

March 25, 2021

Rabbi Peltz – Tzav and Shabbat Hagadol

As Rachel and I scrubbed our kitchen last night in preparation for Passover, we lamented the challenge this year of the first *seder* falling on Saturday night, immediately after Shabbat. This presents a number of challenges for an already challenging holiday. Not least of which is what are we going to eat over the next two days! Since we can't do *bi'ur hametz* (burn our *hametz*) on Shabbat, we do *b'dikat hametz* (search for *hametz*) tonight (Thursday) and then burn it on Friday morning. Normally this signals the end of eating *hametz* before Passover starts. However, since Passover begins on Saturday night this year, we can still eat *hametz* until 10:36am on Shabbat morning. We stop eating it that early before the first *seder* to make sure that *hametz* is not only out of our homes, but out of our bodies as well. This can all make the beginning of Passover feel a little disjointed. But there is a bigger problem: Since we do not eat *matzah* until the *seder* itself, what should we use for *hallah* on Shabbat? We want to make *hamotzi* on Friday night and Shabbat, but with our homes already cleaned for Passover, using bread is problematic. And since it is not yet Passover, using *matzah* is problematic.

What is a Jew to do? [Rabbi David Golinkin, the President of the Schechter Institute in Jerusalem, provides us with guidance in his *teshuvah* \(rabbinic response\) to this question.](#) First he notes that Passover begins on a Saturday night only 12 times every 100 years. The last time it happened was in 2008, and the next time it will happen is in 2025 (save the date!). He goes on to cite five different solutions that have been presented over the centuries. Of the five, two of them are the best options for us today. The first option is to use bread on Shabbat, but to be sure to eat it outside or in a corner of the house that can easily be cleaned up. The second option, which Rabbi Golinkin recommends and that my family will be doing, is using egg *matzah* for *HaMotzi* this Shabbat. Though we cannot eat regular *matzah* until the *seder*, egg *matzah* is allowed to be eaten. That's because egg *matzah* falls into an in-between category. It is not *hametz*, but, since it is made with eggs and has a sweeter taste, it is also not considered to be *matzah mitzvah*, the *matzah* that we use at the *seder* and is called *lehem oni*, poor person's bread. Regular *matzah*, which is made with just flour and water, fits that description as it connects us back to when we were slaves in Egypt. Slaves wouldn't have been able to afford *matzah* sweetened with eggs or fruit juice (as once was the case), rather they would only have the basic ingredients. Therefore, using egg *matzah* for *hallah* over Shabbat keeps your home *pesadik* while also saving that delicious taste of real *matzah* for the *seder*. It's a win-win!

The laws of Passover make this a challenging holiday to prepare for. At the same time, we know that in life you often get out what you put in. The memories that we create with family and friends are our *seder* tables, in-person and virtual, are precious, and help bind us together as a people. What also binds us together is shared experiences, which can be seeing ourselves as going from slavery to freedom, and also doing our best to create an authentic Passover experience for our families. I am sure that the work that we all have put in to prepare for Passover for this year will help us achieve both. Wishing you and your family a happy and liberating Passover. *Hag Pesah Samaeh!*

[Click here to read Rabbi Golinkin's full *Responsa in a Moment* on this subject.](#)

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