



1) There is an age-old custom, based on the teachings of the holy Zohar, to remain awake the entire night of Shavuos and spend the night immersed in Torah learning. (See Mishna Berura Siman 494 S"K 1 for the reason for this minhag)

2) Moreover, the Arizal writes that one who spends the entire night awake, immersed in Torah learning, is guaranteed to remain alive for the remainder of the year and no harm will befall him. (Mishna Berura ibid.)

Although this is a tremendously difficult thing to do, and on a practical level not achievable for most people, it is important to try and spend as much time as possible immersed in Torah learning on this exalted night, and certainly not squander it away with idle chatter, and certainly not with forbidden conversation.

3) One who will stay awake all of Shavuos night to learn Torah, and plans to drink sporadically throughout the night, if he had in mind when reciting the bracha of Shehakol on the first drink, that it should cover everything he drinks that night, that initial bracha will suffice to exempt all the subsequent drinks throughout the night. (provided he did not leave the building where he recite the initial bracha)

4) However, it is ideal not to have this in mind, and rather recite Borei Nefashs after each drink and a new bracha of Shehakol on each subsequent drink. (See Halichos Shlomo; Shavuos Dvar Halacha Os 4 that it isn't considered a Bracha She'aino Tzericha)

5) If one is awake all Shavuos night (or any night during the year) and is learning Torah or reciting Tefilos when daybreak (Alos Hashachar) arrives, he does not need to stop to wash his hands immediately. He can wash after he finishes learning. (See Halichos Shlomo; Shavuos, Perek 12: 4)

6) Furthermore, he may walk more than 4 Amos before washing the morning washing of Negel Vasser (unlike when one slept, where he should wash immediately and avoid walking more than 4 Amos upon rising, before washing. (ibid.)

It is also permissible, when being up all night, to touch the eyes, the clothing etc. before washing (unlike when one slept, where the eyes, mouth, ears etc. should not be touched before washing) . (ibid.)

7) After being awake all Shavuos night (or any other night), the hands should be washed after Alos Hashachar.

The bracha of Al Netilas Yadayim should not be recited on this washing unless the restroom was used before the washing, in which case Al Netilas Yadayim and Asher Yatzar should indeed be recited. (See Mishna Berura Siman 4 S"K 30)

8) Simply touching a covered area on the body before washing will not be enough to necessitate the recital of the bracha of Al Netilas Yadayim. (See Halichos Shlomo; Shavuos, Perek 12:5)

9) If one slept [a Shina Keva, more than half an hour in a bed] on Erev Shavuos, he can recite Birchos Hatorah as usual in the morning, even if he stayed awake during the entire night. (Psak of Rav Akiva Eiger Zatzal quoted in Mishna Berura Siman 47 S"K 28)

The above is true even if the nap he took during the previous day was while still clothed. (See Halichos Shlomo; Tefilah, Perek 6:1 and 2)

10) If one did not sleep during the previous day and was awake all night (i.e. he did not sleep at all from when he recited Birchos Hatorah on the morning of Erev Shavuos until Shavuos morning) **he does not recite Birchos Hatorah himself, rather he should hear it from someone else who did sleep, and be exempted by him.** (See Mishna Berura ibid.)

However, he does not have to cease learning Torah as soon as day breaks (Alos Hashachar); he may continue learning until the time that he hears the Brachos from someone else. (See Halichos Shlomo; Shavuos, Perek 12, Dvar Halacha 7)

11) It is customary in many congregations for the entire Tzibur to stand when the Torah portion of the Aseres Hadibros is read in public (this occurs 3 times each year: Parashas Yisro, Parashas V'Eschana and on Shavuos), **as a commemoration of when they were originally given on Har Sinai, where it says (Shemos 20:15) that Am Yisroel trembled and "stood" from afar.**

12) Although some Rishonim including the Rambam (in Sh"ut HaRambam, Freiman edition, Siman 263, based on Talmud Brachos 12a) **forbade it, as it seemingly gives more importance to one part of the Torah over another, which of course is not the case, many Poskim nowadays allow it, as it is clear to all that we are doing it in commemoration of Matan Torah and not to give importance to the particular portion that is being read.** (See Halichos Shlomo; Shavuos, Perek 12:8 where he allows it. Chacham Rav Ovadiah Yosef Zatzal in Shu"t Yechaveh Da'as Siman 29 rules that it is still forbidden. See also Shu"t Teshuvos V'hanhagos Vol. 1 Siman 144 for a compromise ruling)

If one finds himself in a congregation that stands, he must follow their minhag even if his personal minhag is to specifically not stand, as maintaining the minhag of the place you are in is most important. (See Igros Moshe Orach Chaim Vol 4 Siman 22)

13) It is customary to eat dairy foods on [the first day of] Shavuos. (See Rama Siman 494:3)

One reason (cited in Rama ibid.) **is to commemorate the Shte Halechem, the special bread offering that was brought in the Bais Hamikdash on Shavuos, and thus eating dairy followed by meat will necessitate two separate breads for each eating.** (See Mishna Berura S"K 14 - 17 for more details about this and other things to keep in mind when eating dairy followed by meat at one meal)

14) Another reason (cited in the Mishna Berura Siman 494 S"K 12) **is that at Matan Torah the Jews received the entire Torah** (as the entirety of Torah was included in the Aseres Hadibros, according to Rav Sa'adiah Gaon), **and thus when they returned to their homes they were only able to eat dairy items, as the new laws they were just given required lengthy preparations (of preparing for, and actually slaughtering the animals properly) before they were able to eat meat. Thus, we eat dairy as well to commemorate that day.**

According to the first reason, it would seem that the meal itself should be at least partially dairy. According to the second reason, the Yom Tov meal itself needn't be dairy, rather dairy should be eaten at some point on Shavuos day, before the meal or any time. Indeed, there are various customs regarding this, and each individual should follow their custom.

Some people also have the custom to eat milk and honey, as the Torah is likened to milk and honey. (Mishna Berura Siman 494 S"K 13)

15) It is customary to place grasses and flora in Shuls and homes on Shavuos as a way to commemorate the joy of Matan Torah, being that Har Sinai was surrounded by grass and flora (See Rama Siman 494:3 and Mishna Berura S"K 10)

16) Some have the minhag to also place trees in Shuls and homes as well, to celebrate the fact that heavenly judgement is passed on the fruits of the trees on Shavuos. (Mishna Rosh Hashana Perek 1:2. See Mishna Berura ibid.)

The Gaon of Vilna, however, rejected this added minhag due to the fact that the Aino Yehudim now use trees to celebrate their holidays. (Mishna Berura ibid. See also Da'as Torah Siman 494 where he quotes some Poskim who are not concerned with what the Aino Yehudim do and allow the trees to be placed.)

The minhag of grasses and flora seemingly remains intact according to everyone and is indeed the prevalent custom by virtually all of Klal Yisroel.

17) Many congregations have the custom to dance on Shavuos in honor of the Torah.

18) This is a prevalent custom in many Yeshivos, and it is a proper custom that should continue, as even though on Shabbos and Yom Tov it is generally forbidden to dance (See Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 339:3), **in certain instances when it is for the honor of the Torah, it is permitted.** (Ruling of Rav Shlomo Zalmen Auerbach Zatzal in Halichos Shlomo; Shavuos, Perek 12:14, based on Mishna Berura Siman 339 S"K 8 regarding Simchas Torah. See footnote 64 in Orchos halacha on the Halichos Shlomo ibid. that the Roshei yeshiva and Talmidim of the Radin Yeshiva would dance joyously with all their might on Shavuos, in the presence of the holy Chofetz Chaim Zatzal. See also Shu"t Minchas Elazar Orach Chaim Vol. 1 Siman 29 where he defends the Minhag of many holy Tzadikim who danced and clapped on Shabbos.)

19) On Shavuos we celebrate “*Matan Torah*” the giving of the Torah by Hashem to the Jewish nation.

But weren't the 1st Luchos (the Ten commandments) received [and broken] on the 17th of Tamuz, and then again, the 2nd Luchos on Yom Kippur? What exactly is it referring to when we discuss “*Matan Torah*”?

20) The answer is as follows: Hashem appeared to the Jewish people on Har Sinai on Shavuos. The Ten commandments were heard on Shavuos, and that is considered “*Matan Torah*” even though the actual tablets were not brought down until 40 days later (17 Tamuz) and subsequently broken.

Moshe davened for 40 days, for Klal Yisroel to be forgiven for the sin of the Eigel (the golden calf) and then on Rosh Chodesh Elul went back up to Shomayim to receive the 2nd Luchos.

40 days later, on Yom Kippur, Klal Yisroel was forgiven for their sin (Vayomer Hashem Salachti Kidvarecha; See Rashi Shemos 33:11 and Da'as Zekeinim M'Ba'alei Hatosefos Bamidbar 14:20), **and the second set of Luchos were brought down by Moshe Rabbeinu .**

Thus, although none of the actual Luchos were brought on Shavuos, the revelation at Sinai, where Hashem revealed Himself to Klal Yisroel, was on Shavuos, and that exalted day is commemorated each year on its anniversary, Chag HaShavuos.(See Pirush Binyan Yehoshua beginning of Maseches Avos D'Rav Nosson for a more detailed treatment of the timeline of Matan Torah and the Luchos)

21) On Shavuos the entire Hallel is recited. In Chutz L'Aretz, this applies to both days of Yom Tov.

22) A resident of Chutz L'Aretz who is in Eretz Yisroel on Motzaei [the first day of] Shavuos and davens Ma'ariv (of Yom Tov) with a minyan of Bnei Eretz Yisroel who proceed to recite Kiddush Levana after their Ma'ariv (of weekday), should not recite Kiddush Levana with them, but rather recite it the following night when it will be Motzaei Yom Tov for him.

This is the case even if this will, for some reason, cause him to have to recite it B'Yechidus, alone. (Although generally there are still plenty of days left after Shavuos for Kiddush Levana to be recited properly)

He should be as inconspicuous as possible and ensure that nobody realizes that he is not joining them for the recital; if this is impossible and everyone will know, many Poskim allow him to recite it with them even though it is Yom Tov for him. (See Shu"t B'Tzeil Hachachma Vol. 2 Siman 37 and Sefer Yom Tov Sheini K'Hilchaso Perek 11:5)

[Although Kiddush Levana is generally not recited on Shabbos or Yom Tov (for various Kabalistic and Halachic reasons), if by not reciting it on Shabbos or Yom Tov it will result in missing the deadline for that month

altogether, it may be recited even on Shabbos or Yom Tov. (See Mishna Berura Siman 426 S"K 12 and Sha'ar Hatziyun Os 12)]

23) Tachanun is not recited, nor should one fast, from Rosh Chodesh Sivan until the 8th of Sivan, after Isru Chag (Rama Siman 494:3 and Mishna Berura S"K 8)

Many have the custom to refrain from saying Tachanun until, and including, the 12th of Sivan, as the Korbanos of Shavuos could have been brought (as Tashlumin, make-up Korbanos) **until then.** (See Mishna Berura Siman 131 S"K 36. See also Moadim U'zmanim Vol. 4 Siman 317 that this is the minhag in virtually all congregations in Eretz Yisroel)

24) Some have the minhag to omit Tachanun on the 13th of Sivan as well. (See Sha'arei Teshuva Siman 131:7. He writes there that on the 13th of Sivan, in Chutz L'Aretz, whatever the Shliach tzibur does should be followed by all who are in that minyan.)

Every congregation should follow their accepted custom. If there is no known custom, a Rav should be consulted for guidance.

עֲלִיּוֹנִים שָׁשׂוּ וְתַחְתּוֹנִים עָלְזוּ, בְּקַבְּלַת תּוֹרַה הַפְּתוּבָה מִסִּינַי
תֵּאָר כֶּלֶה מְאֹד נִתְעַלָּה, בְּקַבְּלַת יוֹם זֶה עֲשֶׂרֶת הַדְּבָרִים



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