *mitzvos* of *Shalach Manos*, *Matanos L'evyonim*, and *Seudah*, before *shkiyah*. Kids should make sure to do these *mitzvos* too!

We should learn some Torah before the *seudah*, but be careful not to get too involved and miss the *seudah!*

We *daven Mincha* early so there's enough time to at least eat a *kezayis* before *Shkiyah*. We eat kreplach by the *seudah*. We say *Ve'al Hanisim* in *bentching*, even if our *seudah* ends late at night!

Even though we all have our own *seudah* in our homes, the Rebbe encouraged us to continue the *simcha* and *Ad D'lo Yada* by joining together at bigger *farbrengens* afterwards.

A freilichen Purim!



SHUSHAN PURIM

Even if we're not in Yerushalayim, we don't say *Tachanun* on Shushan Purim! We also increase in joy and celebration today.

In many *sichos*, the Rebbe would say that if we missed doing something on Purim, we should make up for it on Shushan Purim.

On Purim, we were supposed to start learning the *halachos* about *Pesach*, since it is 30 days before *Pesach*, and the *halacha* is to start to study about the *Yom Tov* 30 days before.

So let's make up for it now, and learn some of the *halachos* about *Pesach*!

Starting from Purim, we don't eat matzah, so that we will be excited to eat it at the *seder*.

Since it is 30 days before *Pesach*, we should start thinking about *Maos Chitim*, making sure that all Yidden have what they need for *Yom Tov*. We should also start thinking about *Mivtza Matzah*, making sure that Yidden get *Shmurah Matzah* for *Pesach*!

Starting from today, we should start being careful with *chometz*. We should make sure that we don't make sticky or big *chometz* messes that will be hard to clean for *Pesach*.

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