

Summary of Rav Schachter's Positions on Inyanei Purim during COVID

You must listen to the recording to understand the sources and context of his guidance:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRHqwbpTJZs&feature=youtu.be>

ZOOM

Last year we were caught last minute, by surprise, and needed to rely on ZOOM for many things. ZOOM is permissible only גדול בדחק and all efforts should be made **not** to rely on it.

The Rav and Rav Moshe held that one could be יוצא קריאת המגילה over a microphone because it is ספק לקולא. Rav S. Z. Auerbach said in the name of the Chazon Ish that one is not יוצא over a microphone. This is also the opinion cited by R. Akiva Eiger ערוך על שולחן ערוך in the name of the טורי אבן.

Rav Schachter emphasized that last year we were not prepared. This year we should prepare in advance and not rely on ZOOM, telephones, or loudspeakers. Nevertheless, בשעת הדחק גדול, one may rely on these technologies. If one is listening to a Zoom reading of the Megilah, and they have a Kosher Megilah in front of them, and they read from their Kosher Megilah as they are hearing it on Zoom, everyone Paskins that they fulfill the Mitzvah properly.

פרשת זכור

- Ideally, a person should hear פרשת זכור with a מנין on שבת.
- If one cannot hear it with a מנין, one may read it to oneself from a ספר תורה without ברכות.
- Readings can be arranged to hear פרשת זכור on שבת ערב and שבת afternoon (without) ברכות גדול. בדחק גדול one may rely on ZOOM.
- Many אחרונים disagree with the אברהם מגן and do not hold that one is יוצא with the reading of עמלק on Purim morning, but need to hear Parshas Zachor.

מקרא מגילה

- בעל קריאה one should hear the מגילה directly from the קריאה.
- One may read privately from a קלף. No bracha of הרב את ריבנו without a Minyan.
- One may read from a קלף, repeating the words one hears from a taped reading of the מגילה.
- Earliest times to read:
 - In morning: עלות השחר after בדיעבד ▪ הנץ החמה after לכתחילה
- If the minyan needs to begin at עלות, before earliest time for טלית ותפילין, it is possible to read the מגילה before שחרית.

ליל פורים

- צאת הכוכבים one should read the megillah after.
- בשעת הדחק one may read השמשות בין השמשות, and even as early as פלג המנחה. If relying on this קולא, it must be announced that it is acceptable only בשעת הדחק.
- It is better to hear the קריאה live from פלג המנחה than to hear it later through ZOOM.

- It is permissible to eat after צאת הכוכבים if one will not hear the מגילה until later at night.
- There is no problem for a בעל קורא to wear a mask.
- In order to facilitate social distancing for קריאת המגילה, it is permissible for men and women of the same household to sit together.

משלוח מנות

- One fulfills the obligation of משלוח מנות through “group מנות” only if there are sufficient מנות ב' for each contributor.

מתנות לאביונים

- One can donate prior to פורים through, for example, a credit card payment and arrange to have the money distributed on Purim itself.

סעודת פורים

- One should have בשר ויין at the meal.
- The סעודה can be eaten until 3 שעות זמניות before מנחה קטנה.
- Unless it is one's מנהג, one should not be פורס מפה ומקדש for the סעודה.
- This year, as Purim occurs on Friday, Erev Shabbos, the Seudas Purim should be eaten early as not to conflict with the Shabbos Seudah in the evening. The Seudah should be eaten before Midday, which is this year 12:09pm. One can have Seudas Purim as a brunch. If one is running late, one can start as late as the 10th halachic hour which this year is 2:58pm.