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Lefties Part 2

Cutting Nails for *Shabbos* - The Order

The *poskim* say that the nails should not be cut in sequential order,¹ and the *seforim* offer a number of reasons for this. Doing this causes danger, while others say that cutting the nails in sequential order makes one susceptible to forgetting one's *Torah* knowledge.² Others say the reason for cutting out of order is based on *kabbalah*.³ Some say to start cutting the right fingernails first,⁴ however, the *minhag* is to start with the left hand first.⁵ One should start cutting his nails with the finger next to the pinky, then cut the nail on the pointing finger, pinky, middle finger, and thumb.⁶ The right nails

are cut starting with the pointing finger, the finger next to the pinky, thumb, middle finger, and pinky.⁷ The easy way to remember this is "*kasha*,"⁸ which stands for *kimitzah semol yimin etzbah*. One who started cutting the nails in order should stop and continue cutting by skipping one and cutting the next one.⁹ A lefty-handed person follows the same order as a right-handed person.¹⁰

Birchos Habanim - *Bentching* one's Children

There is a time honored custom for one to *bentch*¹¹ his children on Friday night after he comes home from *shul*.¹² A left handed person should use his weaker right hand to *bentch* his children.¹³ However, based on the *Yaavetz* the custom of most people is to use both hands.¹⁴ The custom in some

¹ Rama 260:1, Magen Avraham 1, Levush 1, Pri Megadim M.Z. 2, Elya Rabbah 6, Sefer Matamim 1:page 144:6 (new), Mishnah Berurah 8, Pela Yoetz ibid, Shevet Ha'kehusi 2:105:1. Refer to Tzeponon Shel Rishonim pages 285-286, see Aruch Ha'shulchan 6. The Arizal was not concerned to cut his nails out of order. (Refer to Taz 1, Magen Avraham 1, Sharei Teshuva 2, Kaf Ha'chaim 17, Ben Ish Chai Lech Lecha 2:3, Ohr L'tzyion 2:47:4, Tzeponon Shel Rishonim page 291). The Steipler zt"l did not cut them in the order stated in the Rama, rather he cut them out of order (Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 104:20).

² Refer to Avudraham page 369, Levush 1, Elya Rabbah 6, Olas Shabbos 1, Sefer Zichoron 2:36:page 14, Shar Naftali page 115.

³ Tzeponon Shel Rishonim page 287:footnote 169.

⁴ Aruch Ha'shulchan 6, Tehilla L'Dovid 2. The Emes L'Yaakov 260:page 122 says one should start with the right hand first but is not sure l'maseh.

⁵ Elya Rabbah 6, Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham 1, Shulchan Aruch Harav 3, Lekutei Maharich 2:page 5, Betzel Hachuchma 3:53. This is true for lefties as well (Yemen Moshe page 28:footnote 51 in depth).

⁶ Rama 1, Levush, Prisha 241:4. Refer to Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 104.

⁷ Rama 1, Levush, Prisha 241:4.

⁸ Avudraham page 368, Pri Megadim M.Z. 2, Shar Naftali page 111, see Elya Rabbah 5.

⁹ Betzel Hachuchma 3:53, 5:7.

¹⁰ Ish Itur 42, Ben Ish Yemini page 81, see Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 104:20

¹¹ Refer to Nishmas Shabbos 1:546 on what *nusach* one should use.

¹² Refer to Yaavetz hanhugos leil Shabbos, Kaf Ha'chaim 262:12, Likras Shabbos 1:page 273, see Noheg Katzon Yosef page 157, Otzer Hayidios Shabbos pages 278-282. Some have the custom to *bentch* their children after *kiddush* before washing for bread (Likras Shabbos 1:page 296).

¹³ Ish Itur 43.

¹⁴ Yosef Ometz 70, Segulas Yisroel bais 58, Ben Ish Yemini footnote 121, see Nishmas Shabbos 1:546, Some have the custom to use only one hand (Refer to Yaavetz ibid, Be'er Moshe 4:25, Ben Ish Yemini footnote 121).

circles is not to *bentch* the children at all on *Shabbos*.¹⁵

Havdala

The custom is to look at ones nails during *havdala* as to distinguish between the flesh and the nails.¹⁶ Some have the custom to look at the nails before the *beracha* is recited,¹⁷ while others have the custom to recite the *beracha* of *meorei hu'esh*, and then to look at his fingernails.¹⁸ *Horav Moshe Feinstein's* *zt"l* custom was like that of the second custom stated,¹⁹ and this seems to be the *minhag haolam*.²⁰ After looking at one's nails, the cup should be returned to the right hand.²¹ A left handed person should look at the nails on his right hand.²²

Bedikas Chometz

There is no *halachic* preference as to which hand one uses to hold the candle during *bedikas chometz*.²³

Pesach – Leaning

Both a right handed and a left handed²⁴ person lean on their left side during the parts of the *seder* which require leaning.²⁵ The reason for this is that the valve which the food goes down is on the right side therefore if one leans on the right side it may cause him to choke.²⁶ *B'dieved*, if a lefty leaned on his right side his leaning was valid.²⁷

Ripping Kriah at the Kosel Etc.

Some have the custom to rip all of their garments,²⁸ however, the prevailing custom in *klal yisroel* is to rip one garment.²⁹ If one does not want to rip his jacket he can remove it and rip his shirt.³⁰ The ripping should be a *tefach* (4 inches).³¹ One should use his hand to rip the garment.³² Some allow the use of a utensil.³³ The ripping should be done on the left side since that is where the heart is situated.³⁴ Some say that since today we do not have the custom to rip to the point where one's heart is revealed,³⁵ one can rip on the right side.³⁶ The ripping should be done on the length of the garment.³⁷ A left handed person rips in the same manner as a right handed person.³⁸

¹⁵ Nishmas Shabbos *ibid*, M'boa V'ad Tzeiso *ibid*:footnote 3.

¹⁶ Rosh *ibid*, *Divrei Chamudos* 22, *Tur* 296, 298, *Bais Yosef* 298, *Prisha* 3, *Shulchan Aruch* 298:3, *Sefer Matamim* (new) 1:pages 210-211, *Mishnah Berurah* *ibid*, *Aruch Ha'shulchan* *ibid*. Another reason to look at the nails on *Motzei Shabbos* is because they grow and therefore are a *simon beracha*. (*Taz* 298:12, *Mishnah Berurah* 9, *Aruch Ha'shulchan* 8). Refer to *Kol Bo* 1:page 155 (new).

¹⁷ *Kol Bo* 1:page 155 (new), *Prisha* 296:6, *Pri Megadim M.Z.* 296:6, see *Taz* 298:2, *Shevet Ha'kehusi* 4:98, *Mishnah Berurah* 296:31.

¹⁸ *Pri Megadim M.Z.* 298:2, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 96:9, *Taamei Haminhagim* 414, *Lekutei Maharich* 2:page 84, *Kaf Ha'chaim* 298:20, *Salmas Chaim* 201, *Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso* 61:35, *Nishmas Shabbos* 2:594, *Orchos Rabbeinu* 1:page 130.

¹⁹ Refer to *Kovod V'oneg Shabbos* page 187:footnote 30, *Igros Moshe O.C.* 5:9:9. The custom of *Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita* is to fold his hand over his thumb before the *beracha*, recite the *beracha* and turn his hand over to look at the top of his hand. Some *poskim* suggest that one look at his fingernails before and after the *beracha* (*Rivevos Ephraim* 3:286:1, *Sheilas Rav* 2:27:17, *Yugel Yaakov* page 81).

²⁰ Refer to *Diyonei Halacha* pages 229-231, *Nishmas Shabbos* 2:594, *Birur Halacha* 298:11.

²¹ *Mishnah Berurah* 296:31.

²² *Ish Itur* 45, *Ben Ish Yemini* page 83, *Orchos Rabbeinu* 1:page 129.

²³ Opinion of *Horav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita* quoted in *Ben Ish Yemini* page 275.

²⁴ *Rama* 472:3, *Mishnah Berurah* 10-11, *Biur Halacha* "ein chiluk," *Be'er Moshe* 2:3:20, *Ben Ish Yemini* page 86.

²⁵ *Shulchan Aruch* 472:3, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 118:6, *Mishnah Berurah* 10-11.

²⁶ *Mishnah Berurah* 472:11.

²⁷ *Mishnah Berurah* 11.

²⁸ *Shulchan Aruch* 4, *Kaf Ha'chaim* 21.

²⁹ *Teshuvos V'hanugos* 1:331, *Minchas Shlomo* 1:73, *Orchos Rabbeinu* 1:page 324:1-2, *E'ven Yisroel* 8:43, see *Air Hakodesh V'hamikdosh* page 212.

³⁰ Refer to *Modanei Shlomo* page 60:footnote 95, *Teshuvos V'hanugos* *ibid*, *Tel Talpiot* 7:5, *Orchos Rabbeinu* 1:page 319, see *Doleh U'mashka* page 212.

³¹ *Horav Akiva Eiger*, *Aruch Ha'shulchan* 1, *Air Hakodesh V'hamikdosh* page 212, *Nechumas Yisroel* page 256:34, *Modanei Shlomo* page 60.

³² *Shulchan Aruch* 4, *Mishnah Berurah* 12, *Aruch Ha'shulchan* 4, *Kaf Ha'chaim* 20.

³³ Refer to *E'ven Yisroel* 8:43, *Teshuvos V'hanugos* 1:331, *Tel Talpiot* 7:4, *Air Hakodesh V'hamikdosh* *ibid*.

³⁴ *Magen Avraham* 4, *Pri Megadim Eishel Avraham* 4, *Mishnah Berurah* 13, *Aruch Ha'shulchan* 2, *Kaf Ha'chaim* 22, *Nechumas Yisroel* page 257.

³⁵ *Shulchan Aruch* 4.

³⁶ *Tel Talpiot* 7:8.

³⁷ *Chuchmas Adom* 152:2.

³⁸ *Ish Eitur* 48, *Orchos Rabbeinu* 1:page 319:5, 322:14.

Shofar

When one blows the *shofar* it should be placed on the right side of this mouth.³⁹ *B'dieved*, one is still *yotzei* if the *shofar* was not placed on the right side.⁴⁰ A lefty should also place it on the right side of his mouth like everyone else.⁴¹ Others say that he should place it on his left side.⁴² The custom is to hold the *shofar* with both hands.⁴³

Kaparos

Some say that there is no *halachic* difference which hand a left-handed person holds the chicken.⁴⁴ *Horav Sheinberg Shlita* is of the opinion that a left-handed person should hold the chicken in his stronger left hand.⁴⁵

Succos - Four Species

A right handed person holds the *esrog* in his left hand and the *lulav* in his right hand.⁴⁶ *B'dieved*, one who switched hands should preferably take the *lulav* and *esrog* again without a *beracha*.⁴⁷ The opinion of the *Shulchan Aruch*⁴⁸ is that a lefty holds the *esrog* in his left hand and the *lulav* in his right hand. However, the opinion of the *Rama*⁴⁹ is that a left handed person holds the *esrog* in his weaker right hand and the *lulav* in his stronger left hand.

There are those who say that by the *beracha* a left-handed person should do like the *Shulchan Aruch* and when doing the *nanuim* he should do like the *Rama*.⁵⁰

Chanukah

On the first night of *Chanukah* we start lighting on the right side one candle, and the second night we start from the left going to the right.⁵¹ Although the *Taz*⁵² is of the opinion that we go from right to left on the second night as well, this is not the accepted practice. Since we start from the left on the second night one should place his hand near the left candle on the second night as not to skip over the right candle.⁵³ A left-handed person lights in the same manner as described for a right-handed person.⁵⁴ Some say a right-handed person should hold the candle with his right hand.⁵⁵ *Horav Sheinberg Shlita* is of the opinion that a left-handed person should hold the candle in his stronger left hand.⁵⁶

Covering Blood

After an animal or bird is *shechted* there is a *mitzvah* to cover the blood.⁵⁷ A right-handed person should use his right hand to perform this *mitzvah*,⁵⁸ while a lefty should use his left hand.⁵⁹

Giving Tzedaka

Based on the writings of *kabbalah* one is supposed to give *tzedaka* with his right hand.⁶⁰ A left handed person also gives it with his right hand.⁶¹

³⁹ Rama 585:2. Refer to Biur Halacha "v'tov." who discusses the reason for this.

⁴⁰ Mishnah Berurah 8.

⁴¹ Shar Ha'tzyion 17, Kaf Ha'chaim 29, Be'er Moshe 2:3:21.

⁴² Magen Avraham 4, Matei Ephraim 585:4, Halichos Shlomo Moadim 2:2:5:footnote 10.

⁴³ Ben Ish Yemini page 89:footnote 138.

⁴⁴ Ish Itur 50.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Ben Ish Yemini page 275.

⁴⁶ Shulchan Aruch 561:2, Shulchan Aruch Harav 13. Refer to Mishnah Berurah 15.

⁴⁷ Mishnah Berurah 19. There is question raised on why by *hoshanos* when circling the *bimah* many have the custom to hold the *lulav* and *esrog* in one hand and the *siddur* in the other. This seems to be against the *halacha* (see Ben Ish Chai Hazeinu 1:14, Mishnah Berurah 651:15. Refer to Piskei Teshuvos 651:footnote 31). However, those who do so have on whom to rely upon (Moadim V'zmanim 2:121).

⁴⁸ 561:3. The Halichos Shlomo Moadim 11:16:footnote 27 says in public he did like the *Shulchan Aruch* and in his house he did like the *Rama*.

⁴⁹ 561:3. Refer to Be'er Moshe 2:3:17, Orchos Rabbeinu 2:page 288:1 who concur with the *Rama's* opinion.

⁵⁰ Poskim. Refer to Magen Avraham 21, Be'er Heitiv 20, Ish Itur 54, Shevet Ha'Levi 8:151, Ben Ish Yemini pages 203-204. For the different ways to do the shaking see Be'er Heitiv 651:20, see Aruch Ha'shulchan 651:27.

⁵¹ Shulchan Aruch 676:5, Be'er Heitiv 4, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 137:4, Mishnah Berurah 11, Aruch Ha'shulchan 13, Kaf Ha'chaim 31.

⁵² *ibid*:6. Refer to Sharei Teshuva 4.

⁵³ Mishnah Berurah 11.

⁵⁴ Ish Itur 57, Be'er Moshe 5:128, Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 18:58, Ben Ish Yemini page 93.

⁵⁵ Rivevos Ephraim 7:323.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Ben Ish Yemini page 275. Others say that there is no preference in which hand he holds the *shamash* (Opinion of Horav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita quoted in Ben Kuntres Ish Itur (Yemen Moshe) page 36:footnote 64).

⁵⁷ Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 28:1.

⁵⁸ Ben Ish Yemini page 96:footnote 164.

⁵⁹ Be'er Moshe 2:3:21*. Refer to Ben Ish Yemini page 96, Yemen Moshe pages 54-55.

Kissing a Mezuzah

When one enters or leaves his house he should touch the *mezuzah* with his right hand⁶² and say *yishmor* etc.⁶³ Others do not touch the *mezuzah* if it is not covered.⁶⁴ Some have the custom to kiss the hand after touching the *mezuzah*.⁶⁵ This is done to show *chashivus* for the *mitzvah*.⁶⁶ The *Chazon Ish* used to look at the *mezuzah* while entering or leaving.⁶⁷ A lefty should kiss the *mezuzah* with his stronger left hand.⁶⁸

Affixing a Mezuzah

Both right-handed and left-handed⁶⁹ people should affix the *mezuzah* on the right side of the door.⁷⁰

Placing Hand on the Keiver

Some have the custom when *davening* at a *keiver* to place their hand on the *keiver*. One who follows this custom should place his left hand on the *keiver*.⁷¹ A lefty also places his stronger left hand on the *keiver*.⁷²

Standing Next to the Kallah

Under the *chuppah* the *chosson* stands on the left and the *kallah* stands on the right.⁷³ Even in a

situation where the *chosson* is a lefty the *kallah* should still stand on the right side.⁷⁴

Giving the Ring to the Kallah

The custom is that the *chosson* places the ring on the *kallahs* pointer finger.⁷⁵ It is placed on her right finger.⁷⁶ Some say if the *kallah* is a lefty or the *chosson* is a lefty the ring should still always be placed on the right hand.⁷⁷ Others say it should be placed on her stronger left hand.⁷⁸

Breaking the Glass Cup

There is an uncertainty in the *poskim* if the *chosson* has to break the glass cup only with his right foot.⁷⁹ Some say one can break it with any foot he wants.⁸⁰

Nursing

From the teachings of *Horav Yehuda Hachassid* a woman should start nursing her child from the left side.⁸¹ There is no difference if she is a lefty or righty in regard to this *inyun*.⁸²

⁶⁰ Beorach Tzedaka 6:35.

⁶¹ Ish Itur 63.

⁶² Yesod V'shoresh Hu'avodah 2:8.

⁶³ Rama Y.D. 285:2, Shach 4, Be'er Heitiv 2, Ben Ish Chai Ki Sovo 2:3, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 11:24.

⁶⁴ Rav Akiva Eiger 58, see B'shivlis Haparsha pages 518-519.

⁶⁵ Birchei Yosef Y.D. 285:4, Kaf Ha'chaim O.C. 25:22, Salmas Chaim 570, Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 164:2, Pischei Mezuzah 285:16.

⁶⁶ Refer to Ben Ish Chai V'eira 1:21, Shar Ephraim 10:4, Yesodo Yeshurin bais hakenesses 1:page 15.

⁶⁷ Orchos Rabbeinu 3:page 164:2, Derech Sicha page 517. Some have the custom to kiss the *mezuzah* not the hand (Sechel Tov pages 66-67).

⁶⁸ Be'er Moshe 2:2:4.

⁶⁹ Rama ibid, Shach 5, Ish Itur 65, Be'er Moshe 2:2:4.

⁷⁰ Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 289:2.

⁷¹ Be'er Heitiv 224:8, Kaf Ha'chaim 224:4, Gesher Ha'chaim 29:14, Pnei Boruch 37:20, Ohelecha B'amisecha 18:19. Others have the custom not to touch the *keiver* at all (Natei Gavriel Aveilus 88:17, 88:footnote 21 in depth).

⁷² Ish Itur 40, Be'er Moshe 2:5:11.

⁷³ Be'er Heitiv E.H. 61:7, Sefer Matamim page 53:77 (new), Lekutei Maharich pages 747-748 (new), Chazon Yeshaya page 294, Rivevos Ephraim 4:224:3, Minhag Yisroel Torah Nesuin pages 170-171, see Yufei Leleiv E.H. 61:8.

⁷⁴ Ish Itur 70, Betzel Hachuchma 5:36, Be'er Moshe 2:2:page 39.

⁷⁵ Ben Ish Chai Shoftim 1:7, Minhag Yisroel Torah Nesuin pages 176-177.

⁷⁶ Shulchan Haezer 8:2:2-3.

⁷⁷ Betzel Hachuchma 5:36, Opinion of Horav Vosner Shlita quoted in Ben Ish Yemini page 105:footnote 195.

⁷⁸ Ben Ish Chai ibid, Divrei Yatziv E.H. 53:1, Ish Itur 69, Chazon Yeshaya page 318, Opinion of Horav Elyashiv Shlita quoted in Mevakshei Torah 33-34.

⁷⁹ Refer to Sdei Chemed Chosson V'kallah 30.

⁸⁰ Ben Ish Yemini page 105:footnote 196 quoting the opinion of Horav Chesner Shlita.

⁸¹ Item # 55 on his will, Kaf Ha'chaim Y.D. 116:149, see Lekutei Halachos 55:pages 169-170.

⁸² Ish Itur 86.

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