



From the teachings of the Rosh Yeshiva of Ateret Yerushalayim
Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"א

Parashat Tzav - #322

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On Purim . . . Purim which falls on Motzei Shabbat

Question: What are the special Halachot for when Purim falls on Motzei Shabbat?

Answer:

1. Bringing the Megillah to Shul on Shabbat: We do not read the Megillah when Purim falls on Shabbat (though nowadays only Shushan Purim can fall on Shabbat). This was decreed in order to prevent people from carrying the Megillah into a public domain (which is forbidden on Shabbat). There are later authorities (i.e. Aruch Ha-Shulchan Orach Chaim 693:3) who forbid carrying the Megillah on Shabbat even within a private domain on account of it being Muktzeh (something that may not be moved on Shabbat), but most authorities disagree and permit it (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 688 and Mishnah Berurah #18). There is, however, a problem with bringing the Megillah to Shul on Shabbat when Purim falls on the next day because of the prohibition of preparing on Shabbat for a weekday. If one does bring the Megillah to Shul on Shabbat, it should be brought inconspicuously, and one should be sure to learn something from it at Shul on Shabbat itself (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 141:17. Aruch Ha-Shulchan, Orach Chaim 693:3).

And it is permissible on Shabbat to prepare for reading the Megillah. It is not considered preparing on Shabbat for a weekday, since it is learning Torah (Shemirat Shabbat Ke-Hilchata Chapter 28 note #169).

2. Children Dressing in Purim Costumes on Shabbat: Children may dress up in a costume on Shabbat before they come to Shul, since they will have enjoyment from the costume on Shabbat itself. It is therefore not considered as if one were preparing on Shabbat for a weekday. This is obviously on the condition that there is no part of the costume which is Muktzeh, and it does not involve painting, [forbidden] tying, and other similarly forbidden things. Adults, however, may not wear costumes on Shabbat, since many authorities rule that it is preparing on Shabbat for a weekday (Shalmei Todah - Purim of Rav Pelman #42. Kaf Ha-Chaim 529:3, 551:93). And it is also not honoring Shabbat.

3. Noisemakers on Shabbat: Noisemakers are definitely forbidden on account of Muktzeh. And even if they are not Muktzeh, one may not bring them because of preparing on Shabbat for a weekday, since one cannot rely on the solution of using them on Shabbat itself, as making noise from any type of instrument, object, etc. on Shabbat is forbidden (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 80:87).

Summary: It is permissible to bring a Megillah to Shul while it is still daytime on Shabbat, provided that one learns something from it. It is permissible for children to dress up in a costume while it is still day time, but it is forbidden to bring noisemakers.

Rav Aviner on...

Making Noise at the Mention of Haman's Name

[Shut She'eilat Shlomo]

Question: Since making excessive noise at the mention of Haman disturbs many people, is it Halachically permissible to abolish it?

Answer:

1. The Rama wrote: "...The custom that we strike [something at the mention of] Haman when we read the Megilah in Shul has spread, and one should not abolish any custom or mock it since it was not established for naught" (Orach Chaim 690:17). It is therefore forbidden to abolish this custom of Israel.

2. The Mishnah Berurah wrote, however, that a custom which has a prohibited aspect to it may be abolished (Biur Halachah ibid.).

3. The basic nature of this custom does not contain any prohibited aspect, and great Rabbis of Israel customarily performed it: "And Ha-Gaon Yavetz (Rav Yaakov Emden) wrote regarding his father, the Chacham Tzvi, that he would hit, stamp his foot and strike his sandal when he arrived at the mention of Haman (Mishnah Berurah #59). According

to the Shevet Musar, we also make noise when Haman's wife and sons are mentioned. But in general, one should only make noise for Haman (Piskei Teshuvot 690:9).

4. Throughout the generations, however, many mishaps were caused on account of this custom:

a. People did not hear the reading of the Megilah. This means that the actual Mitzvah (and the reason we are in Shul) was not fulfilled on account of a custom that is not even observed in all places (Mishnah Berurah ibid.).

b. People have behaved contrary to the Mitzvah of revering the Sanctuary. One should behave with seriousness and reverence in a Shul, and not with joking and levity, since the One who rests His Divine Presence is located within in it.

c. Damage has been caused to objects in the Shul.

d. Distress has been caused to fellow Jews.

e. Children have been taught the opposite of what is required: children must learn that the focus of being in Shul on Purim is listening to the Megilah and not striking something at the mention of Haman.

5. There were therefore some communities that decided to abolish making noise at the mention of Haman, and they publicly informed the entire city not to strike objects at the mention of Haman (Yafeh Lalev #690). And there was a time when the Sefardic Beit Din in Yerushalayim also held in this way, as did the Rabbis of Kushta (Kol Sinai, Halichot Olam pg. 41).

6. There are those who say that if our Rabbi, the Rama, knew where matters would lead, he would not have stated that one should not abolish this custom. The authorities wrote however that if a custom has changed from what it had been at the time of the Rishonim, it is permissible to abolish it (Be'er Heteiv ibid. #15). And the Mishnah Berurah also wrote of those who perform this custom: "their reward is canceled by their loss" (690:59). And Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach did not make any noise at Haman's name, not even by stamping his feet (Ve-Alehu Lo Yibol, Vol. 1 p. 246).

7. Nevertheless, if the proceedings are proper and correct – meaning that people hit objects only in a manner that is appropriate for the holiness of a Shul, and do not disturb the hearing of the Megilah while doing so, etc. - we should not abolish this custom.

In the News...

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