



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on November 23, 2020

Brooklyn Jews Hold Massive Indoor Wedding; City Government Clueless

Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn outfoxed the entire New York City government to hold an indoor wedding ceremony attended by thousands with no social distancing or mask wearing.

According to the [New York Post](#), “Guests crammed shoulder to shoulder inside the Yetev Lev temple in Williamsburg for the Nov. 8 nuptials — stomping, dancing and singing at the top of their lungs without a mask in sight, videos obtained by The Post show.”

The Yiddish newspaper *Der Blatt*, published by the Satmar sect of Hasidic Jews, reported on the wedding on November 13. The groom was Yoel Teitelbaum, grandson of Satmar Grand Rabbi Aaron Teitelbaum; the bride was unnamed, though a relative told the *Post* her first name is Miriam.

“Due to the ongoing situation with government restrictions, preparations were made secretly and discreetly, so as not to draw attention from strangers,” wrote *Der Blatt* (as quoted by the *Post*).

“In recent weeks, organizers worked tirelessly to arrange everything in the best way possible. All notices about upcoming celebrations were passed along through word of mouth, with no notices in writing, no posters on the synagogue walls, no invitations sent through the mail, nor even a report in any publication, including this very newspaper.”

The secrecy was necessary, of course, because both New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo have issued orders restricting the size of indoor gatherings and mandating social distancing and face masks in such gatherings. In October, the state prevented another Williamsburg wedding — this one for a grandson of another grand rabbi — from taking place. That event had been well publicized and was expected to draw a crowd of 10,000.

The Jews learned from that experience and kept the next big event under wraps. “The days leading up to the wedding were filled with tension, not knowing what the next day, or the next moment, will bring; which disgruntled outcast might seize this opportunity to exploit even what hasn’t been written or publicized, to create an unnecessary uproar, and to disrupt the simcha [joy], God forbid,” reported *Der Blatt*.

The November 8 wedding filled the 7,000-seat Satmar synagogue to capacity; and, as mentioned above, it was hardly a quiet affair. According to the *Post*, “The Sunday night wedding capped a three-day affair, which began Friday night with four hours of festivities, and continued Saturday with Sabbath



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services, including a bris [circumcision] of an 8-day-old boy.”

Nevertheless, the government never caught on.

“Mitch Schwartz, the mayor’s director of rapid response, could not explain why the city failed to detect the enormous Nov. 8 celebration — and let it go off without a hitch,” penned the *Post*.

Most embarrassing for the city enforcers is the fact that the synagogue is next door to a fire station, and the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) “is one of a host of city agencies that inspect sites for COVID-19 violations,” noted the *Post*. FDNY spokesman Frank Dwyer told the paper that while the wedding “clearly violated” some of the orders, firefighters didn’t do anything to stop it because “firehouses don’t conduct surveillance on their neighbors.”

Schwartz told the *Post*, “The city performs a tremendous number of inspections daily, and our community outreach team is dedicated to relaying the latest happenings across the city.”

“But let’s be clear: Indoor gatherings of this size aren’t acceptable, and they’re offensive to all the sacrifices New Yorkers have made to keep their families and neighbors safe from COVID-19.”

Despite his bluster, however, Schwartz would not say whether the synagogue would be punished for having the temerity to party like it’s 2019.

Undoubtedly, de Blasio and Cuomo would prefer to tread lightly. For months, they have been battling the Orthodox Jewish community while allowing Black Lives Matter and Joe Biden “victory” demonstrations to take place. Some Jewish congregations are [suing](#) Cuomo over his restrictions on their religious freedom.

In the meantime, *Der Blatt* captured the feeling of having outwitted the tyrants: “Now that the wedding has passed, thank God, after being held with great splendor and fanfare, the sentiment expressed by all is: how privileged we are, how good our portion, how fortunate our lot, to have merited the experience of such a glorious night.”



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