



Making a Siyum

The *Mitzvah*

The *seforim* state that when a person learns a *mesechta*, it is a *mitzvah* to finish that particular *mesechta*.¹ The *Stiepler zt"l* gives two reasons for this; 1. If one starts a *mesechta* and does not finish it, then there is a question of having made a false *neder*. 2. By not finishing that particular *mesechta* it is a disgrace to the *mesechta*.² Upon completing a *mesechta* a *seuda* is made³ to show thanks to *Hashem* for giving him the opportunity to finish the *mesechta*.⁴ The word *samel* (in Hebrew) is the name of the *yetzar hara* and stands for: *siyum mesechta ein l'asos*. By one making a *siyum* he is not surrendering to the *yetzar hara*.⁵

The *Simcha*

When one finishes a *mesechta*, there is a *mitzvah* to be joyous over the occasion.⁶ The *simcha* is so great that some *poskim* say one should mention *simcha b'meono* at the *siyum*.⁷ (The *minhag* is not to say it).⁸ The *Yam Shel Shlomo*⁹ says there is no greater *simcha* or *mitzvah* that is done before *Hashem* than the *simcha* and *mitzvah* of finishing a portion of *Torah*. The *poskim* say since there is such great *simcha* at a *siyum*, even if people did not finish the *mesechta* they should still partake in the *siyum*.¹⁰ The *Gr'a* says the letters *siyum* in Hebrew equals the same number whether *niglah* or *nistar*. To illustrate, both the letter *samach* itself and the remaining letters which spell out *samach* (*mem* and *chof*) equals 60. This goes for the remaining letters of *siyum* (*yud*, *vov*, and *mem*) as well. This is to

¹ Refer to Yerushalmi Pesachim 10:2, Pnei Yehoshua Berochos 17a "begemorah" Medrash Rabbah Koheles 1, Bais Yosef 679, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 1:300, Askina Seudoso footnote 1.

² Sefer Hadrin Aluch page 143:4 and page 166.

³ Mesechtas Shabbos 118b, Yam Shel Shlomo Bava Kama pages 219-220, Rama Y.D. 146:26, Aruch Ha'shulchan 146:45, Gr'a 76, Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 44:4.

⁴ Yam Shel Shlomo Bava Kama, end of the seventh perek, Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 15.

⁵ Shar Yissochor page 152:8.

⁶ See Ramban Mishpatim 24:11, Nemukey Yosef Bava Basra on 121b "yom Tovar," Yam Shel Shlomo Bava Kama end of seventh perek, Darchei Moshe 146:6, Maharahm Mintz 119, Yoma Tova L'rabanen pages 15-22.

⁷ Yam Shel Shlomo Bava Kama 7:37, Levush end of O.C. minhagim 35.

⁸ Aruch Ha'shulchan 146:45, E:H 62:40, Pachad Yitzchok Shevuos 34.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Shach 27, Taz 9, 551:12, Magen Avraham 551:35, Ben Ish Chai Tzav 1:25, Chavos Y'uer 70, Mishnah Berurah 551:73, 570:10, Biur Halacha "v'siyum," Aruch Ha'shulchan O.C. 570:5, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 1:300, Yabea Omer 1:26, Be'er Moshe 3:179:13, Askino Seudoso page 12, Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 46 footnote 15.



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demonstrate that both the one who finished the *mesechta*, and those who did not, should partake in this joyous occasion.¹¹

On What May A *Siyum* Be Made?

Torah – Upon completion of the *Torah*, a *siyum* is prepared. However, this is only if one finished the *Torah* with commentary.¹² The *simcha* that is demonstrated on *Simchas Torah* is different.¹³

Siyum Mesechta- When one finishes a *mesechta* a *siyum* is made.¹⁴ It is still considered finishing the specific *Gemarah* even though the censors took out parts of *Gemarah*.¹⁵ The reasons given are that when one learns the *Gemarah*, he does not know of the sections of the *Gemarah* which were taken out by the censors, therefore, he still has the same *simcha*. Furthermore, the *mesechta* includes the *mishnayos* that were not touched by the censors. In addition, if parts of the *Gemarah* were taken out, it was done through the watchful eye of *Hashem*. A person may learn the *mesechta* out of order and one can make a *siyum* in this situation as well.¹⁶ If the *mesechta* was divided between many people, and each one finished a portion, a *siyum* may be made, and they all have the same reward as if they completing the whole *mesechta* on their own.¹⁷ *Horav Chaim Pinchus Sheinberg Shlita* is of the opinion that a person who went through the *mesechta* with an English translation may make a *siyum*. However, the person who is using the English has to be actually working on understanding the *Gemarah* and not just reading the words like a book. For a person who needs the English, working through the entire *Gemarah* in English, is a very big *simcha*.¹⁸

¹¹ See Kol Eliyahu on the torah in the back, Be'er Moshe ibid. Refer to Yoma Tova L'rabanan 5:4:footnote whether one is permitted to dance at a siyum made on Shabbos.

¹² Medrash Rabbah Shir Hashirim 1, Rama O.C. 679, Yoma Tova L'rabanan page 44:4.

¹³ Igros Moshe O.C. 1:157. (We celebrate on simchas torah without learning the torah with a commentary)

¹⁴ See Rama Y.D. 246:26, Aruch Ha'shulchan, Yoma Tova L'rabanan page 13 footnote 2, Betzel Hachuchma 4:99.

¹⁵ Eretz Tzvi 2:74, Minchas Yitzchok 2:93.

¹⁶ Minchas Yitzchok 2:93, Betzel Hachuchma 2:28, this is the opinion of Horav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita.

¹⁷ Kinyan Torah 5:52, Sdei Chemed mem page 297, Askino Seudoso page 7 footnote 25 see Doleh U'mashka page 318:footnote 3.

¹⁸ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita agreed to this. If one said he would finish a certain mesechta and it is coming close to the time he said he was going to finish, he may read the words without going into the meaning so deeply (Shraga Hameir 8:5). Refer to Yoma Tova L'rabanan 8:5:footnotes 9-20 if one may make a siyum if he finished the mesechta by listening to Torah tapes or a shiur. Refer to Vayivorech Dovid 2:177.



One of the *Neviyim*- One who completed a *sefer of navi* can make a *siyum* if it was finished with one of the commentaries.¹⁹ *Mishnayos*- There are some who permit one to make a *siyum* on one *perek* of *mishnayos* with a commentary.²⁰ There are some who do not permit any *siyum* on *mishnayos*.²¹ However, the prevailing custom is to permit a *siyum* on *mishnayos* only if it's at least on one full *sefer* with a commentary.²² One Part of *Shulchan Aruch*- Some are of the opinion that if one learned one part of the *Shulchan Aruch* and came out with practical *halacha* then he may make a *siyum*.²³ *Mussar Sefer*- After completing a *mussar sefer* no *siyum* is made.²⁴ *Tehillim*- One who completed the entire *sefer tehillim*, with a deep understanding, may prepare a *siyum*.²⁵

Siyum on Erev Pesach

The *Shulchan Aruch* says that on *Erev Pesach* the firstborn of each family fast.²⁶ The reason is as a remembrance of the miracle that the firstborns were saved from *makos bechoros*.²⁷ The *minhag* is that *siyum* is made on *Erev Pesach* and those *bechorim* present may partake in the *siyum*, thereby able to eat the rest of the day.²⁸ Although this fast should be like every other fast whereby eating is prohibited, even if one broke his fast and ate, this fast is different. Every other fast there are two *halachas*, 1. A *mitzvah* to fast. 2. A prohibition against eating. If one ate there is no *mitzvah* to fast anymore, but he still may not eat. This applies by fasts where the purpose is for *inuyeo*. By this fast, it is a remembrance of the miracle and there is no prohibition to eat, only a *mitzvah* to fast, once this *mitzvah* has been lifted by conducting a *siyum*, there is no reason to fast the rest

¹⁹ Berochos 17a, Pnei Yehoshua there, Igros Moshe 1:157, 2:12, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 1:300, see Halef Lecha Shlomo 386, Piskei Teshuvos page 194.

²⁰ See Medrash Shir Hashirim 6:8, Rivevos Ephraim 4:189, Eretz Tzvi 2:74, Yabea Omer 1:26:9.

²¹ Pri Hasada 3:91, Pnei Mavin 103, see Yechaveh Da'as 1:40.

²² Betzel Hachuchma 4:99, Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 34 footnote 11, Minhag Yisroel Torah 2:page 157-158, Emes L'Yaakov 551:footnote 225, Askino Seudoso page 6 footnote 19.

²³ Yoma Tova L'rabanen pages 39-40 footnote 26.

²⁴ Rivevos Ephraim 4:189, Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 38 footnote 21.

²⁵ Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 39 footnote 25.

²⁶ 570:1, see Mesechtas Sofrim 21:3, Mishnah Berurah 570:2-3, Siddur Pesach K'hilchoso 14:1-2, Mikroya Kodesh Pesach 2:22, Be'er Moshe 5:111, Minhag Yisroel Torah 2:page 256, Emes L'Yaakov page 206:footnote 446, Mevakshei Torah pages 563-564, Lekutei Maharich 3:page 7, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 3:113.

²⁷ Mishnah Berurah 1, Eretz Tzvi 79, Harerei Kodesh 2:page 83, Moadim V'zmanim 7:169.

²⁸ Mishnah Berurah 10, Aruch Ha'shulchan 5, Eretz Tzvi 79, Minchas Yitzchok 8:45, Orchos Chaim 570:3, Yabea Omer 4:42:1, 4:13:3, Hesoreos Teshuva 245, Nemukei O.C. 570, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 2:210, 1:300, 3:114, Ben Ish Chai Tzav 1:25, Lekutei Maharich 3:page 7, Natei Gavriel 43, Arugas Habosem 139, Maharim Brisk 133, Minhag Yisroel Torah pages 257 and 259, Seder Pesach 14:5, Vayivorech Dovid 1:54.



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of the day.²⁹ One making the *siyum* may eat prior to the *siyum*.³⁰ (Obviously only whatever is permitted to be eaten before *davening*).³¹ Some have the custom to bring home food from the *siyum* for their wives, if they are *bechorim*.³² Initially, one should make the *siyum* on *Gemorah* rather than any other thing previously mentioned.³³ The *poskim* are in dispute whether one can plan his learning in order to make a *siyum* on *Erev Pesach*.³⁴ The prevailing *minhag* is to be lenient in this regard.³⁵ Some say even if the *bechorim* present at the *siyum* do not hear or understand the *siyum*, eating is permitted afterwards.³⁶ Although some say they should understand it, and the one making the *siyum* should leave over a small piece of *aggadata* that all present can understand.³⁷ Nonetheless, the *minhag* is that the ones being exempted do not have to understand that which the one making the *siyum* is saying.³⁸ One must eat some food at the *siyum* in order to be able to eat later.³⁹ If one cannot partake in the *siyum* in person, some permit him to listen to the *siyum* via telephone. This should only be relied upon in extraordinary situations.⁴⁰ *Erev Pesach* that falls out on Friday, some say the *bechors* fast on Thursday,⁴¹ others say to fast on Friday.⁴² There are those who are careful to hear a *siyum* on both days.⁴³ The *minhag* is to only hear a *siyum* on Thursday.⁴⁴

²⁹ Eretz Tzvi 79.

³⁰ See Mishnah Berurah 568:18, Vayivorech Dovid 1:54, Emes L'Yaakov ibid, Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 68:6.

³¹ Refer to Shulchan Aruch O.C. 89:3.

³² Poskim.

³³ Seder Pesach page 169:6.

³⁴ Teshuvos R' Akiva Eiger 34, Elef Lecha Shlomo 317, Elya Rabbah 551:26.

³⁵ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Shol U'maishiv, this is how it seems from the Mishnah Berurah 551:73, Betzel Hachuchma 4:99:6, Minhag Yisroel Torah page 260:4, Natei Gavriel page 207:footnote 22, Minchas Yitzchok 2:93:4, Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 68 footnote 9, Tamei Minhagim 634 page 287, Piskei Teshuvos page 213 footnote 35, Haggadah Shel Pesach (Horav Elyashiv Shlita) page 19.

³⁶ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Vayivorech Dovid ibid, Teshuvos V'hanhugos ibid, Yabea Omer ibid 3, Maharam Brisk 133, Minchas Yitzchok 9:45, Oz Nedberu 12:58, Stiepler quoted in Teshuvos V'hanhugos 1:300.

³⁷ Ben Ish Chai Tzav 1:25, Chaim L'rosh 143, Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 69.

³⁸ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

³⁹ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Aruch Ha'shulchan 5, Be'er Heitiv 559:15, Emes L'Yaakov ibid, Da'as Torah 570:1, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 1:300, Seder Pesach 14:4, Kaf Ha'chaim 551:161, Rivevos Ephraim 1:296.

⁴⁰ Horav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach zt"l quoted in Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 70 footnote 16, see Modanei Shlomo (Moadim) page 2.

⁴¹ See Shulchan Aruch 570:2, Rama, Teshuvos V'hanhugos 2:211.

⁴² Birchei Yosef 570:4, Teshuvos V'hanhugos ibid.

⁴³ Refer to Teshuvos V'hanhugos 2:211, Orchos Rabbeinu 2:page 57:9.

⁴⁴ Rama O.C. 470:2, see Yoma Tova L'rabanen 6:2:footnote 3 in depth.



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During The Nine Days

During the nine days we do not eat meat or drink wine.⁴⁵ The *Rama*⁴⁶ says at a *seudas mitzvah* like a *bris milah*, *pidyon haben* or "*seudas siyum*" one may eat meat and drink wine.⁴⁷ If one was not planning on making a *siyum* during the nine days, he should not hasten the learning in order to finish it during this time.⁴⁸ Some are lenient with this.⁴⁹ However, one should act in accordance with the first opinion mentioned.⁵⁰ Those who come to the *siyum*, may eat meat even if they did not learn the *mesechta*.⁵¹ When a *siyum* is made in a camp or *yeshiva*, all those present may eat meat afterwards,⁵² this includes both women and children.⁵³ One may not bring the food outside of the place where the *siyum* is taking place.⁵⁴ One may not hear the *siyum* and then go make a barbeque in a different location (this is common in camp).⁵⁵ The *poskim* are in debate whether dividing the *mesechta* between people helps to make a *siyum* during the nine days.⁵⁶ One who was not present at the *siyum*, but came after the actual *siyum* was made, may still eat meat.⁵⁷

Saying Tachnun

Some *poskim* say when a *siyum* will be taking place in a *shul* later that day, no *tachnun* is said.⁵⁸ Others say *tachnun* is said even in this situation.⁵⁹ *Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita* holds

⁴⁵ Shulchan Aruch 551:9, Rama 551:10, Mishnah Berurah 64, Aruch Ha'shulchan 26.

⁴⁶ 551:10

⁴⁷ Elya Rabbah 26, Chai Adom 133:16, Aruch Ha'shulchan 28, Eretz Tzvi 1:79, Minhag Yisroel Torah page 40.

⁴⁸ Mishnah Berurah 73, Aruch Ha'shulchan 28, Yechaveh Da'as 1:40, Yoma Tova L'rabanah, page 91 footnote 4, Askino Seudos pages 18-19.

⁴⁹ Yavetz Shar Hashluchos page 213:14, Mishnah Sicher 2:144, Sdei Chemed Ben Hamitzarim 6:1:8, Mekadesh Yisroel page 135.

⁵⁰ Poskim.

⁵¹ Magen Avraham 35, Elya Rabbah 26, Machtzis Ha'shekel, Chai Adom ibid, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 122:8, Mishnah Berurah 75-77, Shar Ha'tzyion 87, Aruch Ha'shulchan 27,30.

⁵² Chai Adom 133:16. Natei Gavriel 41 footnote 6, Mekadesh Yisroel pages 133-134, Yoma Tova L'rabanah, page 95 footnote 15.

⁵³ Yoma Tova L'rabanah page 94 footnote 11, see Shevet Ha'Levi 6:72.

⁵⁴ Mishnah Berurah 75.

⁵⁵ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

⁵⁶ Yoma Tova L'rabanah page 95 footnote 16.

⁵⁷ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Rivevos Ephraim 3:343.

⁵⁸ See Yabea Omer 4:13, Darchei Chaim V'Shalom 192, Piskei Teshuvos 2:page 67 footnote 142, refer to Yoma Tova L'rabanah pages 262.-264 Chai Moshe 2:page 48.

⁵⁹ Tzitz Eliezer 11:17:6, Pri Hasada 3:182, V'yivorech Dovid 1:24:page 126 quoting the opinion of Horav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita.



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if *mincha* is *davened* prior to the actual *siyum* then no *tachnun* is recited. Some say *tachnun* even in this case.⁶⁰

Making the Actual *Siyum*

Upon reaching the end of the *mesechta*, one should leave over a small portion to recite at the actual *siyum*.⁶¹ The *minhag* seems to be that if a full *seuda* is being served (with bread) then washing should be done first then the *siyum*. However, if cake and soda is being served then the *siyum* should take place first then the eating.⁶² The *minhag* is to say *hadran ulach* three times.⁶³ The *loshon* of *hadran* is to say that I will return to you – the *mesechta* and to review it many times.⁶⁴ The reason is brought that saying it three times is a *segula* to remember your learning. How is this accomplished by saying it three times? Since you say that you will return to the *mesechta* and review it, in actuality you will learn it four times. Therefore, by saying it three times it is a *segula* to remember the *mesechta*.⁶⁵ The *yihy rotzon* and *harev na* is then recited,⁶⁶ followed by saying the 10 sons of *Rav Papa*.⁶⁷ (Look below for some reasons). We then give thanks to *Hashem* by saying *modem* and the *yihy rotzon*. We have the custom to recite a different *kaddish* than what is normally said, called the *kaddish hagadol*.⁶⁸ One of the reasons offered for saying this *kaddish* is, since upon finishing a *mesechta* there is *kovod shemayim*, so too, we say a *kaddish* that speaks about the honor of *Hashem* and the time of *Moshiach*.⁶⁹ Some recite the regular *kaddish d'rabanan*.⁷⁰ The one who finished the *mesechta* should recite the

⁶⁰ Pri Hasadeh 3:182, see Shulchan Hatohar 131:17, Halacha Berurah 131:35, Avodas Ephraim 1:pages 315-322, Shevet Ha'kehusi 4:45.

⁶¹ Shach Y.D. 246:27 who brings Maharam Mintz 119.

⁶² See Horav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita quoted in Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 107:4, refer to Orchos Rabbeinu 2:page 57:6.

⁶³ Refer to Ha'eshkol Hilchos Sefer Torah 14, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham O.C. 139:14, Hadron Ulach pages 148-149. Refer to Minchos Shlomo 1:91:5 why we do not say bli neder when saying the hadrin. Some say when saying the hadrin one should say it using the *loshon* of bli neder (Rivevos Ephraim 4:44:61). Horav Chaim Kreisworth zt"l used to say (bederch melitzah) the following reason for the long hadrin. When one learns daf bais by the time he gets to daf gimel he forgot daf bais. This goes throughout the *mesechta*. A problem would arise when you reach the last blatt that you would remember it, so a long hadrin was made, therefore by the time you finish the hadrin you forgot the last blatt as well.

⁶⁴ Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 125.

⁶⁵ Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 133.

⁶⁶ Yoma Tova L'rabanen page 28 footnote 29.

⁶⁷ Yam Shel Shlomo end of Bava Kama page 375, Eshkol ibid, Maharam Mintz 118.

⁶⁸ Maharam Mintz 119, Yoma Tova L'rabanen pages 153-161 in depth.

⁶⁹ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

⁷⁰ Maharam Mintz ibid, Yoma Tova L'rabanen ibid.



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kaddish even if his parents are alive.⁷¹ If there is an *avel* present, it is good practice for him to recite the *kaddish hagadol*.⁷²

Seuda

Upon finishing a *mesechta*, there is a *mitzvah* to wash on bread and have a *seuda*.⁷³ If one is unable to do this then eating *mezonos* is suffice.⁷⁴ One should sing *zemiros* in honor of the *siyum*.⁷⁵ By *bentching*, *Migdal* is recited like by *Shabbos*.⁷⁶

Reasons for Saying the 10 Sons of *Rav Papa*

1. Some say the reason why *Rav Papa* merited his 10 sons being mentioned when finishing a *mesechta* is because he was a rich man and he would make a *siyum* when a *mesechta* was completed.⁷⁷ 2. There are 10 places in *shas*⁷⁸ where there are disputes stated, and *Rav Papa* was the one who made peace by accepting both of the opinions stated. Since *Rav Papa* did this, he was a vehicle in bringing *shelamos* of the *Torah* into the world. Therefore, he merited 10 children and we mention them at the end of a *mesechta* because this is the time of *shelamos* when a *siyum mesechta* is being conducted.⁷⁹

⁷¹ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Halichos Shlomo Tefilla 11:footnote 48.

⁷² Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

⁷³ Toras Chaim 551:27, Mishnah Sicer 18. Yoma Tova L'rabanan page 45 footnote 9

⁷⁴V'drashta V'chakarta 3:51.

⁷⁵ Kaf Ha'chaim 151:34, Yoma Tova L'rabanan page 45 footnote 11.

⁷⁶ Magen Avraham 189:1, Kaf Ha'chaim 189:11.

⁷⁷ Teshuvos Shem Mishimon 180.

⁷⁸ Berochos 59a, 60b, Shabbos 20a, Megillah 21b, Taanis 6b, 29a, Yevamos 70b, Sotah 40a, Chullin 40a, 65a. The Gemorah Berochos on 11b that some are goes Rav Papa as accepting both opinions, but our Gemorah does not have that girsa.

⁷⁹ Yoma Tova L'rabanan page 153.