TOPIC

Shalom Zachar

SPONSORED BY: KOF-K KOSHER SUPERVISION
HALACHICALLY SPEAKING

- Halachically Speaking is a monthly publication compiled by Rabbi Moishe Dovid Lebovits, a former chaver kollel of Yeshiva Torah Vodaath and a musmach of Harav Yisroel Belsky zt”l. Rabbi Lebovits currently works as the Rabbinical Administrator for the KOF-K Kosher Supervision.

- Each issue reviews a different area of contemporary halacha with an emphasis on practical applications of the principles discussed. Significant time is spent ensuring the inclusion of all relevant shittos on each topic, as well as the psak of Harav Yisroel Belsky, zt”l on current issues.

WHERE TO SEE HALACHICALLY SPEAKING

- Halachically Speaking is distributed to many shuls. It can be seen in Flatbush, Lakewood, Five Towns, Far Rockaway, and Queens, The Flatbush Jewish Journal, baltimorejewishlife.com, The Jewish Home, chazaq.org, and frumtoronto.com. It is sent via email to subscribers across the world.

To sponsor an issue please call 718-744-4360

© Copyright 2016
by Halachically Speaking
Baruch Hashem, it is rare to go through a Friday night in shul without an announcement about a shalom zachar. What is the source for the shalom zachar? What is the reason for it? Why is it done for a male and not a female? When should the shalom zachar be made? Where should it be made? What foods are customarily served at a shalom zachar? These and other issues will be discussed in this article.

Source

The Gemara\(^1\) says that Rav, Shmuel and Rav Asi were walking to a “shevu haben.” Rashi\(^2\) says this means a seudah made when redeeming a firstborn (pidyon haben). Tosafos\(^3\) says that it is a seudah made for leaving the mother’s womb. The Taz\(^4\) brings a Midrash Rabbah\(^5\) that gives the following parable: A king decreed that all his guests should not see his face unless they have seen the face of the queen first. So too, Hashem says not to bring the korban (the newborn [male] child) until Shabbos has passed. Since every seven days is Shabbos, no milah can take place without a Shabbos. The day of Shabbos makes the newborn ready for the milah. Therefore, a seudah is made on Shabbos before the milah.\(^6\) The Drisha\(^7\) explains that we visit the child on Shabbos because he is an avel over the Torah that he learned in his mother’s womb and then forgot.

---

1. Bava Kamma 80a.
2. Maseches Bava Kamma ibid “yeshu.”
3. Maseches Bava Kamma ibid “l’bei.”
Reasons

Why is it called shalom zachar? There are many reasons given.⁸ Two of them are that this is the first mitzvah a newborn fulfills. It says, “Zachor es Yom HaShabbos l’kadsho,” so we refer to the seudah as shalom zachar.⁹ Others explain that the child is free of sin and is like a tzaddik. Just as we visit a tzaddik, we visit a newborn child.¹⁰

When

The Terumas Hadeshen¹¹ and others¹² maintain that the shalom zachar is made on Friday night since this is when everyone is home. This is indeed the custom.¹³

Where

It is apparent from many sources that the seudah should be made at the child’s location, as it says in the Rama, “Go to the child...”¹⁴ However, the overwhelming custom is for the shalom zachar to be held in a shul and not necessarily in the newborn’s home.¹⁵ One possible reason is that there simply is not enough space in the home to host so many people.¹⁶ Nonetheless, many people have the practice of having the shalom zachar in the home where the newborn is located.

---

9. Migdal Oz (Yaavetz), introduction to Hilchos Milah 15.
10. Refer to Sefer Matamim Hachadash pages 82-83 (new).
11. 269.
13. Taz Y.D. 265:13. Some poskim maintain to do it by day and others say at night and day (refer to Al Pi HaTorah Bereishis pages 166-167).
14. Ibid.
Is a Seudah Required?

From some of the sources above, it would seem that there is no need to serve a meal, and refreshments would suffice. Since the shalom zachar is held after the Friday night meal, people have no appetite for a full meal.

Which Foods are served at the Shalom Zachar

Since the child is sad that his Torah was forgotten, lentils are served, which are customarily served to an avel in order to console him.

The custom in most places is to serve arbis (chickpeas).

Which Shabbos

The opinion of the Rama is that the shalom zachar is held on the first Shabbos after the child was born. An interesting question arises when to make the shalom zachar if the child is born on Friday night. Some poskim maintain that the shalom zachar should be made that night, while

---

17. Although this is considered a seudas mitzvah (Rama Y.D. ibid., Pri Megadim ibid., Yam Shel Shlomo Bava Kamma 7:37, Noheg Katzon Yosef Milah page 107:1. In regard to allowing an avel to go to a shalom zachar see Beis Avi 2:88:1, Nishmas Yisrael 1:19, Nishmas Shabbos 2:201.


20. In regard to eating chickpeas on Rosh Hashanah when the custom is not to eat certain legumes, see Divrei Yatziv 7:53 (likutim) (lenient), Ohr Yisrael 17:page 139, B’shvilei Haminhag (Shabbos and Moadim) page 100, Gam Ani Odeicha page 44:11, Mekadesh Yisrael (Yamim Noraim) page 11. Refer to Nitei Gavriel Rosh Hashanah 28:14. In regard to cleaning off empty bottles from the tables at a shalom zachar see Nishmas Shabbos 4:134:2.

21. Ibid.

others wait for the next week (which is also the night before the bris, known as the vacht nacht).\textsuperscript{23}

**Invited to a Shalom Zachar**

The custom is that the shamash of the shul announces that the father of the newborn is making a shalom zachar, rather than inviting everyone.\textsuperscript{24} This is usually done at the end of Ma’ariv.\textsuperscript{25} The reason is that a shalom zachar is a seudas mitzvah, and anyone who ignores such an invitation is placed in cherem in Shamayim.\textsuperscript{26}

**Female**

There is no shalom zachor made for a female.\textsuperscript{27}

**Women**

Women should only go to a shalom zachar if there will be a separate place for them.\textsuperscript{28}

---

\textsuperscript{23} Otzer Habris 1:3:2:10, Sefer Habris page 333:180, see Os Chaim V’shalom Y.D. 265:33, Kores Habris – Nachal Habris 265:68.

\textsuperscript{24} In regard to doing this on Rosh Hashanah which falls out on Shabbos, see Chai Moshe 5:page 18.

\textsuperscript{25} Pri Megadim M.Z. O.C. 444:9.

\textsuperscript{26} Noheg Katzon Yosef Milah page 15:1, Kores Habris – Nachal Habris 265:68, Sefer Habris page 333:181. Refer to Rama ibid. Some mention it is not as serious if one is invited to a shalom zachar and does not go since there is no meal served, rather some snacks (Hagyonei Haparshah 3:page 211).

\textsuperscript{27} Migdal Oz (Yaavetz), introduction to Hilchos Milah 15.

\textsuperscript{28} Teshuvos V’hanhagos ibid.
Over 150 pesakim from Harav Yisroel Belsky zt"l

And also by the author:

HALACHICALLY SPEAKING
The Berkowitz Edition
Vol. 5
Hard-to-Find Halachah for Everyday Living

RABBI MOISHE DOVID LEBOVITS

Israel Bookshop Publications
EXCITING NEWS!
Cakes, Cookies, Muffins, Pastries and Croissants at BJ's Bakery are now KOF-K Kosher Certified

A large variety of pre-packaged kosher pareve products are available in our bakery

Kosher pre-packaged Chicken, Meat, Cheese and Appetizers available in Kosher Clubs!!

Look for over 100 Kosher Certified Wellsley Farms items throughout the store

Brooklyn, NY – Shore Parkway
Gateway Mall, (Erskine) NY
Buffalo, NY
Rochester, NY
Bronx, NY
Riverdale, NY
Albany, NY
Ithaca, NY
Valley Stream, NY
Freeport, NY
Levittown, NY
Garden City, NY
Middle Village, NY
College Point, NY
Farmingdale, NY
East Setauket, NY
Westbury, NY
Monroe, NY
Bellport, NY
Bronx, NY
Pelham, NY
Canarsie, Brooklyn, NY
Yorktown Heights, NY

Howell (Lakewood), NJ
Paramus, NJ
Columbia, MD
Owings Mills, MD
Clermont, FL
Jacksonville, FL
Port Orange, FL
University Heights, FL
Royal Palm Beach, FL
Pembroke Pines, FL
Hollywood, FL
Fort Lauderdale, FL
Parkland, FL
Boynton Beach, FL
Coral Springs, FL
Framingham, MA
Waltham, MA
Stroughton, MA
Warrensville Heights, Ohio
Philadelphia, PA
Norfolk, VA
Virginia Beach, VA
Richmond, VA

Any questions please call
Rabbi Moishe Lebovits
Rabbinical Administrator KOF-K Kosher Supervision
at 718-744-4360 • email: mlebovits@kof-k.org

2016 BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc.