

יטול יָדוֹ וַיֹּאכַל אֶפְיקוֹמֵן וַיִּבְרַךְ בְּרֵכַת־הַמְזוֹן בְּלֹא כוֹס. אָבֵל אִם הוּא נִזְהָר לְבָרֵךְ תָּמִיד בְּרֵכַת־הַמְזוֹן עַל הַכּוֹס, וְעַתָּה לֹא יוּכַל לְבָרֵךְ עַל הַכּוֹס, מִשּׁוּם דֵּהוּי מוֹסִיף עַל הַכּוֹסוֹת, לְכֵן לֹא יֹאכַל אֶפְיקוֹמֵן, וַיִּסְמוּךְ עַל הַמִּצְוָה שֶׁאֵכֵל תַּחֲלָה.

טו' ניסן

סימן קכ

הַלְכוֹת סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר וַיְמִי הַסְּפִירָה

(א) בְּלֵיל שְׁנֵי שָׁל פֶּסַח, מִתְחִילִין לְסַפֵּר סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר. וְסוֹפְרִין מֵעַמֵּד. הַמִּצְוָה הִיא לְסַפֵּר תִּכְף בְּהַתְחִלַת הַלֵּילָה, אַחֵר צֵאת הַכּוֹכְבִים. וּבְדִיעֵבַד, זְמַנָּה כָּל הַלֵּילָה. בְּבֵית־הַפְּנִסֶת, בְּלֵיל שַׁבָּת וַיּוֹסֶטוּב, סוֹפְרִין לְאַחַר הַקְּדוּשָׁה, כְּדֵי לְהַקְדִים קִדְשַׁת הַיּוֹם. וּבְמוֹצָאֵי־שַׁבָּת וַיּוֹסֶטוּב, סוֹפְרִין קִדְם הַבְּדֵלָה, כְּדֵי לְאַחֵר יְצִיאַת הַיּוֹם. וְכִשְׁחַל יוֹסֶטוּב הָאֲחֵרוֹן בְּמוֹצָאֵי־שַׁבָּת, שְׁאוּמְרִים קְדוּשָׁה וְהַבְּדֵלָה עַל כּוֹס אֶחָד סוֹפְרִין גַּם בֵּן קִדְם, כְּדֵי לְאַחֵר אֶת הַהַבְּדֵלָה.

(ב) מִי שֶׁשָּׁכַח כָּל הַלֵּילָה וְלֹא סָפַר, יְסַפֵּר בַּיּוֹם בְּלֹא בְרָכָה, וּבְלֵילוֹת שְׁאֵחֵר כֶּךָ יְסַפֵּר בְּבְרָכָה. וְאִם שָׁכַח גַּם כָּל הַיּוֹם, יְסַפֵּר אַחֵר כֶּךָ בְּכָל הַלֵּילוֹת בְּלֹא בְרָכָה. וְאִם נִסְתַּפֵּק לוֹ אִם סָפַר בְּלֵילָה אוֹ לֹא, אֶף־עַל־פִּי שֶׁלֹּא סָפַר בַּיּוֹם שֶׁלֹּאֲחֵרָיו, מִכָּל מְקוֹם יְכוּל לְסַפֵּר שְׁאֵר הַלֵּילוֹת בְּבְרָכָה.

(ג) הַשּׁוֹאֵל מִחֲבָרוֹ בֵּין הַשְּׂמֻשׁוֹת אוֹ אַחֵר כֶּךָ, כִּמָּה מוֹנִים הַיּוֹם, יֹאמֵר לוֹ, אֶתְמוּל הִיָּה כֶּךָ וְכֶךָ. שְׂאִם יֹאמֵר לוֹ כִּמָּה מוֹנִים הַיּוֹם, אֵינּוּ רְשָׁאֵי לְבָרֵךְ אַחֵר כֶּךָ עַל הַסְּפִירָה.

(ד) לְכַתְחֵלָה קִדְם שְׁיִבְרֶךְ, צְרִיךְ שְׂיַדַע עַל מָה הוּא מְבָרֵךְ, דֵּהִינּוּ שְׂיַדַע כִּמָּה יָמִים הוּא בְּסְפִירָה. וּבְדִיעֵבַד אִם לֹא יָדַע וּפְתַח וַיִּבְרַךְ עַל

1. Since this is a mitzvah, that is done only at a certain, specific time, women are exempt from counting the *Omer*. *Magein Avraham* says that women have since accepted this mitzvah as an obligation, but *Mishnah Berurah* says that in our areas, women are not accustomed to count the *Omer*. He quotes from *Shulchan Shlomo* that women certainly should not say the berachah. (*Mishnah Berurah* 489:3)

2. You should also stand for the berachah. If, however, you did count while sitting, you have still fulfilled your obligation (and you need not count over again). (*Ibid.* 489:6)

hands, eat the *afikoman*, and say *Birkas Hamazon* without a cup of wine. However, if you are scrupulous, and always says *Birkas Hamazon*, over a cup of wine, and now cannot do it, because you would be adding to the four cups, (which is forbidden), then you should not eat the *afikoman*, but rely on the matzah, which you ate before.

April 24

Chapter 120

The Laws of Counting the Omer and the Days of Sefirah

1) On the second night of Pesach, we begin counting the *Omer*.¹ You should stand during the counting.² The mitzvah requires that the *Omer* be counted, as soon as possible after nightfall,³ after (three medium-size star) stars begin to appear. If you did not count at the beginning of the evening, you may count the entire night. In the synagogue, on the eve of Shabbos and Yom Tov, we count after the *Kiddush* is said, in order to give precedence to the (proclamation of the) holiness of the day.⁴ At the conclusion of Shabbos and Yom Tov, we count before the *Havdalah* is said, in order to delay the end of the day. If the last day of Yom Tov occurs on Shabbos night, when the *Kiddush* and the *Havdalah* are said over one [the same] cup of wine, we also count before, in order to postpone the *Havdalah*.

2) If you forgot to count during the night, you should count during the daytime, but without a berachah. On subsequent nights, you may count with a berachah. If you neglected to count an entire day, you should count on all subsequent nights, without saying the berachah.⁵ If you are not sure whether or not you counted that night, even though you did not count on the following day, nevertheless, you may count the remaining days with a berachah.

3) If someone asks you, during twilight or later, "What is tonight's count?" You should tell him, "Yesterday was such-and-such," for if you would tell him today's count, you are not permitted to say the berachah, when you count the *Omer* later that night.⁶

4) Before saying the berachah, you should know what the berachah is for; that is, you should know the exact number of days of the *Omer*.⁷ However, if you did not

3. Counting the *Omer* is done after the *Maariv* prayer, before saying *Aleinu*. Later *Poskim* rule, however, once the stars have appeared, the *Omer* may be counted even before *Maariv*. (*Ibid.* 489:2,18)

4. At home, however, we must count the *Omer* before *Kiddush*, as it is forbidden to eat before counting the *Omer*. (*Ibid.* 489:39)

5. This law also applies, if you realized you counted the wrong *Sefirah* yesterday. (*Ibid.* 489:35)

6. However, if, for example, you just said the number twelve, without saying *today is the twelfth day*, you can still count the *Omer* with a berachah. (*Ibid.* 489:22)

7. The later *Poskim* rule that it is permitted to count the *Omer* in any language you understand. If you do not understand, and, thus, you do not know what you are counting, you cannot fulfill your obligation, even if you count in Hebrew. (*Ibid.* 489:11)

דעת שִׁיסְפוֹר כְּמוֹ שִׁישְׁמַע מִחֲבָרוֹ, גַּם כֵּן יֵצֵא. וְכֵן אִם בְּרַךְ עַל דַּעַת לְסַפּוֹר אַרְבָּעָה יָמִים, וְלֹאֲחֵר שֶׁבְּרַךְ נִזְכָּר שֶׁצָּרִיךְ לְסַפּוֹר חֲמֵשָׁה, סוֹפֵר חֲמֵשָׁה וְאִינוֹ צָרִיךְ לְבָרֵךְ שְׁנֵית. וְכֵן אִם טָעָה בְּסִפְרָהּ, כְּגוֹן שֶׁהָיָה צָרִיךְ לֹאֲמַר שְׁשֵׁה יָמִים וְאִמְרָה חֲמֵשָׁה יָמִים, אִם נִזְכָּר מִיָּד, סוֹפֵר כְּרֵאוֹי וְאִינוֹ צָרִיךְ לְבָרֵךְ שְׁנֵית. אֲבָל אִם הִפְסִיק קֶצֶת, צָרִיךְ לְבָרֵךְ שְׁנֵית.

(ה) בְּכָל יוֹם-טוֹב אִם חָל לַיִל רֵאשׁוֹן בְּשַׁבָּת שְׁאִין אוֹמְרִים אֲזַי מְעַרְבִית, אֲזַי בְּלִיל שְׁנֵי אוֹמְרִים הַמְעַרְבִית מְלִיל רֵאשׁוֹן, חוּץ מִפְּסַח, שְׁאֵפְלוּ חָל לַיִל רֵאשׁוֹן בְּשַׁבָּת, מְכַל מְקוֹם בְּלִיל שְׁנֵי אוֹמְרִים מְעַרְבִית שְׁשֵׁיכֶת לוֹ, מִפְּנֵי שֶׁמְדַבֵּר מִקְצִירַת הָעֵמֶר שֶׁהִיְתָה בְּלִיל זֶה.

(ו) בְּיָמֵי הַסִּפְרָה מֵתוֹ תְּלַמְדֵי רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא בְּשִׁלְשָׁה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם, וְלָכֵן נוֹהֲגִין בְּיָמֵים הָאֵלוֹ קֶצֶת אֲבָלוֹת, שְׁאִין נוֹשְׂאִין נְשִׁים וְאִין מְסַתְּפָרִים. וַיֵּשׁ חֲלוּקֵי מְנַהֲגִים בְּמִסְפָּר שְׁלֹשָׁה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם הָאֵלֶּה, יֵשׁ מְקוֹמוֹת נוֹהֲגִין שְׁחוֹשְׁבִין אוֹתָן מִיּוֹם רֵאשׁוֹן דְּסִפְרָהּ, וְלָכֵן אוֹסְרִין עַד ל"ג בְּעֵמֶר. אֲדָךְ כְּשֶׁחָל רֵאש־חֲדָשׁ אִיר בְּשַׁבָּת, דִּישׁ בּוֹ שְׁתֵּי קִדְשׁוֹת, קִדְשַׁת שַׁבָּת וְקִדְשַׁת רֵאש־חֲדָשׁ, אֲזַי מֵתִירִין לְשָׂא, וְכֵן לְהִסְתַּפֵּר בְּעֵרֵב שַׁבָּת. וּבִיּוֹם ל"ג בְּעֵמֶר, וְכֵן מֵשֵׁם וְאֵילָךְ מֵתִירִין, מִפְּנֵי שְׁבִיּוֹם ל"ג בְּעֵמֶר פְּסָקוֹ מְלֻמוֹת, וְלָכֵן מְרַבִּים בּוֹ קֶצֶת שְׁמַחָה, וְאִין אוֹמְרִים בּוֹ תַחֲנוּן. וְאִף שְׁגַם בּוֹ בִיּוֹם מֵתוֹ קֶצֶת, אִמְרִינָן, מִקְצֵת הַיּוֹם כְּכֹלוֹ, וְלָכֵן אִין לְהִסְתַּפֵּר אוֹ לְשָׂא עַד לְאַחַר שֶׁהָאִיר הַיּוֹם, וְלֹא מִבְּעֵרֵב. אֲדָךְ כְּשֶׁחָל ל"ג בְּעֵמֶר בִּיּוֹם רֵאשׁוֹן, מְסַתְּפָרִין בְּעֵרֵב שַׁבָּת שְׁלֹפְנָיו, לְכַבּוֹד הַשַּׁבָּת.

(ז) וַיֵּשׁ מְקוֹמוֹת שְׁמֵתִירִין עַד רֵאש־חֲדָשׁ אִיר וְעַד בְּכֻלָּל, שֶׁהֵן שְׁשֵׁה עֶשֶׂר יוֹם, וְנִשְׂאָרִים שְׁלֹשָׁה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם בְּאֶסּוֹר עַד חֵג הַשְּׁבִיעוֹת (וּמְסַתְּפָרִין בְּעֵרֵב חֵג). וּמְכַל מְקוֹם בִּיּוֹם ל"ג בְּעֵמֶר בְּעֵצְמוֹ מֵתִירִין. (וְכִשְׁחָל בִּיּוֹם רֵאשׁוֹן, מֵתִירִין בְּעֵרֵב שַׁבָּת, כְּמוֹ שְׁכַתְּבֵתִי לְעִיל). וַיֵּשׁ מְקוֹמוֹת שְׁמֵתִירִין עַד רֵאש־חֲדָשׁ אִיר וְלֹא עַד בְּכֻלָּל, וּבִיּוֹם רֵאשׁוֹן

8. *Toch kedei dibur* i.e., within the time it takes to say these three words, *sholom olecha Rebbe* (Peace be with you Rebbe).

9. Ma'aravis are poetic compositions that are inserted in the Ma'ariv service of Yom Tov.

10. Should the need arise, it is permitted to say the berachah, שְׁהֵחֵיָנוּ (*shehechyanu*) during these days. (*Ibid.* 493:2)

know it, and began the berachah with the intention of counting the number you will hear from your neighbor, you have also fulfilled your obligation. Similarly if you say the berachah with the intention of counting four days, but after completing the berachah, you realize that you should have counted five days, you should count five [days], and need not repeat the berachah. Similarly, if you made an error in counting, for example you should have said "six days," but you said "five days," if you realize it immediately,⁸ you should count the correct number, and you need not repeat the berachah; but if you made a short pause, you must repeat the berachah.

5) When the first night of the Yom Tov occurs on Shabbos, *ma'aravis* are omitted,⁹ and, on the second night of Yom Tov, we say the *ma'aravis* of the first night. On Pesach, however, even if the first night occurs on Shabbos, nevertheless, on the second night we say the *ma'aravis* pertaining to that night, because it deals with the harvesting of the *Omer* which took place on that night.

6) During [the first] thirty-three days of the *Sefirah* period (the counting of the *Omer*), the disciples of Rabbi Akiva perished. Therefore, it is the custom during these days to observe a partial state of mourning:¹⁰ Marriages should not be performed and you should not take a haircut (or shave).¹¹ There are various customs regarding (the day on which to begin) to count these thirty-three days. Some communities have the custom of counting them beginning with the first day of the *Omer*, and, therefore, they forbid [weddings and haircuts] until *Lag ba'omer* (the 33rd day of the *Omer*). But when *Rosh Chodesh Iyar* occurs on Shabbos, which has two levels of *kedushah* (sanctity), the *kedushah* of Shabbos and the *kedushah* of *Rosh Chodesh*, they permit marriages and haircuts on *erev Shabbos*. On *Lag ba'omer* and from that day on, the restrictions are permitted, because on *Lag ba'omer* [Rabbi Akiva's disciples] ceased to die. We, therefore, rejoice somewhat, and we do not say *Tachanun* on that day. Although on that very day some of them died (mourning need not be observed for a full day), for the *Halachah* states, a part of a day is considered as a full day; therefore, you should not take a haircut, nor should weddings be held; until after dawn (of *Lag ba'omer*), but not in the evening. But if *Lag ba'omer* occurs on Sunday, you may take a haircut on the preceding *erev Shabbos*, in honor of Shabbos.

7) In other communities, they permit (weddings and haircuts) until *Rosh Chodesh Iyar*, inclusive, which adds up to sixteen days. This leaves thirty-three days, during which these things are forbidden, [that is] until *Shavuot*, (but they permit haircuts on *erev Shavuot*). Nevertheless, on *Lag ba'omer* they permit (weddings and haircuts); (and if *Lag ba'omer* occurs on Sunday, they permit them on *erev Shabbos*, as I have written above.) In still other communities, they permit (these things) until *Rosh Chodesh Iyar*, exclusive of that day, and on the first day of *Rosh Chodesh*, the

11. Those that are permitted to shave on *Chol Hamoed*, are also permitted to shave during *Sefirah*. (See *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 104:11) (*Ibid.* 493:1)

דראש-חדש מתחיל האסור, ויום הראשון דהגבלה הוא יום הל"ג, ואמרין בו, מקצת היום ככלו, ומתרין לשא ולהסתפר בהו, וגם ביום ל"ג בעמר מתרין (וכמו שכתבתי לעיל). וצריכין לנהג בכל קהלה מנהג אחד, ולא ישנו לעשות מקצתו כך ומקצתו כך.

(ח) הסנדק (הוא התופס את התינוק בשעת מילה), והמוהל, ואבי הבן, מתרין להסתפר ביום שלפני המילה סמוך לערב קדם הליכה לבית-הכנסת.

(ט) לעשות שדוכין אפלו בסעודה, מתרין בכל הימים. אך רקודין ומחולות, אסורין.

(י) נוהגים שלא לעשות מלאכה, אחד אנשים ואחד נשים כל ימי הספירה משקיעת החמה עד לאחר ספירת העמר, ורמז לזה, שנאמר, שבע שבתות, מלשון שבות, שבזמן הספירה, דהינו משקיעת החמה ואילו, יש לשבות ממלאכה עד לאחר הספירה.

(יא) בליל ראשון דשבועות, מאחרין מלהתפלל ערבית עד צאת הכוכבים. שאם יתפללו קדם ויקבלו קדשת יום-טוב, חסר מעט מתשעה וארבעים ימי הספירה. והתורה אמרה, שבע שבתות תמימות תהינה.

סימן כא

הלכות תענית-צבור

(א) מצות עשה מדברי הנביאים להתענות בימים שארעו צרות לאבותינו. ותכלית התענית היא, כדי לעורר את הלבבות לפקח על דרכי התשובה, ותהי זאת זכרון למעשינו הרעים ומעשי אבותינו שהיו כמעשינו עתה, עד שגרמו להם ולנו אותן הצרות. ובזכרון הדברים האלה, נשוב להטיב, כמו שנאמר, והתודו את-עונם ואת-עון אבותם. ולכן חיב כל איש לשום אל-לבו באותן הימים לפשפש במעשיו ולשוב מהו, כי אין העקר בתענית, כמו שנאמר באנשי נינוה, וירא האלהים את-מעשיהם, ואמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה, וירא את שקם ואת תעניתם לא נאמר, אלא וירא האלהים את-מעשיהם כי שבו מדרכם

restrictions begin to apply. On the first of the three days of *Hagbalah* [the three days preceding *Shavuos*,] which is the thirty-third day (of the period the restrictions are in effect), they apply the rule, "A part of day is considered as a full day," and they, therefore, permit marriages and haircuts during these three days, as well as on *Lag ba'omer*, (as I have written above). It is essential that the entire community follow the same custom, and not that some follow one custom and others follow a different custom.

8) The *Sandak*, (the person who holds the infant during the *bris* circumcision), the *mohel*, and the father of the infant, are permitted to take a haircut (and shave) on the day before the *bris*, towards evening, before going to the synagogue.¹²

9) Engagement parties, even with a meal, are permitted during all the *Sefirah* days; but dancing is forbidden.

10) It is the custom that no work is performed, by either men or women during the *Sefirah* days, from sunset, until after the counting of the *Omer*. There is an allusion for this (in the Torah), because it is said, "Seven weeks" (Leviticus 23:15). [The word *shabbasos*, meaning weeks,] is derived from *shevos*, denoting rest, indicating that during the time we count the *Omer*, that is from sunset on, you should rest [refrain] from doing any work, until after you have counted the *Omer*.

11) On the first night of *Shavuos*, the *Maariv* service is delayed, until the stars come out, for, if we would hold the service before this time, and usher in the Yom Tov, a bit of time will be lacking from the forty-nine days of the *Sefirah*, and the Torah says, "They shall be seven *complete* weeks" (Leviticus 23:15).

Chapter 121

Laws Concerning Public Fast Days

1) It is a positive commandment, ordained by the Prophets, to fast on those days on which tragic events occurred to our forefathers. The purpose of the fast is to stir our hearts to reflect on the ways of repentance, and to serve as a reminder of our own evil deeds, and the deeds of our forefathers, which were as reprehensible as ours, and caused all these troubles for them as well as for us. By remembering these events we will improve our ways, as it has been said, "They will then confess their sins and the sins of their fathers" (Leviticus 26:4). Therefore, it is everyone's duty to take it to heart on those days to examine his past actions and to repent; for fasting is not the main thing, as it was said about the people of Nineveh, "And God saw their deeds" (Jonah 3:10), and our Rabbis, of blessed memory, have said, "It does not say, 'He saw their sackcloth and their fast,' but 'God saw their deeds, that they had turned away from their evil ways.'" Fasting is only a preparation for

12. If the *bris* (circumcision) will be held on Shabbos, they are permitted to take a haircut or shave on Friday, even before midday. (*Ibid.* 493:13)