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Practical Guide for Shavuot

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Preface

With Hakadosh Baruch Hu’s kindness we succeeded in compiling an interesting and extensive collection of articles on the halachos of Shavuot. In an effort to spread Torah and understand the complex topics of Shavuot in a new light, we have chosen to share this packet with you. As we reach this milestone, it is without doubt due to certain individuals who deserve proper recognition. Firstly, we would like to thank Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Mordechai Willig for reviewing the Halachos of this packet. We would like to thank the editors who spent a lot of time researching the topics and working on the articles. Our editors include: Dubbin Hanon, Russell Spiewak, Ike Sultan, and Jeremy Perlow. Ben Sultan designed the cover. The printing was thanks to SOY and its prestigious board members including: Tuvya Miller, President, Shua Brick, VP, Jonah Sieger, MYP VP, Ben Barel, JSS VP, Michael Levy, BMP VP, Gavriel Rudansky, IBC VP.

Eating Dairy on Shavuot (Ike Sultan)

1. The minhag Yisrael is to have dairy foods on Shavuot.¹
2. It is preferable to eat meat at the Yom Tov meals. While some consider this to be an obligation, others hold that there is no technical requirement to do so.²

¹ Rama 494:3 writes that the minhag is to eat dairy foods on Shavuot. He explains that by having a dairy meal, one ensures that he will have two loaves of bread, one for the dairy meal and one for the meat meal. This is significant because the two loaves of bread serve as a commemoration of the Shte HaLechem brought in the Beit HaMikdash on Shavuot. The Mishna Brurah (494:12) adds an alternative reason for the custom: the Jews had only dairy food immediately after Matan Torah, because preparing kosher meat takes a long time. Thus, we eat dairy in commemoration of Matan Torah. The Mishna Brura (494:13) also writes that in some communities they would drink milk and eat honey because the Torah is compared to milk and honey: “Devash ve’chalav tachat le’shonech”

Additionally, the Olelot Efraim (Ma’amar 141) writes that the reason for the minhag is that Chazal (Eiruvim 52b) compare learning Torah to a baby suckling milk: just as a baby always finds a new and sweet taste in the milk, so too the learner always a new and sweet taste in Torah.

² The Rambam (Yom Tov 6:18) rules that the mitzvah of Simchat Yom Tov is fulfilled through consumption of meat

and wine. The Beit Yosef 529:2 asks why the Rambam codifies the consumption of meat on Yom Tov when the Gemara (Pesachim 109a) states clearly that the mitzvah of Simcha is fulfilled through eating meat only during the time of the Beit HaMikdash, while nowadays the mitzvah is fulfilled through wine alone. Accordingly, the S”A 529:1 writes that one must have wine at each Yom Tov meal and makes no mention of the consumption of meat. The Eliyah Rabba 529:6 and Bei’ur Halacha 529 s.v. Keitzad explain that the Shulchan Aruch intentionally omitted the obligation to eat meat because of his question in the Beit Yosef.

The Yam Shel Shlomo (Beitzah 2:5) answers the Beit Yosef’s question by reinterpreting the Gemara to mean that nowadays, one must have wine in addition to meat, as opposed to the times of the Beit HaMikdash when one could fulfill the mitzvah through meat without wine. Thus, Mor U’Ketziyah 529, Kitzur S”A 103:7, Aruch HaShulchan 529:5, and Chazon Ovadia (Yom Tov, p. 319) rule that it is an obligation to eat meat on Yom Tov.

3. It is preferable to have meat both at the nighttime and daytime meal of Yom Tov. Those who have a practice to eat one dairy meal, however, have upon what to rely.³

Staying Up All Night (Ike Sultan)

1. One of the most time-honored and beautiful minhagim of Shavuot is staying up in anticipation of accepting the Torah on Shavuot morning.⁴ Symbolically, it is a chance to show our excitement about how Torah is always new and extremely precious to us.⁵ A

The Bach 529, however, explains that although there is no obligation to eat meat nowadays, there still is a mitzvah to do so, and one would fulfill the Mitzvah of Simcha thereby. The Magen Avraham 529:3, Shulchan Aruch HaRav 529:7, Mishna Brurah 529:11, and Kaf HaChaim 529:28 agree.

See also the Sha'agat Aryeh (Siman 65), who argues that Simchat Yom Tov does not obligate one to eat meat in particular; rather, it is fulfilled by what is subjectively considered enjoyable by each person (see Pesachim *ibid.*). Birkei Yosef 529:4 agrees. Darkei Teshuva 89:19 quotes Rav Chaim of Sanz as disagreeing with the Sha'agat Aryeh.³ The Darkei Teshuva (*ibid.*) mentions a number of minhagim:

(A) Some eat only dairy on Shavuot in order to fulfill the minhag. The Darkei Teshuva disapproves of this practice because he accepts the view of the Rambam that there is an obligation to eat meat on Yom Tov (see footnote 2).
(B) Some eat dairy during the nighttime meal and meat during the daytime meal. Such was the minhag of the Steipler (Orchos Rabbeinu v. 2 p. 98). The Darkei Teshuva comments that this is reasonable according to the Sha'agat Aryeh's (Siman 68) view that Simchat Yom Tov is only d'rabanan at night; however, others disagree with the Sha'agat Aryeh. Rav Hershel Schachter (Bikvei HaTzon p. 81) suggests that Simchat Yom Tov follows the schedule of Korbanot for which the night follows the day, implying that eating meat for Simchat Yom Tov does not apply the first night. Therefore, he said (oral communication) that if one enjoys dairy, one may have a dairy meal for the night of Yom Tov. This approach is supported by the Sfat Emet (Sukkah 48b), who writes that Simchat Yom Tov can be fulfilled with one meat meal, either during the night or day. Rabbi Mordechai Willig (Pesachim Shiur 110, min 40-50) agrees with this reasoning.
(C) Some eat a dairy meal and then a meat meal. This is in accordance with the Rama 494:3. However, the Torat Chaim (Chullin 83a) writes that it is better to abrogate the minhag of eating dairy rather than have meat after eating dairy, which is forbidden according to the Zohar. The Darkei Teshuva responds that in order to fulfill this minhag, one may be lenient against the Zohar. Mishna Brurah 494:16 notes that one need not make Birkat HaMazon as long as he cleans his mouth by eating something parve (excluding a vegetable or date flour), drinks water or wine, and washes his hands (S'A Y.D. 89:2).

(D) Some eat a dairy kiddush, wait an hour, and then have a meat meal. The Darkei Teshuva finds this to be the most preferable minhag.

⁴ Magen Avraham (Intro to 494) quotes the Zohar (Beresheet 8a and Vayikra 97b) that says that the early Chasidim would learn all of Shavuot night to rectify the mistake of Bnei Yisrael who overslept on the morning of Matan Torah. The Chida (Birkei Yosef 494:8) and Mishna Brurah 494:1 also record this practice. Kaf Hachaim 494:6 quotes the Arizal as saying that if a person learns all night on Shavuot they will be protected the following year from any damage.

The Shlah (Shnei Luchot Habrit, Masechet Shavuot Perek Ner Mitzvah no. 5 s.v. velehorot) records a story of how Rav Yosef Karo, Rav Shlomo Alkabetz, and others gathered on Shavuot night to learn all night and merited to hear an angelic voice encouraging them to continue learning. Out of inspiration they decided to learn the next night as well.

Interestingly, the Zohar (Vayikra 98a, cited by the Shlah *ibid.* no. 3) states just like a bride is up all night before her wedding in anticipation preparing her ornaments, so too Bnei Yisrael should be up all night adorning themselves with Torah in order to enter the wedding procession with Hashem at Matan Torah. The analogy of Matan Torah to a wedding can be supported by the Gemara Brachot 5b.

⁵ Peninei Halacha (Moadim p. 432-3) in elaboration of the Magen Avraham writes that learning all night is symbolically critical of showing our excitement for the acceptance of Torah. The Kli Yakar (Vayikra 23:16) understands that the Torah's hint to the fact that Shavuot is the holiday of Matan Torah is that we bring a mincha from the new grain, namely the Shte HaLechem, two new loaves of bread. Based on Brachot 17a, he explains that bread represents the yetzer hara to which the Torah is the antidote and the fact that they are made from new grain indicates that our attitude towards Torah should be that we accept it like it is brand new every day. Furthermore, Rabbi Eli Reich (oral communication) explained that on Shavuot when the gerut of klal yisrael took place and halachically we were considered like newborns (*ger sh'nitgayer k'katan sh'nolad dami*), so we should approach Torah with an air of newness and excitement. Therefore, learning Torah all night in anticipation of Matan Torah is comparable to a child excited over a new toy and can't go to sleep because he wants to play with it. See also footnote 1 in the name of the Olelot Efraim, author of the Kli Yakar, for the reason for eating milk on Shavuot.

person should try to be *mechadesh* or come up with original insights in Torah on Shavuot and that will be a good sign for continuing to grow in learning the rest of the year.⁶

2. Even if a person feels that staying up all night isn't the most productive way to schedule one's learning, some say that it is nonetheless proper to maintain this minhag Yisrael.
3. Some say that if a person knows that on account of staying all night one won't be able to concentrate properly during davening the next morning, it is better not to stay up.⁷
4. Some have the custom to stay up on the second night as well.⁸
5. According to Ashkenazim, after daybreak⁹ one should use the bathroom, wash his hands for Netilat Yadayim with a Bracha, and then say Asher Yatzar.¹⁰ One should hear Elokai Neshama, HaMaavir Sheinah, and Birkot HaTorah from someone who slept. The rest of the Birkot HaShachar may be recited as usual.¹¹ If one normally wears a Talit for

⁶ Yalkut Yosef (Moadim p. 446)

⁷ Rav Shlomo Aviner

(<http://www.ravaviner.com/2013/05/laws-of-stayingawake-all-night-on.html>) explains that davening is a clear obligation while staying up all night learning is only a minhag. Therefore, if these two ideas are in conflict, it is better not to stay up. Nonetheless, Rav Chaim Kanievsky (Piskei Shemuot, pp. 81-82) said that since the custom is to learn on Shavuot night, it is preferable to learn at night even if it results in learning less on the following day. Similarly, Peninei Halacha (Moadim p. 433) writes that it is legitimate either to follow the minhag of learning all night even if it will be difficult to have concentration in davening the next morning or to decide to go to sleep so as to be able to daven and learn better during the day.

⁸ Kaf Hachaim 494:6, Piskei Teshuvot 494:4

⁹ Regarding Netilat Yadayim and Birkot HaTorah, it's clear that they shouldn't be recited until Alot HaShachar (Nitai Gavriel 18:1 and 20:1). Regarding Birkot HaShachar, Kaf HaChaim 46:49 writes that one can say all of them at Chatzot; however, Piskei Teshuvot 46:14 rules that one should wait until Alot HaShachar. Regarding Tallit, S"A 18:3 rules that one may not make the Bracha until MeSheYakir.

¹⁰ The Rosh (Brachot 9:23) writes that the reason a person must wash his hands in the morning is that one's hands almost certainly touched an unclean area. The Rashba (responsa 1:191), on the other hand, writes that the reason is that a person is created anew each morning. The Beit Yosef 4:13 writes that according to the Rosh, one who stays up all night doesn't have to wash because one can ensure that his hands stay clean, while according to the Rashba, one is created anew whether he slept or not. Because of this dispute, S"A and Rama 4:13 rule that one should wash without a bracha. Magen Avraham 494, Taz 4:9, Beirur HaGra 4:13, Birkei Yosef 46:12, and Mishna Brurah 494:1 agree. See, the Bach 4, Aruch HaShulchan 4:12, and Maaseh Rav (no. 2) who argue that one who didn't sleep can say the Bracha.

Hagahot Rabbi Akiva Eiger 4:12 writes that if one went to the bathroom, one can make the bracha. Olat Tamid 4:8, Eliyah Rabba 4:8, and Pri Megadim (E"A 494) agree. Artzot HaChaim 4:1 and Chaye Adam 7:6 seem to agree as well. Thus, Mishna Brurah 4:30 rules one should use the bathroom and dirty his hands, thus allowing him to wash his hands with a bracha.

Some achronim (Nitai Gavriel 18:1, Weekly Halacha Discussion, vol 2, p. 363, Halachically Speaking vol 7, issue 6, p. 9) quote the Mishna Brurah as saying that one should use the bathroom and leave out dirtying one's hands. I heard from Rabbi Mordechai Willig and Rabbi Hershel Schachter that although the Mishna Brurah certainly meant to be precise, one can make the bracha even if one merely touches an unclean area of the body.

Derech HaChaim 1:17 adds that even by touching an unclean area, one can make the bracha. Beirur Halacha D"H Veyitlem agrees. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Halichot Shlomo 2:24), however, argues that it is insufficient to touch an unclean area.

Maamar Mordechai 4:8 disagrees with Rabbi Akiva Eiger because even according to the Rashba there is a doubt as to whether one is considered created anew if he didn't sleep (see Magen Avraham 4:12). Kaf HaChaim 4:49 and Yalkut Yosef 4:9 agree and therefore conclude that one should not recite Al Netilat Yadaim.

¹¹ The Tur and S"A 47:12 write that if one is learning at night, one doesn't have to make new Birkot HaTorah as long as he didn't fall asleep. Beirur HaGra 47:12 explains that sleep is a hefsek and if one didn't sleep, one doesn't need new brachot. Chaye Adam 9:9, Mishna Brurah 47:28, and Rabbi Hershel Schachter (cited in Bet Yitzchak vol 30, p. 592) agree, but advise hearing them from someone who slept. Magen Avraham (47:12, 494) argues that essentially Birkot HaTorah are like Birkot HaShachar, which are said every day. He adds that it's preferable to hear them from someone who certainly is obligated. Eliyah Rabba 47:9, Birkei Yosef 46:12, and Aruch HaShulchan 47:23 concur. Kaf HaChaim 47:26 and Chazon Ovadyah (p. 312) write that the Sephardic minhag is to make Birkot HaTorah oneself.

Rama 46:8 writes that one may say all the Birkot HaShachar whether one experienced the event described in the particular bracha or not. Although the S"A argues, Kaf HaChaim 46:49 writes that the Sephardic minhag is to follow the Rama.

Eliyah Rabba 46:12 quotes the Ateret Zekenim 46:3 who says that if one didn't sleep, one shouldn't say Elokai Nishama or HaMaavir Sheinah. Thus, Mishna Brurah 46:24 writes that one should hear these brachot from someone who slept. However, Pri Megadim (E"A 46:2) wonders why Elokai Nishama and HaMaavir Sheinah should be different than the other Birkot HaShachar. Aruch

Shacharit, he should have intent that the bracha on his Talit should cover his Talit Katan as well. If, however, one doesn't wear a Talit, he should hear the bracha from someone else.¹² If one slept a sheinat kevah (literally a “permanent sleep” usually considered to be at least 30 minutes in bed) the day before staying up all night, he may recite the Birkot HaTorah in the morning for himself.¹³

6. According to Sephardim, after using the bathroom one should say Asher Yatzer and not the bracha of Al Netilat Yadayim.¹⁰ One may say Elokai Nishama, HaMaavir Sheinah, and Birkot HaTorah for himself.¹¹ The bracha recited over the Talit covers the Talit Katan as well.¹²

*Minhagei Sefira*¹⁴ (Shmuel Garber)

1. One shouldn't take a haircut during sefirah.¹⁵
2. Typically, it is prohibited to shave during sefirah; however, there are certain circumstances in which one is permitted to shave.¹⁶
3. According to many, one may shave before Shabbos.¹⁷
4. It is forbidden to get married during sefira.¹⁸
5. It is forbidden to dance or listen to music during sefira.¹⁹

HaShulchan 46:13 rules that one may say these brachot even if he didn't sleep. Also, Birkei Yosef 46:12 and Yalkut Yosef 489:13 write that the Sephardic minhag is to say these brachot even if one didn't sleep.

¹² Although S”A 8:16 rules if one slept in one's Tzitzit one should make a bracha upon arising, the Bach 8:15, Taz 8:15, Eliyah Rabba 8:18, and Kaf HaChaim 8:61 argue that one shouldn't make a bracha. Magen Avraham 8:21 writes that one should have in mind that his bracha on the Talit should exempt his Talit Katan. Mishna Brurah 8:42 agrees. Rabbi Hershel Schachter (cited in Beit Yitzchak vol 30, p. 591) rules that if one doesn't have a Talit, he should hear the bracha from someone else and feel his Tzitzit at the time of the bracha.

¹³ Hagahot Rabbi Akiva Eiger 47:12 writes that if one slept during the day prior to staying up all night, according to all opinions one has to recite Birkot HaTorah in the morning. Mishna Brurah 47:28 specifies that the sleep should be a Sheinat Kevah. Chatam Sofer (cited by Netah Sorek YD 63), Hilchot Chag BeChag (p. 131), and Rabbi Mordechai Willig (“Inyanei Chag Hashavuos”, min 48) agree. See Beirur Halacha (vol 7, p. 20) who quotes the Chazon Ish as questioning Rabbi Akiva Eiger.

¹⁴ Yevamot 62b explains that during the period of sefira the students of Rabbi Akiva died. All practices of sefira are minhagim. This is still important to keep in mind, as we are willing to be more lenient for minhagim than for actual dinim.

¹⁵ The Shulchan Aruch says that we shouldn't get a haircut during sefira (S.A 493:2). Rav Soloveitchik explains that this is because during sefirah there is a minhag that we behave like we do during the 12 month period after a parent dies. Thus, we wait after shloshim until the time when people look at him and would say he/she needs a haircut (“ad she'yigar bo chaveiro”). However, since sefirah is only 33 days long this doesn't happen and people should try to schedule their haircuts so that this doesn't happen.

¹⁶ For instance, S.A. 493:2 and M.B 493:12 permit a mohel, father of the baby, and the sandik to get a haircut.

Rav Moshe Feinstein felt that there is no difference between shaving and taking a haircut. Since the prohibition of shaving and taking a haircut is only a minhag, we won't follow the minhag at the expense of losing a significant amount of money. Thus, if someone is afraid he might lose his job or lose out financially if he does not shave before an important meeting, Rav Moshe Feinstein would permit one to shave or take a haircut.

Rav Soloveitchik also says shaving is like a haircut, however since men shave so often this period before “ad she'yigar bo chaveiro” is very short; therefore, even lichatchila one is allowed to shave after reaching this point during sefirah. Thus, Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik would permit someone who typically shaves very often to shave during sefira once he reaches the point of “ad she'yigar bo chaveiro.”

¹⁷ Rav Hershel Schachter says that this is the practice of the yeshiva in Baltimore where they hold based on the Netziv who says that whenever you have a din and a minhag the din takes precedence. Therefore, where you have Kavod Shabbos which is a din and sefira which is a minhag one should oblige to the din and shave on Erev Shabbos.

¹⁸ S.A 493:1. This is because sefira is considered aveilut and therefore during that time one should refrain from throwing or attending parties. Nonetheless, one may remarry the woman he previously divorced as the joy of remarrying someone one has previously married is not as great (M.B 493:1).

Although typically, one should not plan a wedding during the omer, regarding someone who did, we will not penalize him (493:1). Therefore, if there is a wedding, one is allowed to go to the wedding, but shouldn't take a haircut or shave.

¹⁹ M.B 493:3. In Gittin (7a) it says not to listen to music anytime. The Rambam says we should take this literally and never listen to music. Tosfot says that this is talking

Decorating the Shul for Shavuot (Dubbin Hanon)

1. Some have the custom to decorate their shuls and homes for Shavuot with flowers, trees, or nice smelling fruits.²⁰ Some communities, however, abstain from this custom, because it may be considered a violation of chukat akum, as this is the practice in other religions.²¹ Others however, justify the minhag.²²
2. Similarly, some have the practice to hand out scented herbs so that people can smell them and recite a beracha.²³ This should not be done between Baruch Sheamar and the Shemoneh Esreh.²⁴ Some also place flowers on the Sefer Torah itself²⁵ or distribute flowers to be thrown at the Sefer Torah²⁶ in honor of Shavuot.
3. If Shavuot falls out on a Sunday, one should not place the greenery on Shabbat in preparation for Shavuot but should do so either on Yom Tov or before Shabbat.²⁷

about when there is wine and music. Rav Moshe felt that even though the minhag is to follow like Tosfot, really we should be following the Rambam. Therefore, although typically we might be lenient regarding listening to music, during these special times of the year, we should accept the chumra of the Rambam (Igrot Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:137). Other achronim say that since we are lenient the rest of the year, there is no need to be stringent here. Nonetheless, the Magen Avraham (493:1) prohibits dancing during sefira, and thus, the Aruch Hashulchan (493:2) writes that if one is prohibited from dancing during sefira, surely listening to music should be forbidden.

Still, if one earns a livelihood through playing music he may continue to play during sefira (Igrot Moshe O.C. 3:87).

²⁰ Rama O"C 494:3 (quoting Maharil pg. 160) explains that the custom commemorates the joy of Matan Torah. Birkei Yosef 494:6 says that this custom is an ancient one dating back to the time of the Midrash Targum Sheini on Megillat Esther 3:8, which writes that Haman mentioned this minhag of ours to Achashverosh. Magen Avraham 494:5 explains that trees are used for decoration so that we should pray for a good fruit harvest because Shavuot is the day we are judged regarding the fruits of the year. The Levush 494:1 writes that this minhag is based on the pasuk "גַּם-הַצֵּאן וְהַבְּקָר אֶל-יַרְעֵי, אֶל-מוֹלְדֵי הָהָר הַהוּא" (Shemot 34:3) which implies that there was pasture on Har Sinai. Sefer Minhag Avoteinu Biyadenu vol. 2 pg. 578 suggests the Maharil himself felt that the minhag was a fulfillment of added simcha of the holiday itself, not a commemoration of the simcha of Matan Torah. He writes that this minhag developed specifically on Shavuot because there is an added level of happiness which manifests in physical pleasures, as the Gemara Pesachim 68b writes that though there is a machloket Tanna'im if the holidays should be כָּרוּ לָהּ, all opinions agree that there is an aspect of לֵכֶם on Shavuot. With this, he explains why the Maharil writes that the greenery should smell nice. Thus, according to the Maharil, it is our joy in essence of the Torah itself and our ability to learn it that we are celebrating by putting out decorations, while according to the Rama the celebration is more focused on the historical fact that Hashem chose us as His nation and gave us His Torah. See further in Sefer Minhag Avotenu Biyadenu vol.

2 pg. 573-604 for a lengthy discussion of the development of this minhag and the various reasons.

²¹ This is the opinion of the Gra as quoted by the Chayei Adam 131:13 and Maaseh Rav Siman 191. He felt that since it was only a minhag and not a real din, we should abolish it since it became a religious practice of the non-Jews. This seems to be accepted by the Aruch Hashulchan 494:6 and Rav Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe YD 4:11:5). The Munkatcher Rov (Shaar Yissachar vol. 2 pg. 119) writes that although the minhag is well-founded, the best option is to refrain. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (quoted in Ve'alehu Lo Yibol 1 pg. 184) argues that the Gra only wanted to abolish the custom of placing trees in shuls and not flowers. The Steipler (Orchos Rabbenu vol. 2 pg. 99) agrees.

²² Chacham Ovadia Yosef (Yechave Daat 4:33 and Yabia Omer YD 3:24, see also Yalkut Yosef Kitzur S"A 494:17) explains that the custom is justified based on the Sh"t Maharik Shores 88 who explains that there is no concern of "Bechukoteihem lo telechu" (Vayikra 18:3, the prohibition regarding following non-Jewish practices and laws) by a custom that has a good reason for its practice. See also Rav Yosef Shaul Nathanson (Yosef Daat Siman 348) and Maharsham (Daat Torah 494:3) who argue in favor of the minhag. [Minhagei Edot Yisrael](#) writes that Persian Jews call Shavuot Moed'eh Gol, meaning holiday of flowers. In conclusion, Piskei Teshuvot 494:10 writes that the minhag in most places is to place flowers in the shuls.

²³ Derashot Chatam Sofer 5562 where he writes that this is based on the Gemara Shabbat 88b which says that "with every single statement that emanated from the mouth of Hashem the whole world became filled with besamim — the fragrance of spices." see also Birkat Yaavetz of Rav Dovid Cohen on Moadim vol. 2 pg. 263

²⁴ Magen Avraham 494:9 quoting the Shela Hakadosh, Kaf Hachaim 494:57, Torat Hacham Baruch pg. 27

²⁵ Minhag Avoteinu Biyadeinu 2, page 602.

²⁶ Kaf Hachaim Sofer 494:58

²⁷ Magen Avraham 494:5, Shulchan Aruch Harav 494:14, Mishna Berura 494:9 write that even though there is not a problem of muktzeh since they were designated from before Shabbat for this purpose, there is still a problem of preparing on Shabbat for Yom Tov.

Should I Sit or Stand? (Jeremy Perlow)

During Leining the Entire Year

1. It is permissible to sit during Kriyat HaTorah.²⁸ This applies to everyone excluding the person reading from the Torah and the one receiving an aliya.²⁹
2. However, some are strict to stand in order that when they hear the Torah reading they should hear it in a way that resembles the original giving of the Torah at Har Sinai when all of Bnei Yisrael stood.³⁰
3. Nonetheless, one who has difficulty standing and therefore cannot focus on the leining should sit.³¹
4. During Barechu before the aliya one should stand,³² however, many don't stand and the minhag has upon what to rely.³³
5. Since standing is not required during Kriat Ha'Torah, if one is in a shul where the rabbanim are sitting, one should also sit so as not to appear haughty.³⁴

During the 10 Dibrot

1. There is a common custom to stand during the reading of the 10 Dibrot when they are read publicly in shul.³⁵ While some oppose the custom,³⁶ others justify it.³⁷
2. If one typically stands for the reading of the Torah throughout the rest of the year, there is certainly no issue standing during the reading of the 10 Dibrot.³⁸

²⁸ S.A 146:4

²⁹ M.B 146:17 also writes that even the gabaiim may lean on the bima.

³⁰ Rama 146:4 cites that this was the practice of the Maharam. M.B 176:19 quotes the Bach who explains that even the Maharam agrees that, strictly speaking, standing is not required.

³¹ M.B 146:19

³² M.B 146:18 writes that according to everyone, one must stand at this point because this is a *davar she'bekedusha*

³³ One would have thought it would be required to stand for the entire Torah reading just as we stand for any *davar sh'be'kedusha* (i.e. Kaddish, Barechu, and other parts of the service that require a minyan). However, Beit Hillel explain that since the Torah says regarding Kriat Shema

"*uvi'lechtecha va'derech*" (Devarim 6:7), one may recite the Shema in any position (in Berachot 10a). By extension, Rav Soloveitchik thought that the same could be applied to any recital of *psukim* from the Torah and even during the *berachot* before the *kriat ha'torah* that one may listen in any position (Rav Schachter on yutorah.org "Inyonei Krias Hatorah" min. 56 and oral conversation with Rav Schachter). Piskei Tshuvot 146:6 quotes from Rav Chayyim Vital who testifies about the Arizal that he would always sit during the leining and the Barechu preceding the leining.

³⁴ Rabbi Hershel Schachter in a shiur on yutorah.org "Inyonei Krias HaTorah" (min. 55) based on Baba Kama 86b where it says that any talmid who observes a *midat chasidut* which his rebbi doesn't observe in the presence of his rebbi deserves to be excommunicated. See also Yalkut Yosef 145:12

³⁵ Siddur Beit Yaakov, Shaarei Ephraim, and the Chida had this custom. This custom is based on the idea that we strive to remember and even emulate the manner in which the 10 Dibrot were given at Har Sinai. Just as at Har Sinai

the entire Jewish nation stood in awe and even trembled, so too, when we read the 10 Dibrot in shul many stand in an effort to re-experience Matan Torah (all quoted in Dirshu M.B 494:3).

³⁶ The Rambam writes that we should prevent others from following the custom to stand because there is a concern that allowing people stand will lead to a lack of *emuna* in the sense that people might come to believe that the 10 Dibrot are more significant than the other *psukim* in the Torah (Shut Ha'Rambam, Siman 46).

Rav Ovadia Yosef 145:12 writes that one should stop others from standing specifically for the 10 Dibrot. All the more so, if someone decides to stand in a place where there are many *talmidei chachamim* who know the *halacha* who are sitting one should stop him, as the person standing will otherwise be perceived as haughty. Rav Ovadia concludes that many *poskim* who permit standing simply lost the *tshuva* of the Rambam.

³⁷ The Chida writes that since we read the Torah every Shabbat we demonstrate that the entire Torah is true and we thus need not fear that people might begin to think that the 10 Dibrot are more significant than other *psukim* in the Torah. Additionally, Rav Schachter writes that the fact that we read the *psukim* differently (i.e. by stopping after each *dibur* as if there is a *sof passuk*) is an indication that we are attempting to reenact *maamad har sinai*, thus perhaps also for this reason it would be permitted to stand (http://www.torahweb.org/torah/2010/parsha/rsch_vaeschanan.html).

³⁸ The issue the Rambam posed is simply not relevant if one is standing during the leining all year as no one will come to think that certain *psukim* are more important than others. Also, see Rav Schachter's article quoted in the previous footnote.

3. Some hold that in a shul where many are standing one should nonetheless remain seated so as to teach others the proper practice.³⁹ Nonetheless, others argue that one should join the practice of others around him and stand even if it is typically his custom to sit.⁴⁰ Some suggest that, in this scenario, he should stand from the beginning of the parsha or at least from the beginning of the aliya so as not to give off the impression that the psukim of the 10 Dibrot are more important than the rest of the Torah.⁴¹
4. If one typically stands for the 10 Dibrot, yet the rav of the shul and other members of the shul are sitting, many hold that one should not stand despite the fact that this is typically his custom.⁴²

³⁹ R' Elyashiv (in his shiurim on Berachot 12a) writes the Rambam is truly correct that one should not stand.

Therefore even if everyone is standing, you should remain sitting because everyone else is acting incorrectly.

⁴⁰ In a place where everyone stands you should not stop this practice, because the intent is clear that people are trying to beautify their mitzvah performance as if they are going to greet the Shechina (Shut Devar Shmuel, Avuhav 276 as quoted in Dirshu M.B 494:3). Similarly, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach writes that since everyone knows that we are standing as a zecher le'maamad har sinai we should not stop people who stand. Since we also stand for other portions of the Torah, such as Shirat Ha'yam we therefore need not be concerned.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein writes (O.C 4:22) that although logically it would seem to make sense to forbid

people to stand, since on a practical level it has never happened that heretics have convinced Jews who are not knowledgeable that some psukim in the Torah are more important than others, we are therefore permitted to stand. Thus, if you are coming from a place where they never stood and you arrive at a place where everyone is standing you should join them.

⁴¹ Yalkut Yosef (145:14) writes that an individual who is in a shul in which they stand and he does not have the ability to change the practice of the shul should ensure to stand from the beginning of the Torah reading, or at the very least from the moment the person called up for the aliya of the 10 Dibrot, lest he end up sitting amongst everyone else who is standing, as this will be perceived as a disgrace to the kedusha of the 10 Dibrot.

⁴² See footnotes 34 and 36