



i.e. with a prohibition against work and similar things. Otherwise, there is no prohibition of "Bal Tosif." The proof is Purim and Chanukah.

There are those who ask: Why wasn't Yom Ha-Atzmaut established when Yehoshua conquered the Land of Israel or when Ezra and Nechemiah returned to the Land? The "Yom Ha-Atzmaut" after Yehoshua's conquest is Pesach. This holiday does not only celebrate the Exodus from Egypt, but also our arrival in the Land, which is the whole point of the Exodus. This is explained by the four phrases of the Redemption (Shemot 6:6-8): "And I will remove, and I will save, and I will redeem, and I will take," which is followed by the fifth phrase: "And I will bring you [to the Land of Israel]." Regarding the return to the Land by Ezra and Nechemiah, the answer is simple: They did not celebrate Yom Ha-Atzmaut because they did not have independence. They only achieved independence on Chanukah. Their "Yom Ha-Atzmaut" is Chanukah.

An additional question arises: Isn't it stated in the Gemara in Rosh Hashanah (18b) that after "Megillat Ta'anit was abolished" one cannot add any holidays? Megillat Ta'anit is a work of the Men of the Great Assembly that preceded the Mishnah (and it is mentioned in Mishnah Ta'anit 2:8). It enumerates approximately forty holidays which were established during the Second Temple Period, some for military victories and others for spiritual victories. All of these holidays, except for Purim and Chanukah, were abolished after the destruction of the Second Temple, so who are we to add new ones (Rosh Hashanah *ibid.*)? Furthermore, since we are in a general spirit of sadness and mourning over the destruction of the Temple, and it is forbidden for us to fill our mouths with laughter (Berachot 31a), how then can we rejoice on new holidays? Purim and Chanukah were permitted only because they contained commandments, and it is impossible to abolish commandments (Rosh Hashanah *ibid.*). There are Rabbis, however, who argue persuasively that holidays continued to be established even after the destruction of the Temple. Rabbi Moshe Sofer of Pressburg held a middle position: The prohibition applies only to establishing a holiday for the entire Jewish People, but an individual may establish a holiday for himself or an entire community. In fact, the Rambam established a holiday for himself on the day he arrived in the Land of Israel (brought at the end of Sefer Charedim of Rabbi Eleazar Azkari), and so too many communities established a holiday for themselves commemorating the day of their deliverance. There are approximately two hundred special "Purims," such as "Purim Borghel" celebrated by the Jews of Tripoli (29th of Tevet, for being saved in 5554 from destruction during occupation by Borghel Pasha of Turkey), "Frankfurt Purim" (20th of Adar, for the readmitting of expelled Jews being to the town in 5376, and the execution of the Chief Jew-baiter, Fettmilch), "Lepanto (Greece) Purim" (11th of Tevet, for Jews saved from destruction during the Turkish War in 5460), "Tiveria Purim" (7th of Elul, for Jews saved from danger of war in 5503), etc. etc.

The Chatam Sofer, on the other hand, permitted establishing a holiday for the entire Jewish People, with the condition that the deliverance was from death to life. His proof is from the words of our Sages: Purim should certainly be a holiday based on Pesach, since Pesach was a deliverance from slavery to freedom. Should we not celebrate a holiday all the more so for Purim which was a deliverance from death to life (Megillah 14a)? He claims that in exile there is no possibility of being delivered merely from slavery to freedom, since in exile we are slaves to the nations of the world. Any deliverance, therefore, could only be from death to life. We may thus establish a new holiday. In truth, on Yom Ha-Atzmaut in the Land of Israel there was a double-deliverance: from slavery to freedom, from the British authority to Jewish authority, and from death to life, from all of the Arab Nations who tried to destroy us at the time of the War of Independence.

There are those who claim that before the War of Independence we were not really slaves and there was therefore no deliverance to freedom. This is incorrect - we were slaves in the full meaning of the word, since the Talmud explains that we do not recite Hallel on Purim, since it is written in Hallel "Praise, servants of Hashem" and even after the miracle of Purim we were not servants of Hashem, but still servants of Achashverosh (Megillah ibid.). Before the establishment of the State, we were slaves to the British authorities. And now – through Hashem's kindness – we are a free Nation in our Land.

Rav Aviner on...

### Shaving for Yom Ha-Atzmaut

**Question:** Is one obligated to shave before Yom Ha-Atzmaut (since there is a custom not to shave during the period of Sefirat Ha-Omer)?

**Answer:** Yes, just as one shaves all year long to honor Shabbat, it is a mitzvah to shave in honor of Yom Ha-Atzmaut. Obviously, if a person does not shave his beard at all, he does not do so, but if he generally does so for Shabbat, then he also shaves for Yom Ha-Atzmaut. The same applies to getting a haircut. Ha-Rav Yitzchak Nissim, former Chief Sefardic Rabbi of Israel, rules in Shut Yayin Ha-Tov (vol.2, Orach Chaim #11) that it is permissible to get a haircut and shave in order to honor the day based on various authorities who allow haircuts and shaving during Sefirat Ha-Omer for similar reasons. For example, Ha-Rav Chaim Palagi (Sefer Moed Le-kol Chai siman 6, pg. 36) wrote that in his city of Izmir there were families who experienced miracles during Sefirat Ha-Omer and established them as days of joy and thanksgiving like Purim and cut their hair and

shaved on them. Ha-Rav Nissim therefore concludes that on a day when a miracle occurred during Sefirat Ha-Omer - like Yom Ha-Atzmaut - when the State of Israel was declared after 2000 years it is certainly permissible, and even a Mitzvah, to have a haircut and shave on that day (see also Ha-Rav Yaakov Ariel, Chief Rabbi of Ramat Gan, in Siddur Ga'al Yisrael for Yom Ha-Atzmaut p. 32, #13. And Ha-Rav Shlomo Goren ruled that it was permitted for soldiers to have haircuts and shave on Yom Ha-Atzmaut as indicated in a Command of the General Staff of the Chief Rabbinate of Tzahal #34.0207 brought in Hilkhos Tzava of Ha-Rav Zechariah Ben Shlomo, p. 861). The Chief Rabbi of Yerushalayim, Ha-Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank, also gave permission to trim one's beard on this day (See Luach "Shana be-Shana" published by Heichal Shlomo, 5752, p. 145. For those who disagree, see Ha-Rav Ovadiah Hadaya in Shut Yaskil Avdi 6:10 #2 and Ha-Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik in Nefesh Ha-Rav, p. 94). I remember that some students once asked our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook, before Yom Ha-Atzmaut if it is permissible to shave for this day. Our Rabbi did not answer. Later he responded: "Tomorrow there will be an exam on your faces." On Yom Ha-Atzmaut he saw that some students had been strict with themselves and had not shaved. He said of them: "Their faces show their character" (Yeshayahu 3:9, i.e. they had not absorbed the true joy of the day). He added: When there is faith, there is joy, and when there is joy there are no halachic doubts. How long will we speak out of both sides of our mouths (see Melachim 1 18:21)?! Do we believe in the Revealed Redemption or not?!"

Q: When should one get a haircut or shave, since Erev Yom Ha-Atzmaut is Remembrance Day for the Fallen Soldiers of Tzahal?

A: One should do so a little bit before the holiday begins. For example, if Ma'ariv is at 7:00 PM, he should shave at 6:00 PM.

Special thank you to Orly Tzion for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parashah Sheet



**Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim** P.O.B. 1076 Jerusalem 91009 Tel.02-6284101 Fax.02-6261528  
[www.ateret.org.il](http://www.ateret.org.il) To subscribe, send e-mail to: [toratravaviner@yahoo.com](mailto:toratravaviner@yahoo.com)

