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DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

**DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON
LAWS AND CUSTOMS FOR THE
FESTIVAL OF SHAVUOS 5779**

TUESDAY, ROSH CHODESH SIVAN -
SHABBOS PARASHAS NASO, 12TH SIVAN

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DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

**DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON LAWS
AND CUSTOMS FOR THE
FESTIVAL OF PESACH 5779**

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TUESDAY, ROSH CHODESH SIVAN -
SHABBOS PARASHAS NASO, 12TH SIVAN

Distilled from a series
of public shiurim delivered by
Horav **Yosef Yeshaya Braun** shlita
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

The times listed below are for Crown Heights only. Since one can never achieve complete precision, and many factors may influence the accuracy of these times, it is recommended to begin earlier than the time listed and not wait until the last minute (e.g., for the start of Shabbos), or to wait extra time, when that is the appropriate precaution (e.g., at the close of Shabbos).

The basic laws and customs presented below are derived from multiple sources. Due to a dearth of space and time they are presented without their references and halachic notes. Primary sources include: Shulchan Aruch and commentaries, Haggadah Shel Pesach Im Likkutei Taamim Uminhagim, Sefer HaMinhagim Chabad, Luach Colel Chabad, Sichos and Igros Kodesh.

The intention of this summary is to present some of the most relevant laws, not to replace each person's obligation to review the Halachos comprehensively.

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This guide incorporates several reminders about laws that will only be applicable during the Era of Redemption, with the hope that Moshiach will come speedily, allowing us to implement these laws in practice. The concept of studying these halachos is based on several sichos, some of which are quoted below:

“Hashem **begs** the Jewish people,” the Rebbe passionately stated, “to occupy themselves with the study of the laws of the sacrificial orders ... which [as our Sages state,] is considered as if we had actually offered the sacrifices. This study will bring about the actual offerings because it brings [to quote Rambam,] ‘King Moshiach [who] will build the Beis Hamikdash ... and restore the laws of the Torah ... so that the Jewish people will again offer the sacrifices ... in accordance with all the mitzvos that are stated in the Torah,’ speedily, in our time – literally! [Then, to quote the festival liturgy,] ‘We will offer before You there the offerings of our obligations ... in accordance with the commandments of Your will.’”¹

We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption,” the Rebbe demanded. “One of the ways this is accomplished is through studying more Torah on the subjects of the Redemption and

1) Likkutei Sichos, vol. 18, p. 341 – Emphasis in original

the Beis Hamikdash. Studying these topics greatly hastens their actual realization, to the extent that we will go directly from studying these subjects to greet our righteous Moshiach. We will inform him, ‘We have just completed studying the laws associated with your coming!’ An additional motivation to study these laws is that we must expect Moshiach’s arrival each and every day. In that case, these laws [concerning the Redemption and the Beis Hamikdash] are matters that every Jew – men and women alike – must know, in order to put them into practical use on a daily basis, such as many of the laws of the offerings.”²

2) from a *sichah* addressed to N’shei uB’nos Chabad – Sefer HaSichos 5750, vol. 2, p. 485

TUESDAY, ROSH CHODESH SIVAN, 45TH DAY OF THE OMER

Today we learn Sotah 45, following the custom of learning one daf a day throughout the Omer, corresponding to that day of counting.

We do not say *Tachanun*, nor may we fast from Rosh Chodesh Sivan until the twelfth of Sivan. The exception to this rule is a groom on his wedding day.

Law of Redemption: In his *Shulchan Aruch*, the Alter Rebbe states¹: “During the times of the *Beis Hamikdash* the early Sages instituted that the laws of each festival should be explained to the public starting thirty days prior to the festival. Therefore, they would begin teaching the laws of Shavuos from the fifth of Iyar onward. Since each person living in Eretz Yisrael was obligated to bring three offerings (*olas re'iyah*, *shalmei chagigah*, and *shalmei simchah*) on each festival and each sacrifice has to be free of any blemish or other disqualification, the Sages therefore instituted this practice of publicly explaining the laws of the festivals thirty days in advance to remind the people of the festival so that they do not forget to prepare animals that are fit for offering. They then had a full thirty days to prepare.”

In the days preceding Shavuos, we should prepare ourselves in all the ways the Jews originally prepared themselves for *Matan Torah*. The Rebbe infers this directive from the detailed citation of the Alter Rebbe²: “From *Rosh Chodesh Sivan* Moshe began preparing the Jews for *Matan Torah*...”³

Someone who traveled across the International Date Line during *sefirah* should ask a Rav—as early as possible—when and how to celebrate Shavuos.

Kabbolas haTorah b'simchah ub'pnimiyus! The Rebbe encourages all Jews to wish one another to receive the Torah on Shavuos with joy and innerness, using this precise terminology of the Frierdiker Rebbe. The Rebbe adds that it brings additional blessing to the one extending the blessing as well.

The Rebbe records that the Frierdiker Rebbe would consider each moment of the days leading up to Shavuos as extremely precious to be used to its fullest potential.

We best prepare ourselves for receiving the Torah by increasing in our diligence in studying Torah. The Frierdiker Rebbe penned a letter in the year 5700 instructing the yeshivos to establish a

1) beg. *Hilchos Pesach*

2) *Orach Chayim* 494

3) see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 38, p. 6

seder of learning on Shavuos. On Shavuos 5710, the Rebbe called for learning and publicizing this letter.

From the Frierdiker Rebbe's letter:

"In just a few days, we will merit—with the kindness of the Supernal One—to receive the light '*that it is good*,' [an allusion to the Torah, as our Sages state], '*Good* refers only to Torah.' [It will soon be] the luminous day, the festival of Shavuos, the time of the giving of the Torah! [It is] the holy Torah that was concealed and hidden away in Hashem's treasure houses, and in which He delights each day! The Torah for which the supernal angels longed and craved, for which they pleaded with the Creator of the universe, clamoring, '*Set Your Glory over the Heavens!*' [It is] this holy Torah that our G-d and the G-d of our forefathers gave to us and to all Jews so that we study it for the sake of observing it!"

"Each festival is a remembrance to the original time and event at which Hashem established that date as a festival. For this reason, the Torah refers to the festivals as '*mo'adim*,' established times, as in the verse, 'These are the *moa'dim* of Hashem, holy occasions, which you shall designate in their appointed time.'⁴ Each year, on the anniversary of the original date, the light that was revealed at the original event is again revealed and shines forth. Therefore, on Shavous, the time of the giving of the Torah—these two luminous days that are Hashem's appointed dates—the same lights and revelations that were revealed at the giving of the Torah are revealed anew. The souls that are in the lower and higher *Gan Eden* gather in the Supernal Academy. At the same time, all Jews—may they be distinguished for good life!—gather in synagogues and study halls to receive the holy Torah..."

"Whoever analyzes the approach of *Tosafos*⁵ understands that Shavuos is a unique time of Divine favor. At that time [in the Heavenly Court] G-d disconcerts the Accuser of the Jewish people, just as He confuses him when the *shofar* is sounded on Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur."

"The festival of Shavuos is the perfect time to do everything possible to advance one's Torah study and one's service of G-d with awe. Similarly, it is an appropriate time to repent for [failing to study] Torah, since [at that time] the accusing influence of Satan does not interfere—similar to the time of the sounding of the *shofar* on Rosh HaShanah and to the day of Yom Kippur."

4) *Vayikra* 23:4

5) *Shabbos* 89a; s.v. *Torah*

THURSDAY, SIVAN 3, 47TH DAY OF THE OMER

Today we learn Sotah 47.

This is the first of three distinctive days prior to Shavuos, commemorating the “three days of making boundaries” that are a preparation for the giving of the Torah. In specific circumstances, certain restrictions of *sefirah* are mitigated during these days; the Chabad custom is to continue the mourning restrictions that apply throughout the *sefirah* until *erev Shavuos*.

Haircuts: The Rebbe Rashab showed displeasure with those who cut their hair earlier than *erev Shavuos*. This is a stringency based on Kabbalah and is not necessarily for reasons associated with mourning. (See entry for Friday, Sivan 4 regarding practice for this year, as *erev Shavuos* falls on Shabbos.)

Weddings: In earlier years, the Rebbe wouldn’t permit weddings before Shavuos. In later years, however, the Rebbe approved of weddings taking place during the three days prior to Shavuos.

Music is permitted on the three days prior to Shavuos. However, this is restricted to weddings and is not necessarily a license for personal musical entertainment. (A parallel to this is the musical Lag B’omer celebrations that are continued into the following night, although the mourning restrictions, including a ban on personal musical enjoyment, remain in full force.)

Regarding whether the restrictions on new clothes remains in force during this time, see footnote.⁶

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We are commanded to be happy and cheerful on the festival of Shavuos, and each person must also bring joy to his wife and children and all his dependents. This is a biblical obligation. How is this accomplished? A husband can buy clothing or jewelry for his wife and nosh (or at least *chassidishe nosh*⁷) for his children before Yom Tov.

Rambam states that “when one eats and drink [on Yom Tov], he must also feed the convert, the orphan, and the widow, along

6) New garment in the three days preceding Shavuos: On the one hand, the established *minhag* to refrain from saying *shehechiyanu* is relatively new (although mention of it is found in earlier sources) and there are *poskim* who reject it as a restriction during *sefirah*. However, those halachic authorities who propose it use quite specific language that enforces a *sefirah*-long ban without exception for the days leading to Shavuos. This is supported by those who reason that this practice is rooted in the concept of *sefirah* as a time of misfortune that does not abate with the approach of the festival (as opposed to the aspect of public mourning, which is mitigated under certain circumstances. See Hebrew section for more details and for sources).

7) The Rebbe once commented regarding Pesach that a picture Haggadah for children can be considered *chassidishe nosh*.

with other poor and unfortunate people. One who bolts his doors and eat and drinks with his own wife and children, neglecting to feed the poor and the bitter of soul – he is not rejoicing in a mitzvah but rather in the satisfaction of his own stomach! Such a celebration is a disgrace!”

FRIDAY, SIVAN 4, 48TH DAY OF THE OMER—EREV SHABBOS

Today we learn Sotah 48.

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It is a mitzvah to have hair cut before every Yom Tov, so as not to enter into Yom Tov unkempt.⁸ The prohibition of haircutting on Chol Hamoed was instituted especially to compel people to receive a haircut prior to Yom Tov and not to postpone it.

The necessity of receiving a haircut on *erev Shavuos* is more acute, because haircutting was prohibited throughout *sefirah*. The long hair accumulated over *sefirah* causes a disheveled appearance, which is highly inappropriate for any Yom Tov.

Minhag Chabad is to take a haircut **only** on *erev Shavuos* (this includes the preceding night). However, since *erev Shavuos* coincides with Shabbos this year, we must cut our hair one day earlier, on *erev Shabbos*.⁹ In his *Kovetz*, Rabbi Dvorkin writes¹⁰: “It is obvious to me for a number of reasons that [when *erev Shavuos* coincides with Shabbos,] one should receive a haircut on *erev Shabbos*. In fact, I did so myself. And just as the barber began to cut my hair, his telephone rang – it was Rabbi Chodakov calling. The barber then asked me if he could go immediately to give the Rebbe a haircut...” There has been extensive discussion whether this includes Thursday night as well. In practice, we may be lenient about this matter.

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Routine blood tests should not be performed on *erev Shavuos*. In his *Shulchan Aruch*, the Alter Rebbe notes a dispute among the *poskim* which specific procedures might not be included in the prohibition of letting blood on *erev Yom Tov*. This reference has led to leniencies related to blood tests on *erev Pesach* and *erev Sukkos*. *Erev Shavuos*, however, is stricter in this regard, since it is the source of the prohibition, while the eve of the other festivals are restricted as a precaution so as not to differentiate between one *erev Yom Tov* and another. (The reasoning given for the practice is that there is concern of danger from letting

8) *Shulchan Aruch* Admur Hazaken 529

9) *Avodas HaKodesh* (Chidah); *Minchas Elazar*

10) p.61

blood and restrictions based on danger are more severe.) It is therefore recommended to refrain from blood tests altogether on *erev Shavuos*. This year, the recommendation against blood tests is extended to include *erev Shabbos*.

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Regarding the preparation of baked dairy foods, *Shulchan Aruch* states,¹¹ “One must not knead dough with milk lest he mistakenly eat [the bread] with meat. However, it is permissible to produce a small quantity [of dough mixed with dairy], just enough to eat at once, or else alter the appearance of the bread so that it is recognizable [as unusual bread], so that he will not eat it with meat.” The *Rema* comments on this, “Accordingly, we are accustomed to bake bread kneaded with milk for the festival of *Shavuos* ... for all this is considered a small quantity [that is to be eaten immediately]. In addition, the shape [of the dairy bread prepared for *Shavuos*] is different from ordinary bread. Certainly, then, cheese pastries are permitted.”

There are countless details involved in converting ovens and stoves from meat use to dairy, but this is not the forum to delve into this at length. (We will limit the discussion to details relevant to the Alter Rebbe’s treatment of the matter in his laws of *Shavuos*.)

The Alter Rebbe states that those who are accustomed to bake dairy products for *Shavuos* must be careful when koshering their meat ovens (in which meaty juices and the like occasionally drip or splatter, and these juices are then absorbed into the oven walls)—the oven must be heated to the point that sparks fly from it and that the coals used for koshering are passed along all of its surfaces.¹²

Nowadays, ovens are made of enamel, and there are divergent views about the halachic status of this material. Food is usually baked in trays nowadays, and it is not baked directly on the inner surface of the oven as in former times. Accordingly, the oven walls generally absorb the steam of the food rather than the food itself. Therefore, many authorities are lenient and allow a light form of *libun*. Practically speaking, a modern oven is heated to its highest heat and left running at that temperature for a considerable length of time; this method can be relied upon

11) *Yoreh De’ah*, 97:1

12) According to halachah, complete *libun* is not necessary to convert a utensil from meat to dairy (since the meat is kosher, unlike the conversion of an oven used for non-kosher food); rather, *hagalah* or a light form of *libun* is sufficient. According to the Alter Rebbe, *hagalah* works even in a case where first meat and later milk were absorbed into the walls of a vessel without a koshering process in between. However, this case is different, because we are dealing with an oven made of earthenware. Such material cannot be purged without a full *libun*, and the source of the koshering fire must be within the oven itself and it’s only effective if the oven regularly uses a source of fire that is located within.

for converting the oven from meat use to dairy. If the oven has a floor that separates the source of heat, the floor should be removed, if possible, so that the heat enters directly into the heart of the oven.

Some authorities are stringent about this type of koshering as they consider enamel a form of earthenware. Others are concerned that the oven door is glass, and glass cannot be koshered. Nevertheless, if the oven has a self-cleaning mode, we can rely on this self-cleaning process to kosher the oven without concern.

The Alter Rebbe raises an additional point: Be careful to use dairy implements to remove food from the newly converted oven, and not to use the usual tools which remain meaty from previous use in the oven.

Note that koshering the oven on Yom Tov is problematic: The light *libun* that is performed on ovens nowadays generally requires the creation a new source of fire, and it is therefore forbidden on Yom Tov.¹³

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Flowers, plants, and trees have long been used to decorate *shuls* and homes in honor of Shavuos, as described in the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, to recall the joy of Matan Torah and also to remind us to pray for the fruits of the trees whose fate is decided in heaven each Shavuos. This custom is mentioned in *Luach Kollel Chabad* and was practiced in the *shul* in Nikolayev, but it is actually not the Chabad custom (in Chabad *shuls*).

Cut flowers in full bloom may be moved on Yom Tov, as long as there was prior intention to move them or the individual mentally designated them for a permissible purpose before Yom Tov. Water may be added to the vase, but its present water cannot be changed. This is only allowed on Yom Tov, not on

13) As a general rule, it is forbidden to perform *hagalah* or *libun* during Yom Tov. That would be considered *mesaken kli*, equal to fixing a utensil on Yom Tov. This is true even if one wishes to use the oven or utensil on that same day of Yom Tov for food preparation. However, one may perform *libun* on a metal pan in which he previously cooked meat, so that he can now use it for a dairy product, because it does not appear to be *mesaken kli*; rather, it appears that he is warming the pan prior to using it for food, which is permitted on Yom Tov. This works only if he places the food into the pan immediately upon removing it from the source of fire used for *libun*. Once the pan has cooled down, however, if he then reheats it before putting the food in, it becomes clear that his first act was simply an act of *libun*, which is considered *mesaken kli*. In addition, this is permitted only when converting a pan from meat to dairy, because the pan requires only a light *libun*, which is similar to warming a pan for immediate use.

If the pan does not require *libun* or *hagalah* according to the strict letter of the law, but only due to a *chumra* (stringency), he may perform *libun* or *hagalah* on Yom Tov, even if he could have done so in advance of the festival. The reason for this is because, according to the law, the pan does not require *koshering*; therefore, the act cannot be considered *mesaken kli*, for he cannot rectify a utensil that does not essentially require rectification.

Shabbos. Water may be added only to a vase containing blooms that are not stimulated to open by water. Some suggest that great care must be exercised when moving a vase containing blooms that are stimulated to open in such fashion; they should be moved extremely gently.

Plants (flowering or not) are *muktzah* on Shabbos and Yom Tov, and may not be moved at all. Those that have a scent may be smelled on Shabbos and Yom Tov, for that is a pleasure that would not necessarily cause a person to detach them from the earth. However, scented plants that are edible, and may be used in food preparation, may not be sniffed at on Shabbos and Yom Tov.

We cannot arrange the flowers on *erev Shavuos* this year because it is Shabbos and arranging flowers would be considered preparing for the next day. We must take care of floral arrangements today, before sunset.¹⁴

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Those who give *tzeddakah* on a daily basis should give extra *tzeddakah* on *erev Shavuos*, for both days of the festival. Included in our *tzeddakah* obligations is the duty to provide the needy with their Yom Tov requirements. This year, the extra *tzeddakah* should be given on *erev Shabbos*, sufficient for the next three days.

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We read *shnayim mikra* today for Parashas Bamidbar. Although we hear the Torah being read in Shul each Shabbos, an individual is nevertheless obligated to read each week's *parashah* for himself on a weekly basis, in the format of *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*—reading each *possuk* twice and then its Aramaic translation in *Targum Onkelos* once. It is best practice to complete this reading on *erev Shabbos* after *chatzos* (halachic midday); to fulfill this obligation, however, it is still good to read it anytime during Shabbos morning before eating the Shabbos day meal, and even better if completed before Shacharis.

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Law of Redemption: The Rambam states that all Jews are expected to maintain a state of ritual purity for each festival, because they must be ready and fit to enter the Beis Hamikdash and to partake of the sacred sacrifices.¹⁵

Since Yom Tov directly follows Shabbos this year, we would need to immerse any items that require immersion for holy

14) *Shulchan Aruch Admur Hazaken*

15) The Rebbe explains this requirement at length in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 32, Parashas Shemini.

purposes before Shabbos. (The reason why utensils and the like must be immersed a day earlier, before Shabbos, is to avoid leaving them in their state of impurity for an additional day and increase the risk of them coming in contact with *terumah*. Alternatively, it is to avoid the appearance of fixing or completing a utensil on the actual day of Shabbos.) People, however, immerse themselves on Shabbos.

Shte HaLechem: In the *Beis Hamikdash*, the two loaves for the Shavuot offering are baked on *erev Shavuot*. This year, however, due to the fact that *erev Shavuot* coincides with Shabbos, the two loaves must be baked one day early – on *erev Shabbos*. Consequently, the two loaves will be eaten on the third day after they were baked.

Check your pockets before Shabbos to avoid carrying items in public in areas with no *eiruv*.

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Remember to prepare a fire for candle lighting. It is forbidden to light a fire on Yom Tov, because creating a new entity is similar to performing a prohibited activity, and it is also something that could have been taken care of before the onset of Yom Tov (and in this case, Shabbos). Therefore, a candle or flame that will burn safely for more than 48 hours should be prepared on *erev Shabbos* from which the Yom Tov candles will be lit on the first and second night of *Shavuot*. A gas flame may be used for this purpose.

A word of caution: Fire safety organizations recommend that if you leave a gas burner lit over Yom Tov, make sure that a nearby window is open at least four inches and another window is open on the other side of the house to allow proper ventilation. Also make sure that smoke detectors and a carbon monoxide detector are present and active.

If you use liquid wax candles that are placed in small glass holders before being lit (Neronim), it is recommended that you first place a small quantity of water or oil in the bottom of the glass holders **on *erev Shabbos*** (it is permitted to do so, though it is forbidden even on *erev Shabbos* to place a **larger** quantity of water, which may cause the candle to extinguish earlier than its time on *Shabbos*) so that the metal disks that hold the vertical wicks will not stick to the base of the glass, creating a problem for the first night of Yom Tov. (For more details, see the entry below for the first night of Yom Tov)

Shabbos timers: Those who regularly make use of Shabbos timers should plan ahead for all days of Shabbos and Shavuot when setting their timers, keeping in mind if those saying the Tikun through the night on Shavuot will spend time learning

at home.

Candle lighting is at **8:06 pm** (eighteen minutes before sunset). Obviously, candles may **not** be lit after sunset.

SHABBOS PARASHAS BAMIDBAR, SIVAN 5, 49TH DAY OF THE OMER—EREV SHAVUOS

Today we learn Sotah 49, thereby completing our study of tractate *Sotah* that we have been studying, one *daf* a day, since the start of *sefirah*.

“Our main preparation to receive the Torah,” the Rebbe stated in 5749¹⁶, “is *na’aseh v’nishmah*, accepting to do what Hashem wants of us even before we understand the implications. This is done on the fifth of Sivan, the day prior to the sixth of Sivan when we receive the Torah. On this day, we should contemplate the concept of *na’aseh v’nishmah* in a manner that propels us to act accordingly: In all matters of divine service our priority is to actually perform our duty and only then to work on understanding the matter intellectually. True, the fifth of Sivan is *erev Yom Tov* and we are preoccupied with Yom Tov preparations [when occurring on a weekday], but the [Frierdiker] Rebbe taught that on Shavuos, and by extension on *erev Shavuos*—a day that is similar to Shavuos itself—the *yetzer hara* does not have (the same) control. It is an opportune time for act for the good of Torah study, divine service, and the like.”

The Rebbe discusses the superiority of *erev Shavuos* coinciding with Shabbos, as well as its association with Parashas Bamidbar, in *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Bamidbar* 5751.

In the sichah of Shabbos Parashas Bamidbar (and in the sicha of 3 Sivan) 5748, the Rebbe discusses the unique lesson to be derived from the *Chassidus* that the Tzemach Tzedek delivered on this date in the year 5589, as recorded in *Hayom Yom* for Sivan 2. The Rebbe mentioned that it would be worthwhile and appropriate to study these teachings on the corresponding date.

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“One should purify himself before Yom Tov.” This refers to going to the *mikveh*, in addition to other spiritual preparations. This year, since *erev Shavuos* is on Shabbos, someone who immersed on Shabbos morning does not need to immerse again in preparation for Shavuos.

The Shelah states that this obligation is all the more meaningful before the festival of Shavuos, because the entire Jewish nation, men and women, immersed themselves at the command of Hashem in preparation

16) *Ma'amare* entitled *Anochi* 5749

for receiving the Torah. He notes that although the Zohar implies that the time to immerse is shortly before dawn on Shavuot morning after studying Torah the entire night (and this is the custom in Eretz Yisrael), we should also immerse before Yom Tov in order to enter the festival in a state of purity and to mirror our ancestors who immersed during the day, before sunset, on the eve of receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai.

The regular Shabbos prayers are recited, but we omit *Av harachamim* and *Tzidkascha tzedek*.

It is forbidden to prepare anything on Shabbos for the sake of Yom Tov. For this reason, as described earlier, we do not arrange flowers on Shabbos for the sake of Yom Tov.

Some *poskim* rule that someone who naps on Shabbos afternoon should not say explicitly that he is doing so “in order to stay up tonight” or another phrase that would imply preparing for Shavuot.

We should refrain from washing our hands for a meal from the tenth hour of the day (**4:39 pm**). Those who are accustomed to eating *challah* at their *seudah shlishis* should take care to do so before this time. If, for whatever reason, *seudah shlishis* did not commence earlier, it may be eaten even after the tenth hour.¹⁷ In that case, eat a small quantity of food.¹⁸

We recite the sixth chapter of Pirkei Avos after Minchah.

The customary *drashah* by the Rabbonim on the laws of Shavuot will be held in 770 today, at 8:15pm.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS, 6 SIVAN—THE 1ST NIGHT OF SHAVUOS

Shavuot marks the *yahrtzeit* of the Baal Shem Tov.

Today's *Hayom Yom* records that “The Baal Shem Tov passed away on Wednesday, the first day of Shavuot, 5520 (1760) and is interred in Mezhibuz. The Alter Rebbe commented (on Wednesday, the 20th of Kislev 5559 [1798] in Petersburg): ‘On the fourth day the luminaries were taken away....’

The Rebbe often discussed the association between Shavuot and the three shepherds of the Jewish people: Moshe Rabbeinu, Dovid Hamelech, and the Baal Shem Tov.

17) *Shulchan Aruch Admur Hazaken*

18) *Minhagei Maharil*

“As is known, Shavuos is associated with Moshe Rabbeinu, who received the Torah at Sinai, and with Dovid Hamelech and the Baal Shem Tov. For Shavuos marks the *hilula* [*yahrtzeit*] of Dovid Hamelech¹⁹ ... and also of the *hilula* of the Baal Shem Tov. (In a way, we can consider Shavuos the *hilula* of Moshe Rabbeinu as well, because at the giving of the Torah, the souls of all Jews flew out of their bodies [when Hashem spoke the first two of the Ten Commandments], and they were then revived with the dew of resurrection. This certainly occurred to every Jew without exception, young and old alike ... and even to Moshe Rabbeinu. Therefore, Moshe’s soul left his body on this day as well, which is the concept of a *hilula*.)”²⁰

The Alter Rebbe would particularly cherish the Yom Tov of Shavuos.

In 5703, the Frierdiker Rebbe stated,²¹ “The Tzemach Tzedek recounted the following in the name of the Alter Rebbe, who heard it from his Rebbe, the Maggid of Mezritch: ‘When we spent Shavuos with the Rebbe—the Baal Shem Tov—we experienced *‘niftechu hashamayim va’er’eh mar’os Elokim* [*The heavens opened up and I saw visions of Hashem*]²² ...’

“The Alter Rebbe then commented on his own experience, ‘When we were with the Rebbe—the Maggid of Mezritch—for the Yom Tov of Shavuos, we saw and perceived [the same]...’

“The Berditchever was a great *amkan* [in-depth person]. He once addressed a concept in *nigleh* and he prefaced it with the verse, *‘Hinei Hashem rocheiv al av kal’* [*Behold, Hashem is riding on a light cloud*]²³. He then proceeded to deliver seventy-two questions on this single concept, followed by one hundred and thirty responses. [The numerical value of *av* (עב) is 72, while the value of *kal* (קל) is 130.] The Alter Rebbe wrote a four hundred page record of this, but he subsequently commented that all of this [revelation] did not come close to what they saw when they were with their Rebbe on Shavuos.

“The Tzemach Tzedek elaborated on this thought: ‘This experience did not only occur by the Maggid, but with all of the Rebbeim. And it did not only occur in those times,

19) For a discussion on whether Dovid Hamelech passed away on the sixth or seventh of Sivan, corresponding to the first or the second day of Shavuos, see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 8, p. 22, fn. 8. See also *Sichas Yom Beis d’Chag HaShavuos* 5728; and *Roshei Devarim B’eis Haseudah b’Yom Alef d’Chag HaShavuos* 5730.

20) *Ma’amor* entitled *Atah Horeisa* 5746

21) see *Sefer Hasichos*

22) *Yechezkel* 1:1. This is in the Haftorah of the 1st day of Shavuos.

23) *Yeshayah* 19:1

but it occurs in each era. It is only that we are required to have *keilim p'nimiyim*, inner receptacles....”

“Accept the yoke of Torah!” instructs the Frierdiker Rebbe.²⁴ We should do so on the night of Shavuot both in our hearts and also verbally, declaring: “*Ribono shel olam!* (Master of the Universe!) I hereby accept upon myself the yoke of Torah.”

The Frierdiker Rebbe continues,²⁵ “Just as on Rosh Hashanah, each Jew must accept something new in his divine service, so must a Jew take on something new in Torah study on Shavuot. For any Jew with even a bit of intellect ... is suited to Torah study ... and on Shavuot, each Jew must take this upon himself with a proper *kabbalah* [acceptance], with a vow, and with a true acceptance in the heart and not *bli neder* (a commitment which lacks the force of a vow).. [Truth be told] it is extremely difficult to use the term vow in such a case, because there could always be—as they say in the language of this country [English]—‘trouble’... But at least, he must make *kevi’us b’nefesh* [an iron-clad resolution], with a true dedication to uphold his commitment to his addition in Torah study—regarding both his personal study as well as his giving of himself to study with other Jews—to strengthen the Torah by bringing others to study Torah as well.”

“The *kabbolas ol* (acceptance of the yoke of Heaven) of Shavuot,” explains the Frierdiker Rebbe,²⁶ “is the *yechidah* of the *etzem haneshamah* (the core of the soul’s essence). Through this, we perceive the light of the Torah. For it is entirely possible for a person to learn Torah even while the Torah teaches him nothing; it is also possible for the Torah to teach him, but the light of the Torah remains way beyond him....”

“It is stated in *sefarim*,²⁷ the Rebbe says,²⁸ “regarding the allusion in the words of our Sages that ‘All agree that on Shavuot we also need *lachem*’ [for yourselves—meaning that the festival is to be celebrated not only with prayer and the like, ‘For Hashem,’ but also with good food and the like, which is considered ‘for yourselves’]: This can be understood to mean that it is an opportune time to pray for

24) *Sefer Hasichos* 5704, p. 127

25) *Ibid.*, p. 129

26) *Sichas Chag Hashevuot* 5702, printed in *Sefer Hasichos*, p. 123, also quoted in *Hayom Yom*.

27) *Ma’amar Mordechai* to the tractate *Pesachim*

28) *Shabbos Parashas Naso* 5751. See also *Roshei Devarim Leil Beis d’Chag HaShavuot* 5751 to those who returned from *Tahaluchah*, printed in *Sefer Hasichos* 5751.

the hastening of the Redemption ... Our Sages use the term *b'inan*, 'we need,' which is also a term connoting prayer and beseeching, as in the phrase, '*im tiv'ayun be'ayu*' (If you will request, request)²⁹. The words *nami lachem* (נָמִי לָכֶם), 'also for yourselves,' is the numerical value (190) of *keitz*, 'the End' [of exile]. Taken together, our Sages' statement that 'all agree that on Shavuos we also need for yourselves...' can be read, 'All agree that on Shavuos we pray for the *keitz*!' It is a time to pray for the *keitz hageulah*, the *keitz hayamim*, and *keitz hayamin*!"

Before lighting Yom Tov candles on the first night of Shavuos, or before performing any other *melachah* (activity that is prohibited on Shabbos but permissible during Yom Tov) recite Maariv and include *Vatodi'einu* that is effectively a *Havdalah* prayer. At the very least, recite *Baruch hamavdil bein kodesh l'kodesh* before performing these activities.

Candles are lit after *tzeis hakochovim* (nightfall) at **9:16 pm**. The light must be drawn from a pre-existing flame. The blessings *lehadlik ner shel Yom Tov* and *shehechyanu* are recited after lighting the candles (as is done on Shabbos). Men recite *shehechyanu* later tonight, during *Kiddush*, and should not recite that blessing if they light candles.

According to our custom, it is permissible to light the candles immediately, at the above time, and there is no reason or justification for specifically waiting until immediately prior to *Kiddush* to light them.

Someone who forgot to light the gas burner or another 48-hour flame before the start of Shabbos is permitted to ask a non-Jew to light it now.

Do not warm the base of a candle to stick it to its holder. This is prohibited as a precaution, so that you will not come to directly smooth or straighten the bottom of a wax candle, which is forbidden on Yom Tov due to the prohibition of *memacheik* (smoothing). Similarly, do not trim the bottom of a candle to insert it more easily into its holder. This would violate the prohibition of *mechateich* (cutting to shape or size). However, you may firmly press a candle into its position in the holder, even if this will cause its base to erode somewhat to fit the holder – this action is not considered *mechateich*.

Technically, you may clean out a used candle holder on Yom Tov without fear of violating the prohibition of *mesaken kli* (fixing an article) on Yom Tov. Similarly, if using *Neronim*, you may clean a used glass holder from the metal disk that held the

29) *Yeshayah* 21:12

used wick in order to insert a new candle in its place. There is an issue, however, with the remnants of used wax, charred wicks, or spent metal disks. These items are considered *muktzah* and may not be moved on Yom Tov. (This is especially an issue nowadays, when such items are considered disposable and will not be reused. Even in pre-modern times, when such materials were indeed reused, moving them was somewhat problematic. As the Alter Rebbe explains, “Although according to the strict letter of the law these items are not *muktzah*, it is appropriate to be careful not to move them unless there is great need”. It is prohibited to move them even when moved for the sake of food preparation.)

The solution, if you are using wax candles, is to take the holder over to the garbage (since the glass holder isn’t *muktzah*, for reasons beyond the scope of this publication), and shake it out there so that the remnants of wax and wick fall directly into the garbage can. If it cannot be removed through shaking, or if you are using liquid wax candles and the spent disk has become stuck to the base of the glass holder so that it cannot be removed without prying it out with a knife or a similar object, you may not do so during Yom Tov. There is no difference in this case between using a knife and using your fingers—the issue of *muktzah* remains. It may, however, be removed with a *shinui*, using an item which isn’t the normal way to remove it. The preferred solution is to think ahead (as mentioned earlier) and pour a small quantity of oil (or a tiny amount of water) into the holder on *erev Shabbos*, which prevents the disk from sticking to the glass in the first place. This would enable you to take the holder to the garbage can during Yom Tov and to empty its contents by shaking them over the trash can.

Some are careful to avoid using the Yom Tov candle to light another flame that is not specifically for Yom Tov, such as a gas burner or the like.

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Maariv is delayed until after *tzeis hakochavim*, at **9:16 pm**. The Torah requires us to count seven complete weeks. If Maariv were to be prayed earlier on the first night of Shavuot (this would be possible on a weekday), then the sanctity of the festival will have arrived and the last of the forty-nine days of the *sefirah* would have been cut short. This year, Shavuot begins as soon as Shabbos ends; there is no need to delay Maariv further than the conclusion of Shabbos at **9:16 pm**.

Maariv begins with *Shir hama'alos* and includes the *Amidah* for *shalosh regalim*, reciting the passage, *es yom chag haShavuot hazeh, v'es Yom Tov mikra kodesh hazeh, zman matan toraseinu,*

mikra kodesh...³⁰

Since it is also *motzoei Shabbos*, *Vatodi'einu* is added to the *Amidah*. If you forgot to recite this section, or made other omissions or errors associated with the *Amidah* or *Havdalah*, see footnote.³¹ Note that you may not perform activities that are forbidden on Shabbos—even though they are permitted on Yom Tov—until you recite *Havdalah* during *Kiddush* or the phrase, *Baruch hamavdil bein kodesh l'kodesh*. If you mistakenly ate before reciting *Havdalah* (*bein kodesh l'kodesh*), repeat the Maariv prayer, making certain to include *Vatodi'einu* this time.

Kiddush for the first night of Shavuos (even on a weekday) may not be recited early, while it is still daylight, as is the rule for Maariv.

This year, *Kiddush* also contains *Havdalah*. *Kiddush* is recited in the following order: The introductory paragraph *Askinu se'udasa* for Yom Tov, followed by five blessings: (1) *borei pri hagafen*; (2) *kiddush* (*mekadesh yisrael v'haz'manim*); (3) *borei me'orei ha'esh* (4) *hamavdil bein kodesh l'kodesh* (5) *shehechiyanu*.

30) For an explanation of the phrase, “*z'man matan Toraseinu*,” see *Shulchan Aruch Admor Hazaken*, beg. of 494, and in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 3, p. 997ff.

31) If you forgot to recite *Vatodi'einu* but realized your error before reaching Hashem's name at the conclusion of the blessing, begin reciting *Vatodi'einu* immediately, and then continue with *Vatitein lanu*, etc., even if you already started those sections. If you already recited Hashem's at the conclusion of the blessing, you may not return to the previous prayer, but conclude the *Amidah* as usual. You may not perform activities that are forbidden on Shabbos—even though they are permitted on Yom Tov—until you recite *Havdalah* during *Kiddush* or the phrase, *Baruch hamavdil bein kodesh l'kodesh*.

If you began reciting the weekday prayer of *Atah chonein l'adam da'as*, you should complete the blessing—adding the *Ata chonantanu* section that is usually recited on an ordinary *motzoei Shabbos*. Then begin the Yom Tov prayer of *atah vechartanu* and continue with the *Vatodi'einu* section, despite the fact that you already recited *Havdalah* in the *atah chonantanu*.

If you mistakenly continued with the other intermediate blessings for the weekday, you must conclude whichever brachah you have already begun (whether first, thirteenth or any in between) and at its conclusion, continue with the intermediary section for Yom Tov beginning with *Atah b'chartanu*.

If you completed an entire weekday *Amidah* in error without any mention of Yom Tov (such as *ya'aleh v'yavo*), you have not fulfilled your obligation and must repeat the *Amidah* for *shalosh regalim*. However, if Yom Tov was mentioned in the weekday *Amidah*, you do not need to repeat the *Amidah* for Yom Tov. If you remember that it is Yom Tov after completing the brachah of *hamachazir shchinaso l'tzion*, say *ya'aleh v'yavo* for Yom Tov before *Modim* to meet the requirement, and the *Amidah* need not be repeated. If you have already begun *Modim*, return to *Atah b'chartanu*. However, if you have already recited the second *Yi'hiyu l'ratzon* (without intention to prolong the *Amidah* with personal supplications), start over with the *Amidah* for *shalosh regalim*.

If you erroneously began the Shabbos *Amidah*, you should stop at whichever point in the intermediary blessing for Shabbos you are holding and begin *Atah b'chartanu*.

If you mistakenly ate before reciting *Havdalah* (*bein kodesh l'kodesh*), repeat the Maariv prayer, making certain to include *Vatodi'einu* this time. (This is exclusive to eating. If any melachah was performed, Maariv is not repeated.)

The blessing over spices is not recited.³²

The Chabad custom is to simply gaze at the candles during *Havdalah* of Yom Tov, but not to draw two candles together, nor are the fingernails extended close to the flames.

The final word of *Havdalah* is changed from *l'chol* to *l'kodesh*. If you mistakenly said *l'chol*, see footnote.³³ If you forgot to make *Havdalah* altogether, see footnote.³⁴

A woman who recites *Kiddush* omits *shehechiyanu* because she already recited it during candle lighting.

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On the second day of Shavuot in the year 5724 the Rebbe said: "The [Friediker] Rebbe stated that 'it is the custom of our Rebbes to repeat a *ma'amar* [of the Baal Shem Tov] and to recount a story regarding the Baal Shem Tov during Shavuot.' Although the [Friediker] Rebbe referred to this as 'a custom of our Rebbes,' nevertheless, that very fact that he reported it to us and made it available for publication indicates that it is proper for each Jew—all who hear about this custom—to similarly review a teaching of the Baal Shem Tov on each Shavuot, the anniversary of his *hilula*, and to recount a story about him.

Regarding the requirement of *simchas Yom Tov* during the meal, see further, the entry for the first day of Shavuot.

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Ya'aleh v'yavo is included in *Birchas Hamazon*. If you forgot *ya'aleh v'yavo* in *Birchas Hamazon*, see footnote.³⁵ *Harachaman*

32) See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 31, p. 191ff.

33) It is best that someone who inadvertently recited *bein kodesh l'chol* listen to someone else's recital of *Havdalah*. If that is not possible, repeat the entire *Havdalah* yourself. (This was explained at length at the Kinus Torah Chol Hama'ad Pesach 5774. The discussion was printed in *B'asra D'rav*, issue 3.)

34) If you forgot to recite *Havdalah* and only realize your error in the middle of his meal, stop eating immediately and recite *Havdalah* over a cup of wine. However, omit the blessing over the wine (*borei pri hagafen*) because you are already in the middle of a meal. The exception to this rule is if someone had clear intention at the start of the meal, when reciting *Kiddush*, not to drink any more wine during his meal; he must then recite *borei pri hagafen* over the wine he is using for *Havdalah*.

If you forgot to recite *Havdalah* altogether at night, and only realize the omission the following day, recite *Havdalah* immediately over a cup of wine. If you only realize your error on *motzoei Yom Tov*, do not recite anything further, because you have fulfilled your obligation when reciting *Havdalah* for *motzoei Yom Tov*.

35) If you forgot *ya'aleh v'yavo* but realized the error before pronouncing Hashem's name at the conclusion of the blessing *bonei v'rachamav Yerushalayim* should simply return to *ya'aleh v'yavo*. If he already pronounced Hashem's name, he should finish that blessing and then recite the text printed in the *Siddur* for this purpose—*baruch ... asher nassan yomim tovim l'amoi Yisrael l'sasson ul'simchah, es yom chag haShavuot hazeh; baruch ... mekadeish Yisrael v'haz'manim*.

However, if you already began the next blessing after *bonei Yerushalayim*—even if you merely recited the word "*baruch*" of that blessing—repeat the entire *Birchas Hamazon* from the beginning.

for Yom Tov is also added.

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It is customary to remain awake all night studying Torah, particularly *Torah sheba'al peh* (the Oral Tradition, including Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, Kabbalah etc.). It is written that someone who remains awake in study the entire night of Shavuos is guaranteed to live through the coming year without suffering harm.

On Simchas Torah 5652, the Rebbe Rashab stated: "I own a handwritten manuscript of the Mitteler Rebbe in which he promises that whoever remains awake the entire night of Shavuos will merit *kesser Torah* (the crown of Torah). The Mitteler Rebbe was a *posek* (halachic authority)..." At that point, the Rebbe Rashab rose to his feet and declared, "Listen, all Jews! We must remain up on the night of Shavuos!" He then sat down and continued, "I mean it literally! We must remain awake; we simply cannot go to sleep!"

The Chabad custom is to recite *Tikkun leil Shavuos*. The Friediker Rebbe records that the Rebbe Rashab would begin reciting the *Tikkun* immediately after candle lighting as soon as Shavuos began. He would then interrupt for Maariv and the Yom Tov meal and resume after the conclusion of the meal.

Someone who did not complete the *Tikkun* at night should complete it the following day.

There are a number of corrections to the standard versions of the *Tikkun*. The Rebbe notes that the passage that concludes *Sefer Yetzirah* often appears as:

"נאמנת בפנים. . אחד בפה ואחד בלב"

This ending does not make sense and is not a positive conclusion to the book. It should rather read:

"נאמנת ג' רעות ללשון דיבור רע והמלשין אחד בפה ואחד בלב ג' טובות ללשון שתירה ושמירת הלשון ודיבור אמת."

The Rebbe further observes that Rashbi's teaching:

"אנן בחביבותא תליא מילתא דכתיב כו"

is missing its third supporting verse and should read:

"אנן בחביבותא תליא מילתא דכתיב ואהבת את ה' אלקיך וכתיב מאהבת ה' אתכם וכתיב אהבתי אתכם אמר ה'."

The appropriate manner in which to recite the *Tikkun*, the Rebbe explained, is to read it as if its words were right now being transmitted to us from Hashem Himself in the most awe-inspiring Divine revelation, identical to the revelation at Mount Sinai—"with awe and fear, trembling and perspiration."

The Rebbe encourages us to explain this to whomever we are able to reach, so that every Jew is aware that at the very moment he recites the sacred words of the *Tikkun*, Hashem personally repeats the identical words along with him! With this awareness, the *Tikkun* must certainly be recited in an appropriate manner, with due awe and reverence.

The Rebbe insists that the proper preparation to *kabbolas haTorah* on Shavuos is not in-depth study, not even of *Chassidus* and *p'nimiyus haTorah*, as some mistakenly believe. Rather, it is simply reciting the *Tikkun* all the way through to its *minyan hamitzvos*, and to do so with the appropriate awareness, as described above. This is indeed the appropriate *tikkun* (rectification) for receiving the Torah.

Reading the words with your mind is insufficient. Care must be taken to recite each word aloud, so that you can clearly hear what you are saying. Someone who is able to recite the words aloud but instead reads them with his mind has not fulfilled the obligation, “*v’limadetem osam*,” (you shall teach them).³⁶

Someone who recites selections from *Torah shebichsav* but is not sufficiently learned to comprehend the words he utters has nevertheless fulfilled the mitzvah of Torah study. This is not the case with selections from *Torah sheba'al peh*, for which he is not considered having studied at all if he does not comprehend the words he recites. Nevertheless, we are encouraged to busy ourselves with all words of Torah, even that which we cannot comprehend. In the Future Era, we will be granted the ability to fully comprehend the same teachings that we studied without understanding their meaning.³⁷

The Baal Shem Tov instructed that special care be taken not to engage in idle talk from the onset of Shavuos until after reciting *Kesser* in the *Kedushah* of Musaf. (Needless to say, this does not suggest that we may engage in such chatter after *Kesser*.) The time for *Tikkun leil Shavuos* should certainly not be wasted in idle chatter, as we would thereby lose the benefit of having stayed awake.

Mikveh: It is customary to immerse in a *mikveh* towards morning, just before the crack of dawn, which will occur at **3:38 am**. It is customary to dip four times.

Luach Colel Chabad quotes the relevant teaching from the writings of the Arizal.³⁸ “Upon the approach of morning, slightly prior to the crack of dawn, while the eastern sky is yet darkened—for that is the moment of *ayelet hashachar*, as is known—one

36) This concept was explained at length at the Kinus Torah of Shavuos 5775.

37) Cf. *Imrei Pinchas* 274

38) *Sha'ar HaKavanos*

must then immerse in a *mikveh*. He must concentrate on the supernal *mikveh*, which is *kesser elyon* of *zah [ze'ir anpin]*, for that is drawn down to him on this night, and it is referred to as the fiftieth gate, as we have written. Regarding him it is stated, 'I will sprinkle pure water upon you...'³⁹ Through this, we receive additional sanctity from this realm of *kesser*."

The immersion should be performed "approximately a quarter of an hour before the light of day"⁴⁰ or "approximately half an hour before the light of day".⁴¹

Eating and drinking before Shacharis is forbidden according to *Chazal*. This applies once the time for Shacharis has arrived, at dawn each morning. However, an individual who cannot concentrate on prayer without nourishment is permitted to eat and drink. This remains true nowadays, despite the fact that our powers of concentration remain relatively diminished regardless of nourishment. Moreover, there is a well-publicized statement of the *Rebbeim* regarding the value of nourishing the body in preparation for prayer. Nevertheless, first recite the morning blessings and the full three paragraphs of *Shema* before eating or drinking in the morning.

There is another issue with eating before Shacharis from a kabbalistic perspective, according to which food and drink at that time may empower the forces of *klipah*. The time frame for this concern is a matter of dispute; it begins either at dawn or midnight. Here again, nourishment is permitted for the sake of health, concentration in prayer, and similar concerns. All opinions concur that the prohibition would not begin earlier than dawn for someone who did not sleep at night, or slept less than "sixty breaths." (The Rebbe quotes *Eshel Avraham* who states that eating is also permitted if awakening during the night with plans to go back to sleep before dawn. The statement of *Eshel Avraham* appears to imply that even if someone goes to sleep after dawn, they may eat and drink before sunrise.)

What about the bedtime *shema*? "There were certain nights in Lubavitch," says the Frierdiker Rebbe,⁴² "during which we never recited *krias shema she'al hamitah* ... on the eve of Shavuot. As a rule, my father the Rebbe [Rashab] was accustomed to reciting *krias shema* on the approach to midnight, each night, even if he would lie down at a later hour—this was done without anyone noticing. On those nights, during which he would not recite *krias shema she'al hamitah* at all, as mentioned earlier, he would instead sometimes discuss the concept of *krias shema*, and at

39) *Yechezkel* 36:25

40) *Rema MiPano*

41) *Tur Barekes*

42) *Sefer Hasichos* 5702, p. 100.

other times, he would discuss the meaning of the words of *kri's shema*.”

SUNDAY, 6 SIVAN—THE FIRST DAY OF SHAVUOS, DAY OF THE GIVING OF THE TORAH

Reciting the *Tikkun* throughout Shavuos night does not exempt a person from reciting *krias shema* at the proper time in the morning. Plan a sleep schedule accordingly. To study the entire night and then fail to recite the morning *Shema* before its deadline would be completely counterproductive.

The time for the morning *Shema* begins at dawn, according to Torah law. As a precaution, *Chazal* delayed its time until the daylight is strong enough to recognize an acquaintance at a distance of four *amos*, because that is when the majority of people awaken. In extenuating circumstances, the *Shema* can therefore be recited from from its biblically allotted time starting at dawn. The deadline for reciting *Shema* is at the end of the third halachic hour of the day.

The time for morning *Shema* begins at **4:23 am**. (If there is no choice, it may be recited as early as **3:38 am**.) The latest time for *Shema* is at **9:07 am**.

Before going to sleep after studying the entire night, arrange for someone to awaken you in time to recite the morning *Shema* and Shacharis, although it is not forbidden by halachah to go to sleep even if there is no one to awaken you for this purpose. & As a precaution, it is worth reciting *krias shema* immediately after dawn, bearing in mind that if you do not have an opportunity to repeat the *Shema* in the ideal time established by *Chazal* (between **4:23 am** and **9:07 am**), you will have nevertheless fulfilled your obligation.

When faced with the option of remaining awake and praying Shacharis at sunrise, or going to sleep, the Rebbe favored the second option if sleeping would permit greater concentration during prayer. The Rebbe noted, however, that what works for one person will not necessarily work for another. Some feel invigorated after a brief nap, while others feel even groggier than before it. The Frierdiker Rebbe related that the Rebbe Rashab would sometimes sleep first, although it is unclear whether this was his prevalent custom.

Our custom is to recite all the morning brachos as usual, including *al netilas yadayim* and *Elokei neshamah* (this is based on a secret—and unofficial—directive of the Frierdiker Rebbe), even having remained awake the entire night and having not changed clothing. Nevertheless, if possible, it is better to sleep a little before reciting the blessings. The only difference between

someone who slept during the night and another who remained awake is that the former may recite these blessings after midnight, while the latter must wait until after dawn to recite these blessings. The same applies to *birchas haTorah*.

The blessing over the *tzitzis* may not be recited if the same pair of *tzitzis* was worn throughout the night and has not been changed from the previous morning. It is best to recite the blessing over another pair, and thereby exempt the original pair from a blessing.

For those that daven Shacharis early in the morning, the earliest time to make a brachah on the *tallis* is at **4:23 am**. The *Amidah* should be scheduled to begin only after sunrise at **5:25 am**.

The *Amidah* for *shalosh regalim* is followed by the complete *Hallel*.⁴³

It is a rabbinic mitzvah established by an institution of the Prophets to recite the complete *Hallel* on each of the three festivals, during the daytime, and to recite a blessing beforehand—*asher kiddishanu...likro es haHallel* (...Who commanded us to read the *Hallel*). Do not interrupt the recital of the (complete) *Hallel*, except for those matters for which it is permissible to interrupt during the recital of the blessings before the Shema.

The best way to fulfill the mitzvah of reciting *Hallel* is to recite it together with the congregation, immediately after the *Amidah* of Shacharis. That way, the verses of *Hodu* and *Ana Hashem* can be recited in response to the *chazzan*.

In *Igros Kodesh*, the Rebbe mentions the case of an individual who enters *shul* in order to begin Shacharis and discovers that the congregation has already recited the *Amidah* and is poised to begin *Hallel*. The Rebbe states, “I never heard an explicit directive regarding reciting *Hallel* before one has recited Shacharis. According to oral tradition among the *chassidim*, however, despite the fact that our Rebbeim would extend their *Shabbos* prayers over many hours—long after the congregation had concluded the service—they would nevertheless organize their time on Yom Tov so that they would conclude the *Amidah* with the congregation and then recite *Hallel* together with them.

If you did not recite *Hallel* immediately after the *Amidah*, it may be recited anytime during the day prior to *tzeis hakochavim*.

Hallel is followed with *Kaddish shalem*, *shir shel yom*, and *Kaddish yasom*.

43) In his *Shulchan Aruch*, the Alter Rebbe mentions a custom of distributing spices among the congregants in *shul* on Shavuot. He warns against doing so from the start of *Baruch She'amar* until after the *Amidah*. However, as far as can be determined, this is no longer an existing custom.

When the *aron* is opened for the reading of the Torah, *Vayihi binso'a* is recited, followed by the *yud gimmel midos harachamim*, *Ribbono shel olam* and *Brich sh'mei*; two *sifrei Torah* are removed. Five *aliyos* are read in the first scroll from *Parashas Yisro* (from *Bachodesh hash'lishi* until the end of the *sedrah*), which discuss the events surrounding the giving of the Torah. The second *sefer Torah* is used to read *Maftir* from *Parashas Pinchas* (*Vv'yom habikkurim*), which describes the offerings of the festival of Shavuos.

The liturgical Shavuos poem, *Akdamus*: The Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch* states that where there is no particular custom, *Akdamus* should be recited before reading the Torah, before the *kohen* recites his opening blessing over his *aliyah*. *Akdamus* was thus recited in many communities that follow the Alter Rebbe's opinions, as well as in the city of Yekaterinoslav (now known as Dnepropetrovsk). However, in *Hayom Yom* and *Sefer Haminhagim*, the Rebbe states that we do not recite *Akdamus*.⁴⁴

During the *Aseres Hadibros*, the entire congregation stands facing the Torah. The *Aseres Hadibros* are read according to *ta'am ha'elyon* (higher version), whereby all the verses are split into ten sections, with each section containing one of the ten *dibros*, since the *dibros* were given on this day, we read it in a manner similar to the way they were said when the Torah was given. The common custom is to always read it in this manner, even on *Shabbos Parashas Yisro* and *Shabbos Parashas Va'eschanan*; the *ta'am hatachton* (regular version) is only used while reading in private.

In *Hayom Yom*, it is noted that in 5740 the Rebbe called for all children including tiny infants to come to shul on Shavuos to hear the *Aseres Hadibros*. In *Likkutei Sichos*, the Rebbe instructs⁴⁵: "As mentioned many times before based on the teaching of *Chazal*, Hashem says to the Jewish people, "My children! Read this Torah portion each year and I will consider as if you are standing before Mount Sinai and receiving the Torah." Just as the *Aseres Hadibros* were originally delivered in the presence of the entire Jewish nation, men, women, children, and even the extremely young, it is worth the effort to ensure that when this portion is read on the festival of the giving of the Torah each year, **all Jewish people, even its very youngest members are present in shul, at least during the reading of the Aseres Hadibros**. We should recall that the Torah was given in merit of the Jewish people offering their **children** as guarantors." (In many *sichos*, the Rebbe discusses bringing children from the age of one month and upwards, or even

44) At the Rebbe's Shavuos meal, on the first night of Shavuos 5727, a discussion took place regarding the Rebbe's personal custom in this matter.

45) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 28, p. 315

younger, if their health allows for it.)

For the *Haftorah*, we read *ma'aseh merkavah* from *Yechezkel*, because Hashem appeared to us at Mount Sinai accompanied by myriads of angels. It is customary to conclude with the verse, *Vatisa'eini ru'ach*, although it is not written in the same section as *ma'aseh merkavah*. In some communities, a *chacham* and *gadol* is called upon to read this *Haftorah*. Some are accustomed to reading it while standing, not only the person who reads the *Haftorah*, but all who read quietly with him also remain standing out of reverence for its content.

The *Amidah* of *shalosh regalim* is recited for Musaf. Following the *nussach* of the Alter Rebbe,⁴⁶ it is Chabad custom to recite *U'shnei se'eirim l'chaper* during Musaf, corresponding to the additional goat that was offered on Shavuos accompanying the *shteihalechem* (two-loaf offering).⁴⁷

If you made a mistake in the *Amidah* of Musaf, see footnote.⁴⁸

Birchas Kohanim is recited at the end of Musaf. While the *kohanim* sing the blessing, the congregation should move their heads in the following sequence: When the *kohanim* say *Yivarechacha*, the head remains erect; *Hashem*, lean head to the right; *Veyishmerecha*, head erect. *Ya'eir*, lean head to left. And so on, for the remaining eleven words of the blessing.

Recite the *Ribono shel olam* prayer only while the *kohanim* are singing, but not when they pronounce the actual words. At that point, you must remain silent and listen carefully. The prayer is split into three parts: While the *kohanim* sing before the word “*v'yaseim*,” recite from *Ribono* until *hatzaddik*. While they sing before “*lecha*,” recite from *ve'im* until *Elisha*. While they sing for “*shalom*,” recite from *u'kesheim* until *letovah*. Then, as they pronounce *shalom*, recite the three final words *v'sishmereini*, etc. Once the *kohanim* conclude *shalom*, say “*amein*,” followed by *Adir bamarom*, while still covered by the *tallis*.

The *shesh zechiros* (six Remembrances) are recited following Musaf.

“*Mazel tov!*” was the customary greeting on Shavuos among the

46) unlike the view of the *Daas Zekeinim Mibaalei Tosfos*, *Pinchas* 28:28

47) see *Sha'ar HaKollel* 40:15, glosses from the Rebbe *ibid*. See also sources cited in *Hamoadim b'Halacha* 11:82. The reason why the *shteihalechem* is not mentioned in today's Torah reading—nor in today's Musaf prayers—was explained at length at the *Kinus Torah* on *Isru Chag HaShavuos* 5774.

48) If you forgot to recite the verses describing the Musaf offering during the *Amidah*, but have not yet pronounced Hashem's name at the conclusion of the blessing, return and recite it properly. If you realized only after pronouncing Hashem's name, do not repeat the blessing.

If if you recited verses that rightfully belong to another occasion, you must return to the beginning of the blessing.

If you accidentally began the Shabbos or weekday sections of the *Amidah* prayers, simply interrupt and immediately recite the Yom Tov sections.

first generations of Chassidim. At first, they would wish each other *mazel tov* at the reading of the Torah. However, because it is stated in sefarim that this constitutes an interruption, they started wishing each other *mazel tov* after the reading of the Torah. Eventually, it was moved to after the conclusion of the prayer service. “I remember elders in the town of Lubavitch who would announce *mazel tov* on the festival of Shavuos,” recalls the Frierdiker Rebbe.⁴⁹

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It is forbidden to fast a *ta'anis chalom* (for a disturbing dream) on Shavuos because we must eat and rejoice on the day that the Torah was given to show that the Jewish people welcome and enjoy the day on which they received the Torah. Hence, it is forbidden to fast for a bad dream on Shavuos, although it is permitted on every other Yom Tov and even on Shabbos.⁵⁰

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When reciting *Kiddush*, we say *Askinu se'udasa* for Yom Tov and then *Eileh mo'adei* and *borei pri hagafen*.

If you neglected to recite *shehechiyanu* on the first night of Shavuos, recite the blessing today whenever you remember your omission.

SEUDAS YOM TOV

“Although the Shavuos meal is a Yom Tov meal,” clarifies the Frierdiker Rebbe,⁵¹ “it is mainly a *seudas mitzvah*...it is a *seudah* of *kabbolas haTorah v'hamitzvah*. If when we bring even a single Jewish child into the *bris* of Avraham Avinu or into *cheder*, the accompanying meal is considered a *seudas mitzvah*; certainly when six hundred thousand men of military age, in addition to the elderly, the womenfolk, and the children, are brought by Hashem into *cheder* to recite ‘*kamatz alef ah*’—as stated in the verse, ‘*The King brought me to His chambers [cheder]; we will rejoice and be glad in You*’⁵²... ‘*We will rejoice and be glad in You* [בך]’ meaning the twenty-two [כ"ב], the same letters as [בך] letters of the Torah. The first letter that Hashem spoke was *kamatz-alef* of the word “*Anochi*” [I am]. Therefore the meal of Shavuos is first and foremost a *seudas mitzvah*, in addition to its serving as a *seudas Yom Tov*.”

It is customary in all Jewish communities to eat milk products on the first day of Shavuos. A Jewish custom is considered

49) *Sefer Hasichos*, Kayitz 5700. This is explained in *Sichas Chag HaShavuos* 5713

50) The Rebbe explains this at length in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 23.

51) *Sefer Hasichos* 5703; See also 1st day of Shavuos 5705.

52) *Shir HaShirim* 1:4

Torah, especially as in this case, many insights into the custom have been given. Since it is also a mitzvah to eat meat on each Yom Tov, care must be taken to avoid the prohibition of mixing meat and milk, and that all of the appropriate laws are observed.

The custom to eat a *milchig* (milky) meal on Shavuos does not override the obligation of eating meat on Yom Tov. The former is a custom, while the latter is a mitzvah. We therefore eat both.⁵³ However, we are not permitted to eat dairy and meat products in the same meal even if we wait the necessary time in between courses. Therefore, a *brachah acharonah* (after-blessing) on the *milchig* foods must be recited before washing for the meaty meal.

It is our custom to wait one hour between milk and meat. This spans the time from finishing *milchigs* to beginning eating *fleishigs* (meat), so washing can still commence soon after concluding the dairy meal.

Of course, we should use this opportunity to educate our children to wait between eating dairy and meat, each according to their age.

Is it “six-hour” cheese? American cheese can certainly be considered one-hour cheese. We may need to wait six hours for other hard cheeses, since their taste lingers for a considerable time, such as Parmesan cheese. (Among the halachic authorities, there are multiple possible determinations of which cheeses require a six-hour wait, such as: cheese that has cured for six months or more; cheese that has developed worms; cheese that has been stored in rennet long enough to become sharp and hard; cheese that is extremely fatty with a taste that lingers for a long time. There are some *poskim* who require waiting one hour for each month it takes to produce the cheese.)

Modern cheese production has changed the curing process drastically, and this further varies halachic rulings. For our purposes, we will cite the *Yad Yehuda* who posits⁵⁴ that we need not be concerned of the possible “six-hour” status of cheese that is melted, and it requires only a one-hour wait. Thus, with regard to modern cheeses which are melted (aside from those aged for six months or more), there is room for leniency.

A sharp food such as an onion, radish, lemon, or head of garlic⁵⁵

53) The Alter Rebbe simply notes that there are numerous reasons for eating milk products. The *Rema*, for example, traces this custom to the *shtei halechem*, two breads that were offered only on Shavuos, which imply two meals for which we need to wash and eat bread separately; the bread used in a *milchig* meal may not be used for a *fleishig* meal. (Although we are now accustomed to merely eating *mezonos* at the *milchig* meal, the *mezonos* is also considered bread for this purpose.)

54) *Yorah Deah* 69

55) and in many regards, somewhat sharp foods such as pickles

that was chopped with a meaty knife or blender,⁵⁶ even in the case where the utensil is not *ben yomo* (meaning that it was not used for a hot meat product during the last 24 hours), may not be used with milk or milk products. The same applies also in reverse: sharp food that was cut with a milky knife cannot be eaten with meat. In the latter case, according to many opinions, the food cannot be eaten even within the six hour period following the eating of meat. (This stringency does not apply in reverse, i.e. if you drank milk, you may eat a sharp food that was cut with a meaty knife. Also, after eating a sharp food cut with a meat knife, you may subsequently drink milk.) Naturally, it is best to keep a pareve knife and cutting board for just such purposes.

If necessary, it is permitted to heat up *milchig* foods on a *fleishig blech* or hot plate, provided that the fleishig surface is perfectly clean of meaty foods and the dairy food is placed on a neutral layer such as pre-cut foil (it is forbidden to cut foil off the roll on Yom Tov, even to an inexact size, since it falls under the prohibition of *mesaken mana*—creating a vessel).

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The brachah on cheesecake that has even a thin crust is *mezonos*, provided that the purpose of the dough is to enhance its flavor. The question is whether an *Al hamichya* can be recited if the crust itself is not a full *kezayis*. In this case, the amount necessary is determined to be one-sixth of the total *kezayis* volume.⁵⁷ If you are not sure that this requirement is fulfilled, take another piece of *mezonos* and also another food that calls for a *borei nefashos* and subsequently recite both *brachos acharonos*. Note that a *shehakol* food, not a *shehakol* drink, is required for this purpose if you recited *borei pri hagafen* and your subsequent drinks will be incorporated with the *al hagefen* after-blessing. (If you heard *Kiddush* from another and did not drink a full *revi's* of the wine, a *shehakol* drink would require a *bracha achanorah* and can therefore be utilized.)

Aside for the above consideration, it is necessary to eat a *kezayis* of *mezonos* or to drink a full *revi's* of wine in addition to the wine drunk at *Kiddush* (at least *lechatchilah*). *Kiddush* must be followed by washing for bread, or the meal substituted by these quantities of *mezonos* or wine.

A *brachah achanorah* must be recited on the *milchige* meal before washing for the second meal. If you forgot the after-blessing, it should be made during the next meal. If *Birchas Hamazon* was already said, an *Al hamichya* is no longer required, but a *Borei nefashos*, if necessary, should still be recited.

56) some are stringent even if a meaty cutting board was used

57) See One Minute Halacha #493 at length.

When eating *mezonos* at the *milchige* meal, take care not to eat so much as to be *kove'ah seudah* (eat such a large amount that it equals a satisfying bread-meal) otherwise you may be required to recite *Birchas Hamazon*.⁵⁸ A quantity of baked *mezonos* equalling four *beitzim* that satiates you (even if the fullness is a result of the baked goods plus other foods combined), obligates *Birchas Hamazon* according to the biblical requirement.

A *Kiddush* cup used at the *milchig* meal should not be used again at the *fleishig* meal, in case any dairy residue remains on the cup.

A latecomer to a Yom Tov meal who discovers that the people have already finished their dairy foods and are now eating their meat meal—whereas they still need to eat dairy in honor of Shavuos—should not proceed to eat dairy food on the same tablecloth as those eating their meat meal. There must be distinct tablecloths for meat and for dairy.

To fulfill the obligation of rejoicing on Yom Tov, men must drink a *revi'is* of wine. This requirement may be satisfied through drinking the wine of *Kiddush*. The Frierdiker Rebbe was accustomed to drinking a *revi'is* of wine at each Yom Tov meal. Children should be given foods they enjoy to help them rejoice on Yom Tov.

Although rejoicing on Yom Tov is a biblical obligation, there is no dispensation to get drunk. In fact, the *Rambam* specially warns against overdoing the obligation of drinking wine on Yom Tov.

The obligation of *Oneg Yom Tov* means drinking wine during each Yom Tov meal, if the individual can afford it, and having plenty of meat, wine, and delicacies, according to their means.

Law of Redemption: The meat of the *shelamim* (peace-offering) is eaten in fulfillment of the Torah's obligation to rejoice in the festival. In *Likkutei Sichos*, the Rebbe explains⁵⁹ that according to the Alter Rebbe, the *ikar mitzvah*, the primary instrument of rejoicing in the festival (for men) is accomplished through eating the meat of the *korban shelamim*. This is not merely a physical feast, but it is mainly the joy of a mitzvah. It is the consuming of the holy sacrifices, whereby the person absorbs actual sanctity in a tangible manner.

(Incidentally, the halachic authorities debate whether this mitzvah involves only the act of eating, or also the offering of specific parts that is performed prior to the eating. It is the opinion of the Tzelach that there is one mitzvah to offer

58) See *Seder Birchas Hanehenin*, Chapter 2

59) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 33, p. 62ff. See the Rebbe's discussion at length.

a *shelamim* at least once during the festival, and a second mitzvah to partake of the meat during the festival.)

Here is an overview of some of the laws pertaining to eating the sacrificial meat on Yom Tov (without details pertaining to ritual slaughter, offering on the altar, or preparing the sacrificial meat).

Note: This is not an exhaustive treatment, nor does it present the plethora of opinions on many of its details that are sometimes the subject of polar opposite views among poskim. (Let Eliyahu Hanavi come and resolve all halachic disputes, and bring Moshe and Aharon with him to teach us!) When applicable, the laws below reflect the opinions quoted in the writings of our Rebbeim.

As mentioned earlier, everyone is obligated to purify themselves in advance of the festival. According to some opinions, people would avoid entering a home in Yerushalayim during the festival for fear of contracting *tum'as ohel*—ritual impurity received when coming under the same roof as a corpse or its contaminants—and they would simply sleep in the streets. We could perhaps counter this with the argument that since everyone is obligated to purify themselves in advance of the festival, this should not be a concern. In any case, it is clear that caution must be taken to avoid entering a home in which there is a real concern of impurity.

If a utensil that was under the same roof as a corpse is discovered in a home, even in a building several stories high, do not remain in that building. Similarly, do not touch a chair or bed that has not been ascertained to be free of *niddah*-impurity or the like. However, a plastic chair or rubber mat and the like may be used without fear, and food that have not become *huchshar* (halachically susceptible) to *tumah* may be eaten without concern.

The Sages decreed, as an extra precaution, to avoid partaking of sacrificial meat without first immersing hands in a body of water that is kosher for use as a *mikveh*.

The meat of the *shelamim* may not be eaten by its owners before the *kohanim* have offered its sacrificial parts on the altar, for it is the latter activity that makes it permissible for the sacrificial meat to be eaten to begin with. The exception to this rule is in the case that the sacrificial parts are accidentally lost or destroyed before they reach the altar, in which case the meat may be eaten as long as the sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the altar.

Eating the meat of the *shelamim* is a mitzvah that is observed by the offering's owners and not just by the *kohanim*. The blessing before eating the meat is as follows: “*Baruch... le’echol zevach*,” or alternatively, “*al achilas shelamim*.” (“Blessed are You ... instructed us to eat the sacrifice,” or “... instructed us regarding the eating of the peace-offering.”)

The basic obligation is fulfilled by eating just a *kezayis* of meat. However, all of the meat must be eaten (by the owner or by others) for another reason: so that it does not become *nosar*—sacrificial meat left uneaten beyond the deadline stipulated in the Torah. According to some opinions, it is an actual mitzvah to eat the meat in its entirety.

During the festival, another mitzvah is performed simultaneously—that of eating the meat of a *shelamim* during the festival for the sake of rejoicing during the festival as required by Torah law. A *kezayis* of meat is sufficient to fulfill this second obligation. (Some say a *kezayis* is insufficient and it must be *lasovah*, enough to be satiated, which is determined as the quantity of *kebeitzah*.) A married woman fulfills the obligation to partake of a *shelamim* on the festival through her husband offering the sacrifice and sharing its meat with her. (Some opinions disagree.) Children are exempt from this obligation.

All sacrificial meat, of greater or lesser sanctity, must be prepared for eating *lemashchah* – in the manner that food is served to royalty or nobility. It must therefore be roasted and prepared with mustard. Tosefos explains this was common for royalty, but someone prefers another manner of gourmet cuisine may follow their preference.⁶⁰

The *shelamim* belongs to the category of *kadashim kalim*, sacrificial meat of lesser sanctity that may be eaten anywhere within the boundaries of the city of Yerushalayim. (Some say, only on ground level.)

For practical purposes, it is advisable to eat the *shelamim* that is served hot at the table using (kosherable) metal—or disposable—plates, because the flavor of the hot meat that is absorbed into the utensils becomes *nosar* after a certain time, as will be discussed shortly. It is also advisable to clear the table of all other cutlery and crockery before serving the

60) The Rambam's view of this obligation is elaborated upon in *Kovetz Hallelu Avdei Hashem*. In the *drashah* delivered in 770 in honor of Shavuot 5775, Harav Braun *shlita* expounded on the debate regarding one who did not prepare mustard for his *shelamim*—whether he is permitted to transport the mustard from one domain to another, or instead sweeten it via extinguishing burning metal during Yom Tov, in light of the fact that mustard isn't considered a staple for all.

meat for the same reason.

The *shelamim* must be eaten within a specific time frame (see below), and great care must be taken to avoid leaving any meat uneaten beyond this time. An individual who finishes their own portion of meat may leave the table, according to some opinions, and assume that the other adults who are still partaking of the meat will not leave any over beyond the stipulated time. They may not, however, rely on children to finish their portions, and must remain to supervise them.

After the deadline has passed, any remaining meat becomes *nosar* and it transmits ritual impurity to the hands of whomever touches it.

On the first night of Yom Tov, there is a mitzvah of *linah*, whereby someone bringing an offering to the *Beis Hamikdash* is obligated to spend the entire night in Yerushalayim. There is an additional obligation to remain there on the following night, the eve of the second day of Yom Tov, which can be attributed to the festival or to the offering they brought. The Midrash on Rus on the phrase, “*ba’asher talini alin*” (*Wherever you lodge, I will lodge*)⁶¹ seems to imply that women are included in the obligation of *linah* due the offerings they bring.

Shelamim must be eaten within “two days and one night,” which includes the actual day on which the sacrifice was brought (when its blood was sprinkled on the altar), as well as the following night, and then the entire following day until sunset. In our case, when the sacrifice was offered on the sixth of Sivan, it should be eaten before the conclusion of the seventh of Sivan. Nevertheless, the proper way to fulfill the mitzvah is to eat it on the actual day of offering and/or the following night.

It is a mitzvah to burn any leftover meat that has become *nosar* due to passing the deadline. Although *shelamim*-meat becomes *nosar* after sunset on the second day, it must not be burned at night. The prescribed time for burning *nosar* is on the following morning.

Metal utensils used for the *shelamim* while the meat was hot require *kashering*. This must be performed within the city of Yerushalayim. The process demands rinsing with hot and cold water and *hagalah* (koshering via boiling water). If the utensil was earthenware, it must be shattered. Some are stringent to require shattering glass utensils and not to

61) Rus1:16

rely on the koshering process that is used for metal utensils. There is a halachic dispute as to the procedure required for reusable plastic utensils and plastic covers.

Minchah: *Korbonos*, *Ashrei*, *Uva l'tziyon*, *Amidah* for *shalosh regalim*.

"It has been customary for many years now," the Rebbe said,⁶² "that during Yom Tov we go to visit our Jewish brethren in other synagogues and *batei midrashos* in many other communities, in order to amplify the joy of the festival by uniting with large numbers of Jews from additional communities, and especially by reviewing Torah teachings ('*The commandments of G-d are upright, causing the heart to rejoice*'⁶³) culled from both the revealed and mystical teachings of the Torah."

Avoid eating a *seudah* after the tenth halachic hour of the day (4:40 pm), in order to be able to enjoy the Yom Tov meal on the second night of Shavuos. However, if you did not eat *seudas Yom Tov* yet for some reason, you may do so even after this time.

It is forbidden to cook or prepare anything on the first day of Yom Tov for the second (night or) day. Therefore, when cooking for the first day, the food must be prepared in such a manner that it will be ready with sufficient time to eat it before *shkiah* (sunset) at 8:25 pm., it is permissible to cook and prepare for the second day of Yom Tov starting at *tzeis hakochavim*, tonight at 9:16 pm.

Law of Redemption: The time for *Bikurim* is between Shavuos and Chanukah; they are not brought before festival.

⁶⁴ On the holiday itself, there are different opinions in the *Rishonim* as to whether it is permissible to bring *Bikurim*.⁶⁵

Korbonos of the holiday: In addition to the individual *korbonos* that everyone had to bring (*olas r'iyah*, *shalmei chagiga*, and *shalmei simcha*), communal *korbonos* are brought for the holiday. This communal *korbon musaf* includes: two cows, one ram, and seven lambs for an *olah*, and a goat for a *chatas*, as detailed in *Parashas Pinchas*. In addition, a *korbon minchah chadashah* is brought on Shavuos which consists of two loaves of bread from the new wheat called *shte'i ha'lechem*. Offered with the bread were seven unblemished lambs, one ox, two rams for an *olah*, a goat for a *chatas*, and two lambs for *shlamim*, as detailed in *Parashas Emor*.

62) *Sefer Hasichos* 5751

63) *Tehillim* 19:9

64) *Bikurim* 1, *Mishna* 3

65) see *Tosefos Bechoros* 26a s.v. *melay'ascha*. *Maharit Algazi* *ibid.* *Minchas Chinuch Mitzvah* 18. *Sh'ut Igros Moshe Orach Chaim*, vol. 1, *Inyanei Kodshim Siman* 1.

Altogether, twenty-four animals are offered in honor of Shavuos, thirteen of which accompany the *shteí lechem*, while the other eleven comprise the *musaf* offering. These correspond to the twenty-four books of Torah, Nevi'im, and Kesuvim (thirteen of Torah and Nevi'im, and eleven of Kesuvim.) These are also representative of the traditional twenty-four adornments of a bride, of which thirteen are gold and silver, and the remaining eleven are types of clothing.

SUNDAY NIGHT, THE SECOND NIGHT OF SHAVUOS

Candles are lit for the second day of Shavuos after *tzeis hakoch avim*, **9:16 pm**. The flame must be taken from a pre-existing flame, one that has remained lit since before the onset of Shavuos (and this year, before Shabbos). Two blessings, *lehadlik ner shel Yom Tov* and *shehechiyanu*, are recited, as on last night. (See the entry for the first night of Shavuos regarding the proper way to reuse different types of candle cups.)

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The Rebbe often referred to the statement of the Chasam Sofer that the second day of Shavuos is treated more stringently than the second days of Pesach and Sukkos. This is because of a fundamental difference in the original establishment of these dates:

The second day of Pesach and Sukkos were established due to a doubt that existed in former times as to the correct date of these festivals. By the time these festivals arrived (on the fifteenth of Nissan and the fifteenth of Tishrei), communities located at a considerable distance from Yerushalayim had not yet heard word of the decision of the *beis din* in Yerushalayim regarding the establishment of Rosh Chodesh Nissan or Rosh Chodesh Tishrei. Therefore, they were unable to determine the precise date of Pesach and Sukkos. Due to this doubt, a second day was added to these two festivals by way of precaution. Conversely, there was never a doubt regarding the correct date for Shavuos, because Shavuos is not celebrated on a particular date in the calendar, but rather, on the fiftieth day after the first day of Pesach. In other words, whether Rosh Chodesh Sivan is one day or two days is irrelevant to determining the date of Shavuos. Rather, Shavuos depends solely on when Pesach began—which in turn depends on Rosh Chodesh Nissan. By the time Shavuos arrived, even communities living at a distance from Yerushalayim had ample time—over two months—to clarify the *beis din*'s decision regarding Rosh Chodesh Nissan.

The Sages nevertheless established a second day for Shavuos as well, simply to avoid confusion between Pesach, Shavuos, and Sukkos. As a result, the second day of Shavuos is not the product of a doubt, but a deliberate act of the Sages. It is therefore treated with the greater stringency afforded purposeful Rabbinical enactments.

Maariv and *Kiddush* are identical to those of the first night of Shavuos.

MONDAY, THE SECOND DAY OF SHAVUOS

Shacharis is identical to the Shacharis of the previous day.

The Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch* records the custom of reading *Megillas Rus* in *shul* on Shavuos to impart the message that the Torah can be acquired only by those who are willing to undergo suffering and poverty in order to merit it, as reflected in the story of Rus, who converted and embraced the Torah under such conditions. He states that a blessing should not be recited over this reading.

Although it is **not** the Chabad custom to read *Rus*, neither in *shul* nor at home, the Rebbe emphasizes that the theme of *Rus* and its association with Shavuos is not diminished. In fact, *Megillas Rus* is expounded at length in the teachings of Chassidus on Shavuos. Its importance is further underscored by the fact that the entire *Megillas Rus* is included in the *Tikkun* that we recite on the night of Shavuos while almost every other book of the Torah is represented in the *Tikkun* by only a number of verses. Only those subjects that are deeply connected to Shavuos (another example is *ma'aseh hamerkavah*) appear in their entirety. The Rebbe also explains that the crucial connection to Shavuos is the fact that Dovid Hamelech was born and passed away on Shavuos and that the purpose of *Rus* is to detail the ancestry of Dovid Hamelech.

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Five *aliyos* are read from the first *sefer Torah* from the portion *Kol habechor*. The *Maftir* is read from the second scroll, exactly as on the first day of Shavuos. The *Haftorah* is from *Tefilah l'Chavakuk* until *lam'natze'ach binginaso*. However, others—including Chabad—have the custom to begin from *Va-shem b'heichal kodsho*.

Yizkor is recited as well as *Av harachamim*.

The difference between *Yizkor* and *Av harachamim* is that *yizkor* is recited by individuals in the merit of particular souls, whereas *Av harachamim* is recited by the public in the merit of all departed souls from the departed Jewish community at large. Usually, on a day on which *Tachanun* is not recited, *Av*

harachamim is also omitted because it is a universal form of *Yizkor*. But today, when individuals need to recite *Yizkor*, they recite *Av harachamim* as part of that service, so it may also be recited by those who do not need to recite *Yizkor*, if they so wish.

Musaf, *Kiddush*, and Minchah are identical to the first day of Shavuos.

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If you forgot to recite *shehechyanu* in tonight's *Kiddush*, say it anytime before the end of *Yom Tov* (even if you remembered the first night).

The Frierdiker Rebbe recounted,⁶⁶ “Our master the Baal Shem Tov greatly cherished the second day of Shavuos. Immediately following his public revelation [as a Baal Shem], at a time when everything was done with alacrity and by the strict letter of the Shulchan Aruch—so that Kabbalas Shabbos was recited at its precise time, and the like—the Baal Shem Tov held a unique schedule on the second day of Shavuos. He would pray at the earliest time in the morning, and then hold a small meal together with a *minyan* of his students in order to recite *Birchas Hamazon* over a cup of blessing. Later, in the middle of the day, he would hold a grand meal and he would *farbreng* for hours. He continued this practice until the day of his passing.”

It is customary to wash hands for bread before sunset and to eat at least the quantity of bread equal to a *kebeitzah* to participate in a *farbrengen*. The *niggunim* of all the Rebbeim are sung.

“The Alter Rebbe would refer to the meal on the second day of Shavuos as *dem zeiden's seudah* [Grandfather's meal],” the Frierdiker Rebbe relates. “During the meal, the Alter Rebbe would pronounce, ‘*Baruch haba!*’ [Welcome!]. At that point, the *chassidim* knew that the Baal Shem Tov was present.

“It once happened that during the meal of the second day of Shavuos, the Alter Rebbe failed to announce *baruch haba*. Three elderly individuals were present; they had known the Baal Shem Tov personally. Since the guests would sometimes speak at the Alter Rebbe's table, these individuals began repeating their recollections of the Baal Shem Tov. The Alter Rebbe called out that the Baal Shem Tov is still busy right now in *gan eden ha'elyon* and *mesivta d'Kudsha Brich Hu* (the higher *gan eden* and the supernal academy of the Holy One blessed be He). A while later, the Alter Rebbe pronounced *baruch haba*, and they knew that

66) *Sichas Yom Beis d'Chag HaShavuos* 5704. See there for the reason behind this practice. The Rebbe explains this further in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 4, p. 1027ff.

the Baal Shem Tov had arrived at the meal. This episode was recounted by the Tzemach Tzedek, who was present at that gathering. He was six years old at the time, because this took place in the year 5556. The story was subsequently transmitted from one Rebbe to the next.”

On the second day of Shavuos in the year 5715, the Rebbe instructed the *chassidim* to sing a number of *niggunim*. However, the Rebbe himself sat in his chair, seemingly withdrawn, an extremely serious expression on his face, and entirely lost in his thoughts. After some time, he began to speak with tremendous emotion and delivered the following message:

“The Alter Rebbe used to announce, ‘*Baruch haba!*’ at the Shavuos meal. He was referring to the Baal Shem Tov, because the Baal Shem Tov’s *yahrtzeit* is on Shavuos.

“Some elderly *chassidim* were once seated at his table, and they related stories of the Baal Shem Tov. As is known, through relating stories of *tzaddikim* it is possible to draw down the souls of those *tzaddikim*. The Alter Rebbe told them that the Baal Shem Tov was still busy in *gan eden ha’elyon*.... After some time, the Alter Rebbe pronounced *baruch haba*—in his customary tune—and everyone seated at the table then realized that the Baal Shem Tov had arrived.”

At this point, the Rebbe announced, “Whoever sees and feels and is able to say *baruch haba* should say, ‘*baruch haba!*’ [When the Rebbe said these last two words, he said them with a tune.]

“When the *ispashtusa d’Moshe* [a leader whose soul is a branch of Moshe’s soul] that is in each generation is present—and in our generation, it is my father-in-law the Rebbe—then through him, the Rebbe Rashab is also present. He, my father-in-law, the Rebbe, is the Rebbe Rashab’s *memaleh makom* [his successor], and as we have often explained, the concept of *memaleh makom* is that all the matters that existed previously continue to exist, and even with an addition. And when the Rebbe Rashab is present, then the Rebbe Maharash is also present. When the Rebbe Maharash is present, then the Tzemach Tzedek is here as well. When the Tzemach Tzedek is present, then the Mittler Rebbe is also here. When the Mittler Rebbe is present, then the Alter Rebbe is here as well. When the Alter Rebbe is present, then the Maggid is also here. When the Maggid is here, then the Baal Shem Tov is present as well.

“In general, it is not possible to differentiate between our Rebbeim, but at least as far as we are concerned, whichever Rebbe is closest to us is most precious to us. Since a large percentage of the audience here are *chassidim* of my father-

in-law, the Rebbe, for they were with him in the life that he lived in this world, and they study his Torah teachings, and so on, it is therefore understandable that my father-in-law, the Rebbe is the most critical for us.

“True, there is the Baal Shem Tov, the Maggid, the Alter Rebbe, the Mitteler Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek, the Rebbe Maharash, and the Rebbe Rashab—but what is most critical for us is **the Rebbe**. It is through him that we also have the Rebbe Rashab, the Rebbe Maharash, the Tzemach Tzedek, the Mitteler Rebbe, the Alter Rebbe, the Maggid, and the Baal Shem Tov—who received his teachings from [the prophet] Achiyah Hashiloni, who was also the teacher of Eliyahu Hanavi regarding whom it is stated, ‘*v’heishiv lev avos al banim*’ [He will turn the heart of the fathers back through the children, and the heart of the children back through their fathers]⁶⁷—May it be speedily in our days!”

“The emanations are drawn down on Shavuos to every Jew,” the Rebbe says in a *ma’amar*,⁶⁸ “and give him strength in his divine service through the coming day. If someone, G-d forbid, is lacking in his service, these effusions give him no rest and drive him to toil in his work in the coming days in the optimal manner, starting with the days of *tashlumin* (rectification) of Shavuos until the twelfth of Sivan, inclusively (these are days we do not say Tachanun, as the Alter Rebbe writes in his Siddur, since these are days on which the sacrifices of the Festival were [still] brought), until we channel these phenomena [into our lives] throughout the year. With this, the year will include all the brachos that are indicated by the letters of the alef-beis, up to [the last]—a year of Torah...”

At these Shavuos *farbrengens*, the Rebbe often demanded an increase in Torah study, including the daily study of *Chitas* and Rambam. Here is an excerpt of one such *farbrengen*⁶⁹:

“... this applies to the *shiurei chitas*—the daily study of Chumash (divided according to the days of the week), of Tehillim (divided according to the days of the month), and of Tanya (divided according to the days of the year). These three *shiurim* correspond to the three shepherds of the Jewish people who are associated with Shavuos: Chumash is associated with Moshe Rabbeinu who received the Torah at Sinai; Tehillim is the book of Dovid Hamelech who passed away on Shavuos; And Tanya is the elucidation of the teachings of Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov whose *hillula*

67) Malachi 3:24

68) *Ma’amar Yom Beis d’Chag HaShavuos* 5748

69) *Chag HaShavuos* 5751, printed in *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, vol. 2, p. 560.

is also on Shavuos. And how good, how appropriate, and so on, it would be to apply this to the daily study of Rambam (divided into an annual cycle of three chapters a day, or a three-year cycle of one chapter a day, or an annual cycle of Sefer Hamitzvos.)”

If the Yom Tov meal or *farbrengen* extend past nightfall—even if it extends many hours into the night—recite *ya’aleh v’yavo* during *Birchas Hamazon*. As long as the meal began at a time when *ya’aleh v’yavo* was required, that obligation continues for the duration of his meal. (Naturally, if you prayed Maariv or recited *Havdalah* over a cup of wine, you can no longer recite *ya’aleh v’yavo*.)

Yom Tov ends at **9:17 pm**.

Atah chonantonu is added to the *Amidah* of Maariv.

It is possible to recite *Kiddush Levanah* tonight.⁷⁰

The regular *Havdalah* is recited, but without the blessings over the candle and spices. *V’yiten lecha* is not recited tonight.

TUESDAY, 8 SIVAN, ISRU CHAG—YOM TAVO’ACH

Until the twelfth of Sivan (inclusively), *Tachanun* is not recited, because this post-festival period is a time of *tashlumin*, meaning that personal festive offerings that were not brought during Shavuos may still be offered during this period. (On this coming, we omit *Av harachamim* and *Tzidkasecha tzedek*.) Rather than reciting *Tachanun*, we yearn and expect each day that Moshiach will arrive and we will offer the festive sacrifices (*shalmei simchah* and *shalmei chagigah*) that we were unable to offer on Shavuos.

“The Tzemach Tzedek asked the Alter Rebbe ,” the Frierdiker Rebbe tells,⁷¹ “why Shavuos is celebrated for seven days until the twelfth of Sivan (in that we refrain from reciting *Tachanun*, and so on). The Alter Rebbe responded that it is analogous to merchants who travel to participate in a great two-day business fair where they purchase much merchandise. Once the fair is over, they

70) There is a special aspect to blessing the moon on *motzoei Shabbos*. Does this extend to *motzoei Yom Tov*, or is it better to wait until after the coming Shabbos? There is support in the sources for either conclusion—see Hebrew section for extensive notes on this subject—yet it was not the practice in the Rebbe’s shul for *Kiddush Levanah* to be recited after *Kos shel brachah* on *motzoei Yom Tov* (as evidenced by the private diaries of years past; see also Sefer Hasichos 5751, p. 596, fn. 159). However, it is also recorded (as brought by the Rema and printed in Sefer Hasichos 5752, vol. 1, p. 68) that we do not wait until *motzoei Shabbos* when it falls after the tenth of the month (as this year), and even more so when the season or location make moon sightings less certain. As stated in the *sichah*: “If there is a question of a doubt, follow the direction of a local *posek*.”

71) *Sichas Yom Beis d’Chag HaShavuos* 5698

need to journey back to their homes. However, they linger for a few days in order to properly package and secure their merchandise, especially if they have to travel a great distance, in which case, there is always a concern that something may be lost or stolen along the way. The same is true of the Festival of the Giving of the Torah. Without a doubt, each Jew acquires something from the revelations of this festival. He must linger until he has properly packaged that which he acquired. The concept of waiting a few days after the festival is in order to secure everything so that it will not be lost with the trials of time.”

The day after Shavuot is called *Yom T'voach* (Slaughtering Day), when the *olot r'iyah* were brought. For this reason, it is forbidden to fast on *Isru Chag Shavuot* by force of law (not merely per custom as it is on other days that immediately follow a festival). Even a *chossan* who is getting married today cannot fast.

The day following a festival is referred to as *Isru Chag*. This name is derived from the verse, “*Isru chag ba'avosim ad karnos hamizbe'ach*” (Bind the festival [offering] with cords until [you bring it to] the horns of the altar).⁷² Taken literally, the phrase *isru chag* means to bind the festival itself, which Chazal explain as connecting the day following the festival with the actual festival, to celebrate in honor of the festival that has just ended. This celebration, Chazal explain, takes the form of feasting, as alluded in the alternative meaning of *ba'avosim*— with fattened cattle. The verse's final phrase, “to the horns of the altar,” allude to the fact that whoever celebrates by eating and drinking a little more than usual on the day after the festival, and treats it as a mini-festival in honor of the departed festival, is considered having built an altar and offered an actual sacrifice to Hashem. It is customary to eat and drink a little more than usual on this day.

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Someone who pledged to give *tzeddakah* during *Yizkor* should not delay in fulfilling their pledge. In a number of letters, the Alter Rebbe places extraordinary emphasis on donating money owed to *tzeddakah*, in addition to the need to avoid the prohibition against delaying fulfillment of a vow. The author of *Terumas Hadeshen* would not eat food on the morning of *Isru Chag* until he had sent *yizkor*-money to the *gabbaim*.⁷³

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In a Farbrengen on the second day of Shavuot 5749, the Rebbe

72) *Tehillim* 118

73) see *Leket Yosher*, *Hilchos Tzeddakah*

said⁷⁴: The custom which has been established over a number of years and in numerous locations, to arrange a Kinus Torah following—and in close proximity to—all of the three major festivals [Pesach, Shavuos, and Sukkos] ... and especially Shavuos, for being the "Time of the Giving of the Torah", it is the most appropriate time to hold a Kinus Torah... We should strive to publicize this custom wherever it has not yet been implemented, so that the people of those locations will likewise arrange a Kinus Torah in continuation of—and in proximity to—the festivals, i.e., on the day of Isru Chag. They should consider the local conditions and hold the Kinus during subsequent days instead if doing so will allow for a larger attendance.

Rabbi Yeshayahu Hertzel, *shlita* recounted the following episode: "In the year 5726, I was standing outside [770] the court of the Rebbe *shlita*, together with my father-in-law, Harav Yaakov Freidman, of blessed memory. It was Isru Chag Shavuos, and the Kinus Torah was underway [inside the building]. The Rebbe turned to us and demanded, 'Why are you standing outside of the Kinus Torah?' We responded that we were so preoccupied with arrangements for the upcoming wedding that we had not paid attention to the matter at all. The Rebbe again demanded, 'But it is the middle of Torah! For wedding arrangements you should steal time from your sleep!' From then on, it was fixed within me a sense of the importance of participating in these Kinusim even when it is somewhat difficult. When I recounted all this at the Shavuos Kinus Torah, Harav Hagaon Rabbi Mentlik, of blessed memory, was extremely pleased to hear of this exchange, and he exclaimed, 'Why did you wait until the conclusion of the Kinus to report this!'"

Law of Redemption: During the days immediately following *Shavuos*, we may offer the following mandatory Yom Tov sacrifices that we did not have an opportunity to offer during Yom Tov: *shalmei simchah* and *chagigah*.

As for the *olas r'iyah*, although the established halacha is like *Beis Hillel* who say it is permissible to bring it on Yom Tov itself, still in this case, *Beis Hillel* did as *Beis Shamai* said not to bring them on *Yom Tov* (since it is not needed for food we do not desecrate the Yom Tov for it, since it is possible to bring it after Yom Tov). Many Jews did the same, and brought it the day after Shavuos.⁷⁵

74) *Hisvaduyos*, p. 294

75) *Shulchan Aruch Harav Orach Chaim, Siman 494:19*. See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 28, p. 24ff.

Once the festival has concluded, the utensils and equipment of the *Beis Hamikdash* are removed from their places and immersed. This is done to purify the Courtyard from the ritual impurity of those ignorant of the laws of ritual purity who came in contact with the equipment during the festival.

There is a debate regarding someone who forgot to recite *Havdalah* on *motzoei Yom Tov*. Some say that they can recite it the following day, while others disagree. Since the matter is shrouded in doubt, we do not recite *Havdalah* on *Isru Chag*.

SHABBOS PARASHAS NASO, 12 SIVAN

“While we were out together for a walk,” the Frierdiker Rebbe relates,⁷⁶ “my father told me: ‘Today [the twelfth of Sivan] is the seventh day from Shavuos.’ He proceeded to list all the superior qualities of Hoshana Rabba, which is the seventh day of Sukkos and those of Shvi’i shel Pesach, the seventh day of Pesach. He then explained the concept of the twelfth of Sivan, the seventh day from Shavuos.”⁷⁷ In a *sichah* on the twelfth of Sivan, 5720, the Rebbe explains that this day has the quality of the “the seventh is beloved.” Since this is the culmination of the revelations associated with the festival of Shavuos, the light radiates with more intensity, with an even greater *shturem* than it shone on Shavuos itself, because it possesses the superiority of *or chozer* (light that rebounds [with added strength]).

Av harachamim and *Tzidkas’cha tzedek* are not recited this Shabbos.

Pirkei Avos is recited after Minchah. This week the first chapter is read.⁷⁸

We wish our readers and the entire Crown Heights community, among the entire community of Anash worldwide, and all our fellow Jews, a *gut Yom Tov*, *kabbolas haTorah b’simchah ub’pnimiyus*, a healthy summer, and above all, the immediate revelation of the true and complete Redemption!

76) *Sefer Hasichos* 5704, p. 143

77) See *ibid.* for an explanation of the superiority of 13 Sivan, as is also explained in the *sichah* of 12 Sivan, 5720 that is mentioned.

78) See *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Naso* 5751.