

# HALACHICALLY SPEAKING

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{ TOPIC }

## Drinking on Purim



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► Halachically Speaking is a monthly publication compiled by Rabbi Moishe Dovid Lebovits, a former *chaver kollel* of *Yeshiva Torah Vodaath* and a *musmach* of *Harav Yisroel Belsky Shlita*. Rabbi Lebovits currently works as the Rabbinical Administrator for the KOF-K Kosher Supervision.

► Each issue reviews a different area of contemporary *halacha* with an emphasis on practical applications of the principles discussed. Significant time is spent ensuring the inclusion of all relevant *shittos* on each topic, as well as the *psak* of *Harav Yisroel Belsky, Shlita* on current issues.

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# Drinking on Purim

For some reason, people think that drinking is acceptable at certain times,<sup>1</sup> such as on *Simchas Torah*, at a *Shalom Zochor*, at a wedding, and on *Purim*.

Many people become intoxicated by drinking wine or whiskey on *Purim*. Is there a *mitzvah* to get drunk? What are the reasons for drinking on *Purim*? What are the parameters? Is wine preferred to whiskey? Does it apply to women? Can one fulfill the *mitzvah* while asleep? When should one drink? These and other issues will be addressed in this issue. We will also discuss the *halachic* sources for drinking too much wine on *Purim* and throughout the year.<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction – Wine

Wine is associated with many aspects of Jewish life. *Shabbos*<sup>3</sup> and all the major *Yom Tovim*, including *Rosh Hashanah*, requires *kiddush* with wine. Wine is a drink that “gladdens the heart.”<sup>4</sup> Wine has medicinal properties as well.<sup>5</sup>

1. For a video put together by the Yehuda Mond Foundation on the dangers of drinking see <http://yehudamondfoundation.org/lechaim.asp>.

2. Refer to *Vaykira Rabbah* 12:1, *Bamidbar Rabbah* 10:1, *Meseches Kesubos* 65a, *Megillah* 12b, *Niddah* 16b, *Eiruvin* 64a.

3. *Shulchan Aruch* 272:8.

4. *Tehillim* 104:15. Refer to *Bereishis Rabbah* 29.

5. Refer to *Meseches Bava Basra* 58b, see *Bava Basra* 12b.



איך על להקדיף? הבעולמו אלאי די אמות של הלהקה בלביד... (ברכות ח)

## Wine in the Torah and Chazal

The *posuk*<sup>6</sup> tells us that *Noach* planted a vineyard...and he drank wine, got drunk and uncovered himself.<sup>7</sup> *Lot's* daughters gave their father wine to drink so that he would get drunk.<sup>8</sup> *Nadav* and *Avihu* are said to have drunk wine when they offered their “strange fire” in the *Mishkan*.<sup>9</sup> The *Medrash*<sup>10</sup> says when a person starts drinking wine he feels innocent as a lamb and as complacent as a sheep. After he has a few drinks, he feels as if he is strong like a lion. When he has gone too far he becomes like a pig, wallowing in his own filth. When he becomes drunk he is like a monkey. He thinks he is smart, witty and clever, when in reality he is being laughed at by others. The *Gemorah*<sup>11</sup> says the tree *Adom* ate from was a grapevine, because nothing brings grief to this world like wine. The *Rambam*<sup>12</sup> says it is impossible to serve *Hashem* with silliness, lightheadedness, and while being drunk. One who is drunk is like he is worshipping *avodah zarah*.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the *Rambam*<sup>14</sup> says that one who gets drunk is a sinner, ugly, and loses his wisdom. One is not allowed to enter the *Ohel Moed* in a drunken state.<sup>15</sup> The *Gemorah*<sup>16</sup> says that wine was created for two purposes, to comfort mourners and to give the

6. Bereishis 9:20.

7. For additional sources which speaks about wine and its effects see Yeshayahu 28:3:7, Shmuel 1:1:14, Mishlei 23:29-35.

8. Bereishis 19:35.

9. Refer to Vayikra Rabbah 20:9.

10. Yalkut Shemoni Noach 61.

11. Meseches Berochos 40a.

12. Hilchos Yom Tov 6:20.

13. Meseches Berochos 31a.

14. Hilchos De'os 5:3.

15. Vayikra 10:9.

16. Meseches Sanhedrin 70a.

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wicked their reward in this world so that they may get their full punishment in the World to Come.

On the other hand, the *Gemorah*<sup>17</sup> says happiness comes from consuming wine and meat. The *Tana D'bei Eliyahu (Zuta)*<sup>18</sup> says that, “Wine gives pleasure to old people, makes their hearts happy, refreshes their souls, and illuminates their eyes.” Wine also has a positive effect on the brain and the thinking process.<sup>19</sup> The *Gemorah*<sup>20</sup> says that old wine is beneficial for the intestines.

## Drinking on *Purim*

The *Gemorah*<sup>21</sup> says that one is obligated to get drunk<sup>22</sup> on *Purim* until the point that he does not know the difference between cursed *Haman* and bless *Mordechai*. The *Gemorah* also relates the following story: *Rabbah* and *Rav Zeirah* had their *Purim seuda* together. *Rabbah* got drunk and killed *Rav Zeirah*. They prayed for *Rav Zeirah* and he lived. The next year, when asked to come over for the *seuda*, *Rav Zeirah* did not go because one cannot rely on a miracle every time.

This seems to be an odd story; should it be taken literally?<sup>23</sup>

The *Maharsha*<sup>24</sup> explains that *Rabbah* did not literally slit *Rav Zeirah's* throat. Rather, he kept giving *Rav Zeirah* drinks

17. Meseches Pesachim 109a.

18. 13.

19. Refer to Meseches Eiruvim 65a.

20. 51b. Refer to Meseches Pesachim 92a.

21. Meseches Megillah 7b.

22. There is an opinion that holds the *Gemorah* does not say “*lhishtakeir*” – to get drunk it says “*l'besumi*” – which means get high. (Haskama of the Gerrer Rebbe zt”l to sefer Piskei Teshuva, also see Yesod V'shoresh Huavodah 12:8). Refer to Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 327.

23. Refer to Sharei Hamoadim pages 124-135 in great depth. Also see L'bisumi B'puryah pages 34-37.

24. Meseches Megillah ibid. Also see Meiri Meseches Megillah 7b. Refer to Moadim L'Simcha

איך ללמוד מהגמרא על הלכה בליל פורים (ברכות ט)



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until he became sick. *Rav Zeirah's* refusal the next year was to avoid a situation of over-indulgence which can be fatal. Obviously, drinking wine is very dangerous if done without a *cheshbon*.<sup>25</sup>

*Harav Shlomo Zalman zt"l*<sup>26</sup> suggests that *Rabbah* embarrassed *Rav Zeirah*, which is akin to murder.

### **Halachic Opinions**

There are some *poskim* who maintain that we do not follow the apparent ruling of this incident, and one should not get drunk on *Purim*.<sup>27</sup> The *Meiri*<sup>28</sup> says that there is no *mitzvah* to get drunk and act in a frivolous manner on *Purim*. However, the majority of *poskim* do in fact concur with the incident and maintain that one should drink enough wine on *Purim* to cause drunkenness.<sup>29</sup> The *Pri Chadash*<sup>30</sup> says that *Rav Zeirah* should have replied that he will drink a little without actually getting drunk. From the fact that he did not say this we can deduce the *halacha* that one should get drunk on *Purim* and the story is valid. The *Bach*<sup>31</sup> says that even the lenient opinion agrees that one should drink more than usual on *Purim*.

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3:pages 442-447.

25. Also see Teshuvos V'hanhagos 4:173.

26. Halichos Shlomo Moadim 19:footnote 77, Shalmei Moed page 289.

27. Ran Meseches Megillah page 6, Baal Hameor, Shibuley Haleket 201, Bach O.C. 695, Taz 2, Aruch Hashulchan 3. See Shaarei Teshuva 2.

28. Meseches Megillah 7b. See Biur Halacha "ad."

29. Rif Meseches Megillah, Rosh 1:8, Rambam Hilchos Megillah 2:15, Tur 695, Shulchan Aruch 695:2, Yosef Ometz 1101. Refer to Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 325. See Moadim V'zemanim 2:175, Divrei Yatziv 2:297.

30. 695:2.

31. 695.

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## Drinking More Than Usual

The *Pri Chadash*<sup>32</sup> says that in our weak generation one should follow the lenient approach and only drink a little more than usual. This opinion is the opinion of other *poskim* as well.<sup>33</sup>

## Not Knowing the Difference Between Cursed *Haman* and Bless *Mordechai*

As mentioned above, one should drink until he cannot tell the difference between cursed *Haman* and bless *Mordechai*.<sup>34</sup> There are many explanations as to what this means.<sup>35</sup> The *Bach*<sup>36</sup> understands this as a literal statement, and other *poskim* agree.<sup>37</sup>

Others say that this comment in the *Gemorah* should not be taken literally.<sup>38</sup> One opinion says that one should drink to the point that he cannot calculate that the *gematria* of “cursed is *Haman*” (in Hebrew) is equivalent to “bless *Mordechai*” (in Hebrew).<sup>39</sup>

The *Taz*<sup>40</sup> explains that we have to give thanks to *Hashem* for saving us from *Haman's* evil plot. We must also thank Him for the additional kindness of elevating *Mordechai*. We

32. Ibid.

33. Kol Bo 45, Bach, Orchos Chaim brought in Bais Yosef 695. Refer to Shevet HaLevi 10:107.

34. Refer to Korbon Nesanel Meseches Megillah 1:10, Aruch Hashulchan 5, Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 56:91.

35. Refer to Tosfas Meseches Megillah 7b “d’lo,” Maharsha Meseches Megillah 7b “m’chayiv,” Bais Yosef 695. See Kaf Hachaim 16, Moadim L’simcha 3:pages 421-423, Sharei Hamoadim pages 113-117.

36. 695.

37. Shulchan Aruch 695:2.

38. See Sharei Teshuva 695:2.

39. Darchei Moshe 695:1, Magen Avraham 3, Elya Rabbah 2, Be’er Heitiv 2, Shaar Hatzion 5. Refer to Avudraham Purim.

40. 695:1, Mishnah Berurah 4, see Be’er Heitiv 2.

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should drink until the point that we cannot discern between these two acts of kindness.

The *Sefas Emes*<sup>41</sup> says one does not have an obligation to be drunk to the point of not knowing.... However, one is supposed to busy himself with party on Purim and as long as he knows the difference between... he has to party and after that point he does not. However, one has fulfilled his drinking even before he reaches the point where he does not know....

*Harav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach zt"l* says people think that the miracle of saving the Jews was great and the fall of *Haman* was not a big miracle. Therefore, we drink until we do not know the difference between the two and they are both the same great miracle.<sup>42</sup>

*Harav Moshe Shternbuch Shlita*<sup>43</sup> says the following: there are different time periods in life. Sometimes *Haman* is on top and sometimes *Haman* is on the bottom. Sometimes our enemies beat us and the hand of *Hahsem* is hidden. Sometimes it is “bless *Mordechai*” and *Hashem's* hand is visible, so to speak. On *Purim* we have a *mitzvah* to drink to the point that we do not know the difference between the two stages. We have to drink to know that all is from *Hashem*. This is the point of *Purim*. Even if *Hashem's* name is not mentioned in the *Megillah*, everything is from *Hashem*.

### Drinking More Than Usual – Falling Asleep

The *Rama*<sup>44</sup> says one should drink more than usual and thus fall asleep. This is the opinion of other *poskim* as

41. Meseches Megillah 7b.

42. Modanei Shlomo Purim page 123.

43. Teshuvos V'hanhagos 4:173:page 165.

44. Darchei Moshe 695:1, 695:2.



well.<sup>45</sup> However, sleeping without drinking at all does not accomplish anything.<sup>46</sup>

## Getting Drunk is Not Allowed

The *Orchos Chaim*<sup>47</sup> (and others)<sup>48</sup> says drinking to the point of getting drunk is the greatest *aveirah* one can do since it causes *giluy arayos*, murder, etc. One should only drink more than he usually does.

## Obligation or *Mitzvah*

Many maintain that there is no obligation to drink, but if one does so he has fulfilled a *mitzvah*.<sup>49</sup> However, some argue that the term *chayiv* in the *Gemorah* and *Shulchan Aruch* clearly indicate that it is in fact an obligation. Therefore, the *Aruch Hashulchan*<sup>50</sup> says there is an obligation to drink, but every person has the leeway to choose how much he wishes to drink.<sup>51</sup>

## Avoid Drinking

When one drinks to excess, he cannot perform *mitzvos* properly. Therefore, one who knows that by drinking he will not properly perform the *mitzvos* of *netilas yadayim*, *bentching*,<sup>52</sup> and *mincha* or *maariv*,<sup>53</sup> it is better than he

45. Rambam Hilchos Megillah 2:15, Yam Shel Shlomo Meseches Bava Kamma 3:3, Pri Megadim M.Z. 3, Levush 2, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 142:6, Mishnah Berurah 5, Aruch Hashulchan 5, Moadim V'zemanim 2:190.

46. Mekroei Kodesh 44, Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 57:93, Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 326.

47. Brought in Bais Yosef 695.

48. Kol Bo 45, Yesod Veshoresh Huavodah 12:8, see Levush 2, Aruch Hashulchan 5.

49. Hago'es Mamonei Hilchos Megillah 2:15:2, Maharil 56, Darchei Moshe 695:1, Biur Halacha "v'chayiv," Kaf Hachaim 15, Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 327.

50. 695:4.

51. See Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 327.

52. Moreh Betzbah 307, Pela Yoetz Purim.

53. See Noheg Katzon Yosef page 203.

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should not get drunk.<sup>54</sup> One who wishes to drink should make sure the *mitzvos* are accomplished first and then he can drink.<sup>55</sup>

## Reasons to Drink

Why do we drink on *Purim*? One reason is offered by the *Avudraham*<sup>56</sup> (quoted by others as well).<sup>57</sup> The story of the *megillah* was influenced by wine. *Vashti* was removed from her role as queen through drinking of wine.<sup>58</sup> *Esther* took her place through a party.<sup>59</sup> So too the fall of *Haman* was through wine. Therefore, we drink on *Purim* to remember that the miracles happened to the Jews through wine.<sup>60</sup>

The *Chasam Sofer*<sup>61</sup> explains that the Jews in the time of *Achashveirosh* attended his *seuda* and got drunk. Therefore, we have a *mitzvah* to drink to rectify the *aveirah* which was committed at that time,

*Harav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach zt"l*<sup>62</sup> says that *Purim* was established during the time of *golus* and it is not possible to be joyous while we are in *golus*. Therefore, we drink to forget about the fact that we are in *golus* and then we can be joyous properly.

54. Elya Rabbah 2, Matei Moshe 1012, Chai Adom 155:30, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 142:6, Mishnah Berurah 4, Biur Halacha "ad," Kaf Hachaim 17. Refer to Toras Hamoadim Purim page 341:3. See Noheg Katzon Yosef page 203.

55. Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 332.

56. Purim.

57. Elya Rabbah 1, Matei Moshe 1012, Chai Adom 155:30, Taamei Haminhagim 891:pages 381-382, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 142:6, Biur Halacha "chayiv." See Meiri Meseches Megillah 7b.

58. Megillas Esther 1:10.

59. Megillas Esther 2:18.

60. For many other reasons see Moadim Lsimcha 3:pages 407-415.

61. Toras Moshe on Purim.

62. Halichos Shlomo Moadim 19:footnote 79.

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*Harav Moshe Shternbuch Shlita*<sup>63</sup> explains that a sober person is aware of his true feelings and his surroundings, and uses his intellect to hide his feelings. When he is drunk and has no control over his intellect, he cannot hide his feeling, and his true essence emerges. Even without our intellect, we should be close to the *Torah* and choose the good.

## Wine or Other Drinks

Most *poskim* say that one should drink wine on *Purim* as opposed to other intoxicating drinks.<sup>64</sup> This fits with the above opinions that maintain that we drink wine because the miracle happened with wine. A minority opinion says that the *Gemorah* does not designate wine, so one can drink any *chamar medina* (commonly consumed drink, such as beer and whiskey).<sup>65</sup> In addition, it is possible that the *Gemorah* only mentioned wine, because that was the primary source of alcohol at the time. This does not mean to exclude other intoxicating beverages.<sup>66</sup> The use of wine is not the overwhelming custom,<sup>67</sup> especially since one would need an excessive amount of wine in order to become intoxicated.<sup>68</sup>

The *Aruch Hashulchan*<sup>69</sup> says that one should stay away from whiskey since it causes one to vomit.

63. Moadim V'zemanim 2:190.

64. Rashi Meseches Megillah 7b "I'besumi," Rokeach 237, Radvaz 1:462, Rambam Hilchos Megillah 2:15, Shalmei Moed page 287, Moadim V'zemanim 2:190, see Rivevos Ephraim 1:195:2, 8:page 478:2.

65. Shivili Dovid 695:3. Refer to Shevet Hakehasi 6:258, Lehoros Nosson 9:21-22, Peer Eitz Chaim O.C. 36, Moadei Yeshurin page 50.

66. Nemukei Orach Chaim 695:3:page 265, Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 56:92, Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 328, see Lehoros Nosson 9:21-22.

67. Mekroei Kodosh 44.

68. Rivevos Ephraim 7:360:1:1, see Rivevos Ephraim 3:465:1.

69. 695:5.

איזן עיל להקצי"ה בעמולו אלאי די אמותו של הלכה בלביד... (ברכות ח)



One does not fulfill the *mitzvah* of drinking with grape juice.<sup>70</sup>

## One Who Does Not Drink Wine All Year

One who does not drink wine all year because of health reasons does not have to strain himself to drink wine on *Purim*.<sup>71</sup> Included in this is also someone who suffers from headaches. Since drinking does not bring him to joy he does not have to drink.<sup>72</sup> In addition, it brings him to pain.<sup>73</sup> If even a little wine causes him pain he does not have to do this either.<sup>74</sup> However, if one refrains from wine because of non-health reasons all year, then he should drink wine on *Purim*.<sup>75</sup>

## Women

Although women are included in the *mitzvos* of the day of *Purim*,<sup>76</sup> this does not apply to drinking.<sup>77</sup> Women who wish to drink should only drink a minute amount.<sup>78</sup>

70. Shevet HaLevi 10:107:2, Shalmei Moed page 288, Halichos Shlomo Moadim 19:footnote 76, Rivevos Ephraim 8:600.

71. Leket Yosher 1:page 157, Shaarei Teshuva 695:2, Yosef Ometz 1101, Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 329.

72. Refer to Moadim V'zemanim 2:190.

73. Mekadesh Yisroel ibid.

74. Mekadesh Yisroel ibid.

75. Shevet HaLevi 10:106:2. See Oz Nedberu 5:42.

76. Refer to Meseches Megillah 4a, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 695:14.

77. Rivevos Ephraim 1:458, 4:173:10, 53, Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 334, Moadim V'zemanim 2:190, Natei Gavriel Purim 73:4, Shevet HaLevi 10:18:2, Shulchan Aruch Hamekutzar 123:footnote 19. See Shaar Hatzion 199:6.

78. Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 58:97, Chazon Ovadia Purim page 176.

כל השווה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (קדוה עב)

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## Children

The *mitzvah* of drinking on *Purim* does not apply to a child and one does not have to be *mechanech* a child to drink on *Purim*.<sup>79</sup>

## When

The *Rambam*<sup>80</sup> seems to imply that alcohol should be consumed during the *Purim seuda*.<sup>81</sup> However, the *Gemorah* which mentions the obligation to drink does not make any connection to the *Purim seuda*, nor does the *Shulchan Aruch*. Some argue that the fact that the *Megillah* describes *Purim* as a day of party and joy<sup>82</sup> shows that drinking can be done all day.<sup>83</sup> The overwhelming custom is to drink throughout the day of *Purim*.<sup>84</sup>

One wonders why people drink at night as well, since this *mitzvah* is included in the other *mitzvos* of *Purim* which apply during the day.<sup>85</sup>

## Even Those Who Drink- With a *Cheshbon*

Even those who drink should not drink on *Purim* just for the fun of drinking. This brings to lightheadedness, and one neglects the other *mitzvos* of the day.<sup>86</sup> The *Rishonim*

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79. Moadim V'zemanim 2:190, Teshuvos V'hanhagos 3:229, Natei Gavriel Purim 73:4:footnote 10.

80. Hilchos Megillah 2:15. Refer to Hisoreros Teshuva 1:6, Rivevos Ephraim 7:214, Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 57:93.

81. If one is drunk how will he recite *birchos hamazon* (Refer to Hisoreros Teshuva 1:6, Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 57:93, Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 332). See Yesod V'shoresh Huavodah 12:8.

82. Esther 9:17.

83. Sharei Hamoadim page 112.

84. Avnei Yushpe 6:106:4, Moadim L'Simcha 3:pages 430-431, Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 333, 346 Halichos Shlomo Moadim 19:footnote 28, Shalmi Moed page 287, Modanei Shlomo Purim page 124. Refer to Natei Gavriel teshuvos - Purim 24:pages 571-574.

85. Sharei Yemei HaPurim page 75:4. See Magen Avraham 696:15, Mishnah Berurah 24.

86. Matei Moshe 1012.

איננו לול להלכה אלא לזאת של הלכה בלבד... (ברכות ח')

who drank of *Purim* did not do so with lightheadedness.<sup>87</sup> Drinking on *Purim* is not a *heter* to drink without a *cheshbon*. It brings about *chillul Hashem* if one does not act properly, especially in public.<sup>88</sup>

### Father Does Not Want Child To Drink

If a father demands that his son not drink on *Purim*, it is questionable whether the son is obligated to obey. Generally, if a father tells his son not to do a *mitzvah* the son does not have to listen, because both are commanded in *mitzvos*.<sup>89</sup> However, this rule does not apply to drinking on *Purim*, and the son has to obey his father.<sup>90</sup> The reason is that one can fulfill the *mitzvah* by drinking more than he usually does.<sup>91</sup> If the father does not want his son to drink at all the *halacha* may be different.

### Drinking and Performing *Mitzvos*

A person who is totally inebriated cannot *pasken*,<sup>92</sup> *daven*,<sup>93</sup> be a *shatz*,<sup>94</sup> carry a *sefer Torah*,<sup>95</sup> and be a judge.<sup>96</sup> One who drinks more than a *reviis* and is a bit woozy cannot *daven* until the wine is out of his system, but if he did *daven* his *tefillah* is valid, as long as he can speak before a king.<sup>97</sup> If he cannot talk properly before a king, he is considered

87. Matei Moshe 1012.

88. Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 330.

89. Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 240:15-16.

90. Halichos Shlomo Moadim 19:25, Shalmei Moed page 288.

91. Ibid:footnote 38.

92. Meseches Krisos 13a.

93. Meseches Berochos 31a.

94. Rambam 165.

95. Ibid.

96. Bach (Hayishonos) 41.

97. Shulchan Aruch 99:3.

כל השווה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (מדה עב)

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drunk and may not *daven*<sup>98</sup> or say *krias shema*.<sup>99</sup> He is allowed to *bentch*,<sup>100</sup> nevertheless, it is proper to wait until the wine leaves his system if he drank a lot.<sup>101</sup> He does not count toward a *minyan* to *bentch*, but does count for a *zimun* of three.<sup>102</sup>

Obviously, getting drunk does not excuse anyone from any *mitzvah*. Therefore, saying *loshon hara* is forbidden on *Purim*.<sup>103</sup>

## Vomited

One who vomited before he made a *beracha achrona* does not make a *beracha achrona* since it is unclear how much he threw up and how much he has left in his stomach.<sup>104</sup>

## Drinking By *Gedolim*

Many *gedolim* had the custom to get drunk on *Purim*.<sup>105</sup> However, they drank with a *cheshbon* and never succumbed to *kalus rosh*. The *Chofetz Chaim* zt"l did not get drunk. He used to pour some wine to all the guests and said this is for *Shabbos*, and he would then fill another glass and say this is for *Purim* in order to drink more than usual, and then he went to sleep.<sup>106</sup>

98. Shulchan Aruch 99:1.

99. Rama 99:1.

100. In regards to saying a *beracha* see Rama 99:1, Mishnah Berurah 11, Taz 185:2.

101. Refer to Shulchan Aruch 185:5, Mishnah Berurah 6.

102. Mishnah Berurah 99:10.

103. Sharei Hamoadim page 122.

104. Sharei Yemei HaPurim page 77. Refer to Meseches Chagigah 5a about vomiting in public.

105. Refer to Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 57:94-95, Moadim L'Simcha 3:pages 437-442.

106. Hanhagos HaChofetz Chaim page 181. See Shalmei Moed page 288.

איזן על להקצי"ה בעולמו אלאי די אמותו של הלכה בלביד... (ברכות ח)



כל השנה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לישוא בן עולם הפא... (מדד עב)

## Making a *Beracha* at Each Home

An interesting question arises with regard to groups who collect money on *Purim* and drink in each house (one should not offer them drinks-see below). Is a *beracha* required in each home? Should he recite a *beracha achrona* at the last house? This question involves many variables and this is not the place to discuss it. One possible solution is to have in mind that he wants to drink in every home, and he should drink less than 3.3 ounces in each home. This way, no *beracha achrona* would be required.<sup>107</sup>

## Get Involved

The *Torah* says, “You must not stand idly by your friend’s blood.”<sup>108</sup> If another person is in danger you have to help him out. Do not allow a drunken person to drive. In addition, one should not offer alcoholic beverages to groups who collect on *Purim*.<sup>109</sup>

## Lying About Knowing Between Cursed *Haman* and Blessed *Mordechai*

If one asks you on *Purim* if you know the difference between cursed *Haman* and *boruch Mordechai* you can say no.<sup>110</sup>

## Doing Damage When Drinking

Many drunken people get out of control, and even damage another person’s property. The question arises whether he is responsible to pay for the damage, or since he was drunk due to the *simcha* of *Purim* he is not responsible.

107. Refer to Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 336-337.

108. Vayikra 19:16.

109. Refer to [www.dontserveteens.gov](http://www.dontserveteens.gov).

110. Maharsaha Chiddushei Agados Meseches Bava Metziah ibid “b’purya.” Refer to Titen Emes L’Yaakov page 52:26. See Moadim V’zmanim 6:109 who explains this opinion.

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If the damage was unintentional,<sup>111</sup> then he is exempt from payment,<sup>112</sup> if he caused minor damage.<sup>113</sup> There is an opinion in the *poskim* that exempts him even for physical damage,<sup>114</sup> while others are stringent.<sup>115</sup>

This only applies if one drinks at least more than usual, not if he drinks a little.<sup>116</sup>

The definition of damaging due to joy is unclear.<sup>117</sup> In any case, the *Aruch Hashulchan*<sup>118</sup> says that in his days the joy we have for *Purim* is not the type of joy which would exempt one from paying for damage.

In addition, one who grabs food or drink from his friend on *Purim*<sup>119</sup> is not considered stealing.<sup>120</sup> One can make a *beracha* on it as well. However, the *poskim* say that a person who is careful should refrain from such activity on *Purim*.<sup>121</sup> Here too, the *Aruch Hashulchan*<sup>122</sup> says that this leniency is not applicable today.

111. Magen Avraham 8, Mishnah Berurah 14.

112. Rama 695:2, Matei Moshe 1013, see Bais Yosef 695. Refer to Meseches Succah 45a, Rashi "miyad, Tosfas "miyad," Shulchan Aruch C.M. 378:9. See Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 7.

113. Mishnah Berurah 695:13, see Refer to Bach (yeshonos) 62.

114. Magen Avraham 7. Refer to Bach (yeshonos) 62.

115. Aruch Hashulchan 10, see Elya Rabbah 15.

116. Modanei Shlomo Purim page 124.

117. Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:19:footnote 77.

118. 695:10.

119. This includes the from reading the *megillah* until after the *seuda* – two nights and one day (Mishnah Berurah 696:32).

120. Rama 696:8.

121. Mishnah Berurah 696:31.

122. 696:12. See Toras HaYeshiva 13:14, Chazzon Ovadia Purim page 208.

איזן לל להקצי"ה בעמלמו אלזי יז אמות של הלקה בלביד... (ברכות ח)



כל השומה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (תדה עב)

## Drunk and Gave Out A lot of Money

It can happen that one gets drunk to the point that he does not know what he is doing and he may have given out a lot of money on *Purim*. He may in fact have a right to reclaim the money. When this situation arises one should discuss it with his *Rav*.<sup>123</sup>

## Driving Groups Around and Not Drinking

Hundreds of groups collect money on *Purim*. The Jewish driver will not be drinking,<sup>124</sup> and will not be able to fulfill the *mitzvah* of drinking on *Purim*, especially if the group collects during the *seuda*. Is this permitted? There is no *mitzvah* to collect money on *Purim* but there is a *mitzvah* to drink. One option is to finish collecting early so one can drink, or drink later that night even though it may not be part of any *seuda* and just a *Purim chagigah*.<sup>125</sup>

## Torah Reasons Not to Drink

We are required to protect our health, and therefore one should refrain from drinking too much alcohol. In addition, according to the law of the land one is not allowed to give alcohol to minors. This is enforced by the *halacha* of *dina d'malchusa dina*. These and other obvious reasons demanding that we limit our alcohol intake, or fulfill the *mitzvah* in any of the ways detailed above.

## Conclusion

It is impossible to say that *chazal* would demand of us to drink to the point of losing all feeling for what we are doing, which brings one to lightheadedness and other

123. Refer to Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 339.

124. This is obviously *ossur* and no need to discuss this here (Refer to Natei Gavriel Purim 73:6).

125. Refer to Mekadesh Yisroel Purim 343.

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*averios*.<sup>126</sup> If one can drink and maintain control, then it may be permitted. After all is said and done, one should drink either to the point of getting drunk and then stopping, or drink a little more than usual. One who only wishes to drink a little has also fulfilled his obligation, especially according to those *poskim* who maintain that the incident in the *Gemorah* is not *halachic*.

Every year, *hatzalah* responds to calls for people who drank so much alcohol that they were in critical medical condition. Is it worth it? NO.

## What Drinking Too Much Alcohol Does To Your Health<sup>127</sup>

Alcohol, or ethyl alcohol (ethanol), refers to the intoxicating ingredient found in wine, beer and hard liquor. Alcohol arises naturally from carbohydrates when certain micro-organisms metabolize them in the absence of oxygen, called fermentation.

Alcohol is metabolized extremely quickly by the body. Unlike foods, which require time for digestion, alcohol needs no digestion and is quickly absorbed. About 20 percent is absorbed directly across the walls of an empty stomach and can reach the brain within one minute.

Once alcohol reaches the stomach, it begins to break down the alcohol. This process reduces the amount of alcohol entering the blood by approximately 20%. (In addition, about 10% of the alcohol is expelled in the breath and urine.

Alcohol is rapidly absorbed in the upper portion of the small intestine. The alcohol-laden blood then travels to the liver via the veins and capillaries of the digestive tract,

126. Yesod V'shoresh Huavodah 12:8.

127. Refer to <http://www.healthchecksyste.ms.com/alcohol.htm>, <http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/faqs.htm>.

איזן על להקדיף"ה בעמלמו אלאי יאמות של הלכה בלביד... (ברכות ח)



כל השווה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן עולם הבא... (תדה עב)

which affects nearly every liver cell. The liver cells are the only cells in our body that can produce enough of the enzyme alcohol dehydrogenase to oxidize alcohol at an appreciable rate.

Though alcohol affects every organ of the body, its most dramatic impact is upon the liver. The liver cells normally prefer fatty acids as fuel, and package excess fatty acids as triglycerides, which they then route to other tissues of the body. However, when alcohol is present, the liver cells are forced to first metabolize the alcohol, letting the fatty acids accumulate, sometimes in huge amounts. Alcohol metabolism permanently changes liver cell structure, which impairs the liver's ability to metabolize fats.

The liver is able to metabolize about ½ ounce of ethanol per hour (approximately one drink, depending on a person's body size, food intake, etc.). If more alcohol arrives in the liver than the enzymes can handle, the excess alcohol travels to all parts of the body, circulating until the liver enzymes are finally able to process it.

### Some Health Effects of Alcohol Consumption

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Cancer</b>                 | Increases the risk of cancer in the liver, pancreas, mouth, pharynx, larynx and esophagus.  |
| <b>Fetal Alcohol Syndrome</b> | Causes physical and behavioral abnormalities in the fetus.  |
| <b>Heart Disease</b>          | Raises blood pressure, blood lipids and the risk of stroke and heart disease in heavy drinkers. Heart disease is generally lower in light to moderate drinkers. |
| <b>Kidney Disease</b>         | Enlarges the kidneys, alters hormone functions, and increases the risk of kidney failure.   |

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|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Liver Disease</b>              | Causes fatty liver, alcoholic hepatitis and cirrhosis.   |
| <b>Malnutrition</b>               | Increases the risk of protein-energy malnutrition; low intakes of protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A, vitamin C, thiamine, vitamin B6 and riboflavin, and impaired absorption of calcium, phosphorus, vitamin D and zinc. |
| <b>Nervous Disorders</b>          | Causes neuropathy and dementia; impairs balance and memory.  |
| <b>Psychological Disturbances</b> | Causes depression, anxiety and insomnia.   |

### ***Kashrus* Concerns**

Up until recently, there were few *kashrus* concerns regarding whiskey. However, non-*kosher* enzymes can be added to aid in the fermentation process. In addition, some wine can be added to the liquor in order to classify it as a wine product with a lower tax. Furthermore, whiskey is sometimes aged in wine casks.<sup>128</sup>

The following liquors are accepted without *kosher* certification:

All varieties of **domestic whiskeys** are acceptable. All **silver tequila** is acceptable. **Domestic vodka** produced from grain spirits is acceptable.

The following liquors require *kosher* certification:

**Imported vodkas** require certification. **Wines, liqueurs, flavored spirits and brandies** require kosher certification.

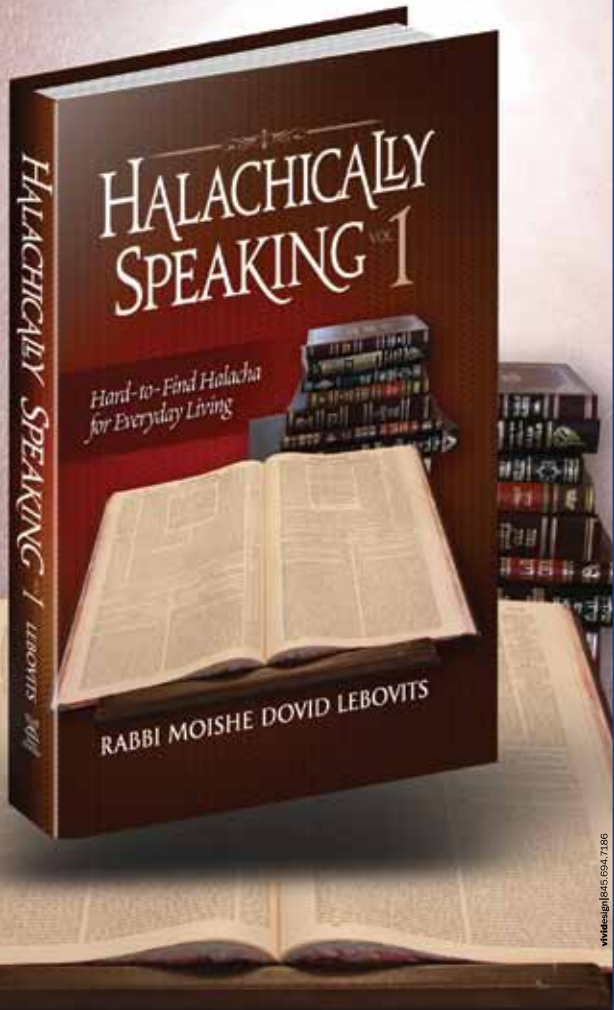
128. Refer to Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:62-64, Minchas Yitzchok 2:28:13.

איזן לל להקצי"ה בעמלמו אלאי יאמות של הלקה בלביד... (ברכות ח)

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