

The Minhag of Women Saying *Shehechyanu* When Lighting *Neros Yom Tov*

Several passages in the Gemara cite an obligation to say the beracha of *Shehechyanu* at the commencement of each yom tov. The halacha obligates saying *Shehechyanu* in conjunction with Pesach, Shavuot, both days of Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, and Shemini Atzeret. In *Chutz La'aretz* (the Diaspora), where *yom tov sheini shel galuyos* is observed, *Shehechyanu* is said again on the second day of Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret (what we call Simchas Torah).

In general, we find that many berachos associated with mitzvos are said over a *kos shel beracha*, a cup (usually of wine), which is linked with the mitzva; examples include kiddush, havdala, birchas hamazon, bris mila, and the berachos said under a chuppa at a wedding. The *Levush* (*Orach Hayim* 182:1, cited by *Mishna Berura* 182:1) states that this is based upon the understanding that the *kos shel beracha* gives added honor and prestige to the mitzva, as alluded to in the language of the verse *kos yeshuos esah u'veshaim Hashem ekra* (Tehillim 116:13) — “I will lift up the cup of salvation and call out in the name of God.” Several sources in the Gemara indicate clearly that the *Shehechyanu* over the yom tov should also be said over a *kos shel beracha*:

First, in two places (*Eruvin* 40b, *Sukka* 47b), the Gemara considers the



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possibility that one is precluded from saying *Shehechyanu* without a *kos shel beracha*, but concludes that while the *kos shel beracha* is preferred, when it is not available the *Shehechyanu* can be said on its own — *afilu be'shuk* — even in the marketplace.¹

Second, the Gemara in *Pesachim* (102b-103a), while debating the sequence of the berachos of kiddush when the Seder falls on Saturday night, also makes clear that the *Shehechyanu* is to be said during kiddush.

Third, the importance of saying *Shehechyanu* in conjunction with kiddush is reflected in the Gemara's assertion (*Sukka* 46a) that while the completion of the construction of a sukka necessitates the recitation of *Shehechyanu*, the fulfillment of this obligation is deferred until the kiddush on the first night of Sukkot, and the *Shehechyanu* said then addresses the completion of the sukka and the four species as well. This halacha reinforces the apparent strong preference for saying *Shehechyanu* together with a *kos shel beracha*.²

The Custom of Women: Responses by Rav Yaakov Emden and Others

With this background in mind, we turn to a fascinating *teshuva* of Rav Yaakov Emden (1697-1776, *She'eilas Yaavetz* 1:107). He was asked about the appropriateness of the custom of women to say *Shehechyanu* at the time of lighting yom tov candles, which seems to conflict with the Gemara's stated preference to fulfill the obligation in conjunction with kiddush. Rav Emden wavers, acknowledging on the one hand that the custom seems at odds with the Gemara, but also emphasizing that the obligation of *Shehechyanu* can in fact be fulfilled at any time and mentioning that saying *Shehechyanu* at the earliest opportunity highlights the *kavod* and *simcha* that it is meant to convey. Thus, while this custom disregards the Gemara's preferred context for the beracha's recitation, it does not result in a prohibition per se, and this explains why “*gedolei olam*,” who observed this custom, refrained from voicing their objections. Rav Emden injects a

personal element as well, stating that his own wife took this custom from her parents' home, indicating that her father, a halachic authority in his own right,³ apparently allowed the practice. Ultimately, Rav Emden concludes with a compromise: in a place where this custom has not taken hold, women should be told to refrain from doing so. However, he clearly implies that in locales where women follow this practice, it can be allowed to continue — in accordance with Rav Emden's own approach in regard to his wife.

While Rav Emden's view became the starting point for many of the subsequent deliberations in the poskim, it should be noted that this practice existed in Ashkenazi communities well before Rav Emden, and various early sources related to the custom in different ways. An early rishon, the *Or Zarua* (1180-1250, vol. 2, *Siman* 11) writes briefly that when lighting yom tov candles, *ein tzarich lomaz zeman* — “there is no need to say *Shehechianu*.” In the time of the later rishonim, the *Leket Yosher* (1423-1490) references the custom of some women to say *Shehechianu* when lighting yom tov candles, and citing the *Or Zarua* as support, voices opposition to the practice.

During the era of the early achronim, several authoritative collections of minhagim relate to the issue. The *Yosef Ometz*, written in 1630, sharply critiques the practice of women saying *Shehechianu* when lighting yom tov candles, stating that no source supports it, and the *Noheg Ka'tzon Yosef* (written 1718) references the *Yosef Ometz* and confirms the critique. However, the *Minhagei Kehilla Kedosha Vermaizah*, (written 1648), records this practice as the standard custom in the community, and does not remark further. In addition to these *sifrei ha'minhagim*,

we find several references in poskim in regard to this custom. One of the leading early achronim, R. Yair Bachrach⁴ (1638-1702), refers twice to the custom of saying *Shehechianu* when lighting yom tov candles as the standard practice, without further comment. The *Eliya Rabba* (1660-1712, O.C. 600:3) presents this custom of women in regard to Rosh Hashana without any critique. The author of the *Korban Nesanel* (R. Nesanel Veil, 1687-1769) is quoted by his son⁵ as saying said that women should be allowed to continue their custom, referring to the Gemara that women were allowed to do the act of *semicha* on a *korban* because it brought them *nachas ruach*, a sense of fulfillment.⁶

Most of these aforementioned sources were not part of the halachic discourse that dealt with this issue in the 19th and much of the 20th century. The view of Rav Emden, stating that there is no need to say *Shehechianu* at the time of *hadlakas neros* but that women should not be prevented from doing so, took center stage, and it was cited repeatedly and given much weight. His position is adopted by many of the classical Ashkenazi halachic works such as the *Mishnah Berura* (263:23)⁷ and the *Aruch Hashulchan* (263:12).⁸ Among Sephardim there was a greater prevalence of poskim who rejected the custom, and this is reflected in the ruling of Rav Ovadia Yosef on the matter.⁹

Interestingly, after the time of Rav Yaakov Emden, there was relatively little discussion about secondary halachic issues that could result from saying *Shehechianu* when lighting yom tov candles. In more recent times, halachic authorities raised new questions regarding this practice, and this has given the essential issue added layers of complexity. Several of these topics are presented below.

Issue #1: Hefsek when Answering Amen in Kiddush

The halacha prohibits creating a *hefsek*, an interruption, between a beracha and the act or mitzvah that it relates to. This gives rise to the following question: if a woman already fulfilled her obligation of *Shehechianu* by reciting it at the time of lighting candles, how is she permitted to answer *amen* when this beracha is said at the end of kiddush? If she does not need this beracha, is it not akin to inserting extraneous words that constitute a *hefsek* between the kiddush and the drinking of the wine? There are three opinions in the poskim:

First, Rav Moshe Feinstein¹⁰ argues that it is permissible for a woman to answer *amen* in these circumstances. Rav Moshe begins his *teshuva* by contending that were there an issue of *hefsek*, it is inconceivable that the halachic authorities would have remained silent as multitudes of women transgressed a prohibition each yom tov. Then, in addressing the rationale, Rav Moshe presents the thesis that the person who says the text of a beracha to exempt others is considered the leader, and others who fulfill their obligation through him are considered *tafel* (secondary), and defer to his text. Thus, the text of the person reciting kiddush becomes the default text for all those who fulfill their mitzvah of kiddush through him. To prove his view, Rav Moshe notes that general Sephardi practice, following the *Shulchan Aruch*, prohibits women from saying the beracha of *leishev ba'sukka* (and all other *berachos* on *mitzvos aseil she'hazman gerama*). If so, reasons Rav Moshe, why is a Sephardi woman allowed to answer

amen to this beracha when it is said in the context of kiddush — should it not constitute a *hefsek*, as a Sephardi woman is prohibited from (ever) saying this beracha and it is therefore unnecessary from her point of view? The silence of the poskim indicates that this is not a problem, proving, says Rav Moshe, that since *leishev ba'sukka* is the text for the person saying kiddush, it becomes the text for everyone fulfilling their mitzva of kiddush through this individual.¹¹

Second, some authorities¹² rule that any woman who says *Shehechyanu* when lighting candles should not answer *amen* to *Shehechyanu* in kiddush due to the issue of *hefsek*.

Third, a number of contemporary poskim,¹³ while accepting the basic view that answering *amen* to *Shehechyanu* in kiddush may constitute a *hefsek* if the individual does not need this beracha presently, argue that a distinction should be made between various *yomim tovim*. On Pesach and Sukkos, the *Shehechyanu* in kiddush has two functions: it relates to the yom tov itself, and it also fulfills the requirement for a *Shehechyanu* for the unique mitzvos of the yom tov that will be initially fulfilled that evening (sitting in the sukka on Sukkos, and the many mitzvos that are fulfilled *Leil ha'Seder* on Pesach). Thus, one may suggest that the *Shehechyanu* said by a woman at the time of lighting candles only relates to the yom tov. She relies upon the *Shehechyanu* in kiddush to cover the mitzvos that are to be fulfilled during or immediately after the kiddush, and therefore she can and must answer *amen*. On Shavuos and Rosh Hashana, however, when there are no special mitzvos relating to the yom tov that

require a *Shehechyanu*, a woman who already said *Shehechyanu* when lighting candles would be precluded from answering *amen* because of the concern of *hefsek*. As proof for this view, some of these poskim¹⁴ cite the *Alfasi Zuta* (R. Menahem Azariah mi'Pano, 1548-1620, end of third perek of *Rosh Hashana*), who proposes that if someone said kiddush solely to exempt someone else on the night of Shavuos, he would not repeat the *Shehechyanu* a second time when saying his own kiddush, as he already fulfilled his obligation the first time. However, if this kiddush took place on the night of Pesach or Sukkos, then he could say a *Shehechyanu* a second time, because the first *Shehechyanu* relates to the yom tov, while the second *Shehechyanu* is associated with the mitzvos of sukka or matza.¹⁵

It should be noted that while the *Alfasi Zuta* actually allows an individual to say *Shehechyanu* twice on Pesach and Sukkos and this is cited by some poskim to justify a woman answering *amen* in kiddush, the question arises to whether it follows that a woman could actually say *Shehechyanu* twice on Pesach and Sukkos: once at candle lighting and once if she says her own kiddush. Some suggest that such action might be justified following this approach.¹⁶ However, a strong case can be made that the gravity of saying an unnecessary beracha is more severe than the issue of *hefsek*, and therefore the justification may not be compelling enough to allow two recitations of *Shehechyanu*. This concern is elevated by the fact that numerous poskim state explicitly that a woman who says *Shehechyanu* when lighting candles must make sure not to say *Shehechyanu* if she says kiddush on *Leil ha'Seder*.¹⁷

Issue #2 - Is the *Shehechyanu* a *Hefsek* between the Beracha and the Lighting?

The custom of Ashkenazi women (and some Sephardi women) regarding Shabbos is to first light the candles, cover one's eyes, and then say the beracha prior to uncovering one's eyes and benefiting from the light (*Rama* 263:5). Whereas there is a principle of saying a beracha over *li'asiyasan* — immediately before the mitzva is fulfilled — this procedure is based upon the premise that acceptance of Shabbos is effected by the recitation of the beracha over the candles, which then would prohibit the person from lighting the candles. There is a dispute among the acharonim regarding the proper procedure for lighting yom tov candles. The son of R. Yaakov Falk, the author of the *Derisha* on the *Tur*, writes that his mother pointed out that since one is allowed to light a flame from an existing fire on yom tov, the impetus for delaying the beracha until after lighting the candles does not apply on yom tov, for even if the beracha does effect acceptance of yom tov, it would still be permitted to light the yom tov candles. Thus, she counselled that one should maintain the more conventional sequence of saying the beracha prior to lighting yom tov candles. The *Magen Avraham* disagreed, asserting that it is important to maintain a consistent manner of lighting Shabbos and yom tov candles, and therefore the Shabbos procedure should be followed on yom tov as well. Many later authorities ruled in favor of the view of the *Derisha's* wife.¹⁸

The position that necessitates saying the beracha prior to the lighting of the candles results in a potential problem for the women who say *Shehechyanu* at this time. If the beracha over the

candles and the *Shehechyanu* were said after the lighting of the candles, as the *Magen Avraham* advocates, then there would be no problem of *hefsek*. However, if these two berachos are said prior to the lighting of the candles, then the *Shehechyanu* could constitute a *hefsek* between the beracha over the candles and the lighting of the candles. While *Shehechyanu* is routinely said between a *birchas ha'mitzva* and the fulfillment of that mitzva when fulfilling various mitzvos for the first time during a yom tov (e.g. lulav, shofar, *neros Chanuka*), it is not considered a *hefsek* in that context because it relates directly to the mitzva. However, if the *Shehechyanu* under discussion relates to the yom tov itself and not to the mitzva of lighting yom tov candles, the insertion of this beracha prior to the lighting may arguably be considered a *hefsek*.

Some poskim advise that a woman should make sure to say *Shehechyanu* after lighting the candles to avoid this issue.¹⁹ Others assert that since the *Shehechyanu* relates to yom tov, it is broadly relevant to *hadlakas neros*, which is for the sake of *kavod yom tov*, and therefore does not constitute a *hefsek*.²⁰

Issue #3 – Can a Woman Stipulate to Defer the Acceptance of Yom Tov?

The lighting of *neros Shabbos* is generally assumed to signify the acceptance of Shabbos. However, in extenuating circumstances a woman can make a *tenai*, a stipulation, that the *neros Shabbos* do not usher in Shabbos and she can accept Shabbos at a later time.²¹ In principle, these rules should apply in regard to *neros yom tov* as well. However, many poskim point out that if a woman says *Shehechyanu* when

lighting *neros Yom Tov*, she may not be able to defer the acceptance of yom tov. This is evident from the Gemara in *Eruvin* (40b) which asserts that it is not possible to say *Shehechyanu* on Yom Kippur over a *kos shel beracha* because saying *Shehechyanu* brings about the acceptance of Yom Kippur, which in turn makes drinking the *kos* impossible. The Gemara compares saying *Shehechyanu* before Yom Kippur to someone who davens Maariv of Shabbos late Friday afternoon, which causes the acceptance of Shabbos.

This can have great practical significance on any given yom tov. A woman who needs to do something prohibited on yom tov after candle lighting should stipulate that she is not accepting yom tov and must also skip the *Shehechyanu*; otherwise, the restrictions of yom tov apply despite her stipulation to the contrary.²²

A Different Perspective on the Shehechyanu

A few later authorities²³ have proposed a different understanding of the custom of saying *Shehechyanu* when lighting *neros yom tov* that would resolve all of the questions raised thus far. They suggest that this *Shehechyanu* does not relate to the yom tov itself, but rather to the mitzva of *neros yom tov*. In their view, just as a *Shehechyanu* is recited on yomim tovim for the unique mitzvos related to the respective yom tov (lulav, shofar, *kerias ha'megilla*, *neros Chanuka*, etc.), so too *Shehechyanu* is said over the reintroduced mitzvah of *neros yom tov*. According to this perspective, there would be no issue regarding answering *amen* to *Shehechyanu* in kiddush, for the *Shehechyanu* in kiddush which relates to the yom tov is still fully required

even after *Shehechyanu* is said over *neros yom tov*. In fact, according to this view, a woman who lights candles and says her own kiddush would say *Shehechyanu* each time. Furthermore, the *Shehechyanu* would not constitute a *hefsek* between the beracha and the lighting, since the *Shehechyanu* relates to the mitzva itself and is no different than *Shehechyanu* over shofar, lulav, etc. Finally, the *Shehechyanu* said during *neros yom tov* would not preclude a woman from stipulating that she is not accepting yom tov, as this consequence only applies to the *Shehechyanu* said over the yom tov itself.

Given that this approach resolves all the above issues, why did the poskim who discussed these questions *not* present this view or even suggest it as a possibility? Apparently, they took for granted that the mitzva of *neros yom tov*, which is fulfilled every yom tov, does not bear the novelty of the other mitzvos that are unique to each particular yom tov, and in fact *neros Yom Tov* is strikingly similar to *neros Shabbos*. In addition, even if one would argue that the *Shehechyanu* relates to the candle lighting, it is logical to assume that since the *Shehechyanu* (when said prior to sunset) signifies the acceptance of the yom tov, it should also fulfill the obligation of *Shehechyanu* over the yom tov itself.²⁴ Therefore, it was assumed by the poskim that no *Shehechyanu* was required for the mitzva of *neros Yom Tov*, and the *Shehechyanu* said at the time of candle lighting relates to the yom tov itself.

Conclusion

In closing, we may seek to draw a lesson from the centuries-old practice of women to say *Shehechyanu* when lighting *neros yom tov*. Why did they

find it so important to say the beracha at that specific time; what was so compelling? As Rav Emden alludes to, women apparently sought to express their joy at the arrival of yom tov at the earliest opportunity. As yom tov was ushered in through the candle lighting, the mundane and material elements of life receded and the kedusha of yom tov commenced its reign, transforming life and time itself and propelling the Jew to a higher plane of existence. How could one not seize this opportunity to give voice to this delight by saying the Shehechyanu that Chazal mandated for each yom tov? Perhaps this can serve as a model for the attitude that we must adopt in approaching mitzvos in general. In today's wired and connected world, we often find it difficult to disconnect and immerse ourselves in the activities and experiences that are most meaningful. Too often, we engage in tefilla or enter Shabbos still distracted by the unending stream of information and communication that we are exposed to throughout the day. The eagerness and excitement of women saying *Shehechyanu* at the very onset of Yom Tov can help us to reframe our thinking and enthusiastically anticipate the opportunities to connect deeply and completely with the mitzvos that elevate and enrich us.

Endnotes

1 Some of the rishonim state that saying *Shehechyanu* over a *kos shel berachah* is a “*mitzva min ha'muwhar*” — a preferred practice (Ran, *Eruvin* 40b, s.v. *Mai havei*; Or *Zaruah*, *Hilchos Eruvin Siman* 140). The *Tur* (O.C. *Siman* 519) writes that while one can fulfill the obligation of *Shehechyanu* in any context, *tiknu le'omro al ha'kos*, “they instituted that it should be said over a *kos*,” and the Rambam also writes (*Sukka* 6:12) *u'mesader kol ha'berachos al ha'kos*, “one incorporates all the berachos (including *Shehechyanu*) together with the *kos* [of kiddush].”

It is interesting to note that in the commentary of Ri ben Chakmon on *Eruvin* (s.v. *Ve'hilkhatah*), he writes that it is completely permissible to say *Shehechyanu* prior to kiddush, but if the individual has not yet said *Shehechyanu* at the time of kiddush it is preferable to say *Shehechyanu* over the *kos* of kiddush. This would justify saying *Shehechyanu* before kiddush, but it is not the mainstream view in the rishonim.

2 See *Shulchan Aruch* O.C. 641:1. The *Minchas Chinuch* (*Mitzva* 300) initially suggests that according to the Gemara's conclusion that the *Shehechyanu* over the completion of the *sukka* and *daled minim* should be deferred in order to say it over a *kos shel beracha*, it should follow that one who forgot *Shehechyanu* at the beginning of Pesach should wait until kiddush on the evening of the seventh day of Pesach in order to say the *Shehechyanu* over a *kos shel beracha*. The *Minchas Chinuch* counters that one might distinguish between the two situations: in the case of the Gemara, *Shehechyanu* is going to be said in any case in the kiddush at the beginning of yom tov, in contrast to the scenario he presented. In any case, his discussion confirms the importance of saying *Shehechyanu* with a *kos shel beracha* when possible.

The *Nesiv Chaim* (on *Shulchan Aruch*, O.C. 432) asserts that the *mitzvah* of *shechitas korban Pesach* also requires a *Shehechyanu*, but it is fulfilled through the *Shehechyanu* said at kiddush, similar to the *Shehechyanu* for *sukka* and *lulav*. The *Teshuvos Shevet Halevi* (3:69) disputes this, arguing that *shechitas korban Pesach* does not require a *Shehechyanu* at all.

3 The *Elef La'Mateh* (619:6) identifies R. Emden's father-in-law as R. Mordechai Katz, the *Av Bais Din* of Poznin.

4 *Mekor Chaim* (printed in the *Machon Yerushalayim Shulchan Aruch*) 529:2, 610:2.

5 His son, R. Tia Veil, cites this in his commentary to the *Haggada* “*Marbeh Li'saper*” (in a note regarding kiddush), which is turn is quoted in *Teshuva Me'ahava* (R. Eleazar Fleckeles, 1754-1826, a student of the *Noda Bi'yehuda* and the Chief Rabbi of Prague, v. 2 *Siman* 239, s.v. *Hinei*). The *Teshuva Me'ahava* says that he was always puzzled by this custom, and concludes by stating that it causes a stumbling block because women who say kiddush at *Leil ha'Seder* end up saying *Shehechyanu* twice, which in his view certainly constitutes a *beracha li'vatala*. This point was made by R. Tia Veil as well, and he says that his father agreed with him.

6 See *Chagigah* 16b, *Rosh Hashana* 33a. Interestingly, many of the authorities mentioned here either lived in Germany or strongly identified with its scholars, indicating both that the custom under discussion was prevalent there and also that there was not a clear consensus among the rabbonim regarding its legitimacy.

While he lived several generations after the sources cited here, it should be noted that the *Mateh Ephraim* (1762-1828; 581:54, 599:9, 619:4) also cites this custom as the standard practice without any critique or comment.

7 It should be noted that the *Mishna Berura* in *Hilchos Rosh Hashana* (600:4) mentions the custom of women saying *Shehechyanu* when lighting yom tov candles without critiquing it. That passage in the *Mishna Berura* is apparently quoting from the *Eliya Rabba* cited above.

8 R. Emden's position is a nuanced one, and it is not surprising that different later authorities quote him with subtle but important distinctions. For example, Rabbi Akiva Eiger, the *Shaarei Teshuva*, and others cite R. Emden as saying that *ve'ain la'zeh yesod, mihu ain limchos bahen bi'chezkas yad* — “this has no foundation, but one should not protest against them aggressively.” The *Mishna Berura* uses a much milder formulation: *ve'ain tzarich le'varech zeman al ha'hadlaka, mihu bi'makom she'nahagu ain limhos bi'yadan* — “there is no need to say *Shehechyanu* when lighting candles, but one should not protest in a place where there is such a custom.” The *Aruch ha'Shulchan* has a similar presentation to the *Mishna Berura*.

We also find views among later poskim that are more unequivocally supportive or opposed: The *Tzitz Eliezer* (14:53) argues that the persistence and prevalence of the custom indicates that most authorities were supportive of it, and he advocates for encouraging women to continue the practice. The *Moadim U'zmanim* (7:117) quotes that the Brisker Rav, R. Yitzchak Ze'ev Soloveitchik, was opposed to this custom.

9 See *Yechaveh Daas*, 3:34, *Yalkut Yosef*, *Moadim: Sukka*, pp. 590-601. While R. Yosef does not prohibit the practice outright, he strongly discourages it. R. Ben-Tzion Abba Shaul (*Or Li'tzion*, v. 3, Ch. 18 #2), has a more accommodating presentation that is more similar to the view of R. Emden, stating that women who have this practice are allowed to continue to observe it. See, however, *Teshuvos Tzitz Eliezer* 14:53, par. 3, who quotes the *Ben Ish Chai* (*Shana 1: Bamidar*, par. 1; *Shana 2:*

Noach, par. 10) and other Sephardi poskim who give legitimacy to the minhag and indicate that a significant number of Sephardi communities followed it.

10 *Igros Moshe* O.C. v. 4, 21(9), 101(1).

11 Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (*Minchas Shlomo, Tanina, Siman* 60 #24; *Halichos Shlomo, Moadim: Nisan-Av*, Ch. 9 par. 22), concisely marshals many of the same essential arguments as Rav Feinstein. However, he was only lenient on Pesach and Sukkos (see *Halichos Shlomo, Moadim: Tishrei-Adar*, Ch. 9 par. 5), as the *Shehechyanu* at kiddush could relate to the special mitzvos of the yom tov (sukka, matza, etc), while on Rosh Hashana and Shavuot he instructed the women to refrain from answering *amen* to the *Shehechyanu* in kiddush. In other words, while he largely subscribed to Rav Feinstein's view, in practice he followed the third view (mentioned below) in regard to this issue. See also *Shemiras Shabbos Ki'hilchisa* (48:7).

Rav B.Z. Abba Shaul (*Or Li'tzion*, *ibid.*) also gives a similar explanation for why answering *amen* to *Shehechyanu* is not a *hefsek* and cites the example of Sephardi women answering *amen* to *lei'shev ba'sukka* as proof.

Rav Ovadia Yosef is aligned with the third view in regard to this issue, and therefore allows a woman who has already said *Shehechyanu* to answer *amen* only on Pesach (see below). Following this reasoning, he actually rules that a Sephardi woman should not answer *amen* to the beracha of *leishev ba'sukka* in kiddush, but should rather just think of the *amen* (*Yabia Omer*, 9:60; *Chazon Ovadia: Sukkos*, p. 149). It is striking that Rav Yosef does not cite any previous poskim who take this position, which reinforces the argument of Rav Feinstein and Rav Abba Shaul.

There are numerous other circumstances discussed by the poskim in which an individual being *yotzei* from someone else faces the dilemma of whether to answer *amen* to a beracha the listener may not need. Some examples include:

1) Can a Sephardi, who follows the view of the *Shulchan Aruch* that a *Shehechyanu* is only said over the night reading of the megilla on Purim, answer *amen* to the *Shehechyanu* said by an Ashkenazi over the megilla on Purim morning?

2) According to the poskim who question whether a woman is obligated in the beracha of *Borei Me'orei Ha'aish* on *Motzei Shabbos*, should a woman refrain from answering *amen* to this beracha in Havdala?

3) If someone listening to Havdala will not have the chance to smell the *besamim* after the beracha is said, should the individual answer *amen*?

12 See *She'elos U'Teshuvos Har Tzvi* (O.C. 54); Rav Elyashiv (*Ashrei Ha'ish, Hilchos Yom Tov*, 2:10, and *Hilchos Shabbos* 7:21); see Rav S.Z. Auerbach, cited below.

13 See *Teshuvos Shevet Halevi* 3:69, *Shemiras Shabbos Ki'hilchisa* 44:4. For questions on this approach, see *Mikra'ei Kodesh* (R. Tzvi Pesach Frank), *Pesach* v. 2, #38; *Minchas Shlomo* and *Halichos Shlomo* (*ibid.*).

14 See *Yechaveh Daas* 3:34.

15 It should be emphasized that even according to this view, an individual is unquestionably prohibited from saying *Shehechyanu* twice on Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, and Shavuot.

While we have grouped Sukkos together with Pesach, there are in fact significant distinctions between the two as they relate to our discussion. While it may be plausible that a woman is obligated to say *Shehechyanu* over matza and the other mitzvos of the Seder, as she is obligated in them, saying a *Shehechyanu* in the middle of kiddush specifically over the mitzva of sukka is more problematic, as a woman is not obligated in this mitzva. Nonetheless, for Ashkenazi women who are permitted to say a beracha over the mitzva of sukka, one may argue that a woman may say *Shehechyanu* over the mitzva as well (see e.g. *Halichos Shlomo, Moadim: Tishrei-Adar*, Ch. 9 par. 5). However, Sephardi women who generally do not say berachos on mitzvos *asei she'hazman gerama* should not say a *Shehechyanu* over such a mitzva (see *Yechaveh Daas, ibid.*).

Some authorities raise another conceptual and practical issue: While it is permitted to light *neros yom tov* after yom tov has begun, there is a prominent view that advises that the candles should be lit during the day prior to the onset of yom tov, similar to the time-frame for *neros Shabbos*, and this is the practice of many women. One might argue that the *Shehechyanu* said at this time *cannot* cover the mitzvos relating to Pesach and Sukkos, as it is not yet possible to fulfill those mitzvos! The essential question revolves around whether a *Shehechyanu* can sometimes be said prior to the arrival of a mitzva or event if it is being said in conjunction with an associated matter. The most important primary source in this discussion is the view of Tosafos (*Sukka*

46a, s.v. *Nichnas*) and other rishonim, which states that if a person said *Shehechyanu* after completing the construction of the sukka before yom tov, this beracha would also cover the *Shehechyanu* over the yom tov itself. (See also *Biur Halacha* 641:1 s.v. *ela.*) For discussion of this as it relates to our topic, see *Tzitz Eliezer* (10:19); *Minchas Shlomo* and *Halichos Shlomo* (*ibid.*), *Teshuvos Li'horos Noson* (v. 4, #21-22); *Yalkut Yosef, Moadim: Sukka*, pp. 600-601; *Nitei Gavriel, Erev Pesach She'chal Bi'Shabbos, She'eilos U'teshuvos* #1-2.

16 The *Shevet Halevi* (*ibid.*) initially wrote that this reasoning could not be applied to allow two recitations of *Shehechyanu*, but in a note added later in the margin, he writes that apparently some women do say *Shehechyanu* twice and this logic could offer some justification for their practice.

17 The *Teshuva Me'avahav* writes explicitly that this would constitute a *beracha li'vatala*, and the *Korban Nesanel* and his son (mentioned above) concur. Rav Y.M. Tukachinsky (*Luach Li'Eretz Yisrael*) also warns that women who say *Shehechyanu* when lighting candles should not say it during kiddush of the Seder, and the *Kaf HaChaim* (514:112) says the same regarding all *yomim tovim*. See also *Halichos Shlomo* (*ibid.*, n. 152).

18 See *Mishna Berura* 263:27.

19 *Moadim U'zmanim* 7:117; *Chazon Ovadia: Haggada shel Pesach*, p. 132, *Yechaveh Daas* 3:34.

20 See *Or Li'tzion, ibid.*, *Shemiras Shabbos Ki'hilchasa* Ch. 44 fn. 14.

The *Halichos Shlomo* (*ibid.*, n. 149) seems to state that the *Shehechyanu* relates to the *hadlakas neros* in addition to the yom tov itself. This seems similar to the view which will be mentioned at the end of the article, but it is difficult in particular because R. Auerbach himself wrote that the proposition that *Shehechyanu* relates to *hadlakas neros yom tov* is very difficult.

21 See *Shulchan Aruch* 263:10.

22 *Teshuvos Pri Yitzchak* 2:9. See *Kaf HaChaim* (514:112), *Nefesh HaRav* (p. 210), *Or Li'tzion* (*ibid.*), *Shemiras Shabbos Ki'hilchisa* (43:23).

23 *Teshuvos Zecher Simcha* #34, cited and discussed in *Teshuvos Tzitz Eliezer* 10:19; *Emes Li'Yaakov* on the *Shulchan Aruch, Siman* 585.

24 See R. S.Z. Auerbach, *Minchas Shlomo* and *Halichos Shlomo* (*ibid.*).