The Chicago Center
Mishna Berura Digest
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן תצ"ג סעיף א'-ב'

Overview

Siman 493 Seif 1:

The custom is to refrain from marrying between Pesach and Shavuos until Lag BaOmer since during that period the students of R' Akiva died. Betrothal and *kiddushin* is permitted and regarding marriage as well, if one married he is not punished. After Lag BaOmer everything is permitted.

- It doesn't matter whether one has children or not. It is permitted to remarry a woman one divorced since it does not generate such joy. (M.B. 1)
- If something comes up that requires the recitation of *shehechiyanu*, one may recite the *beracha*. (M.B. 2)
- The concern is that someone will preempt him. A celebratory meal for betrothal is also permitted. Nowadays it is permitted to get engaged and have a meal but dancing is prohibited and certainly dancing that is voluntary is prohibited. (M.B. 3)
- If one cuts his hair during the *omer* he is penalized and punished. (M.B. 4)
- According to our custom to prohibit haircuts during this time, it is also prohibited to marry since they share the same *halacha*. However, before Rosh Chodesh Iyar haircutting and weddings are permitted. Even those who observe the restrictions before Rosh Chodesh Iyar, if Rosh Chodesh falls on Shabbos one may cut hair on *erev* Shabbos or marry on that day since the meal will be on Shabbos/Rosh Chodesh. (M.B. 5)

Siman 493 Seif 2:

The custom is to refrain from cutting hair until Lag BaOmer since at that time the students stopped dying and one may not cut his hair until the morning of the 34th of the *omer* unless Lag BaOmer falls on *erev* Shabbos in which case one may cut his hair on Lag BaOmer to honor Shabbos. In these countries we do not follow the above custom and instead we cut hair from the morning of Lag BaOmer and increase our joy in a small manner and do not recite *tachanun*. We do not cut hair until Lag BaOmer itself but not the night before. However, if it falls on Sunday the custom is to cut hair on *erev* Shabbos to honor Shabbos. One who is a *ba'al bris* or one circumcising his son may cut his hair in honor of the *milah*.

- After *hanetz hachama* it is permitted. (M.B. 6)
- It is also not recited on the afternoon of the 32nd. (M.B. 9)
- Some authorities permit cutting hair from night time but Elya Rabba writes that regarding weddings he never saw someone who is lenient on the night of Lag BaOmer. (M.B. 11)
- This is the *sandek*, *mohel* and father of the child. (M.B. 12)
- It is also permitted on the day before the *bris* before going to the *bais haknesses*. If the *milah* falls on Shabbos it is permitted to get a haircut on *erev* Shabbos even before midday. (M.B. 13)

Halacha Highlight

Playing music during *sefirah*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 493 Seif 1
אבל לארס ולקדש שפיר דמי
But betrothals are permitted

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') writes that the custom is to refrain from marrying a woman between Pesach and Lag BaOmer since during that period of the calendar the students of Rav Akiva died. However, it is permitted for a man to betroth a woman. Mishnah Berurah (סק"א) explains that this restriction applies even to a man who does not yet have children and did not yet fulfill the *mitzvah* of *pru u'rvu* since the restriction is against the joy that accompanies a marriage. For that reason it is permitted for a man to remarry a woman he previously divorced since their marriage is not as joyous. The reason it is permitted to betroth a woman is out of concern that if one does not betroth her, someone else may come along and preempt him and betroth her. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ג) also notes that nowadays it is permitted for one to become engaged to a woman and host a celebratory meal but they may not dance and it is certainly prohibited to dance at non-*mitzvah* gatherings.

Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv (הלכות חג בחג ספירת העומר פ"ז הע' 36 וסידור פסח כהלכתו פי"ב סע' י"ד הע' 53) ruled that it is permitted to play music and dance in celebration of a new *sefer torah* since it is categorized as a *mitzvah* related *simcha*. However, he noted that one should not schedule a *hachnosos sefer torah* during *sefirah* unless it is necessary. Although there is a general restriction against listening to music during *sefirah*, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (הליכות שלמה פסח פי"א הע' 54) permitted playing music for people who are ill in order to lift their spirits. Rav Chaim Kanievski (הלכות חג בחג ספירת העומר פ"ז הע' 39) similarly ruled that it is permitted for one who is depressed to play music in private if otherwise he would violate more severe prohibitions. Rav Moshe Feinstein (אג"מ או"ח ח"ג סי' פ"ז) permitted people learning to play an instrument to practice during *sefirah* since their playing is not an expression of *simcha*.