



# Purim on Motzaei Shabbat

לעילוי נשמת  
 יואל אפרים בן אברהם עוזיאל זלצמן ז"ל

**Question:** What should we know about the transition from Shabbat to Purim this year (outside Yerushalayim)?

**Answer:** There are no major issues, but there are a few that are worthwhile to raise.

Normally, it is forbidden to eat a half hour before the time for *Megillah* reading (Mishna Berura 692:15; see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 235:2), which is *tzeit hakochavim*. However, since *seuda shlishit* is a *mitzvah* and it freezes, in some ways, the coming of the next day, one may continue to eat until *tzeit hakochavim* (Mikraei Kodesh (Harari), Purim 4:5 in the name of Rav Mordechai Eliyahu). Using one's standard assumption of when *tzeit hakochavim* is (not including the extra time for ending Shabbat), he might have to finish slightly before usual. There may also be a slight advantage to finishing eating bread by sunset or at least *tzeit hakochavim* to avoid the question about whether he should be saying *Al Hanissim* in *Birkat Hamazon* (see Mishna Berura 188:33). In any case, one should not recite *Al Hanissim* even if he *bentches* after *tzeit hakochavim* (ibid.).

It is generally forbidden to prepare (*hachana*) on Shabbat for *Motzaei Shabbat*, even for a purpose of an after-Shabbat *mitzvah* (see Mishna Berura 667:5). However, one

may prepare the *laining* on Shabbat even from a *Megillah* scroll (it is therefore not *muktzeh* – Mishna Berura 688:18). It is forbidden to bring the *Megillah* to *shul* on Shabbat, even if there is an *eiruv*, due to *hachana* (Chayei Adam II:155:10), unless he will read/learn from it before Shabbat ends (Sha'arei Teshuva 693:2; see Machazei Eliyahu 58).

*Rishonim* debate whether to read *Megilat Esther* in *shul* before or after *Havdala* (see Darchei Moshe, OC 693:2). The opinion accepted both by Ashkenazim (Rama, OC 693:1) and Sephardim (see Chazon Ovadia, Purim p. 68) is to read the *Megillah* before *Havdala*. The Levush and Gra (to OC 693:1) say the reason is to delay the exit of Shabbat (based on Pesachim 105b) despite the preference that we usually do the more common *mitzvah* first. This is one of the factors in the *machloket* whether to light Chanuka candles before or after *Havdala* (see Mishna Berura 681:3 and Be'ur Halacha ad loc.). Some say that the matters are fully equivalent, and in both areas, in *shul* one does *Havdala* after the present *mitzvah*, whereas at home there is more reason to do *Havdala* first (Da'at Torah to 693:1). Some say that *Megillah* reading has a special status of *pirsumei nisa* that exceeds even that of Chanuka candles (Imrei Esh, OC 53).

Another *machloket* is, given that *Havdala* is done after the *Megillah*, whether one should at least make the *beracha* on fire

Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, is headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by Rav Shaul Yisraeli, zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in the Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Eretz Hemdah, and OU Israel's Torah Tidbits.



before that. The Kolbo's (41) first opinion is that we should thank Hashem for light before benefitting from it during the reading, and this is the *minhag* of most Sephardim (Chazon Ovadia *ibid.* p. 67). Ashkenazim follow the Kolbo's second opinion, that there is no problem with using light before the *beracha*, as that requirement is fulfilled every morning, and here it is a general praise for Hashem's introducing fire to Adam (Pri Megadim, *MZ* 693:1, based on Maharsh Halevi, OC 28).

There is an apparently relatively recent practice, with significant upside in many communities – to hold *Ma'ariv* on *Motzaei Shabbat*/Purim well after its regular time. This gives families the time to prepare for *Megillah* reading (including driving, getting kids' costumes on, etc.). It is possible to make *Havdala* before *Ma'ariv*, including the *Havdala* candle, after making a declaration of ending *Shabbat*, at the proper time (see Mishna Berura 294:1). Under these circumstances that many people will be doing significant *melacha* before *Ma'ariv*, it is likely also worthwhile to do full *Havdala* (see Shulchan Aruch, OC 299:10).

## Having a dispute?



For a Din Torah in English or Hebrew contact:

Eretz Hemdah - Gazit  
Rabbinical Court

077-215-8-215 • Fax: (02) 537-9626  
beitdin@eretzhemdah.org

There is no problem here doing *Havdala* before *Megillah* reading, considering that the communal reading is not ready to be done yet (one should not eat other than drinking the "*Havdala* wine"). In *shuls* that never do *Havdala* on *Motzaei Shabbat*, there should be no need on Purim. For those *shuls* that recite *Havdala*, it is best that one who has not yet recited *Havdala* do so. ■

*Gemach for Chatan and Kalla:*

**Meals for wedding and Sheva Brachot at cost**

Eida Hachareidis Hechsher

Tel:052-633-1744  
gadgadood@gmail.com



## US BROKERAGE SERVICES IN ISRAEL

# Get the Best of Both Worlds

Keep your money in the US and receive local expert investment advice

CALL **02-624-0995 054-599-9530**

aaron@lighthousecapital.co.il • www.aaronkatsman.com

Securities offered through Portfolio Resources Group, Inc., member of FINRA, SIPC, MSRB, SIFMA

