

## 1. Guidelines of *Misrad haBriyut* for Mishloach Manot

<https://www.health.gov.il/Subjects/FoodAndNutrition/Nutrition/brochures/Pages/Purim.aspx>

מנהג פורים - משלוח מנות איש לרעהו. לרוב אנו נותנים ומקבלים משלוחי ממתקים, חטיפים ועוגות. הפעם אנו מציעים לנהוג קצת אחרת:

- ברוח המצווה - חשוב שיהיו לפחות שתי מנות מזון שונות.
- ברוח התזונה הים תיכונית, מומלץ על:
  - גיוון בקבוצות המזון ולא דווקא ממתקים וחטיפים - אפשר לוותר עליהם בכלל.
  - מנות עם ערך תזונתי גבוה ללא כמויות מיותרות של סוכר, שומן ומלח. הכוונה היא למשלוחי מנות שהכנו בעצמנו בבית, מחומרי גלם טבעיים, שלא עברו עיבוד, למשל דגנים מלאים, ירקות, פירות וקטניות...
- לא חייבים להתמקד רק באוכל. אפשר לשלב במשלוח המנות גם מנה מקורית כמו עציץ עם פרחי העונה או עציץ עם עשב תיבול... גם לנוי וגם למאכל!...

A custom of Purim is sending portions, each to his fellow. Mostly, we give and receive deliveries of sweets, candies and cakes. This time, we suggest doing this a bit differently.

- In the spirit of the mitzvah – it is important to have at least two different kinds of food portions.
- In the spirit of the Mediterranean Diet, it is advisable to have:
  - Variety in the types of food, and not only sweets and candies; one could abandon those altogether.
  - Portions with high nutritional value, without excessive sugar, fat or salt. The point would be to send homemade portions, from natural, unprocessed ingredients, like whole grains, vegetables, fruits and beans...
- One need not focus exclusively on food. One could blend into the *mishloach manot* an original component, like a pot with seasonal flowers, or a pot with herbs... attractive and edible!

## Halachah: The Rejected Mishloach Manot

### 2. Rabbi Moshe Isserles (16<sup>th</sup> century Poland), Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 695:4

ואם שולח מנות לרעהו והוא אינו רוצה לקבלם, או מוחל לו, יצא.

And if one sends portions to his fellow, and [the recipient] doesn't accept them, or forgives it, he has fulfilled his duty.

### 3. Rabbi Yisrael Isserlein (15<sup>th</sup> century Austria), Terumat haDeshen 111

שאלה: בני אדם השולחים לחבריהם בפורים חלוקים וסדינים וכה"ג, יוצאים ידי משלוח מנות או לאו?

תשובה: יראה דאין יוצאים בהן דנראה טעם דמשלוח מנות הוא כדי שיהא לכל אחד די וספק לקיים הסעודה כדינא...

Question: People send their fellows clothing and blankets and the like on Purim; do they fulfill *mishloach manot*, or not?

Answer: It appears that they do not fulfill their duty with these items, because it appears that the reason for *mishloach manot* is so that each person will have sufficient means to fulfill the feast according to the law...

### 4. Rabbi Shlomo HaLevi Alkabetz (16<sup>th</sup> century Israel), Manot Halevi to Esther 9:19

עושים יום י"ד שמחה ומשתה וי"ט ומשלוח מנות איש לרעהו, כמו שהיה ענינם כאיש א' להקהל כל אחד עם חברו, הפך "איש צר ואויב" לשון

רמיה האומר "עם א' מפוזר"...

They make the fourteenth day [a day of] joy and feasting and Yom Tov and *mishloach manot* to each other, as they acted as one person to gather, each with the other, the opposite of the false speech of "the foe and enemy" who said, "one nation, scattered"...

### 5. Rambam (12<sup>th</sup> century Egypt), Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Megilah 2:15

כיצד חובת סעודה זו? שיאכל בשר ויתקן סעודה נאה כפי אשר תמצא ידו... וכן חייב אדם לשלוח שתי מנות של בשר או שני מיני תבשיל או שני

מיני אוכלין לחבירו...

What is the obligation for this meal? To eat meat and prepare a fine meal as one can afford... And one must send two portions of meat or two kinds of cooked food or two kinds of food to his fellow...

### 6. Rabbi Asher Weiss (21<sup>st</sup> century Israel), Minchat Asher, Moadim, Purim 27:1

הנה לכאורה מסתברא דלא נחלקו בגדר המצוה להלכה, ולכו"ע נתינת המנות לצורך הסעודה היא, כמבואר בדברי התה"ד... נראה דלא כתב

המנות הלוי דבריו אלא כטעם נוסף בדרך הדרוש והמוסר ולא להלכה...

ולכן נראה ברור בדברי הרמ"א דהא דיצא ידי חובתו אי"ז משום שקיים טעם המצוה אלא דאף שלא נתקיים טעם המצוה על ידו מ"מ יצא ידי

חובתו דלא חייבוהו חכמים אלא לשלוח ואין בידו להבטיח שחבירו יקבל...

It appears logical [to say] that they did not disagree regarding the halachic parameters of the mitzvah; everyone agrees that giving the portions is for the needs of the meal, as per Terumat haDeshen... It appears that the Manot HaLevi did not write his words other than as an added reason, homiletically, as *mussar*, not as halachah... And therefore it appears clear that Rabbi Moshe Isserles meant that one fulfills his duty not because he has fulfilled the reason for the mitzvah, but that even though he has not fulfilled the reason for the mitzvah, still, he has fulfilled the mitzvah for the Sages did not obligate him beyond sending. He cannot guarantee that his fellow will accept it...

#### Anthropology: Why do we share food?

7. Smith, Bird, Bird, *The benefits of costly signaling: Meriam turtle hunters*, Behavioral Ecology 14:116-126 (Jan 2003)  
Signalers (hunters) gain social and reproductive benefits. Specifically, we find that successful hunters gain social recognition, have an earlier onset of reproduction, achieve higher age-specific reproductive success, and gain higher quality mates, who also achieve above-average reproductive success...

8. Stevens & Stephens, *Food Sharing: A Model of Manipulation by Harassment*, Behavioral Ecology 13:3 (2002)  
We propose a game theoretical model of a general sharing situation in which food owners share because it is in their own self-interest – they avoid high costs associated with beggar harassment... Our model predicts that harassment can be a profitable strategy for beggars if they reap some direct benefits from harassing other than shared food...

9. Perry, *Reciprocal Altruism in Vampire Bats* (and see Moed Katan 28b)  
Vampire bats will starve after 60 bloodless hours, losing as much as 25% of their bodyweight, making them unable to maintain a critical body temperature. They need to eat 50-100% of their body weight in blood every night. Blood is preferentially donated to bats in critical need (those that would reach minimum weight within 24 hours) within a given roost; if a bat has more than 24 hours until starvation it will usually not be fed.

10. Fox, *Food and Eating: An Anthropological Perspective* (and see Mishnah Berachot 7:3-4)  
Because of its centrality in our lives, food becomes a perfect vehicle for ritual, and food rituals become central to most religions; food taboos mark off one sect or denomination from another... Modern anthropology tends to stress the usefulness of food as a marker of social boundaries. As the late Meyer Fortes said, it is not so much that food is "good to eat" as that it is "good to forbid." Catholics, for example, could find a bond between each other and a mark of difference from Protestants by substituting fish for meat on Fridays. It was probably a mistake for the Catholic Church to end the ban on meat; it had helped make Catholics feel special, and many continue to observe it voluntarily.

11. Kaplan and Gurven, *The Natural History of Human Food Sharing and Cooperation: A Review and a New Multi-Individual Approach to the Negotiation of Norms* (2001) (and see Rosh HaShanah 31b)  
The acquisition of difficult-to-acquire foods, especially wild game, often requires the coordinated efforts of several individuals. However, usually only a single individual is identified as the owner of the acquired resource, determined by cultural-specific norms of ownership... Owners may reward non-owners for their current cooperation by giving them shares of the resource, but this sharing may also act as a means of insuring future cooperation in similar food production activities. Thus, sharing is a form of trade-based reciprocal altruism, where labor is rewarded with food. An alternative interpretation of the same phenomenon is that engaging in group production when there is sharing provides participants with higher per capita returns than if they produced food by themselves. Thus, group production may represent a form of byproduct mutualism (Clements and Stephens 1997; Dugatkin 1997; Alvard and Nolin in press).

12. Goldstein, *Melting pots and Rainbows*, Gastronomica (May 2008) (and see Bava Batra 144b)  
Nearly fifteen years after independence, the specter of apartheid is still painfully apparent in South Africa. Yet, an exciting new inclusivity is visible in the cultural sphere, particularly in the kitchens of some talented chefs, where the various traditions comprising South Africa's multilayered cuisine come together. "Rainbow cuisine" has proved to be more than just a catchy phrase. It has actually impelled change, at least in the culinary arts. The larger question is whether this metaphor can have a wider impact and help shape social behavior.