

Halacha Newsletter

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Sivan

Tachnun is not said from the first through the twelfth day of the month. During this time period fasting is forbidden except in the following two cases. A Chossan and Kallah fast on the day of their wedding. One accustomed to fast following a disturbing dream may do so.

The second day of Sivan is known as "Yom HaM'yuchos." It was on that day that Hashem said to the Jewish people, "V'atem Tihiyu Li Mamleches Kohanim V'goy Kodosh" (And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation). The following Yom Kipur will fall on the same day of the week as the Yom HaM'yuchos.

The third, fourth and fifth days of Sivan are called "Shloshes Y'mei Hagboloh," the three preparatory days before Mattan Torah. Although haircuts are permitted during these three days, Minhag Chabad is to wait until Erev Shavuos.

Erev Shavuos

Thursday, Sivan 5, May 21

Eruv Tavshillin One should take at least a "kibeah" (2 ounces) of Challa, and a highly regarded food (at least a "K'zayis" - 1 oz.) such as fish or

meat, and recite the Brocho "Al Mitzvas Eruv" followed by the verse "B'dein..." This permits cooking and other preparations for Shabbos to take place on Friday, which is Yom Tov.

The Eruv must exist until all Shabbos preparation is completed on Friday. We combine the Eruv along with another Challa to serve as Lechem Mishneh at the first two Shabbos meals, and again at Shalosh Seudas, when it is eaten.

Shavuos Night

Candlelighting time is 7:34 p.m. The following two Brochos are recited: 1) L'Hadlik Ner Shel Yom Tov; and 2) Shehechiyonu.

Maariv We daven later than usual to make sure that the forty-nine days of the Omer are complete. Beginning at Shir Hamaalos we recite Maariv L'Sholosh Regolim

Kiddush is performed in the following order:

1. Boreh P'ri Hagofen
2. Birkas Kiddush
3. Shehechiyonu

It is customary to stay awake all night to recite "Tikun Leil Shavuos" and to learn. This is to rectify the Jews' having slept the night prior to Mattan Torah. One who was up all night (until morning) washes "Negel Vasser" and

says Birchash Hashachar. (For further details, refer to Likutei Sichos, Volume 9, page 276.)

Some have a custom to immerse in the Mikveh at dawn to receive the Torah in purity.

Shavuos Day

First Day of Shavuos
Friday, Sivan 6 May 22

Shacharis of Sholosh Regolim and Hallel.

There has been an urgent call from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, שליט"א, to bring all children, including infants, to Shul to hear the Torah reading, especially the portion containing the Aseres Hadibros.

Kriyas Hatorah After Vay'hi Binsoa we say "Hashem, Hashem" once, and take out two Sifrei Torah. From the first Sefer we read the portion concerning Mattan Torah in Parshas Yisro. It is customary to stand facing the Sefer Torah during the reading of the Aseres Hadibros. For Maftir, from the second Sefer we read "U'vayom Habikurim" in Parshas Pinchas.

According to the Minhag of Chabad we do not say Akdomos.

Musaf of Sholosh Regolim. Note the special insertions describing the Shavuos Korbonos. Birkas Kohanim is performed.

It is customary to eat dairy foods on the first day of Shavuos. However, we are also obligated to eat meat on Shabbos and Yom Tov. Therefore, one should take caution to rinse the mouth out and wait approximately one hour (six hours after “hard cheese”) between the dairy foods and any meat meals which follow.

Mincha Before Mincha, Posach Eliyahu is said. (“Hodu” is omitted.)

Second Day

Second Night of Shavuos Friday Evening

Candlelighting at 7:34 p.m. from a pre-existing flame. The following two Brachos are recited: 1) L’Hadlik Ner Shel Shabbos V’Shel Yom Tov; and 2) Shehechionu.

Maariv begins with “Mizmor L’Dovid.” In the last verse of L’cho Dodi (Bo-ee V’Sholom”), we substitute the word “B’Simcha” in place of “B’Rina.” Shmoneh Esrei for Sholosh Regolim with Shabbos insertions.

Kiddush Sholom Aleichem, Aishes Chayil, and Mizmor L’Dovid are recited quietly. The Kiddush is for L’Sholosh Regolim, with Shabbos insertions, and Shehechionu.

Second Day of Shavuos Shabbos, Sivan 7, May 23

Shacharis Shabbos davening until the Shmoneh Esrei, which is that of the Sholosh Regolim including Shabbos insertions. According to the Minhag of Chabad the book of Ruth is not read publicly.

Kriyas Hatorah “Hashem Hashem” is not said. Two Sifrei Torah are taken out. In the first we read “Aser T’Aser” in Parshas Re’eh. Maftir is the same as for the first day.

Yizkor is recited after Kriyas Hatorah.

Musaf of Sholosh Regolim with Shabbos insertions. Be sure to include the special insertions describing the Shavuos Korbonos. Birkas Kohanim is performed.

Motzei Yom Tov 8:34 p.m. Havdolo is the same as every Motzei Shabbos.

Shavuos Facts...

Oaths

Shavuos means not only “weeks” but also “oaths.” The name indicates that, on the day of the giving of the Torah, G-d and Israel exchanged oaths to remain faithful to each other forever.

Dairy

The true sanctification and holiness of the Jews began at Mattan Torah. Therefore, any “Shchitah” done prior to Shavuos was not “kosher” for them afterwards. This holds true even according to those opinions that maintain that the Jews kept the laws of kashrus before Mattan Torah. Being that the Torah was given on Shabbos, they were not permitted to “schecht” that day. Hence, the only thing available for them to eat was dairy. This is one reason we eat dairy on Shavuos.

Another reason we eat dairy on Shavuos is because the word “cholov” (milk) has the numerical value of forty. This corresponds to the forty days which Moshe Rabeinu spent on Har Sinai to receive the Torah.

The Tablets

Tradition tells us that they were thick square blocks of stone, six handbreadths tall, six handbreadths wide,

and three handbreadths deep. In modern measurements, that is about 18”× 18”× 9”. The sages of the Talmud demonstrate how tablets of this size—along with a few other relics—fit neatly into the Ark of the Covenant that Moses made as described in Exodus.

It is interesting to note that nowhere is there any mention of them having the rounded tops that are so common in the popular drawings of Moses and the tablets. This design appears to be the invention of non-Jewish artists.

The Mountain

The Torah was given freely, in an ownerless public place. If it had been given in the land of Israel, the nations of the world would say that they have no portion in it. Anyone who wishes to properly accept it is welcome to do so.

Why was Mount Sinai chosen to be the site for the giving of the Torah? The conventional answer is that the choice of Mount Sinai was to teach us humility, since Mount Sinai was the most humble of all mountains. If so, why was it not given in a low lying valley? Surely that would have been a stronger lesson in humility?

Hence, we learn that a Jew must be able to distinguish between being proud and being arrogant. Arrogance is distasteful. Being proud of one’s roots is a virtue. The Torah therefore, was given on a humble mountain.

Best Wishes For a Happy Shavuos