



EREV PESACH ON SHABBAT: A USER'S GUIDE

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Dear Shaare Family,

This year features the rare occurrence of Erev Pesach falling on Shabbat. Many people are intimidated by the seemingly complex halachic aspects of this day, but I assure you it is not that complicated and nothing to be afraid of. Keep in mind the following instructions, based on guidelines from my revered teacher Rav Herschel Schachter, Rosh Yeshiva and Rosh Kollel of RIETS, Rabbi Dovid Heber of the Star-K and from Rabbi Eliezer Melamed, Rosh Yeshiva of the Hesder Yeshiva in Har Bracha, Israel and author of the popular *Pninei Halacha* series. It may even be helpful if you keep them within reach for reference on Erev Pesach/Shabbat.

Thursday – Taanit Bechorot

On a regular Erev Pesach, first-born males (*bechorim*) are obligated to fast, an obligation that is unique in that, unlike all other fasts, this one can be foregone if one participates in or makes a Siyum, a conclusion of the study of a section of the Torah, usually a tractate of Talmud or Mishnah. Because we do not usually fast on Fridays, the fast will take place this year on **Thursday, March 25, 2021**. A special Siyum on **Masechet Pesachim** by the members of the Shaare Tefilla Daf Yomi will take place after **6:40 AM Shacharit**. This Siyum will be broadcast on Zoom for those unable to participate in person.

Bedikat Chametz

One cannot search for chametz the night before Pesach, as it is Friday night. Therefore, one must perform *bedikat chametz* after nightfall (8:19 PM) on **Thursday, March 25**. As is done in other years, a blessing is recited before commencing the search:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וציוונו על ביעור חמץ

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by His commandments, and has commanded us concerning the removal of *chametz*.

The formula for nullification is recited afterward:

כל חמירא וחמיעא דאיכא ברשותי, דחזיתיה ודלא חזיתיה, דבערתיה ודלא בערתיה, לבטיל ולהוי כעפרא דארעא

It is important to understand the meaning of this declaration, and therefore it should be said in whatever language is most comfortable and readily understood. Here it is in English:

All leaven or anything leavened which is in my possession, which I have neither seen nor removed, and about which I am unaware, shall be considered nullified and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

Friday – Erev Shabbat

The unique nature of this year- in which Erev Pesach is a day after Chametz is burned and nullified- means that one is permitted to continue consuming Chametz all day Friday, and into Shabbat as well. Although *chametz* may be purchased and eaten all day Friday, the custom is to sell and burn the *chametz* before the normal time to finish burning *chametz* (i.e., the end of the 5th halachic hour of the day) corresponding to when that time occurs on the actual day of Erev Pesach. Burning it later could lead to confusion in subsequent years, though *Kol Chamira* is not recited at the time of burning. *Chametz* that is being used for Friday night and Shabbat morning meals should be limited in quantity, and placed in a disposable container away from all Pesach food.

The following preparations for the Seder should be made on Erev Shabbat: Roast the egg and shank bone, check and clean lettuce leaves for Maror, prepare the Charoset, and, if you do so manually, grate the horseradish. Food cooked for Shabbat and Yom Tov should be kosher for Pesach and cooked in Pesach pots.

After *chatzot* (midday) on a regular Erev Pesach, one may not perform various *melachot* (e.g. shaving, doing laundry). These *halachot* do not apply this year since Erev Shabbat is not actually Erev Pesach.

Friday Evening And Shabbat Day

Except for *Hamotzi*, all meals should be eaten on kosher for Pesach or disposable utensils. Kosher for Pesach utensils should not be brought to the table until after all crumbs have been cleared away. If one is concerned with eating any bread indoors, one may eat outdoors on the porch or in the backyard. Recite *Hamotzi*, eat the rolls, then sweep the crumbs off the table and off the porch. One may not sweep the crumbs into the wind or out of an *eruv*. Alternatively, eat over tissues or napkins and flush as above. One may finish the meal inside. *Birkat Hamazon* should ideally be recited where the bread was eaten

The procedure for *Hamotzi* for all Shabbat meals is as follows:

- Place the *lechem mishneh* on tissues or paper napkins on the table. No Kosher for Pesach utensils should be on the table with the rolls.

- Eat the rolls carefully over tissues/napkins, so that any remaining crumbs can be wrapped in the tissues and flushed or shaken out of the napkins and flushed.
- It is advisable to use small fresh rolls for *lechem mishneh* (fresh rolls make fewer crumbs).
- Clear the table of all *chametz*.
- Discard all disposable items (e.g., plastic tablecloth, plates) used with *chametz* into a trash can.
- Serve the rest of the Kosher for Pesach meal on kosher for Pesach dishes.

If you are using disposable dishes, there is no need to clear the table after Hamotzi- everything may be disposed of at once at the conclusion of the meal. Another alternative, which will eliminate the need to use Chametz at all, is to use Egg Matzah. This does not violate the prohibition against eating Matzah on Erev Pesach, or of eating Chametz- because it is not Chametz, but is also not permitted for use as Matzah for healthy adults.

Shabbat Morning Meal

There will be one Shacharit on Shabbat morning, and, for those who typically daven in the main minyan, it will take place earlier than usual, at **8 AM**. The reason for the earlier start time is that one must recite *Hamotzi* on two rolls and finish all bread before the end of the 4th *halachic* hour of the day, at **11:28 AM CDT**.

After disposing of all *chametz*, one must recite the same phrase of nullification that is usually said when burning the *chametz*. This must be done before the end of the time to burn Chametz (i.e. the end of the 5th *halachic* hour), at **12:30 PM CDT**. It is recited even if it was already recited by mistake on Friday at the time of *biur chametz*.

One may continue his *Kosher l'Pesach* meal and recite *Birkat Hamazon* after these times.

Splitting The Morning Meal

If time permits and one wishes to partake of Chametz rolls on Shabbat, it is preferable to “split the morning meal” by doing the following:

- Recite *Hamotzi* and eat more than an egg’s volume from the rolls.
- Recite *Birkat Hamazon* and take a walk outside.

- Then, wash for *seudah shlishit* and recite *Hamotzi*.
- Be careful to finish the bread and dispose of the crumbs by the times indicated above.

If one “splits” the morning meal in this way, one should still eat something after **2:03 PM** as described below, to fulfill the mitzvah of *seudah shlishit* in the prescribed time according to most opinions.

Shabbat Afternoon Meal

On a regular Shabbat, one is supposed to partake of three meals, with the third one taking place around the time of Minchah. During *seudah shlishit* on an ordinary Shabbat, one must have two full rolls and ideally consume more than an egg’s volume after six and a half halachic hours of the day. On this Shabbat, one may not eat bread or matzah at this time. There are several solutions to this dilemma.

First, one can consume Egg Matzot for all their meals on Erev Pesach. This would eliminate the need to consume Chametz by the prescribed time, and would also allow the sale of Chametz to take effect even before Shabbat. It would also eliminate a possible source of anxiety in the form of keeping track of Chametz while also having kosher for Pesach food out. Note that if one is partaking of Egg Matzah, it must be consumed by the 10th halachic hour of the day, at **5:51 P.M.**

Another solution for the third meal is to avoid any kind of matzah altogether, and instead consume foods such as meat, fish, fruits or cakes made only from potato starch or other ingredients that are not *matzah meal* (note that one must still have bread- or Egg Matzah- for the other two meals). For those who follow the custom of eating *gebrokts*- cooked or wet matzah products- on Pesach, cooked products containing matzah meal such as matzah balls may be eaten if they are consumed *before* the 10th hour of the day . Baked matzah meal products, including cakes, may not be eaten anytime during the day, though they may be eaten on Friday night. According to my revered teacher Rav Herschel Schachter, one would be permitted to eat *kitniyot* (rice, legumes) during this time as well, even though it is prohibited for Ashkenazim on Pesach itself, though it would have to be prepared in a dedicated utensil. Our own family custom is to have a hearty beef stew every year on Erev Pesach in the afternoon, consisting of meat and potatoes. These may be consumed any time between *Mincha Gedola* (2:03 P.M.) and sunset, though care should be taken not to eat the food too late in a way that would diminish one’s appetite for the Seder.

Motzei Shabbat And The Seder

All preparation for Yom Tov and the seder may not begin until Shabbat is over (**8:21 P.M.**). As previously indicated, some preparations should be done before Shabbat. One may also set the

Seder table before Shabbat and eat in the kitchen or outdoors on Shabbat if they so choose, so as to allow the Seder to begin as early as possible after Shabbat.

Kiddush and *Havdalah* are recited together at the Seder as printed in the *Haggadah*. The order of Kiddush follows the acronym *YaKNeHaZ*:

1. **Yayin**- The Beracha of *Borei Peri HaGafen*
2. **Kiddush**- The special text of Kiddush for Yom Tov
3. **Ner**- The Beracha of *Borei Me'orei Ha'eish*
4. **Havdalah**-The special text for Havdalah that differentiates between Shabbat and Yom Tov
5. **Zeman**- The Beracha of *Shehechyanu*

One should recite *Borei Me'orei Ha'aish* using the Yom Tov candles, putting them together side by side while upright, not tilted to touch each other. Alternatively, one may recite the *bracha* using a non-frosted incandescent light bulb which was turned on before Shabbat (or was turned on by a timer that was set before Shabbat).

At the Seder there is one change to the text of the *Haggadah*: In the *bracha* of *Asher G'alanu* prior to the second cup of wine, we reverse the order and say *min hapesachim u'min hazevachim* (instead of the opposite order). This is due to the change in the order of *korbanot* when Pesach occurs on Motzei Shabbat.

Final Thoughts

Erev Pesach that falls on Shabbat may seem complicated, but it is actually a special blessing and a rare opportunity; rather than featuring the frenetic pace of the day usually associated with Erev Pesach, it is a day filled with opportunities for rest and relaxation, allowing us to enter the Seder reinvigorated and refreshed.

Jessica, Shaya, Avremi, Shevy and Tzivie join me in wishing you a Chag Sameach VeKasher!

-Rabbi Ariel Rackovsky