

Purim 2014

1.

Birchas Yabeitz (Rabbi Dovid Tzvi Moshe Cohen, Posek in Brooklyn) chelek 2, page 230: The Gemara in Megilah (32) relates that Moshe enacted that we must learn about the halachos of Yom Tov on their Yom Tov. The Gemara instructs us to discuss the halachos of Pesach on Pesach, Shevuos on Shevuos, and Succos on Succos. The question arises, why doesn't the Gemara say we must learn the halachos about Purim on Purim?

When Moshe said to be 'שואל ודורש' on the Yomim tovim, he was referring to learning about the applicable halachos of that day. However, since on Purim we have to get drunk and the Gemara in Kerisos (13b) says it's forbidden for someone who is drunk to pasken Halacha, therefore, we can't be obligated to expound the halachos on Purim itself.

He adds that you shouldn't try to compare this to the Gemara Megilah (4a), and bring a disproof from there. On that daf, it says that we are obligated to read or hear the Megilah during the night and then repeat it during the day. The Yeshiva students thought that this meant that they should listen to the Megilah at night and then learn the Mishnayos the next day.

So someone might want to claim that we see from here that learning on Purim is permitted, despite the fact that you have to get drunk! He answers that you can't compare someone learning a Mishna to paskening halachos; for someone to pasken a Halacha they have to have a straight and clear mind and therefore cannot be drunk.

2.

Why don't we make a beracha on the seuda (meal) of Purim?

Kemotzei Shlal Rav (Rabbi Avraham Yisroel Rosenthal) (pages 342-343):

Why don't we make a beracha on the seuda (meal) of Purim?

The Maritz Chiyas (Rav Tzvi Hirsh) says that the seuda on Purim and the mishloach manos that we give out are both included in the beracha of 'שעשה ניסים' that is made before the megilah is layned. It's only due to the miracle we read about in the megilah that we are obligated to perform these mitzvos.

The Shailas U'tshuvos Beis Shearim (Rabbi Amram Blau) (Orachaim siman 381) asks a question on this answer. If that would be the case, then seemingly we wouldn't have to say a separate beracha for the reading of the megilah? Seemingly we are only obligated to lain the megilah because of the miracle. Thus, שעשה ניסים should cover the beracha for laining the megilah.

He answers based on a Taz (siman 167 sif katan 17) who explains that we are allowed to make additional berachos on matzah and kiddush. Meaning, someone can recite the bracha over matzah even if he is not taking part of that meal. The logic behind this Halacha is since this is a berachos hamitzvah as opposed to a berchas hanehnin. Meaning, the common denominator between the brachos over matzah and kiddush is we are reciting the bracha for a mitzvah purpose. We can therefore use the halachic principle of ערבות. The mechanics of ערבות are the following, even though the person reciting the bracha is not obligated; he is still able to recite the beracha in order to fulfill the obligation of others. Conversely, if the beracha is a berchas hanehnin (beracha for pleasure), then it is prohibited to apply the concept of ערבות. Therefore, it is prohibited for someone who will not derive benefit from the food he is making a bracha upon to recite a bracha for someone else. Therefore, when it comes to making the beracha hamotzi on

Shabbos, we don't make an additional beracha because it is not recognizable that we are eating for mitzvah purposes; he could just say hamotzi since he is eating bread for dinner like any other night. Only when it is evident that what we do is clearly for a mitzvah, and not necessarily for pleasure, can we make a special beracha. In summary, only when the difference is evident does ערבות apply. The cases of matzah and kiddush are uniquely distinguishable because it's apparent that they are for the sake of a mitzvah rather than optional. Meaning, the matzah needs to be made l'shaim (for the sake of the) mitzvah. (Also why else would we eat matzah at such a late hour and in the midst of reciting so many phrases (aka the Haggadah)?) The same applies to kiddush; we are not merely reciting a בורא פרי הגפן; rather we are changing the text of the standard bracha, thus making it evident that the bracha being recited is solely for mitzvah purposes. **The same applies to the Purim seuda (meal). Since it's not totally recognizable that we are having a meal for the sake of Purim, we don't make a beracha on the seuda. Conversely, the Megilah is clearly being read for the sake of fulfilling a mitzvah. (This reason also applies to why we don't make a beracha on the seuda we have on Erev Yom Kippur.)**

3.

Maarechi Lev (Rabbi Moshe Shawab, משגיח of Yeshivas Beis Yosef) (page 207-208):

The following analogy will attempt to explain why we drink on Purim. There were two people: one was deaf and blind and the other was lame and couldn't walk. The lame person would sit on the shoulders of the deaf/blind person and direct him where to walk. Once, the lame person heard music and saw people dancing, he wanted to join in and dance as well. So he decided to get the deaf/blind guy drunk so he would start dancing.

This is the explanation why we drink on Purim as well. Purim is holy. Our souls therefore want to 'dance', so to say. Our souls, however, are like the lame person who can't walk. Consequently, they can't dance, even though they want to. Therefore, we give the body (which is comparable to the blind and deaf guy who is carrying the lame person) a lot of wine to get it to start dancing!

4.

Sifsei Chaim (Rabbi Chaim Frelander) (pages 232-233):

The pasuk (Shemos 19, 17) states "ויתיצבו בתחתית ההר." "they stood at the bottom of the mountain." The Gemara in Shabbos (88a) is bothered by how it's possible to be underneath a mountain. Rav Dimi bar Chama says we learn from here that Hashem placed Har Sinai over the Jews like a barrel and said 'if you accept the Torah, good; if not, this will be where you are buried.' The Gemara continues and says that the Jews 're-accepted' the Torah during Purim." אמר רב אבדימי בר חמא בר חסא מלמד שכפה הקדוש ברוך הוא עליהם את ההר כגיגית ואמר להם אם אתם מקבלים (התורה מוטב, ואם לאו שם תהא קבורתכם. אמר רב אחא בר יעקב מכאן מודעה רבה לאורייתא. אמר רבא אף על פי כן (הדור קבלוה בימי אחרשוש דכתיב "קימו וקבלו היהודים" קיימו מה שקיבלו כבר.

The question arises; why did Hashem needed to force us to accept the Torah if we already said "נעשה ונשמע." (Shemos 24, 7) ("everything that Hashem said we will do and we will obey.")? Tosfos explains that it was to ensure that in the future we would not stray from the right path. Another answer is as follows; the Medrash Tanchuma (parshas Noach gimal) says the Jews

accepted Torah shebichtav (written Torah) willingly but needed to be forced to accept Torah shebeal peh (oral). A third answer is that when we accepted the Torah, it was out of ahava (love), so Hashem did this in order to have us accept the Torah out of yirah (fear) as well. The Bartenura (first perek of Avos) says, that someone who lovingly serves Hashem will be careful with all the positive commandments, and someone who fearfully serves Hashem will be careful with all the negative commandments; therefore, the Jews needed to be forced to accept the Torah as well, to have the fear which is necessary to perform the passive mitzvos.

The Maharal (Ohr Chadash) explains that once they accepted upon themselves the mitzvos of Purim and all of its halachos, the rest of Torah shebeal peh got dragged along with it. The source for the mitzvos of Purim is rooted in the Torah shebeal peh. So once they accepted Purim they accepted everything else as well. That's why the Gemara says it was as if we accepted the Torah a second time in the days of Achashverosh.

The question on the Maharal is why was the rest of Torah shebeal peh specifically dragged along with Purim? What made Purim so special that after accepting it we accepted all of Torah shebeal peh?

Many times Chazal creates fences and make gezeiros (decrees), in order to distance us from violating something from the Torah; but it's based on something from the Torah. Purim is completely different. These were all completely new mitzvos that we had no concept of before. The Jews accepted these mitzvos upon themselves due to the love that resulted after the Purim miracle. This love manifested itself when they willingly accepted Purim's mitzvos. They lovingly accepted Purim. Subsequently, the rest of the mitzvos got dragged along with it. A second reason and answer as to why specifically everything was dragged along with Purim is, all of the hardships and salvations were based on אמונת חכמים/belief in the chachamim. Rav Eliyahu Dessler (Michtav M'Eliyahu chalek alef page 76) says based on the Alter Mi Kelm that when Mordechai said the Jews weren't allowed to go to the feast it was a test of their אמונת חכמים, which they failed. Similarly, they failed by bowing down to Haman even though they were told not to; they had a lack of belief in the chachamim (Mordechai and others) of their time. After the decree, the Jews realized they erred with their lack of אמונת חכמים and began to listen to Mordechai. They then joined Mordechai by fasting and repenting and merited to be redeemed. Therefore, specifically after Purim, a time in which they had strong emunas chachamim and had the love for the miracle did they 're-accept' everything that was in the Torah, including all of Torah shebeal peh and all the decrees of the chachamim that come along with it.

5.

Which Yomim Tovim will remain even after Mashiach comes?

Otzros Hatorah (Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim Cohen) (pages 381-382):

The Megilah says (9, 27) "ולא יעבור." "without fail."

Chazal (Midrash Mishlei and Yalkut Shemoni) relate that when Moshiach comes all the Yomim Tovim will no longer exist, except for Purim! The Sefer Haikarim asks the obvious question; why Purim? What is so special and significant about Purim? After all, it's only mi'drabanan (rabbinic)?

The Gemara in Berachos (12b) relates that when Moshiach comes we will no longer say 'this is Hashem, who redeemed us from Egypt.' This doesn't mean that the memory of leaving Egypt will be uprooted and completely forgotten; rather it means that when Moshiach comes the main

discussion will be about the fact that Hashem brought Moshiach and brought us out of the galus (exile) we were previously in. Leaving Egypt will become more of a secondary conversation. The question arises, how does the Gemara state that we will in fact mention Egypt just that it'll be secondary, if the pasuk seems to imply they're not going to mention it all?

When people start speaking about the miracles during the days of Moshiach, no one will mention leaving Egypt. It will be pale in comparison to the days of Mashiach.

Let's take this answer and apply it to our question about the Yomim Tovim. **Almost all of the Yomim Tovim commemorate in some way, leaving Egypt. That's why the other holidays aren't going to be around anymore after Moshiach comes, because we'll only be speaking about Moshiach and not leaving Egypt. Purim, however, is different because we are celebrating being saved from death; it has nothing to do with leaving Egypt. Therefore, even after Moshiach comes we will still be celebrating it!**

Additionally, the future redemption, i.e. Moshiach coming, will be a spiritual redemption. Therefore, all the other physical redemptions will be forgotten. However, Purim was a spiritual redemption (this doesn't shtim with the Levush (siman 670)) as well and that is why it won't be forgotten!

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