



Drinking on Purim

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Drinks List

Wine's W's -

- Who should drink?
- What to drink?
- When to drink?
- Where to drink?
- Why drink?
- How much to drink?

Why drink on Purim?

The original decree

- Esther 9:22 – like the days wherein the Jews had rest from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to gladness, and from mourning into a good day; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. (JPS 1917)

• אסתר ט"ז:כ"ב - (כב) כַּיָּמִים
אֲשֶׁר-נָחוּ בָּהֶם הַיְּהוּדִים מֵאוֹיְבֵיהֶם
וְהַחֲדָשׁ אֲשֶׁר נִהְפָּךְ לָהֶם מִיָּגוֹן
לְשִׂמְחָה וּמֵאֵבֶל לְיוֹם טוֹב לַעֲשׂוֹת
אִתָּם יְמֵי מְשֻׁתָּה וְשִׂמְחָה וּמְשָׁלוֹחַ
מִנוֹת אִישׁ לְרֵעֵהוּ וּמִתְּנוּת לְאֶבְיוֹנִים:

Megillah 7b – Mitzvah to drink

Rava said: A person is obligated to become intoxicated with wine on Purim until he is so intoxicated that he does not know how to distinguish between cursed is Haman and blessed is Mordecai. (Willia Davidson Translation)

- Rashi – get intoxicated with wine

אָמַר רַבָּא: מִיַּחֲיִיב אֵינִישׁ
לְבַסּוּמִי בְּפוּרִיָּא עַד דְּלֹא
יָדַע בֵּין אָרוּר הָמָן לְבָרוּךְ
מֹרְדֵכַי.

• רש"י על מגילה -
לאבסומי - להשתכר
ביין:

Why wine?

Biur Halachah Orach Chaim 695 (Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, the Chofetz Chaim, 20th century)

A person must drink until... and if you say how did the Sages oblige what is mentioned in the Torah and the prophets in several places that intoxication is a great obstacle? One could say that because all the miracles done to Israel in the days of Ahasuerus were by a feast initially Vashti was disturbed by a feast and Esther came and also the matter of Haman and his defeat was by a feast there the Sages obligated getting drunk so that he remembers the great miracle with drinking the wine. In any event this is for the mitzvah and not required [Eliyahu Rabbah] (similar idea in Abudraham)

• (*) חייב איניש וכו': וא"ת האיק יחייבו חז"ל מה שנזכר בתורה ובנביאים בכמה מקומות השיכרות למכשול גדול וי"ל מפני שכל הניסים שנעשו לישראל בימי אחשורוש היו ע"י משתה כי בתחלה נטרדה ושתי ע"י משתה ובאה אסתר וכן ענין המן ומפלתו היה ע"י משתה ולכן חייבו חכמים להשתכר עד כדי שיהא נזכר הנס הגדול בשתיית היין. ומ"מ כ"ז למצוה ולא לעכב [א"ר].:

Megillah 7b – Rabba and Rabbi Zeira's Purim

The Gemara relates that **Rabba and Rabbi Zeira prepared a Purim feast with each other, and they became intoxicated** to the point that **Rabba arose and slaughtered Rabbi Zeira. The next day**, when he became sober and realized what he had done, Rabba **asked God for mercy, and revived him. The next year, Rabba said to Rabbi Zeira: Let the Master come and let us prepare the Purim feast with each other. He said to him: Miracles do not happen each and every hour, and I do not want to undergo that experience again.**

רַבָּה וְרַבִּי זֵירָא עֲבָדוּ סְעוּדַת פּוּרִים בְּהָדִי
הָדִי. אִיבָסוּם. קָם רַבָּה שְׁחִטָּיה לְרַבִּי זֵירָא.
לְמָחָר, בָּעִי רַחֲמֵי וְאַחֲיִיה

לְשָׁנָה, אָמַר לִיה: נִיתִי מָר וְנַעֲבִיד סְעוּדַת
פּוּרִים בְּהָדִי הָדִי. אָמַר לִיה: לֹא בְּכָל שְׁעָתָא
וְשְׁעָתָא מִתְרַחֵשׁ נִסָּא.

Opinion of Rabbeinu Efraim

- Rabbeinu Efraim z"l explains based on the incident when Rabbah slaughter R' Zeira and the next year he asked him is he would do it again etc... Means that we have pushed away the statement of Rabbah and the Halachah is not like him and it is not proper to do that. (Quoted by Baal HaMaor Megillah 3b)

• אמר רבה חייב איניש לבסומי
בפוריא כו' כתב ה"ר אפרים ז"ל
מההוא עובדא דקם רבה שחטיה
לר' זירא לשנה א"ל תא נעביד כו'
אידחי ליה מימרא דרבה ולית
הלכתא כוותיה ולא שפיר דמי
למעבד הכי.

No Mitzvah to get Drunk

Drink until you don't know the difference [between Haman and Mordechai] – Rabbi Menachem Meiri (1249-1308, France) – a person must increase happiness on this day [Purim] through eating and drinking until there is nothing missing, and in any event we are not commanded to get drunk and degrade ourselves because of the happiness, because we weren't commanded to have a meaningless and vapid joy but rather a happiness of enjoyment that arrives from love for G-d and thanks for the miracles that G-d did for us, and see more what he said on that Gemara. (Biur Halacha 695:2)

עַד דֵּלָא יָדַע וְכו' - וז"ל
הַמְאִירִי חַיִּיב אָדָם
לְהַרְבוֹת בְּשִׂמְחָה בְּיוֹם זֶה
וּבִאֲכִילָה וּבִשְׂתִיָּה עַד שֶׁלֹּא
יִחְסַר שׁוֹם דָּבָר וּמ"מ אֵין
אָנוּ מְצוּיִן לְהִשְׁתַּכַּר
וּלְהַפְחִית עַצְמֵינוּ מִתּוֹךְ
הַשִּׂמְחָה שֶׁלֹּא נִצְטוּיְנוּ עַל
שִׂמְחָה שֶׁל הוֹלָלוֹת וְשֶׁל
שְׂטוֹת אֶלֶּא בְּשִׂמְחָה שֶׁל
תַּעֲנוּג שִׁיגִיעַ מִתּוֹכָהּ
לְאַהֲבַת הַש"י וְהוֹדָאָה עַל
הַנִּסִּים שֶׁעָשָׂה לָנוּ וְע"ש
מֵה שֶׁמְבָאֵר דְּבָרֵי הַגְּמָרָא.

What if you lose control when drunk?

And this is the language of the Chayay Adam (Rabbi Avraham Danzig 1748—1820, Vilna) : since all of the miracles were done by means of wine therefore the Sages obligated us to get drunk, or at least to drink more than we are used to in order to remember the great miracle, but if a person knows themselves that they will degrade themselves in that state from the a mitvah among the mitzvot such as Netilat Yadayim (washing ones hands), saying brachot, saying grace after meals, or that he won't pray Mincha or Maariv, or that he will behave with kalut rosh, frivolity, it is better not to get drunk so that all of your actions will be for the sake of Heaven. (Biur Halacha 695:2)

וז"ל הח"א כיון שכל הנס היה
ע"י יין לכן חייבו חכמים
להשתכר ולפחות לשתות יותר
מהרגלו כדי לזכור הנס הגדול
ואמנם היודע בעצמו שיזלזל אז
במצוה מן המצות בנט"י וברכה
ובהמ"ז או שלא יתפלל מנחה
או מעריב או שינהוג קלות
ראש מוטב שלא ישתכר וכל
מעשיו יהיו לש"ש עכ"ל:

When should one drink? Megillah 7b

- **Rava said: A Purim feast that one ate at night did not fulfill his obligation. What is the reason? “Days of feasting and gladness” (Esther 9:22) is written, i.e., days and not nights. (WDT)**

• אָמַר רַבָּא: סְעוּדַת פּוּרִים שְׁאַכְלָה
בַּלַּיְלָה — לֹא יֵצֵא יְדֵי חוּבָתוֹ. מֵאִי
טַעֲמָא — “יְמֵי מְשֻׁתָּה וְשִׂמְחָה”,
כְּתִיב:

How much should one drink?

Rambam Mishneh Torah, Scroll of Esther and Hanukkah 2:15(15)

He should drink wine until he becomes intoxicated and falls asleep in his intoxication....
(Sefaria)

משנה תורה, הלכות מגילה וחנוכה
ב'ט"ו(טו)

...ושותה יין עד שישתכר וירדם
בשכרותו...

Range of Recall

- Shulchan Arukh, Orach Chayyim 695:2(2)
One is obligated to be intoxicated on Purim to the point where he does not know [the difference] between "accursed is Haman" and "blessed is Mordechai".
- Rama: Some say it is not necessary to become drunk so much, but rather to drink more than he is used to (Kol Bo), and to fall asleep, (Rambam) and while he sleeps he does not know [the difference] between "accursed is Haman" and "blessed is Mordechai" (Maharil).
- [There is no difference] between one who has more and one who has less, as long as his heart is directed to heaven... (Sefaria Translation)

אורח חיים תרצ"ה:ב'
חייב אינש לבסומי
בפוריא עד דלא ידע בין
ארור המן לברוך מרדכי:

הגה: וי"א דא"צ
להשתכר כל כך אלא
ששתה יותר מלימודו
(כל בו) ויישן ומתוך
שיישן אינו יודע בין ארור
המן לברוך מרדכי
(מהרי"ל)

ואחד המרבה ואחד
הממעיט ובלבד שיכוין
לבו לשמים...

Who should drink?

R' Shmuel HaLevi Vosner (1913-2015, Bnei Brak)

And regarding what you asked whether women are included in the Mitzvah to get drunk on Purim ad di lo yada –

- In my opinion there is no question, that it is not relevant to women (even if you say it still applies nowadays based on the pesukim in the Megillah) because our Sages were exacting in Ketubot 65a from giving wine to women because the the urges it will incite and in Shulchan Arukh EHA 70, even if her husband is with her, the way is not until “lo teida” she doesn’t know, see the Meiri there about whether wine is good for women, these things are obvious. (Responsa Shevet Halevi 10:18:2)

שו"ת שבט הלוי חלק י סימן יח ב.

ואשר שאל אם נשים חייבות בכלל מצות היום גם חייב אינש לבשומי בפוריא עד דלא ידע.

- לדידי אין שום שאלה, דלא שייך זה באשה (גם אם ננקוט דשייך עוד בזה"ז כמבואר בפוסקים), דחז"ל הקפידו בכתובות ס"ה ע"א מליתן רבוי יין לאשה מטעמי התגברות היצר ובשו"ע אה"ע סי' ע', וגם אם בעלה עמה, אין דרך עד דלא תדע כמובן, ועיין לשון מאירי שם אין רבוי יין יפה לאשה, והדברים פשוטים.

Too young? R' Moshe Shternbuch

In my humble opinion to explain the idea of my elder zt"l [the GR"A that only adults are obligated in simcha but even children are required to hear Megillah] that in cases where there is an action of mitzvah such as Kriat Shma, Tephilin, Tzitzit, Shofar, Matzah etc a father is required to educate his children but a mitzvah whose foundation is fulfilled through the heart, such as the joy to one's heart by feasting and happiness is not relevant for the mitzvah of Chinuch, (education before Bar/Bat Mitzvah), because it is impossible for a child in practice to experience true 'Simcha' as commanded because everything to him is laughter and enjoyment and therefore it is not relevant to educate in this mitzvah, and our Sages did not require educating when he cannot fulfill the mitzvah, and Chinuch cannot work for Simcha in this case, and this is correct. (Moadim uZmanim 2:190)

מועדים וזמנים ח"ב-סימן קצ: ולענ"ד
ליישוב דברי זקני צ"ל, דבמקום שיש מעשה המצוה כמו ק"ש, תפלין, ציצית, שופר ומצה וכדו' האב מחוייב לחנך את בנו, אבל במצוה שיסודה מתקיים בלב, והיינו שמחת לבבו על ידי משתה ושמחה לא שייך חינוך, דקטן אי אפשר לו במציאות להרגיש שמחה כמצותה שהכל אצלו כשחוק ותיעתוע ולכך לא שייך לחנכו במצוה זו, ולא חייבו חז"ל לחנכו שאינו בר קיום המצוה ואין חינוך למצות שמחה כה"ג ודו"ק כי נכון הוא.

How will it affect you? R' Eliezer Melamed

If one knows that drinking a lot of wine causes him to cry and become depressed, or causes headaches, it is preferable for him to fulfill the mitzva by drinking just a little more than usual. This is because the main objective of the mitzva is to be happy, and if drinking makes one sad, he undermines the mitzva. If, however, he cries out of joy – for example, if he is happy to cry about important things, like the present state of the Jewish people, the rebuilding of the Holy Temple, or his own unrepentant spiritual state – he may fulfill the mitzva by drinking “until he does not know.”

If one knows that when he gets drunk he goes wild and hurts others, or he ends up wallowing in his own vomit and degrading himself in public, he should not get drunk. Rather, he should fulfill the mitzva by drinking more than usual. Such a person need not bemoan the fact that he cannot control himself when drunk. Even though the Sages state that “When wine enters, a secret comes out” (*Eruvin* 65a), and thus his actions while drunk seemingly show that he has a deep-seated inclination toward violence and rowdiness, nevertheless, the Sages also say, “The reward is proportionate to the exertion” (*Avot* 5:23). Since he actually

manages to curb his impulses in the course of daily life, it is clear that he continually makes great improvements.^[14]

In order to fulfill the mitzva properly, one must understand that alcohol reaches the height of its influence around twenty minutes after it is ingested. This delay causes some people to make a mistake: When five minutes pass after drinking a cup of wine or hard liquor, and they do not feel any significant change, they think that they need to drink another cup. And when, even then, they feel that they have not fulfilled the mitzva, they drink another cup, and – just to be sure – one more. Then, all of a sudden, the first cup starts taking effect, and then the second, the third, and the fourth. All at once they become very drunk, behave like animals, and begin to vomit, causing much shame and degradation. Therefore, one must know how to drink and rejoice, waiting at least a half-hour between drinks and incorporating one’s drinking into the meal. This way, people will be able to rejoice properly throughout Purim.

Message from Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, M.D.

February 13, 2014_

To our esteemed rabbis and community leaders:

As you know, I have been alerting the community of the increasing problem of alcohol abuse and marijuana smoking among Jewish adolescents. It is unfortunate that many people still do not accept that some of our own children are involved. This is happening to children from the finest families.

Given the gravity of the problem and the ineffectiveness of prevention programs, the very least we can do is to avoid encouraging intoxication.

Purim is soon upon us, and many people drink to excess because of the mistaken notion that there is a “mitzvah” to get drunk on Purim. Rabbi Shneur Zalman in his Shulchan Aruch (529) says, “It is impossible to serve Hashem either in levity or drunkenness.” One of the final authorities on halacha, the Chafetz Chaim in [Mishna Berura](#) (695) states clearly that the proper thing to do is not to drink to intoxication, but rather to drink just a bit more than is

customary (which would be a glass or two of wine), and go to sleep. This is the proper way to fulfil “not distinguishing between ‘cursed be Haman’ and ‘blessed be Mordechai.’ ”

There is certainly no justification for drinking anything but wine. Aruch Hashulchan (695) condemns drinking spirits (liquor) in very sharp terms. Alcohol intoxication is an abomination, and overriding the rulings of the Baal Hatanya and the Chafetz Chaim by drinking to intoxication is inexcusable.

Let us use good judgement on Purim. We should set a model for our children by not drinking to excess and by supervising adolescents so that they do not drink. We can all enjoy a safe, respectable Purim.

I invite you to affix your signature below, indicating your agreement and support, and to distribute this letter throughout the community.

Sincerely,

Abraham J. Twerski, M.D.

Summary

- Who is obligated to drink?
 - Men
 - Not women and children (definitely not until “Lo Yada”)
- What?
 - Ideally wine
- When?
 - During Purim Seuda, not at night
- Where?
 - In a safe location
- Why?
 - Because the miracle took place because of wine
- How much?
 - Until cannot distinguish between Cursing Haman and Blessing Mordechai
 - More than one is used to
 - Until gets tired, takes a nap
 - Way that brings joy
 - Not leading to violence, prohibitions
- Responsibly

DRUG ABUSE, THE PANDEMIC, AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

A PANEL DISCUSSION

Featured Panelists:



R' Chaim Metzger
Moderator



Dr. Michael Kirzner
Addiction Medicine
University of Toronto



Rabbi Charles Grysman
Senior Rabbi
Zichron Yisroel - Ayin
L'Tzion Congregation



David Kaufman
Director of Outreach
& Education at JACS
CCAC

WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?

Please submit questions and sign up at:
<http://tiny.cc/drugspanel>

SUNDAY, MARCH 13

**10 AM: OPENING REMARKS, FOLLOWED
BY PANELIST PRESENTATIONS**

10:45 AM : Q & A

ZOOM LINK: <http://tiny.cc/chaimmetzger>

Please submit questions
tiny.cc/drugspanel