

המדריך

HAMADRIKH
THE RCA LIFECYCLE GUIDE

THE RABBINICAL COUNCIL OF AMERICA

RABBI SHMUEL GOLDIN
RABBI LEONARD A. MATANKY

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This new edition
of the Rabbinical Council of America's *HaMadrikh*
is dedicated in memory of

Rabbi Meyer Kramer z"l,

a long-time and devoted member of the RCA.

When Rabbi Kramer learned in Yeshiva University –
Yeshivat Rabbeinu Yitzchok Elchanan (RIETS) – in the 1930s and 40s,
and Orthodoxy was in steep decline in the United States, he embraced,
at the encouragement of his rebbe, Rav Dr. Samuel Belkin zt"l, Yeshiva University's
commitment to *kibbush hakehillot*. He settled in Philadelphia to attend law school,
met his wife, Rose z"l, at a Mizrachi meeting, and together made the decision to
consecrate their lives to the rabbinate in that city where Orthodoxy was in retreat.

Rabbi Kramer taught part-time in the University of Pennsylvania Law School,
but his full-time work was serving in congregations where many congregants,
like the city itself, were not religiously observant. He sought to bring them closer
to the ideals of *Yahadut*, and his wife was his full partner in these endeavors.
Rabbi Kramer not only worked with and related to his congregants, but also to Jews
of all backgrounds, whom he treated with great respect, as he did all human beings.
For him, life-cycle events were an especially meaningful opportunity to reach out
to other Jews in a caring, sensitive, positive, and personal manner.

This edition of *HaMadrikh* is lovingly dedicated by their son,
Rabbi Doniel Zvi Kramer, with his fervent prayer that it will enable
rabbis and chaplains and other *klei kodesh* to share, through their
life-cycle *avodat hakodesh*, the loving presence of **השם יתברך**
and His Torah whose **דרכיה דרכי נועם וכל נתיבותיה שלום**.

לזכר נשמות

Rabbi Meyer Kramer

הרב מאיר בן הרב חיים מנחם ז"ל
נפ' ז' תמוז תשע"ה

Mrs. Rose Schnabel Kramer

מרת רייזל בת ר' יהודה לייב ע"ה
נפ' ג' תשרי תשס"ז

ובנם היקר,

הילד משה שיה בן הרב מאיר ע"ה
נפ' כ"ז כסלו תשי"ג

תנצב"ה

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FOREWORD FROM THE RCA LEADERSHIP

The Torah tells us that Noah was so named because of the consolation that he brought to the world (Gen. 5:29). Rashi, echoing Ḥazal, states that actually two things occurred at the same time during Noah's lifetime: (1) Noah invented tools for plowing, which made it easier to work the soil. This brought comfort (*menuḥa*) to mankind. (2) Until Noah's generation, the soil itself was still manifesting the curse placed upon Adam, and thorns and thistles predominated every field that had been planted for grain. During Noah's lifetime, this vexing phenomenon diminished significantly, which brought great consolation (*neḥama*) to his generation.

Our world continues to accelerate at a dizzying pace. New technologies are constantly rendering old technologies obsolete even before we've had a chance to learn the old ones. The RCA has long recognized that just like every other profession, the rabbinat has its own "thorns and thistles," those inconveniences that can sometimes make our jobs cumbersome and unwieldy. As the world around us has succeeded in alleviating the inconveniences of the workplace, we in the rabbinat must strive to do so as well. Just as one needs the right tool for the right job, every rabbi needs the right tools to officiate and oversee various religious ceremonies and events.

Over thirty years ago, we published the first RCA *Madrikh*, a true classic, that alleviated many of the stresses that rabbanim out in the field undergo when presiding over life-cycle occasions.

We realized that we needed to bring a new *Madrikh* to the twenty-first-century, English-speaking rabbinat. This one would be even more robust than the previous one, taking into account that today's rabbi is called upon to preside over various events that

were not addressed in the previous *Madrikh*. We also recognize that today's rabbi can benefit from additional pastoral and halakhic guidance and have created sections that address these needs. Finally, we are providing online resources to supplement our new *HaMadrikh* that will allow the rabbi to instantly access additional texts at www.rabbis.org/hamadrikh.

Those of us out in the field know what it's like to struggle through a funeral service in the middle of a rainstorm or blizzard. We've experienced the panic of realizing, at the *hatan's tisch*, that there's an error in the *ketuba*. Having a reliable toolbox like the new *HaMadrikh* will at least alleviate some of the job's stresses and will free our minds to remember the names of all the family members we're officiating for, and to have greater presence in the moment.

Thanks are not enough to express our *hakarat hatov* to the herculean efforts of Rabbi Leonard Matanky and Rabbi Shmuel Goldin in preparing this *HaMadrikh*. We must also express our great appreciation to Rabbi Reuven Bulka *zt"l*, who was the author of the previous RCA *Madrikh*, and who had started as one of the co-editors on this project before taking ill. His loss leaves a gaping hole in the hearts of his *haverim* as well as the North American rabbinate.

Finally, an incredible *yasher koah* to our *haver* Rabbi Doniel Kramer, who came forward as a *gavra rabba* and dedicated this *HaMadrikh* in memory of his father, Rabbi Meyer Kramer *zt"l*.

May this new RCA *HaMadrikh* bring consolation and comfort. May it assist rabbis to be *mekadesh shem Shamayim* in all their efforts for Klal Yisrael.

Rabbi Binyamin Blau
President

Rabbi N. Daniel Korobkin
Honorary President

INTRODUCTION

For more than eighty years, one of the most important rabbinic resources has been a small volume known as a “Madrich.” First composed and compiled by Rabbi Hyman E. Goldin *zt”l*, and then reimaged in the 1980s by Rabbi Reuven Bulka *zt”l*, these books have guided American rabbis through the often-complex task of officiating at life-cycle events. Each book is a masterpiece, and each has succeeded in having a meaningful impact upon American Jewry.

It is therefore with a deep sense of gratitude to these rabbis and a fair amount of trepidation that we present to you a new edition of this classic work, which we believe will address the ever-changing needs of the American rabbinate.

This new *RCA HaMadrikh, The Rabbi’s Guide* offers, as did theirs, the complete texts for key life-cycle events. This volume, however, adds to those previous editions in several critical ways.

▶ **Fully Sourced and Expanded Halakhic Sections**

The welcome literacy of today’s Orthodox community has placed new demands upon its rabbinate. Questions of increased complexity are regularly posed, and the immediacy of modern communication raises the need for on-the-spot responses as never before.

Considering these and other similar challenges, we have made every effort to provide rabbis with expanded and sourced halakhic information needed for their leadership at critical times.

We are deeply indebted to Morenu HaRav Hershel Schachter *shlita* for his careful review of each halakhic section in this volume. HaRav Schacter’s *piskei halakha*, insights, and edits have

enabled us to present these halakhot with a confidence that would have been otherwise impossible.

▶ **“Rabbinic Road” Sections**

Each chapter of this volume is introduced by a concise section of general guidance to the rabbi. These introductions are motivated by the conviction that a rabbi’s greatest task is to serve as the pastoral guide for his congregants. At its best, this new edition of *HaMadrikh* should therefore aid rabbis in navigating the often-complex road ahead.

▶ **Added Content**

Certain sections were deleted from the previous edition of the RCA Madrikh in order to limit its size. After consulting with our membership, we have expanded some of the sections and reinstated texts for both a *hanukat habayit* and a *haknusat sefer Torah*. These events reflect the changing needs of our communities as they seek to create a stronger bond between home and synagogue, and as more *sifrei Torah* are written and dedicated.

In addition, we have included a wider selection of psalms, both within the chapters and at the end of this book. These chapters represent the key sections of Psalms that are recited in times of need.

▶ **Online Resources**

In addition to material included in this book, the Rabbinical Council of America has prepared an online resource at www.rab-bis.org/hamadrikh. There, rabbis will find additional forms (e.g., a *ketuba de’irkisa*, a replacement *ketuba* when signatures have faded, the prenuptial agreement, etc.), the entire *Vidui* service, which may be needed when the printed edition is not accessible, halakhic spellings of cities, and more. It is our hope that this resource will serve to support the dynamic needs of the rabbinate.

A few personal notes ...

While participation in this project has been deeply meaningful for us both, it carries an additional layer of significance for Rabbi Shmuel Goldin. As noted, the original *Madrikh* of 1939 was conceived and authored by Rabbi Hyman E. Goldin, Rabbi Shmuel Goldin's grandfather. Rabbi Goldin is indebted to the RCA for enabling him to further his grandfather's legacy through this new publication.

Four years ago, when we met to plan this new edition, we were honored to have Rabbi Reuven Bulka join us and agree to serve as a co-editor. We looked to Rabbi Bulka, a prolific writer, a great rabbi, and editor of the first RCA *Madrikh*, for his sage advice and skillful writing. We were deeply saddened when his tragic illness and passing forestalled that possibility. Rabbi Bulka's presence is, nonetheless, felt throughout the pages of this volume, as much of the content is built upon the foundation of his earlier work.

One of the most important gifts provided by membership in the RCA is the *chavershaft* that develops over time. The editors of this volume met in the trenches of RCA leadership immediately before and during our respective terms as president of the organization. What began as a collegial relationship has blossomed over the years into a close, cherished friendship. This relationship informed our shared efforts on this project, enabling us to complement each other's strengths and augment each other's weaknesses seamlessly. We trust that the warmth of our partnership is reflected in the pages of this volume.

Thanks are certainly due to Caryn Meltz who, on behalf of Koren Publishers shepherded this effort to publication, and to Koren's publisher and our good friend, Matthew Miller. Their talented team, including Esther Be'er, Efrat Gross, Dvora Rhein, Rachelle Emanuel, and Debbie Ismailoff, and their patient acceptance of our continual emendations to the manuscript were

invaluable in bringing the volume to reality. We thank our colleagues, Rabbis Shalom Baum, Mark Dratch, Chaim Poupko, Yona Reiss, Reuven Tradburks, and Michoel Zylberman for their review of portions of the manuscript. Their critiques and advice proved extremely helpful.

As always, we express our deep gratitude to our respective spouses for their patient support in this and other projects throughout our years of service to the Jewish community. We owe all to you, and you continue to inspire us in all we do.

Finally, we thank the leadership of the RCA, past presidents Rabbi Elazar Muskin and Rabbi Daniel Korobkin, president Rabbi Binyamin Blau, and executive vice president, Rabbi Mark Dratch for entrusting us with this critically important project. We hope that this edition of *HaMadrikh* will prove that confidence to have been well placed.

We close with a paraphrase of the talmudic prayer quoted in the name of Rav Nehunya ben Hakaneh upon entering the *beit midrash*.*

“May it be Your will, Hashem, our God, that no mishap should occur because of us; that we should not err in a halakhic matter and that our colleagues will rejoice in us; that we should not declare the impure pure or the pure impure; that our colleagues should not err in a halakhic matter and that we will rejoice in them.”

May this volume guide its readers and support the rabbis of our community *lehagdil Torah ulehaadirah!*

Rabbi Shmuel Goldin and Rabbi Leonard A. Matanky
Jerusalem/Chicago, 5783 (2023)

* Berakhot 28b.

המדריך

**HAMADRIKH:
THE RCA LIFECYCLE GUIDE**

THE RABBINIC ROAD: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

BRIT MILA

The preparations for a *brit mila* provide the rabbi with a wonderful opportunity to interact with a family – usually a younger family – against a background of deep joy and hectic preparation. Helping each family find a *mohel*, guiding the parents through a ceremony replete with honors for distribution, assisting in the determination of timing and venue, offering advice concerning the selection of a name, are just some of the areas of potential rabbinic involvement. As always, the *baalei simcha* will remember the assistance and guidance offered by the rabbi long after the event itself.

- ▶ The rabbi should maintain updated contact information of local *mohalim* for ready access. In particular, he should be able to identify those *mohalim* who will make themselves available over Shabbat or Yom Tov. The rabbi should familiarize himself with the professionalism of the *mohalim* he recommends; keeping in mind that, while the *brit* is a pivotal religious rite, it is a medical procedure, as well.
- ▶ The rabbi should be prepared to guide the celebrants regarding the halakhic issues surrounding the use of a clamp vs. a shield, and the proper way to perform *metzitza*.
- ▶ As early as possible, the rabbi should meet with the parents, in person or over the phone, to review the *brit* ceremony and the various honors for distribution. He will often be called upon to offer advice concerning the significance of each particular honor and to whom that honor should be given. The rabbi should also use this opportunity to gather personal information from the parents (concerning the child's name, family history, etc.) for inclusion in any remarks he may deliver (see below).

- ▶ If communal custom dictates that the *rabbi* be given a particular honor, the rabbi should feel free to delicately share that information with the parents. He should make it clear, however, that he is willing to forego the honor if the family feels the need to grant it to someone else. In this, and all related matters, sensitivity to each family's particulars and "politics" should be the order of the day.
- ▶ The rabbi should make every effort to attend the *brit mila* and, if possible, stay until the recitation of *Birkat HaMazon*, with its special inclusions, after the meal. The rabbi should also offer to speak, but, once again, indicate his clear understanding if the parents intend to limit any speeches to family members. All speeches, including the rabbi's, should be short, personal, and preferably delivered directly after the *brit* or early on during the meal. In this way, those attendees who must leave to "get on with their day" can do so comfortably.
- ▶ Concerning this and all other lifecycle events, the rabbi should carefully review his halakhic standards with the family as soon as possible.

HALAKHOT CONCERNING BRIT MILA

TIMING OF THE BRIT MILA

1. A *brit mila* is performed when a boy is eight days old, counting the day of birth as day one (י"ד רסב:א).
2. If a *brit* was performed before the eighth day, the child must have *hatafat dam* performed after the eighth day (ערוה"ש י"ד רסב:ה).
3. A *brit* must take place during the daytime (after sunrise and before sunset) and ideally in the morning because of the principle of וריו"ן למצות (י"ד רסב:א).
4. If the *brit* was performed after sunset, *hatafat dam* on a later day is required (ש"ך י"ד רסב ס"ק ב).
5. The *brit mila* of a child born on Shabbat is held on the following Shabbat, unless the child was delivered by Cesarean section, in which case the *brit* is delayed until Sunday. Similarly, if the eighth day following a Cesarean section is a Yom Tov, the *brit* is delayed until after Yom Tov (י"ד רס"ז).
6. If a child is born *bein hashmashot* (ע"ע משנה ברורה רסא ס"ק כג), the count of eight days begins that evening (i.e., the next halakhic day) (י"ד רסב:ד).
7. If a child is born on Friday night *bein hashmashot*, the *brit* is delayed until the ninth day (Sunday). Similarly, a *brit mila* is not performed on a Yom Tov unless the child was definitely born eight days earlier, and not *bein hashmashot* (י"ד רס"ח-ט). However, if the eighth day is a *yom tov sheni shel galuyot*, the *brit* can take place, even when the boy was born *bein hashmashot* (נודע ביהודה מהדורא קמא או"ח סימן ל).
8. Twin boys (or two other boys having a *brit* at the same time) should not be brought into the room for the *brit* together. Rather, after the first *brit mila* is complete, the blessing of *HaMalakh*

HaGoel (Genesis 48:16) is recited, and then the second boy is brought into the room for his *brit mila* (פתחו תשובה יו"ד רס"ה ס"ק י). Between the two *britot*, it is appropriate for the father to deliver a *devar Torah* to further separate between the two sets of blessings.

POSTPONING A BRIT MILA

1. A child with a serious illness affecting his entire body does not have his *brit mila* until seven complete days (seven twenty-four-hour periods) have passed after his recovery (יו"ד רס"ב).
2. A jaundiced child is typically not considered a *holeh kol gufo* and may have his *brit mila* as soon as he has recovered (ציץ אליעזר (ח"ג סימנים פ"א ופ"ג). If, however, the child required a blood transfusion, then the *brit mila* should be delayed for seven days after his recovery (אג"מ יו"ד ח"ב סימן קכ"א).
3. Just as a doctor's expert advice is relied upon in circumstances of illness/emergency to suspend the laws of Shabbat, so too, a doctor's advice should be sought regarding a child's illness and the advisability of performing a *brit mila* (ערוה"ש יו"ד רס"ד). There are, however, situations (e.g., after a child is removed from an incubator, or following a blood transfusion) when *halakha* requires a seven-day waiting period, despite the doctor's permission to immediately perform a *brit mila* (אג"מ יו"ד ח"ב סימן קכ"א).

SHALOM ZAKHAR

1. On the first Friday night following the birth of a boy, it is customary to host a *shalom zakhar* (יו"ד רס"ה"ב). This gathering can occur even when the baby is not in the location of the *shalom zakhar* (אוצר הברית ח"א ג'בז).
2. If the child was born on Friday night after Shabbat began (causing his *brit mila* to be scheduled for the following Shabbat), there are different *minhagim* as to whether the *shalom zakhar* should take place on the first or second Friday night. The common *minhag*

is to hold the *shalom zakhar* on the second Friday night, i.e., the Friday night closer to the *brit mila* (חכמת אדם מט:כד).

3. If the *brit mila* must be postponed due to the child's illness, the *shalom zakhar* should still be held on the first Friday night after the child's birth. If, however, there is doubt as to whether or not the child will survive the illness, a *shalom zakhar* need not be held (אוצר הברית ח"א גב:יא-יב).

TEFILLA ON THE DAY OF THE BRIT MILA

1. On the day of the *brit*, *Taḥanun* is not recited in the synagogue where the *brit* will take place or in any minyan which includes either the *mohel*, the *sandak*, or the father of the baby. If the *brit* takes place after *Minḥa*, *Taḥanun* is not recited at *Shaharit* or *Minḥa* if any of these men are present (אשי ישראל כה:כד).
2. The day of the *brit* is considered a holiday for the *mohel*, the *sandak*, and the father of the baby. These individuals, therefore, do not personally recite *Taḥanun* at *Shaharit* or *Minḥa* that day, no matter what time of the day the *brit* occurs (משנה ברורה קלא ס"ק כה).
3. If there is a later minyan in the same location as the *brit*, even after the *brit* has concluded and all of the participants have departed, the later minyan does not recite *Taḥanun* on the day of the *brit* (דברי משה א"ח ג). If, however, the later minyan is held in a separate sanctuary with its own *aron hakodesh*, *Taḥanun* is recited (משנה ברורה קלא ס"ק כד).
4. Just as *Taḥanun* is not recited when a *brit* falls on a weekday, *Av HaRaḥamim* and *Tzidkatekha Tzedek* are omitted when a *brit* occurs on Shabbat (א"ח קפד:ז).
5. While the *baalei brit* do not recite *El Erekh Apayim* prior to reading the Torah or the series of *Yehi Ratzon* following the reading of the Torah, those who are praying with them do say these prayers (ש"ך י"ד רס"ה ס"ק כד).
6. Those who are wearing *tefillin* prior to the *brit mila* should

continue to wear their *tefillin* for the *brit mila*, since both are referred to as an *ot* (ש"ך יו"ד רסה ס"ק כ"ד).

7. It is customary in some communities for the *mohel* (or the rabbi) to lead the congregation in the responsive reading of the section of *Pesukei DeZimra* beginning with the words *vekharot imo haberit*. Some conclude this recitation with the words *kemo even bemayim azim*, while others continue until *Yishtabah*.
8. In other communities, only the *mohel* and the *sandak* recite this section responsively aloud (דרך החיים ל:יד).

THE HONORS AT A BRIT IN ORDER OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. Many honors are available for distribution to those participating in the *brit mila*. The following is the list of honors, in order of significance.
 - A. *Sandak Meyushav*
 - I. Serving as the *sandak* is the most significant honor at a *brit mila*. The individual who receives this honor is referred to as the *baal brit*. This honor is given to a male family member or another righteous man (יו"ד רס"ד:א).
 - II. Halakhic authorities disagree as to whether the same person may serve as the *sandak* for more than one child in a family. Some forbid this practice (רמ"א יו"ד רסה:יא), while others permit a family member or the rabbi to serve in this role for multiple children of the same family (נודע ביהודה מהדורה קמ"א יו"ד פ"ג, הגהות יד שאול יו"ד רסה).
 - B. *Amida laberakhot* (*Sandak Me'umad*)
 - C. *Berakhot*
 - D. *Keriat hashem* (*the naming*)
 - E. *Kiseh shel Eliyahu*
 - F. *Kvatter and kvatterin*
 - I. A husband and wife are chosen to serve as *kvatter* and *kvatterin* (איצור הברית ח"א גיב"ד).

II. In order to involve others in this important mitzva, multiple women can participate in bringing the baby to the *kvatterin*, and multiple men can take the baby from the *kvatter*, until one reaches the *kiseh shel Eliyahu* (אוצר הברית (ח"א גטוח הערה כד).

G. *Min hakiseh leyad hasandak*

1. There are varying customs regarding this honor. Some have the father lift the baby and place him on the lap of the *sandak*, while others honor someone present to do this.

MOHEL

1. If the father himself is not the *mohel*, the father should seek a person who is experienced and righteous to serve as the *mohel* for the *brit* (י"ד רסד: א).
2. If a *brit mila* was performed by a non-Jew, a Jew must later perform *hatafat dam* (י"ד רסד: א).
3. A woman should not perform a *brit mila*. If a woman did the *brit mila*, however, *hatafat dam* is not required. In a situation where significant effort was made to find a male *mohel* to perform the *brit* on the eighth day, but none was found, a woman is permitted to perform the *brit mila* on the eighth day (לבושי שרד רס"ד ס"ק א) (בגדל עוז י"ד רסד ס"ק ה).
4. A *mehalel Shabbat befarhesia* should not serve as a *mohel*. If such an individual performed the *brit mila* properly and on the eighth day, some authorities do not require *hatafat dam* (רעק"א י"ד רסד) (ס"ק א), while others require *hatafat dam* (אות שלום רסד ס"ק ה).
5. Prior to the *brit mila*, the father must designate the *mohel* as his agent (*shaliah*) to perform the *brit mila* (י"ד רסד: ט).
6. A *mohel* should not perform his first *brit mila* on Shabbat, unless no other *mohel* is available, and the *mohel* is confident that he can perform the *brit mila* properly (שבות יעקב ח"ג סימן כה).

BERAKHOT

1. The *berakhot* of the *brit mila* should be recited while standing (שיבולי הלקט מילה ד).
2. Immediately prior to the *brit mila*, the *mohel* recites the *berakha* of *Al HaMila* (חכמת אדם קמטיט).
3. Following the *berakha* of the *mohel*, and the circumcision, but before the *peria* is performed, the father of the baby recites the *berakha* of *LeHakhniso BiVrito Shel Avraham Avinu*. Sephardim recite this *berakha* before the *mila* is performed (שמוחות ח"ב ח"ד ילקוט יוסף שובע).
4. If the father is not present at the *brit mila*, the *sandak* recites this second *berakha* (י"ד קס"ה א).
5. There are four different customs regarding drinking the cup of wine used for the *berakhot*: a) the *mevarekh* drinks the wine only after the baby is named; b) the *mevarekh* drinks the wine following the *berakha* but before the naming; c) the baby is given some of the wine to drink following the *berakha* but before the naming; and d) the *mevarekh* has intent for another person, who drinks the wine after the naming (אוצר הברית ח"א גט"כ).
6. If one drinks the wine after the initial *berakha*, the cup should be refilled before the naming takes place (אג"מ ח"ג סימן ק).
7. When the *brit mila* takes place on Shabbat morning, a child is given the wine to drink, since *Kiddush* has not yet been recited (א"ח רע"ג). If the individual reciting the *berakha* will drink at least a *revi'it* of wine, eat cake, or begin the regular Shabbat meal immediately afterward at the same location, the *berakha* for the wine can serve as the *Kiddush* for Shabbat morning (אור לציון ח"ב כ"ב).

SEUDAT MITZVA

1. Following the *brit mila*, it is customary to host a *seudat mitzva* with at least ten men (י"ד רס"י). If, for some reason, the meal cannot occur on the day of the *brit*, it should be held on another day (תשובה י"ד רס" ס"ק ט).

2. The *seuda* should include bread (חכמת אדם קמט:כד), and according to some authorities it should also include meat and wine (מג"א א"ח רמט:ו). Other authorities permit fish in place of meat (Rabbi J. David Bleich, *Tradition* 35, no. 2 [2001]: 55–60; תשובות והנהגות ח"ב סימן תפה, ע"ע).
3. There is a custom not to directly invite guests to the *seuda* of a *brit* so as not to obligate their attendance (פתחי תשובה י"ד רסה:יח). If one is invited to a *brit* but has a conflicting responsibility, it is permitted not to attend the *brit* (שבט הלוי ח"ח סימן ר"ו).
4. Prior to the *zimun* of *Birkat HaMazon*, the *piyut* of *Nodeh Le-Shimkha* is recited (מג"א א"ח קסו ס"ק לג).
5. There are six special *HaRaḥaman tefillot* inserted toward the end of the *Birkat HaMazon*, after the paragraph of *BaMarom*. Typically, these passages are distributed among honored guests to recite out loud. However, the cup of wine used for *Birkat HaMazon* is not passed from one to the other for this honor.

BRIT ON SPECIAL DAYS

1. Rosh Hashana: In the synagogue, the *brit mila* takes place after Torah reading and before the blowing of the shofar (א"ח תקפד:ד). If the *brit* occurs at another location, it should take place after services are completed (משנה ברורה תקפד ס"ק יא).
2. Yom Kippur: The *brit mila* takes place after Torah reading and *Ashrei*. If the *brit mila* does not take place in the synagogue, it should take place after the Torah is returned to the Ark and before *Musaf* (א"ח פקבא:ב). The *berakha* for the wine is recited, the baby is given some of the wine, and no one else drinks from the cup (מג"א תרכא ס"ק ג).
3. Fast Days: The *brit mila* takes place as usual in the morning. At the *brit*, however, a young child is given the wine to drink (י"ד רסה:ד). If the fast is *nidḥe* (postponed), the parents of the baby, the *sandak*, and the *mohel* do not complete the fast, and may drink the wine (משנה ברורה תקנט ס"ק לה). On *Taanit Esther*, even if the fast

is not *nidhe*, the father of the baby, the *sandak*, and the *mohel* may drink the wine (i.e., they do not complete the fast).

4. Sukkot: Only the *seuda* of the *brit mila* should take place in the sukka. Due to health concerns, the *brit mila* procedure should take place indoors (אוצר הברית ח"א ג:ז:י:א).
5. Erev Pesach: The *brit mila* should preferably be performed before the time that *hametz* can no longer be eaten, so that a *seuda* with bread can be served (אוצר הברית ג:ז:כ:א).
6. *Sefirat HaOmer*: The father of the baby, the *sandak*, and the *mohel* may get haircuts in preparation for the *brit* (א"ח תצג:ב).
7. The Three Weeks: Until Rosh Hodesh Av, the father of the baby, the *sandak*, and the *mohel* may get haircuts in preparation for the *brit* (נדע ביהודה מהדורה קמא א"ח סימן כח).
8. The Nine Days: The father of the baby, the *sandak*, and the *mohel* may dress in freshly laundered Shabbat clothing, a young child is given the wine to drink, and the *seuda* of the *brit* can include meat (א"ח תקנא:א).
9. Tisha B'Av: The *brit* should take place after the conclusion of *Kinot*. Ashkenazim perform the *brit* before midday, while Sephardim perform it after midday (א"ח תקנט:ו). During the ceremony, the father of the baby, the *sandak*, and the *mohel* may wear Shabbat clothing. However, after the *brit* they should change back to Tisha B'Av clothing (א"ח תקנט:ח). A young child is given the wine to drink (א"ח תקנט:ו). The *seuda* is held after the conclusion of the fast (מג"א א"ח תקנט:יא).
10. During *Aveilut*:
 - A. *Aninut*: The *brit mila* takes place as normal, but the *onen* does not recite the *berakha* of *LeHakhniso*. The *sandak* recites that *berakha* in the *onen*'s place (כל בו על אבילות פרק ב ד"ב).
 - B. *Shiva*: The father of the baby may go to the synagogue for the *brit mila*, and he may participate in the *seudat mitzva* (זוכר הברית ג'לב).

THE BRIT MILA SERVICE

When the baby is brought in, all stand and say:

בְּרוּךְ הַבָּא Blessed is the one who has arrived!

The mohel says:

וַיְדַבֵּר The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Pinehas the son of Elazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned My wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was very jealous for My sake among them, so that I consumed not the children of Israel in My jealousy. Therefore say: Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace. Num. 25

The baby is placed on Elijah's seat, and the mohel says:

זֶה הַכִּסֵּא This is the throne of Elijah the prophet, who is remembered for good.

The mohel says:

לִישׁוּעָתְךָ I wait for Your salvation, O LORD. Gen. 49
 I hope for Your salvation, O LORD, Ps. 119
 and I perform Your commandments.
 Elijah, angel of the covenant,
 the one who belongs to you is in your presence.
 Stand to my right and be close to me.
 I hope for Your salvation, O LORD. Ps. 119
 I rejoice at Your word, like one who finds great spoil.
 Those who love Your law have great peace,
 and they have no stumbling-block.
 Happy is he whom You choose and bring near, Ps. 65
 that he may dwell in Your courts.

All present respond:

May we be sated with the goodness of Your House,
 Your holy Temple.