



## Women's Tefillah Halachot as discussed with Rabbi Grussgott:

### Torah Service

Taking out the Torah:

- There is a halacha based on the gemara that all tefillot in Aramaic cannot be said without being in a *tzibur*, which requires a minyan. Therefore, the women's tefillah group will skip בריך שמה, which is in Aramaic. Another option is to recite it in English (since the problem is with the Aramaic).

Bracha before an aliya:

- Women aren't obligated in the mitzvah of *kriyat haTorah b'tzibur*, communal Torah reading, so they cannot constitute a minyan to allow for official aliyot. Therefore, the *kriyat haTorah* of a women's tefillah group constitutes an act of Torah study, not a communal Torah reading.
- At our women's tefillah group, we will say the bracha of אשר בחרבנו (*asher bachar banu*) before an aliya (which is the same bracha said in a regular minyan, just without *barchu*).
- We cannot say *barchu* because it is one of the *devarim shebikedushah* which can only be said in a minyan.
- The reason we are allowed to say *asher bachar banu* is that this bracha serves two purposes. First, we say this bracha every morning before learning Torah. Secondly, it is the bracha that one says when one receives an aliya in shul on fulfilling the mitzvah of communal Torah reading.
- However, since women aren't obligated in communal Torah reading, they can only say it once a day (not in the morning *and* when they get an aliya). So, women who receive an aliya in the women's tefillah group shouldn't say the bracha of *asher bachar banu* in the morning, rather they should delay their recitation of the bracha and say it only on their aliya in the women's tefillah.
- However, delaying this recitation causes a few problems in Shacharit since you cannot learn Torah without saying this bracha. First, we have a problem because saying shema fulfills the mitzvah of saying shema itself, but also the mitzvah of talmud Torah. The way

to solve this is to make sure that you say shema within *zeman kriyat shema* so that your recitation can count as fulfilling the mitzvah of *kriyat shema* rather than talmud Torah.

- A second problem is that saying *ahava rabbah* before shema can be counted as your *birkot haTorah* if you haven't yet said them. Therefore, when you say *ahava rabbah*, you must keep in mind that it doesn't count as your *birkot haTorah* so that you are able to say them when you get an aliya. An alternate suggestion is not to say *ahava rabbah* since women aren't obligated in it.
- A final point is that there are two brachot in *birkot haTorah*, *laasok b'divrei Torah* and *asher bachar banu*. Even though you aren't saying *birkot haTorah* in the morning, you are still obligated to say both of these brachot. You will say *asher bachar banu* when you receive an aliya, so it is best to silently recite *laasok b'divrei Torah* immediately before you say *asher bachar banu* out loud in order to say them together. An alternate suggestion, though not as good (since it is better to say the two brachot together), is to say *laasok b'divrei Torah* in the morning and then recite *asher bachar banu* on your aliya.

Bracha after an aliya:

- Women cannot say the bracha that is usually said after an aliya since it is a bracha on the mitzvah of communal Torah reading which women aren't obligated in.
- Therefore, we will substitute the text of *baruch hamakom* and *lamdeni chukecha* (a pasuk from tehillim, not a bracha) to say in place of this bracha.

Haftorah Brachot:

- Since women are also not obligated in the mitzvah of communal haftorah reading, they cannot say the regular brachot on the haftorah.
- Therefore, we are saying the text of the paragraphs without the brachot themselves. In the bracha before the haftorah, we replaced the bracha part with another pasuk from tehillim, *baruch hashem leolam amen v'amen*.
- In the bracha after the haftorah, we simply removed the "*baruch ata hashem elokeynu melech haolam*" in the first bracha and removed the brachot from the rest, except the last bracha, where we again substituted *baruch hashem leolam amen v'amen*.

## **Mussaf**

Yekum Purkan:

- Generally, only the first paragraph of yekum purkan can be said without a minyan. However, since the women's tefillah group will be meeting concurrently with the main minyan upstairs, we can say all of yekum purkan because there is a *kahal*, congregation, in the building.
- In the third paragraph, women may wish to omit the word "*u'nasheihem*", "and their wives," in the phrase "הוא יברך את כל הקהל הקדוש הזה...הם ונשיהם ובנותיהם וכל" "אשר להם", "may he bless this congregation, them and their wives and their children and

everything that is theirs,” implying that the women are not included in the congregation.

Repetition of the Shemoneh Esreh:

- Generally, a repetition is only required in order to say *kedushah* which is one of the *devarim shebikedushah* and therefore cannot be said without a minyan.
- However, the repetition can be used for other purposes, such as enhancing kavanah by emphasizing every word of the amidah, whereas when we daven alone, we may skim over some words. This is the purpose of the repetition that the women’s tefillah group will use.
- The chazzanit will delay her silent amidah and say it out loud after giving the rest of the women time to say a private amidah as usual. Another option is to delay your personal amidah and say it silently as the chazzanit says hers aloud, ensuring you don’t miss any words and enhancing your kavanah.
- The chazzanit will recite her amidah aloud through *sim shalom*, at which point she will conclude silently through *elokai natzor*. As the chazzanit recites *elokai natzor* silently, each woman can say their own silent tefillah or stand silently.