

THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

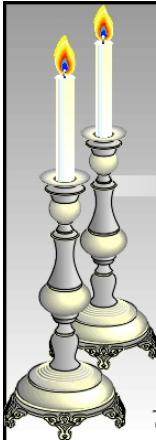
Published by



based on the shiurim given by

RABBI DOVID
OSTROFF shlita

developed from the Chabura of the
Shulchan Aruch Project



These halachos were shown by Rabbi Ostroff to HaGaon HaRav Moshe Sternbuch, shlita

Parshas Emor 5768

May 9, '08

Volume VII Issue 27

Sefiras Ha'omer

People frequently ask each other what day of the Omer it is and if one has not yet counted the Omer, it is possible, as we shall soon explain that one may not later count with a *b'racha*. This is based on the halachic concept that *mitzvos einan tzrichos kavanah* – one need not have specific intention to do a mitzvah, but it suffices that the mitzvah was done. Therefore, in our case, since the person stated the day of the Omer – albeit not intending to specifically fulfill the mitzvah and count – in effect the day was counted. Whether one will be permitted to count that night with a *b'racha* will depend on the nature of the response, as follows.

If the response is -

~ "today is day six", one may not count that night with a *b'racha*, because it is considered as counting, even though one did not say *la'omer* or *ba'omer*.¹

~ "today is day twelve", and he omitted, "which is one week and five days", in other words, the response included the days but not the weeks. The *halacha* is that one may count later with a *b'racha*.²

~ "five *la'omer*", and *hayom* was omitted, one may continue with a *b'racha*, because without the word *hayom*, it does not constitute as counting that day.³

~ a full response, but one had specific intention not to do the mitzvah, one may later count with a *b'racha*. Having specific intention not to be *yoetz* is not considered counting.⁴

One is about to count 12 ba'omer or la'omer and hears the ba'al tefillah say 13 ba'omer. May he count 13 with a b'racha?

The basis of the question is that if he intended to count 12, it means that he thought the day before was 11, in which case he evidently missed a day and cannot continue counting with a *b'racha* since he missed a day.

If however, he is now uncertain, and it is possible that he counted the correct day yesterday, he may continue with a *b'racha*.⁵ The reason is because we have a combination of two *s'feikos*. One *safeik* is whether he skipped a day or not, and another *safeik* is whether a *b'racha* is recited even though one has not counted each day.⁶

One recited the b'racha and is about to say day 14 and hears the tzibbur say 15, is the b'racha valid?

In this case he knows he counted the previous day correctly, yet his problem is that today he miscalculated and was about to recite the incorrect day. He does not recite a new *b'racha* and must immediately continue with the correct count.

If today is day 15 and one said

¹ *M" B* 489:8;489:21.

² *M" B* 489:22. The *Sha'ar ha'Tsiun* cites the Elya Rabah saying that from his omission it is evident that he did not intend to count.

³ *M" B* 489:20, see *Sha'ar ha'Tsiun* 25.

⁴ *M" B* 489:22.

⁵ *Siman* 489:8.

⁶ *M" B* 489:38.

~ "today is day 14, which is two weeks *ba'omer*", one must repeat the *b'racha* because it is the incorrect count.

~ "today is day 14, which is two weeks *ba'omer*", and one corrected oneself within *toch k'dei dibur* (2-3 seconds) and recited the correct day, the count is valid and one need not repeat the *b'racha*.⁷ This holds true even when one mistakenly thought that today is 14, not only if one's tongue slipped and recited 14.

May one recite a shehechiyanu during the Omer?

Although the *Shulchan Aruch* says to refrain from reciting *shehechiyanu* during the three weeks from 17th of Tamuz till 9th of Av, many *poskim* hold that during *sefirah* one may recite the *shehechiyanu*.⁸ The *Mishna Berura* writes that even though *sefirah* is not a time for extraordinary *simcha*, if one happens upon a *shehechiyanu*, one may recite it.⁹

May one purchase new clothes during the Omer?

The *Kaf HaChaim* cites several *poskim* who say that one may recite *shehechiyanu* on fruit and clothing during *sefirah*, as it is not as severe as the mourning customs during the three weeks. Although he cites an opinion who holds that it is "a good custom" not to wear new clothing during *sefirah*, he says that one does not rule accordingly.¹⁰

It appears that if not for the issue of reciting *shehechiyanu*, there is no issue with purchasing and wearing new clothes during *sefirah*. And since most have the custom to recite *shehechiyanu* on special clothing and not on regular clothing, one is permitted to purchase and wear regular clothing during *sefirah*.

⁷ *M" B* 489:32.

⁸ *Kaf HaChaim* 493:4.

⁹ 493:2.

¹⁰ *Kaf HaChaim* 493:4.

Sefiras Ha'Omer

The *gemora* tells us that all of R' Akiva's great *talmidim* died during *sefirah* for they lacked in *bein adam lachaveiro*. We thus mourn the loss of these great *talmidim* and at the same time it is customary to try improve our own *bein adam lachaveiro*.

It is important to realize that *Mishna* 6:6 in *Pirkei Avos*, which states that there are 48 *kinyanei Torah* (Ways to acquire Torah) include approximately twelve traits that are *bein adam lachaveiro*.

For example – *noseh b'ol im chaveiro* – helping a friend bear his load, is one of the means with which to acquire Torah. There are many other traits and it requires an explanation as to how this will make someone a *talmid chacham*.

A simple *p'shat* is that Torah is learned with a *chavrusa* and with other people, and if one treats others with respect and love, love will be returned and together learning will take on a greater meaning.

If one chases *Kavod*, contrary to *mistracheik min hakavod* (another trait), people will stay away from such a person and he will not merit learning with a *chavruta*.

Another *p'shat* is that Torah is holy and one needs to make oneself a *k'li* to receive Torah. Refined *middos* in a person make him a *k'li* into which Torah can exist.

32 days prior to *lag ba'omer* = *lev*.

17 days after *lag ba'omer* = *tov*.

Lev tov is another trait!!

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If you would like to send a question to Rav Ostroff, you can write to him at shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com.

Note: The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive *p'sak*.