

Hilchot Purim

A *VERY* Brief Overview for SFW Students

1. תענית אסתר

- a. This year, the fast takes place on Wednesday, יג אדר תשע"ה (March 4, 2015).
- b. This year, the fast begins in Yerushalayim at 4:51 AM and ends at 6:16 PM
- c. No eating or drinking is permitted. Though other aspects of Taanit -- like wearing shoes and washing -- are permitted.
- d. Since this is not a major fast, we may be lenient in certain circumstances; We can help you discuss a personal p'sak if you need.
- e. [NOTE: If you are keeping Purim outside of Yerushalyim (see below part 3), you should extend the fast until after the Megillah is read at night.]

2. מחצית השקל

- a. There is a minhag to give Three-Halves of a shekel before Mincha before Megilla reading (even in Yerushalayim). If you miss that time, you may give it all day.
- b. This minhag reminds us of the collecting the shekalim (due on the 1st day of Nissan); the announcements to remind people to bring the shekalim began on the 1st of Adar (that's why we read Parshat Shekalim right before Rosh Chodesh Adar). Our minhag is to give 3 half-shekalim because the word "Terumah" appears three 3 times in that Parsha.
- c. According to Rav Shlom Zalman Auerbach women are obligated to give the three-halves of a shekel because the mitzvah to give the shekalim is from the Torah while the time-bound component of the mitzvah is "only" midrabanan (similar to Tefilla daily according to the Rambam).

3. On What Day Are You Obligated to Fulfill the Mitzvot of Purim?

- a. Most cities in the world celebrate Purim on the 14th of Adar; cities that are - or were - walled from the days of Yehoshua, (like Yerushalayim) celebrate Purim on the 15th of Adar.
- b. If, on the night of the 14th, you intend to sleep outside of Yerushalayim, you must keep all of the mitzvot of Purim on the 14th. In other words, you must hear the Megilla that night and the next day, give Matanot La'evyonim and Mishloach Manot on the 14th and partake of Seudat Purim on the 14th as well.
- c. In addition, if, on the night of the 15th, you intend to sleep in Yerushalayim, you must keep all of the mitzvot of Purim on the 15th. In other words, you must hear the Megilla on Shushan Purim and the next day, give Matanot La'evyonim and Mishloach Manot on the 15th and partake of Seudat Purim on the 15th as well.
- d. Example: if you sleep in Modiin on the 14th at night and in Yerushalayim on the 15th at night (see the following note), you must hear the Megilla a total of

4 times, give Mishloach Manot and Matanot La'evyonim twice, and eat two Seudot Purim.

- e. (NOTE: at Sha'alvim for Women, we expect everyone to be at Megilla reading on Shushan Purim both at night and during the day, join us for the seuda on Shushan Purim and, of course, join in the chagiga :)

4. קריאת המגילה

- a. A person is obligated to hear the reading of the Megillah -- at night and again the next day. Women too are required to hear the Megillah.
- b. When you hear the brachot of the Megilla, the קורא has in mind to be מוציא us, and we too should have in mind to be יוצא the mitzvah of the Megilla. When שהחיינו is said in the morning, be sure to have in mind that the bracha includes the other mitzvot of the day, viz. Matanot La'evyonim, Mishloach Manot, and Seudat Purim.

5. משלוח מנות

- a. You must send two types of ready-to-eat food to at least one friend on Purim day itself. The food should preferably be the type of food that is served at the Seuda.
- b. You may not send the Mishloach Manot anonymously since part of the idea of the mitzvah is to increase love and friendship.
- c. Some are careful to send Mishloach Manot through a *shaliach*, since the mitzvah is described as “*sending* food” (*mishloach* manot).

6. מתנות לאביונים

- a. You must give money to at least two poor people on the day of Purim.
- b. This is not a "family" obligation, but rather each person must perform the mitzvah themselves.
- c. If you do not know two poor people or cannot get to them on Purim day, you may give your money to someone else who will act as your *shaliach*. Rabbi Goldsmith accepts money and gives it to the Va'ad HaChessed in Beit Shemesh (where the money is distributed in Beit Shemesh on Purim) and to an organization called L'maan Nizkakei Yerushalayim (where the money is distributed in Yerushalayim on Shushan Purim).
- d. Matanot La'evyonim is a special mitzvah, and is not to be included in the regular *Maaser* money you give the rest of the year.

- i. If you have your own source of income, you should follow the Rambam who writes (Hilchot Megilla 2:17):

It is preferable for a person to be more liberal with his donations to the poor than to be lavish in his preparation of Seudat Purim or in sending mishloach manot. For there is no greater and more splendid happiness than to gladden the hearts of the poor, the orphans, the widows, and the converts. One who brings happiness to the hearts of these unfortunate individuals resembles the Divine Presence....

- ii. If you do NOT have your own source of income, (e.g. you receive money from your family) you are still obligated in Matanot La'evyonim. You should speak with your parents about the amount of money that they think you should give. At the very least, you should give the amount of money that it would take for two poor people to buy a sandwich and a drink.

7. סעודת פורים

- a. We are obligated to have a festive meal full of divrei Torah, *ruchniyut* and happiness associated with the day.
- b. The common practice is to have bread at this meal.
- c. Our seuda must resemble the seudot of Esther with no inappropriate behavior. We will not emulate the offensive and vulgar meals of Achashverosh and Haman at their meals. As such, we do not get drunk on Purim nor do we drink any alcohol whatsoever even if we do not become drunk from it. (Some people take a short nap on Purim day - that will be discussed in Shiur).
- d. In addition to the halachot discussed here, this is also a rule; SFW's policy is no drinking. Period. Needless to say, if this rule is broken, you will need to find another place, other than SFW, to spend the rest of your year in Israel.
- e. NOTE: this is a sensitive topic and will, iy"H, be discussed at greater length in shiur.

Wishing you a wonderful and kosher Purim Sameach!