

SHAVUOS DINIM AND CUSTOMS

Shabbos – Erev Yom Tov

Since one is not permitted to have a meal late in the day on Erev Yom Tov, Seudah Shlishis should begin before 4:35 PM (one half hour prior to Mincha ketana which is 5:00 PM).

Prior to lighting Yom Tov candles on Saturday night one should say *Baruch Hamavdil bein Kodesh l'kodesh*.

Yizkor Candle – Due to the fact that it is questionable whether lighting of a Yahrzeit candle in memory of a loved one is considered a Yom Tov need, it should be lit before Yom Tov. Since Erev Yom Tov falls out on Shabbos this year, one should purchase a three day candle and light it on Friday such that will last until Yizkor. If this was not done, there are those who permit lighting a candle in conjunction with the hadlakas neiros on the second night of Yom Tov and placing it in a position where one benefits from its light.

Trees and Greenery

The Rema discusses two *minhagim* that we have been observing for a millennium. The first custom mentioned is to adorn our Shuls and homes with greens and trees in commemoration of *Matan Torah*. The Torah specifically states, "*Gam hatzon v'habakar el yiru el mul hahar hahu*" a warning not to allow the animals to graze on the mountain. Additionally on Shavuos the fruits of the trees are judged; therefore, we bring the trees into our homes and Shuls in order to be *mispallel* for them.

The various greens and flowers that decorate our shuls and homes are not muktza and may be moved. If flowers were in water at the outset of Yom Tov and taken out, they may be replaced if they are the type of flowers that were totally open. Flowers that were not totally open may not be put back into water. In the event that you forgot to put flowers into the water prior to Yom Tov, you may not fill up a vase and place them in there on Yom Tov.

Dairy Foods

The Rema says that we have a custom to eat dairy on the first day of Shavuos. Numerous explanations are cited for this *minhag*. The Rema himself says that just as on Pesach we cook two different dishes in remembrance of the *Korban Chagiga* and *Korban Pesach*, similarly we require two different breads on Shavuos in remembrance of the *Shte Lechem* which were brought on Shavuos. In order to create a need for the two loaves of bread, we have a *Milchig* meal and then a *Fleishig* meal since one cannot use the same bread for both meals.

The *Mishna Berura* mentions a requirement of a new tablecloth when having the *Fleishig* meal, although there is no need to say *Birkas Hamazon* after the *Milchig* meal. The Shulchan Aruch in *Yoreh Deah* requires one to rinse out his mouth and eat something *parve* before having the meat meal.

Another reason for eating a *Milchig* meal on Shavuos is advanced by Rabbeinu Sadiah Gaon. He says that after the Jews accepted the Torah at Har Sinai, they were unable to eat meat due to the fact that with the newly acquired laws, the preparation of the animal would have taken an enormous amount of time. Klal Yisrael opted instead to prepare *Milchig* food, which was much easier.

(over please)

Halachos for One Who Stays Up the Entire Night

For those who have not slept at all:

- 1) *Al Netilas Yadaim* and *Asher Yatzar* may be said only after going to the bathroom.
- 2) The following blessings should not be said: a) *Al Mitzvas Tzitzis* b) *Birchas HaTorah* study c) *Elokei Neshama* d) *Hama'avir Shaina*.

If possible, one should hear someone else (who has slept during the night) say them and intend to fulfill his obligation by listening. (The individual who is saying the blessings must also have in mind to allow the listeners to fulfill their obligation through his recitation.) If there is no one to recite these blessings, then the blessing for the *talis gadol* can be used to cover the *talis katan* as well; *Ahava Raba* can cover *Birchas HaTorah* if one specifically has so in mind and if immediately upon termination of the *Shmoneh Esrei* one recites some Torah passages.

Selected & Relevant Halachos of Yom Tov

Showering & Bathing – It is permitted to heat water on Yom Tov (in a permissible fashion) to wash one's hands, face and feet. Only liquid soap is permitted. It is permitted to wash other parts of one's body on Yom Tov even with hot water provided that you don't wash most of the body. However, it is not proper to wash all or most of one's body even with cold water. If, however, you don't wash your entire body at once, but limb by limb, you may use water either heated **prior to Yom Tov** or cold water. Additionally, if you are in a situation of great discomfort, e.g. sweated from a long walk from a Simcha on a hot day, you may wash your entire body at once using cold water. Of course, you must be careful not to squeeze water out of your hair. One would additionally be permitted to turn on the hot water to bathe a child who soiled part of his/her body. For specific situations, ask the Rav.

Hachana Issues –

1. One is not permitted to set the table, wash dishes or warm up food on the first day of Yom Tov for the night time meal.
2. A food that was in the freezer and is needed for the night time meal may not be removed and defrosted, unless removing it later will cause an undue delay in eating the meal. One should be mindful to remove it early enough in the day so that it could be potentially ready for that day as well.
3. One may not carry clothing or books or other items on the first day of Yom Tov if these items will be needed for the second day.

Our Mara D'asra Rabbi Uri Orlian is available to answer any questions (646) 369-6017.