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ברוקלין, נ. י.

B.H. 22nd of Tammuz, 5722
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Sholom uBrocho:

I trust you received my previous letter to you and your wife. This letter is in reply to yours of 9th of Tammuz, in which you ask what is the Halocho view on teaching the Sephardi pronunciation to learn and daven.

Although I do not consider it my usual duty to answer questions in Piskei-dinim which any orthodox Rov can answer, I am making an exception in this case. From the Halocho viewpoint there are no objection to the Sephardi pronunciation, as is evidenced from the fact that our Sephardic brethern learn and daven that way.

However, in teaching children, it is necessary to avoid confusion, and therefore a uniform pronunciation should be used throughout, rather than some subjects in one pronunciation and others in another.

At the same time I may add that in the case of Ashkenazi children, coming from Ashkenazi parents and attending Ashkenazi synagogues, many teachers object on pedagogical grounds against introducing the Sephardi pronunciation to them, because of the unavoidable confusion. The only advantage of teaching them Sephardi pronunciation is that if these children should at one time go to the Holy Land, where the Sephardi pronunciation is spoken, they would be better prepared. But this remote advantage does not warrant the immediate confusion.

Incidentally, it is noteworthy that there is a whole school of linguists in the Holy Land who believe that the Ashkenazic pronunciation is the authentic one, while the Sephardic came later, under various influences. For obvious reasons this school is not given much publicity.

Another point: The claim that the Sephardic pronunciation would eventually unite all Jews is also without foundation, since even among the Sephardim themselves there are different pronunciations and accents.

I trust you will make good use of the enclosed excerpt from ~~xxxxxx~~ the 13th of Tammuz Talk.

With blessing,

By *Avraham Shalom*