

### Sanctifying Shabbat

Amongst everything going on in this week's Torah portion, we encounter a monumental occasion in Jewish history, the delivery of the Ten Commandments. Amidst this momentous occasion, God tells our people

זְכוֹר אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְשׁוֹ

Remember the sabbath day to sanctify it" (Ex. 20.8).

This is certainly an important mitzvah, but what does it mean?

In early midrashic approaches to this mitzvah, our sages understood this commandment to relate to Friday night kiddush, as we read,

זְכוֹר זְכוּרָהוּ עַל הַכּוֹס מִיְכָאן שְׁאִין מִקְדָּשִׁין  
אֵלָא עַל הַכּוֹס שֶׁל יַיִן

'Remember' - Make mention of it upon a cup; from here, we only sanctify through a cup of wine"

(*Mekhilta deRabbi Shimon ben Yohai* 20:8 (all subsequent references are this source)).

After having discussed the How of this mitzvah, the sages discuss the When of this mitzvah:

"לְקַדְשׁוֹ. בַּלַּיְלָה קָדְשׁוֹ"

'To sanctify it' - we sanctify it at night."

And, if one hadn't:

מִיַּיִן שְׂאֵם לֹא קִידֵשׁ בַּלַּיְלָה מִקְדָּשׁ וְהוֹלֵךְ  
כָּל יוֹם ת"ל זְכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְשׁוֹ

Whence is it that if one had not sanctified at night, one sanctifies at any point during the daytime - it is learnt to be read as

'Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it'."

While so far we have gleaned that the sages, in their wisdom, understood this mitzvah to be focused on inaugurating Shabbat over a glass of wine as Shabbat enters, the sages also understood the sanctification to achieve an elevated experience, as we also read:

לְקַדְשׁוֹ בְּמָה אֶתָּה מִקְדָּשׁוֹ בְּמֵאֵל  
וּבְמִשְׁתֵּהוּ וּבְכִסּוֹת נְקִיָּה שְׁלֵא תֵהָא סְעוּדַתְךָ  
שֶׁל שַׁבָּת כְּסְעוּדַת הַחֹל וְלֹא עֲטִיפְתָּךְ שֶׁל  
"שַׁבָּת בְּעֲטִיפְתָּךְ בַּחֹל"

'To sanctify it' through what? You sanctify it with eating, with drinking, and with clean clothes, so that your Shabbat meal is not like that of your weekday meal, nor that your Shabbat clothing is not like that of your weekday clothing."

This final teaching in this midrash implores us to attain a special experience of drinking and eating on Shabbat; not just for kiddush to bring in Shabbat, but also to

elevate our eating and drinking experience throughout our Shabbat to make it a higher level. Why should our Shabbat drinking and eating be the same as during the week?

While we typically think about dressing more nicely for Shabbat, as well as eating finer foods on Shabbat, how often do we do, as this midrash urges us to do? This final aspect of this midrash certainly implores us to elevate our drinking for Shabbat, perhaps sharing nicer wine, whiskey, or whichever beverages one prefers.

May we all fulfill this midrashic teaching and elevate our drinking experience on Shabbat.

#### l'chaim!



# Timing of Purim-Drinking

As Purim approaches in a few weeks, one matter concerns when one is supposed to eat and drink in celebration of the festival. We read in the book of Esther that Purim is characterized as “יְמֵי מְשֻׁתָּה וְשִׂמְחָה Days of drinking and celebration” (Esther 9:22), so we know that drinking is certainly a component of the day.

However, can one drink to fulfill one’s Purim celebration at nighttime or daytime? A story that occurred at the turn of the fifth century CE illustrates some ambiguity around this question (*Megillah* 7b (MS Munich 95)):

רב אשי הוה יתיב קמיה דרב כהנא נגה ולא אתו רבנן

א"ל מאי טעמא לא קאתו רבנן

א"ל דילמ' טרחו בסעודת פורים

א"ל לא הוה אפשר למיכלה באורתא

א"ל ולא סבר לה מר להא דרבא דאמ' רבא סעודת פורים

שאכלה בלילה לא יצא ידי חובתו מאי טעמ' ימי משתה ושמחה

א"ל אמ' רבא הכי

א"ל אין

תנא מיניה ארבעין זימנין ודמיא ליה כמאן דמנח ליה בכיסתיה

Rav Ashi was sitting before Rav Kahana and it grew dark, but the rabbis had not come.

He said to him, “Why have the rabbis not come?”

He said to him, “Maybe they are busy with the Purim meal.”

He said to him, “They were not able to eat it at night?”

He said to him, “Does the master not opine that of

Rava’s, as Rava said, ‘One who eats the Purim meal at night has not fulfilled his obligation. What is the reason? “Days of drinking and celebration”?’

He said to him, “Rava said that?”

He said to him, “Yes.”

He repeated it 40 times and it became as if it rested in his pocket.

While Rav Kahana (led the Pumbedita academy from 395 until 412 CE) clearly expected the opportunity to study with his fellow rabbis on Purim day, it was through the sharing of Rav Ashi (352–427 CE) with him the innovative teaching of Rava (280 – 352 CE) innovative teaching from within the previous century that one only fulfills one’s Purim-drinking and eating requirement during the daytime.

Ultimately, Rabbi Yosef Karo (1488-1575 CE) wrote in the *Shulhan Arukh* (Set Table) what Rava had innovated (OH 695:1), although Rabbi Moshe Isserles (1530-1572 CE) wrote thereupon that “ומ”מ Nevertheless, one should be happy and add more during his meal even at night.”

Thus, while it is certainly appropriate and expected to eat and drink during the night of Purim, the special bonus celebrating, as innovated by Rava, comes through the additional eating, drinking, and celebrating during the daytime of Purim.



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## Newest Episode

This week's episode of *The Jewish Drinking Show* features Dr. Michal Shaul discussing Kiddush Clubs as Mens' Clubs, wherein she shares her research from her article “Kiddush Club: Fraternity, Authority, Class and Gender Challenges in the Modern Orthodox Synagogue,” which was published a half-year ago in *Contemporary Jewry* (August 2022), the first-ever academic article on kiddush clubs. For more on kiddush clubs, stay tuned for next week's episode featuring Hudi Zinar on his kiddush club experiences.

