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צורבא מרבנן

TZURBA M'RABANAN

WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION, COMMENTARY AND ESSAYS

A concise learning method from the Talmudic source
through modern-day halachic application

THE KUPFERBERG AND UCKO FAMILIES VOLUME

Volume 1 Excerpt: Hilchot Leil Haseder I

SELWYN & ROS SMITH AND FAMILY



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WE ALSO DEDICATE THIS VOLUME
TO OUR DEAR CHILDREN

Tal, Dov & Noam

WHOM HASHEM SHOULD BLESS
TO ALWAYS DRINK THIRSTILY THE WORDS
OF CHACHAMIM AND MAY THEY ALWAYS
FOLLOW IN THE WAYS OF HASHEM
AS THE PASUK SAYS

כי ידעתיו למען אשר יצוה את בניו ואת ביתו אחריו
ושמרו דרך ה' לעשות צדקה ומשפט
למען הביא ה' על אברהם את אשר דבר עליו



IN APPRECIATION OF
OUR PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS
AND WITH THANKS TO HASHEM





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IN LOVING MEMORY
OF

Arnold Rapp ז"ל
אברהם בן יעקב

BY
LAURENCE, EMMA,
DANIEL, ALEXA & DAVID RAPP



9

Hilchot Leil Haseder I

הלכות ליל הסדר א'

Kadesh

Urchatz

Karpas

Yachatz

Maggid

Rachtzah

Motzee-Matza

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For the complete list of referenced websites visit www.tzurbaolami.com.

	Tanach
	Talmud (Chazal)
	<i>Rishonim</i>
	<i>Acharonim</i>
	<i>Contemporary Poskim</i>

INTRODUCTION

The Seder night is a unique annual experience whereby we not only remember the Exodus from Egypt, but also relive it. This experience is designed to strengthen our belief that Hashem protects us throughout history from those who oppress us. It also serves as an opportunity to thank Him for transforming us into His chosen people.

Due to the importance of this evening, it is quite understandable that there are numerous *halachot* associated with the different steps of the Seder, many of which we will review in these two *shiurim*.

The Seder night consists of four general sections:

1. *Kiddush* and other introductory steps
2. *Maggid* [the telling of the story of the Exodus]
3. The mitzvot of eating [*Matza, Maror, Korech, Shulchan Orech*]
4. *Hallel*

The four cups of wine divide the evening into these four sections: We make *Kiddush* on the first cup, we tell the story of the Exodus over the second cup, we drink the third cup after we have eaten, and we recite *Hallel* over the fourth cup. This division is outlined by the Rambam in the *Mishneh Torah*:



Rambam, Hilchot Chametz Umatza

7:10

Regarding each of the four cups, one recites a separate *beracha*. One recites *Kiddush* over the first cup, one reads the *Haggada* over the second cup, one recites *birkat hamazon* over the third cup, and one completes the *Hallel* over the fourth cup and recites *Birkat Hashir*.¹ Between these cups, if one wishes to drink [another cup of wine] one may drink; but between the third and fourth [cup] one may not drink.

1. רמב"ם | הל' חמץ ומצה

ז':

כל כוס וכוס מארבעה כוסות האלו מברך עליו ברכה בפני עצמה, וכוס ראשון אומר עליו קדוש היום, כוס שני קורא עליו את ההגדה, כוס שלישי מברך עליו ברכת המזון, כוס רביעי גומר עליו את ההלל ומברך עליו ברכת השיר, ובין הכוסות האלו אם רצה לשתות שותה בין שלישי לרביעי אינו שותה.

1. *Birkat Hashir* refers either to the paragraph known as "*nishmat*" or the one called "*yehalelucha*" (based on the dispute in the Gemara *Pesachim* 118a), both of which are recited today following *Hallel* at the Seder. [Addition of the English editors]

KADESH

The Mitzva of Drinking Four Cups of Wine

The **Gemara** teaches that there is a rabbinic mitzva to drink four cups of wine on the Seder night.

נ Masechet Pesachim 108b

It was taught in a *beraita*: Everyone is obligated regarding the four cups; men, women and children.

2. מסכת פסחים קח:

תנו רבנן: הכל חייבין בארבעה כוסות הללו, אחד אנשים ואחד נשים, ואחד תינוקות.

The Gemara (*Pesachim* 117b) explains the reason as follows: "The four cups of wine were instituted as a manner of freedom." The **Rambam** explains this to mean that by drinking the four cups, we demonstrate that we are free people.

ה Rambam, Hilchot Chametz Umatza 7:6-7

6. In every generation, a person is obligated to depict himself as if he himself came out of the slavery in Egypt right now, as it is stated: "And He took us out from there" (*Devarim* 6:23). Regarding this matter, the Holy One, blessed be He commanded in the Torah: "And you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt" (*Devarim* 5:14), i.e., as if you yourself were a slave and came out to freedom and were redeemed.

7. Therefore, when one eats on this night, he must eat and drink while reclining in a manner of freedom, and everyone, whether men or women, are obligated to drink four cups of wine on this night. One may not decrease from that [amount], and they may not give even a poor person who is supported from charity less than four cups.

3. רמב"ם | ה' חמץ ומצה ז-ו:ז

ו. בכל דור ודור חייב אדם להראות את עצמו כאילו הוא בעצמו יצא עתה משעבוד מצרים שנאמר "ואותנו הוציא משם" וגו' (דברים ו), ועל דבר זה צוה הקדוש ברוך הוא בתורה "וזכרת כי עבד היית" (דברים ה) – כלומר כאילו אתה בעצמך היית עבד ויצאת לחירות ונפדית. ז. לפיכך, כשסועד אדם בלילה הזה צריך לאכול ולשתות והוא מיסב דרך חירות, וכל אחד ואחד בין אנשים בין נשים חייב לשתות בלילה הזה ארבעה כוסות של יין, אין פוחתין מהם, ואפילו עני המתפרנס מן הצדקה לא יפחתו לו מארבעה כוסות.

Since the Rambam groups the mitzva of drinking four cups together with other activities demonstrating freedom, such as reclining, it is evident that drinking a large amount of wine is another method of demonstrating our freedom, as a slave would not be permitted to drink as much as he wants. Nevertheless, the Sages instituted the practice of drinking specifically four cups of wine to correspond to the four expressions of redemption, as explained by **Rashi**.

**Rashi, Pesachim 99b**

The four cups – These are parallel to the four expressions of redemption that are stated regarding the exile of Egypt: “I will bring you out, and I will save you, and I will redeem you, and I will take you,” as found in *Parshat Va’era* (*Shemot* 6:6–7).

4. רש"י | פסחים צט:

ארבע כוסות – כנגד ארבעה לשוני גאולה האמורים בגלות מצרים והוצאתי אתכם והצלתי אתכם וגאלתי אתכם ולקחתי אתכם בפרשת וארא.²

FURTHER IYUN

For a discussion on the custom of the fifth cup in halacha and *hashkafa*, see page 332.

How Much Wine Must One Drink?

With regard to a standard *kos shel beracha* (cup of wine upon which a mitzva is performed) such as *Kiddush*, one must drink a minimum amount of a *melo lugmav*, or cheek-full, defined as the amount of wine with which one can fill one side of the cheek (usually around 50–55 cc, based on the *Bi’ur Halacha, siman* 271). This is based on the Gemara’s statement (*Pesachim* 107a): “One who recites *Kiddush* and drinks a cheek-full has fulfilled his obligation, but less than that he hasn’t fulfilled his obligation.” However, regarding the four cups of wine on the Seder night, the **Gemara** states that one must drink the majority of the cup.

**Masechet Pesachim 108b**

Rav Nachman Bar Yitzchak stated: And this is only where he drank the majority of the cup.

5. מסכת פסחים קח:

אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: והוא דאשתי רובא דכסא.

The *Rishonim* dispute the meaning of this phrase. According to **Tosafot**, one need only drink a cheek-full of the four cups, just like concerning a standard *Kiddush*. The Gemara used the phrase “the majority of the cup” to refer to the majority of a *revi’it* (one-fourth of a *log*), which is actually a cheek-full (the Gemara was referring to a standard cup that holds a *revi’it*). However, even if the volume of the cup is much greater, this opinion holds that one need only drink a cheek-full.

**Tosafot, Pesachim 108b**

The majority of the cup – Meaning a cheek-full, as was explained earlier. However, *lechatchila* (ideally) one should drink an entire *revi’it*.

6. תוספות | פסחים קח:

רובא דכסא – היינו כמלא לוגמיו כדפרישית לעיל ומיהו לכתחילה צריך לשתות רביעית.

However, the **Ramban** and **Ra’ah** argue, explaining that the four cups are unique and one must drink the majority of the cup, even if it is a large cup, and ideally drink the entire cup if possible.

2. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach asks: It is understandable why we drink four cups, but why must such a cup consist specifically of wine? He answers that wine is unique in that the more aged it is, the better it becomes. Similarly, during each stage of the redemption, we will achieve even greater heights than the previous one, concluding with the final stage of “I will take you to me for as a nation.”



Beit Yosef, Orach Chaim Siman 472

This is the language of the *Orchot Chaim*: “The Ramban writes that one must drink the majority of any cup, even [if the volume of the cup] contains multiple measures of a *revi'it*.”



Bayit Chadash (Bach), Orach Chaim Siman 472

This is indicated by the language “majority of the cup,” meaning that whatever is in the cup is considered the definition of “the cup,” and one must always drink the majority of the cup. For the Ramban explains that drinking “a cheek-full” was only stated regarding *Kiddush* and *birkat hamazon*, as there we only require tasting [*te'ima*] of the cup, and drinking a cheek-full is considered tasting even concerning a large cup. Therefore, even *lechatchila* there is no need to drink an entire *revi'it*; rather a cheek-full is sufficient, which is equivalent to the majority of a *revi'it*. However, here where there is an obligation to drink four cups, it is not considered as if one drank a cup unless one drank the majority of that cup. Therefore, when [the Gemara] refers to the four cups it does not state the measurement of a cheek-full, but rather it states: “This is where he drank the majority of the cup,” be it a small cup of a *revi'it* or a big cup. This is true *bedieved* (after the fact), but *lechatchila* one should drink the entire cup.

The **Bach** explains further (in the continuation of the piece quoted above) that according to the Ramban, the reason for the distinction between *Kiddush* and the four cups is that regarding *Kiddush*, the primary mitzva is the recitation of the *beracha*. Since the one reciting the *beracha* must taste some of the cup, it is sufficient to taste a cheek-full. But regarding the four cups of wine, the mitzva is to drink in a manner of freedom. Therefore, simply tasting the wine is insufficient; rather one must drink the majority of the cup, and according to the **Rosh**, *lechatchila* one must drink the entire cup.

The **Shulchan Aruch** codifies the opinion of Tosafot that drinking the majority of a *revi'it* is sufficient as the normative halacha. He then mentions the opinion of the Ramban that one must drink the majority of the cup, even if it is a large cup.



Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 472:9

The cup must contain a *revi'it* [of wine] after it is diluted (if one wants to dilute it), and one must drink the entire cup or the majority of it. If the cup contains many amounts of a *revi'it*, many people can drink from the cup according to the number of measures of *revi'it* in it. And some say that one has to drink the majority of the cup even if it contains many measures of a *revi'it* in it.

7. בית יוסף | או"ח סימן תעב

זו לשון ארחות חיים (סדר ליל הפסח סי' ו) והרמב"ן כתב שצריך לשתות רוב מכל כוס אפילו מחזיק כמה רביעיות.

8. בית חדש (ב"ח) | או"ח סימן תעב

והכי משמע לישנא דרובא דכסא דקאמר דכל מה שיש בכוס הוא הכוס וצריך שישתה רוב הכוס לעולם, דהרמב"ן ז"ל מפרש דטעימת מלא לוגמיו לא קתני לה אלא גבי קידוש וברכת המזון דהתם לא בעינן רק טעימת הכוס ובטעימת מלא לוגמיו הוי טעימה אפילו בכוס גדול והלכך אפילו לכתחלה לא בעי למיטעם רביעית שלם אלא סגי במלא לוגמיו דהיינו רוב רביעית אבל כאן דבעינן שישתה ארבע כוסות ולא הוה שתיית כוס אא"כ שותה רוב הכוס ולכך לא קאמר גבי ארבע כוסות והוא דשתי מלא לוגמיו אלא קאמר והוא דשתי רובא דכסא בין כוס קטן של רביעית בין כוס גדול הרבה והיינו דוקא דיעבד אבל לכתחלה צריך לשתות כולו.

9. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תעב:ט

שיעור הכוס, רביעית לאחר שימוגנו (אם רוצה למזגו), וישתה כולו או רובו. ואם יש בו הרבה רביעיות, שותין ממנו כל כך בני אדם כמנין רביעיות שבו. ויש אומרים שצריך לשתות רוב הכוס, אפילו מחזיק כמה רביעיות.

The **Mishna Berura** rules that it is permissible to drink only the majority of a *revi'it* (i.e., a cheek-full). However, *lechatchila* (ideally) one should drink the entire cup or at least the majority of the cup. Therefore, he suggests that one should not use cups that are much larger than a *revi'it*. That way, one can still drink the entire cup or the majority and fulfill one's obligation according to all opinions.

Ⓝ Mishna Berura 472:33

The majority of the cup – Although in general it is sufficient to have a majority of a *revi'it*, even from a large cup; here regarding the four cups it is more stringent, as the majority of the cup is required, and if he has not [drunk that amount] he hasn't fulfilled his obligation. However, practically the halacha is in accordance with the first opinion. Nevertheless, if one does not plan on drinking a lot, one shouldn't take a large cup, but a smaller cup that holds a *revi'it* in order to take this opinion into consideration.

10. משנה ברורה | תעב:לג

רוב הכוס אפי' וכו' – אף שבעלמא די ברוב רביעית אפילו מכוס גדול הכא לענין כוסות חמיר טפי דבעינן דוקא רוב כוס ואם לאו לא יצא. ולדינא קי"ל כדעה הראשונה. ומ"מ אם אין בדעתו לשתות הרבה לא יקח כוס גדול רק כוס שמחזיק רביעית כדי לחוש לדעה זו.

Regarding the manner of drinking, the **Rema** writes that "one needs to drink without a large break in between."

The **Mishna Berura** writes that *lechatchila* one should drink the entire amount at once, but if that is difficult, one should be stringent to at least drink it within the amount of time necessary to drink a *revi'it* (which is two gulps one after the other – **Shaar Hatziyun** 11). *Bedieved* (after the fact), if he drank the amount within the time of *achilat pras* (the amount of time necessary to eat half a loaf of bread – four minutes according to the stringent opinions), he has fulfilled his obligation.

Ⓝ Mishna Berura 472:34

Without a large break – Meaning that one must not delay the amount of time of *achilat pras* while drinking the majority of the cup. If one did delay for more than this amount of time, the initial drinking is not combined with the latter drinking, and one hasn't fulfilled one's obligation even *post facto*, and one needs to repeat drinking even regarding the latter cups [the third and fourth]. And there is no problem of adding additional cups, since according to all, one hasn't fulfilled one's obligation.

Lechatchila one should be careful when drinking the majority of the cup **not to delay more than the time it takes to drink the majority of a *revi'it***. This is in order to take into consideration the first opinion brought in *siman* 612. Nevertheless, *post facto* if one did delay during the last two cups, one does not repeat drinking... But for the first two cups one must return and drink. ***Lechatchila* (ideally) one should drink the majority of a *revi'it* at one time.**

11. משנה ברורה | תעב:לד

שלא בהפסק גדול – דהיינו שלא ישהה בשתיית רוב הכוס יותר מכדי אכילת פרס ואם שהה יותר משיעור זה אין מצטרף תחלת השתיה לסופה ואפילו בדיעבד לא יצא וצריך לחזור ולשתות אפילו בכוסות אחרונות [דאין כאן משום מוסיף על הכוסות כיון דלכו"ע לא יצא].

ולכתחלה יש לזהר שלא לשהות בשתיית רוב הכוס יותר מכדי שתיית רביעית לחוש לדעה הראשונה המבואר בסימן תרי"ב ע"ש ומ"מ בדיעבד אם שהה בשתי כוסות אחרונות לא יחזור וישתה... ובשתי כוסות ראשונות יחזור וישתה. ולכתחלה נכון לשתות רוב הרביעית בבת אחת.

The Size of the Cup

Every *kos shel beracha* must big enough to contain at least a *revi'it* of wine, but the amount of a *revi'it* is subject to dispute among the *poskim*. **Rav Chaim Na'eh** holds that the measurement is 86 cc (the *gematria* of the word *kos* in Hebrew, כוס, is 86), which is about 3 ounces, while the **Noda B'Yehuda** and the **Chazon Ish** hold that it is 150 cc (the *gematria* of the words *kos hagun* in Hebrew), approximately 5 ounces.

The *Mishna Berura* (in the quote below from the **Bi'ur Halacha**) rules that the practical halacha is that with regard to biblical mitzvot, one should adopt the stringent opinion, but for rabbinic mitzvot one may be lenient and rely on the smaller measurement. Since the four cups are rabbinic in nature, one may use the measurement of 86 cc as the size of a *revi'it*.³

Bi'ur Halacha, Siman 271

In practice it seems that regarding a Torah obligation such as consuming a *kezayit* of matza on the night of Pesach, one certainly needs to be stringent in accordance with them [the stringent opinions]. Similarly, regarding the nighttime *Kiddush*, whose basis is from the Torah, *lechatchila* one should also take the opinion of the *Tzelach* [i.e., R. Landau, who is also the author of the *Noda B'Yehuda*] into consideration. Similarly, the *Chatam Sofer* is stringent like him concerning the measurement of a *revi'it*.⁴

[However, regarding the daytime *Kiddush* and other instances of a *kos shel beracha*, one may rely on the common custom in accordance with what is explained in the *Magen Avraham* and *Pri Megadim* and other *Acharonim*]. Nevertheless, it seems that *lechatchila*, the cup should be capable of containing the volume of two eggs with their shell.

12. ביאור הלכה | סימן רע"א

ולמעשה נראה דלענין דאורייתא כגון כזית מצה בליל פסח בודאי יש להחמיר כדבריהם וכן לענין קידוש של לילה דעיקרו הוא דאורייתא ג"כ נכון לחוש לכתחלה לדברי הצ"ח הנ"ל וכן בחתם סופר מחמיר ג"כ לענין רביעית כדבריו. [ומיהו לענין קידוש שחרית ולשאר כוס של ברכה יש לסמוך על מנהג העולם שנוהגין כמבואר במ"א ופמ"ג ושא"א] ועכ"פ יראה לכתחלה שיחזיק הכוס כשני ביצים עם הקליפה וכנ"ל.

- Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon (*Haggada Kinor David*, p. 36) notes that some have a custom to use a cup that contains 150 cc for the first cup of *Kiddush*, which is based on a Torah obligation (even though the obligation to say it over wine is only rabbinic in nature, and even though on *Yom Tov* most *poskim* hold the obligation is only rabbinic – see *Mishna Berura* 271:2). This custom is especially pertinent when Pesach falls out on Friday night, and the *Kiddush* is in fact a Torah obligation, as pointed out as well by Rav Shimon Eider (*The Laws of Pesach* p. 229). Rav Eider there also mentions that according to Rav Moshe Feinstein (in *Sefer Kol Dodi*, written by his son Rav Dovid Feinstein), the larger amount to be used specifically on Friday night equals 4.42 fluid ounces. However, Rav Rimon notes that even this stringency need be practiced only by the one reciting *Kiddush*. [Addition of the English editors]
- These sources here are referring to the dispute of whether we must double the halachic measurements of eggs nowadays due to the possibility that our eggs are half the size of what they once were (see footnote 9 below and the sources quoted there). The connection between the size of eggs and the size of a *revi'it* discussed here is that a *revi'it* (one fourth of a *log*) was equal to the size of 1.5 eggs (as the *log* measurement was equal to six eggs). [Addition of the English editors]

RECLINING

One of the mitzvot of the Seder night is to recline on one's left side while eating and drinking, as stated by the Mishna (*Pesachim* 99b): "Even a poor person in Israel may not eat unless he reclines." The Gemara (*Pesachim* 108a) clarifies that the mitzva applies specifically while drinking the four cups and eating the matza and *Afikoman*. The reason for reclining is given by the **Rambam** as follows:



Rambam, Commentary on the Mishna, *Pesachim* 10:1

They obligated one to eat while reclining in the manner of kings and distinguished individuals so that it should be in a manner of freedom.



Rambam, *Hilchot Chametz Umatza* 7:6–7

- In every generation, a person is obligated to depict himself as if he himself came out of slavery in Egypt right now...
- Therefore, when one eats on this night, he must eat and drink while reclining in a manner of freedom.

13. פירוש המשנה לרמב"ם | פסחים יא:

וחייבוהו לאכול כשהוא מיסב כדרך שאוכלין המלכים והגדולים. כדי שיהיה דרך חרות.

14. רמב"ם | הל' חמץ ומצה ז:ז-ז

- בכל דור ודור חייב אדם להראות את עצמו כאילו הוא בעצמו יצא עתה משעבוד מצרים...
- לפיכך כשסועד אדם בלילה הזה צריך לאכול ולשתות והוא מיסב דרך חירות.

The basis for this rabbinic enactment of *haseiba* was the fact that reclining luxuriously in this manner was a common practice in Talmudic times. However, it seems that even in the times of the *Rishonim*, it was already not as widely practiced. The question that arises, therefore, is whether the mitzva of *haseiba* should still apply even if the basis for it is no longer relevant. The **Ra'avyah** suggests that since reclining is no longer considered a manner of freedom even for kings, the obligation of *haseiba* no longer applies.



Ra'avyah, Volume 2, *Pesachim* 525

In our times, where it is not common in our countries for free people to recline, one should sit normally.

15. ראבי"ה | חלק ב, פסחים תקנה

ובזמן הזה שאין רגילות בארצנו להסב שאין רגילות בני חורין להסב ישב כדרכו.

The **Shulchan Aruch** rules that one must recline even today and describes the proper way to do so. If one does not do so, he rules that one has not fulfilled one's obligation, and must fulfill the mitzva in question again. For Sephardim, this ruling applies to all four cups of wine, while for Ashkenazim this is true for the first two cups only.

נ Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 472:3, 7

3. **Shulchan Aruch:** When one reclines, one should not lean backwards nor forwards, not to one's right; rather to one's left.

Rema: And there is no distinction between a left-handed person and another [i.e., right-handed person].

7. **Shulchan Aruch:** Regarding one who is obligated to recline, if he ate or drank without reclining he has not fulfilled his obligation and needs to repeat eating and drinking while reclining.

Rema: Some say that in today's times, where it is not the norm to recline, we may rely on the Ra'avyah in that after the fact, one has fulfilled one's obligation without reclining. **And it seems to me that if one didn't drink the third or fourth cup while reclining, he shouldn't drink again while reclining, as there is a concern that it seems that one is adding to the cups.** But for the first two cups, one drinks them again without a *beracha*, and similarly regarding eating matza. *Lechatchila*, one should recline for the entire meal.

16. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תעב:ג, ז

ג. כשהוא מיסב לא יטה על גבו ולא על פניו ולא על ימינו, אלא על שמאלו.
(ואין חילוק בין אטר לאחר)

ז. כל מי שצריך הסיבה, אם אכל או שתה בלא הסיבה לא יצא, וצריך לחזור לאכול ולשתות בהסיבה.

הגה: ויש אומרים דבזמן הזה, דאין דרך להסב, כדאי הוא ראבי"ה לסמוך עליו שבדיעבד יצא בלא הסיבה. ונראה לי אם לא שתה כוס שלישי או רביעי בהסיבה, אין לחזור ולשתות בהסיבה דיש בו חשש שנראה כמוסיף על הכוסות; אבל בשני כוסות ראשונות, יחזור וישתה בלא ברכה, וכן באכילת מצה. ולכתחלה יסב כל הסעודה.

Regarding women's obligation to recline, the **Shulchan Aruch** and **Rema** rules as follows:

נ Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 472:4

A woman does not need to recline unless she is prominent.

Rema: All of our women are considered prominent, but they do not have the custom to recline, as they rely on the words of the Ra'avyah who writes that in contemporary times one does not recline.

17. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תעב:ד

אשה אינה צריכה הסיבה אלא א"כ היא חשובה.

הגה: וכל הנשים שלנו מיקרי חשובות, אך לא נהגו להסב כי סמכו על דברי ראבי"ה דכתב דבזמן הזה אין להסב.

According to the *Shulchan Aruch* (based on the Gemara), women are exempt from reclining unless they are considered prominent, as apparently in earlier times most women never reclined, and it was never considered an expression of freedom for them to do so. By contrast, the Rema writes that even though all women have the status of prominent ones in former times, the custom is that no women recline based on the opinion of the Ra'avyah.⁵ However, they are permitted to recline if they so desire, and it is considered praiseworthy for them to do so. Indeed, in practice many Ashkenazi women do customarily recline. With regard to the practice of Sephardic women, the **Ben Ish Chai** writes that the custom is to recline (which is also the opinion of **Rav Ovadia Yosef** in *Chazon Ovadia* 14).

5. The *Aruch HaShulchan* (472:6) questions why the Rema states that women specifically rely on the opinion of the Ra'avyah. If his opinion is accepted, then why don't men also rely on it? Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (*Halichot Shlomo*, Pesach chapter 9) gives the following answer: According to the letter of the law, there is good reason to say that the halacha of reclining should no longer apply, as no one is accustomed to reclining nowadays and it is not considered an expression of freedom anymore. Nevertheless, we still recline because our ancestors did so, in commemoration of their custom. But this is the case with regard to men only, who used to recline, and therefore continue the custom of previous generations. Most women though never had the practice of reclining (as noted in the text). Since they never did so initially, they are exempt now as well from continuing the custom.

א

**Ben Ish Chai, Shana Rishona,
Parshat Tzav, Se'if 28**

...Also all the four *kezayit* portions of matza need to be eaten while reclining, both for men and women, adults and children...

**18. בן איש חי | שנה ראשונה,
פרשת צו סעיף כח**

...וגם אכילת כל ארבע כזייתות של מצה יהיו בהסיבה, בין אנשים ובין הנשים בין הגדולים בין הקטנים...

RABBI YOSEF CHAIM – THE BEN ISH CHAI (1835–1909)

Rav Yosef Chaim of Baghdad, often known by the name of his work the *Ben Ish Chai*, was a leading Sephardic Torah scholar, Kabbalist, and authority on Jewish law. Born to a family of distinguished rabbis, Yosef Chaim became well-versed in Torah and Kabbala at a young age. For years, he would seclude himself in a special room used for study and strive to attain spiritual perfection. At twenty-five, he was appointed as the leading rabbi of Baghdad upon his father's death.

Rav Yosef Chaim gave regular daily and weekly lectures to the Jews of Baghdad that fused together the weekly parsha, Kabbala, and halacha, and was venerated by his congregants, who followed his every ruling scrupulously. These lectures were ultimately transformed into his famous work *Ben Ish Chai*, which is still studied by thousands today. Rav Yosef Chaim was known as a pious and saintly individual, and his halachic rulings also often combine mystical and Kabbalistic elements. He is still considered one of the most influential *poskim* with regard to practical halacha for many Sephardic Jews today, though his works are cited as well in Ashkenazi halachic literature. In addition to the *Ben Ish Chai*, he also authored numerous other works on all areas of Torah, including *Ben Yehoyada* on the Aggadic sections of the Talmud, poetry and works on *Tefilla*, responsa published under the names *Torah Lishma* and *Rav Pealim*, and *Mekabtzil*, an elaboration on some of the topics discussed in the *Ben Ish Chai*.

URCHATZ

Following *Kiddush*, we wash our hands before eating the *karpas*, based on the halacha of *davar shetibulo bemashkeh*, washing hands for any vegetable dipped in a liquid, which is cited elsewhere in the *Shulchan Aruch* as applying all year round. However, since *Rishonim* dispute whether there is in fact an obligation to do so today (and many today rely on the lenient opinions not to do so at all), we wash our hands without a *beracha*.

⌘ Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 473:6

One washes one's hands for the sake of the first dipped vegetable, but one does not recite a *beracha* on the washing...

19. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תעג:ו

נוטל ידיו לצורך טיבול ראשון ולא יברך על הנטילה...

⌘ Mishna Berura 158:20

Since there are a few *Rishonim* who hold that the Sages did not require washing hands for vegetables that have been dipped in liquid except in their days, where they were scrupulous about eating in a state of purity, as opposed to nowadays where we are all impure with impurity of a corpse [*tamei meit*]. Therefore one should not recite a *beracha*, as uncertainties with regard to *berachot* are resolved leniently [i.e., not reciting a *beracha*].

20. משנה ברורה | קנח:כ

כי יש מקצת הראשונים דסברי שלא הצריכו חכמים נט"י לדבר שטיבולו במשקה אלא בימיהם שהיו אוכלים בטהרה משא"כ עכשיו שכולנו טמאי מתים ולכך לא יברך ענט"י שספק ברכות להקל.

KARPAS

Once everyone has washed their hands, the Seder continues with the eating of the *Karpas* vegetable, as described by the **Mishna**.

מ Masechet Pesachim 114a

The attendants **brought** vegetables **before** the leader of the Seder prior to the meal, if there were no other vegetables on the table. **He dips the *chazeret* into water or vinegar... so that there be a conspicuous distinction for the children.**

21. מסכת פסחים קיד.

הביאו לפניו מטבל בחזרת... כי היכי דליהוי היכירא לתינוקות.

How Much *Karpas* is Eaten?

According to the **Rambam**, one must eat a *kezayit* of *Karpas*, as eating an amount less than a *kezayit* is not considered significant in halacha. This is the ruling of the **Bach** (*siman* 473) and the **Gra** (*Ma'aseh Rav* 187) as well.

ה Rambam, Hilchot Chametz Umatza 8:2

One begins by reciting the *beracha* of *borei pri ha'adama* and then takes a vegetable and dips it in *charoset* and eats a *kezayit*; he as well as all the people sitting with him, each person must not eat less than a *kezayit*.

22. רמב"ם | הל' חמץ ומצה ח:ב

מתחיל ומברך בורא פרי האדמה ולוקח ירק ומטבל אותו בחרוסת ואוכל כזית הוא וכל המסובין עמו כל אחד ואחד אין אוכל פחות מכזית.

However, the **Rosh** and the **Rashba** hold that one need not eat a *kezayit*, since the purpose of *Karpas* is only to pique the children's interest, as stated in the Mishna above.

ה Rosh, Pesachim 10:25

...Because when reciting the *beracha* of "*al achilat maror*" (on eating *maror*), one needs to eat a *kezayit*, as it is not defined as eating with less than a *kezayit*. However, concerning the vegetables [that one eats] earlier and upon which one recites *borei pri ha'adama* but does not mention eating, one does not need [to eat] a *kezayit*.

23. רא"ש | פסחים י:כה

...משום דמברך על אכילת מרור צריך שיאכל כזית דאין אכילה בפחות מכזית אבל בירקות הראשונות שמברך עליהן בפה"א בעלמא ואין מזכירין עליהם אכילה אין צריך מהם כזית.

The **Shulchan Aruch** rules in accordance with the Rosh and adds that one should specifically eat less than a *kezayit* in order not to enter into any doubt regarding whether a concluding *beracha* (*beracha acharona*) is required, and this is the accepted custom.

⌘ **Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 473:6**

...One takes less than a *kezayit* of *karpas* and dips it in vinegar, and recites the *beracha* of *borei pri ha'adama* and then eats. One does not recite the concluding *beracha*.

24. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תעג:ו

...ויקח מהכרפס פחות מכזית ומטבלו בחומץ ומברך בורא פרי האדמה ואוכל, ואינו מברך אחריו.

If one did eat a *kezayit*, one should nevertheless not recite a *beracha acharona* because the *beracha* on *Karpas* is supposed to cover the consumption of the *maror* as well, as explained by the **Mishna Berura**.

⌘ **Mishna Berura 473:55–56**

55. **And recites the *beracha* of *borei pri ha'adama*** – And one should have intention to exempt the *maror* that one will eat later with this *beracha*.

56. **One does not recite the concluding *beracha*** – Even if one ate a *kezayit*, since the first *beracha* covers the *maror* as well.

25. משנה ברורה | תעג:נה-נו

נה. ומברך בורא פה"א – ויכוין לפטור בברכה זו גם המרור שיאכל אח"כ [אחרונים].

נו. ואינו מברך אחריו – אפילו אם אכל כזית לפי שברכה ראשונה קאי גם על המרור.

YACHATZ

On the Seder night one is supposed to eat a broken piece of matza instead of a whole matza, which is the reason for performing *Yachatz*, the breaking of the matza, prior to *Maggid*. This is similar to a poor person who doesn't have the means to procure a full loaf of bread, and suffices with a piece instead, as indicated by the **Gemara** below.

מ Masechet Pesachim 115b

26. מסכת פסחים קטו:

Shmuel said that the phrase: “**The bread of affliction** [*lechem oni*]” (*Devarim* 16:3) means **bread over which one answers** [*onim*] **matters**, i.e., one recites the *Haggada* over matza. **That was also taught** in a *beraita*: *Lechem oni* is **bread over which one answers many matters**. **Alternatively**, in the verse, “*lechem oni*” is actually **written** without a vav, which means a poor person. **Just as it is the manner of a poor person to eat a piece** of bread, for lack of a whole loaf, **so too, here** he should use a **piece** of *matza*.

אמר שמואל: לחם עני (כתיב) – לחם שעונין עליו דברים. תניא נמי הכי לחם עני – לחם שעונין עליו דברים הרבה. דבר אחר: לחם עני – עני כתיב, מה עני שדרכו בפרוסה – אף כאן בפרוסה.

The ***Shulchan Aruch*** describes the exact procedure followed for breaking the matza.

א Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 473:6

27. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תעג:ו

...He takes the middle matza and breaks it into two pieces. He gives one half to one of those sitting [at the table] to keep for the *afikoman*, and this is placed under a cover, while he places the other half between the two whole matzot...

...ויקח מצה האמצעית ויבצענה לשתיים, ויתן חציה לאחד מהמסובין לשומרה לאפיקומן ונותנין אותה תחת המפה, וחציה השני ישים בין שתי השלימות...

The ***Pri Megadim*** adds that one must be careful to break the bread in the manner of a poor person.

א Pri Megadim, Orach Chaim, Aishel Avraham 473:20

28. פרי מגדים | או"ח, אשל אברהם תעג:כ

With his hand and not with a knife, the way a poor person does.

ביד ולא בסכין, כדרך שהעני עושה.

Some have the custom to then place the broken matzot on their shoulders as a remembrance of the Exodus, as described by the *Mishna Berura*.

א Mishna Berura 473:59

29. משנה ברורה | תעג:נט

There are those that place it [the matza] on their shoulders as a remembrance of the Exodus.

יש שנותנין אותה על כתפיהם זכר ליציאת מצרים.

MAGGID

The next section of the Seder, *Maggid*, contains one of the primary mitzvot of the evening, the mitzva of telling the story of the Exodus. However, it is evident from the *sugya* in *Masechet Berachot* below (also brought in the *Haggada*) that there is a mitzva to remember *yetziat mitzrayim* every night of the year as well. In that *sugya*, Tannaim dispute why the Torah added the word "*kol*" in the verse "*kol yemei chayecha*," "all the days of your life," when describing the mitzva to remember the Exodus from Egypt. The halacha follows the opinion of Ben Zoma who explains that the word "*kol*" teaches that the Exodus must be remembered at night as well.

מ מַסֶּכֶת בֵּרַחֹת 12ב

The Exodus from Egypt is mentioned at night, adjacent to the recitation of *Shema*. **Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya said: I am like seventy years old, and** although I have long held this opinion, **I was never privileged** to prove that there is a biblical obligation to fulfill the accepted custom and have **the Exodus from Egypt mentioned at night, until Ben Zoma interpreted it homiletically** and proved it obligatory.

As it is stated: "That you may remember the day you went out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life" (*Devarim* 16:3).

The days of your life, refers to daytime alone; however, the addition of the word "all," as it is stated: "**All the days of your life**," serves to include the nights as well.

And the Rabbis explain the word "all" differently and **say: The days of your life**, refers to the days in **this world, all is added to include the days of the Messiah**.

30. מסכת ברכות יב:

מזכירין יציאת מצרים בלילות. אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה: הרי אני כבן שבעים שנה, ולא זכיתי שתאמר יציאת מצרים בלילות עד שדרשה בן זומא. שנאמר: "למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך." ימי חייך – הימים, כל ימי חייך – הלילות; וחכמים אומרים: ימי חייך – העולם הזה, כל – להביא לימות המשיח.

Based on this, one may ask what is so unique about the Seder night, as every other night there is also an obligation to recall the Exodus from Egypt.

The *Acharonim* discuss this question at length and offer a number of answers distinguishing the unique obligation of telling the story on the Seder night from the mitzva in effect the rest of the year.

מ מִנְחַת חִינוּךְ, מִצְוָה 21

Now it seems that the Rambam requires further analysis, for he counted the mitzva to tell [the story of the Exodus] on the night of the 15th [as a separate mitzva]. But why is this night greater than all other nights, for there is a mitzva to remember the Exodus from Egypt every day and night... see Responsa *Sha'agat Aryeh* (*Hilchot Yetziat Mitzrayim*) who clarifies at length that one does not fulfill one's obligation (every night) by mental thought alone.

31. מנחת חינוך | מצוה כא

והנה לכאורה צריך עיון על הרמב"ם, דמונה המצוה לספר בליל ט"ו מאי מעליותא דליל זה מכל הלילות הא מצוה להזכיר יציאת מצרים בכל יום ובכל לילה... עיין שו"ת שאגת אריה הלכות יציאת מצרים האריך לברר שאינו יוצא ידי חובה בהרהור ולומר דבכל יום די בהזכרת יציאת מצרים לחוד

And to say that in general it is sufficient to mention the Exodus without the story, as opposed to here one needs to tell the miracles and wonders that Hashem may He be blessed did for us [also does not seem correct]... as it's possible that even on the Seder night, one fulfills one's obligation by mentioning it as well. See the *Pri Chadash* (*siman* 473) who states that one fulfills one's obligation by mentioning the Exodus during *Kiddush*. And see the Ran who writes that "anyone who didn't mention these three things on Pesach hasn't fulfilled his obligation" is only referring to fulfilling the mitzva in the best way possible... but he has fulfilled his obligation according to the Torah. According to what we have written, **one can say that generally the mitzva is to mention it to oneself and not tell it to one's child, whereas here the mitzva is to tell one's child**. But if there is no other person with him, the mitzva to mention it to oneself is equivalent to that of other nights...

בלא סיפור וכאן צריך סיפור הנסים ונפלאות שעשה עמנו השי"ת... דאפשר דגם בליל פסח יוצא בהזכרה לחוד.

ועיין פרי חדש סי' תע"ג דבהזכרת יציאת מצרים בקידוש יצא, ועיין ר"ן שכתב דכל שלא אמר ג' דברים אלו בפסח לא יצא י"ח היינו מן המובחר כראוי... אבל יצא י"ח מן התורה, ולפי מה שכתבנו אפשר לומר דתמיד המצוה להזכיר בפני עצמו ולא להגיד לבנו וכאן המצוה לספר לבנו, אבל אם אין עמו אחר, המצוה להזכיר בעצמו שוה לשאר הלילות...

Rav Chaim Soloveitchik of Brisk offers another answer.

נ Chidushei HaGrach, Pesachim 116a

32. חידושי הגר"ח | פסחים קטז.

Regarding the mitzva of "and you shall tell your son":

במצות והגדת לבנך:

Every night there is a mitzva of remembering the Exodus from Egypt, and if so what is added on the Seder night within the obligation to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt that is beyond the remembering that we do all year round? **It seems that there are three differences between the mitzva of remembering [zechira] the Exodus from Egypt and the mitzva of telling [sippur] the story of the Exodus from Egypt.**

הנה בכל לילה יש מצוה של זכירת יציאת מצרים, וא"כ מה נתוסף בליל פסח במצות סיפור יציאת מצרים שאין בזכירה של כל השנה? ונראה לומר, שיש ג' חילוקים בין המצוה של זכירת יציאת מצרים להמצוה של סיפור יציאת מצרים:

1. In order to fulfill the mitzva of *zechira*, one only needs to remind oneself about the Exodus, while the mitzva of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* is to tell the story to someone else by way of question and answer, as it is written: "When your son will ask... and you shall say to him... and you shall tell your son, etc." In the *Haggada* the son asks *mah nishtana* (what is different on this night) and the father answers that we were slaves in Egypt. And the halacha is that even if one is by oneself, one must ask oneself [questions] and answer with *avadim hayinu* similar to [the manner in which would] tell the story to another person.

א. לקיים מצות זכירה אין צריך אלא להזכיר לעצמו יצי"מ, אבל בסיפור יציאת מצרים המצוה היא לספר לאחר דרך שאלה ותשובה כדכתיב "והיה כי ישאלך בנך וגו' ואמרת אליו" וכדכתיב "והגדת לבנך וגו'". ובהגדה הבן שואל מה נשתנה והאב משיב עבדים היינו, וההלכה היא שאפילו אם אחד לבדו צריך לשאול לעצמו ולומר עבדים היינו כדרך סיפור לאחר. ב. בסיפור צריך לספר כל ההשתלשלות, וצריך להתחיל בגנות ולסיים בשבח, ולקיים מצות זכירה סגי בזכירת יציאת מצרים לחוד.

2. In telling the story, one needs to relate the entire development, and begin with the degradation and end with the praise [see *Pesachim* 115a]. However, to fulfill the mitzva of *zechira*, one only needs to mention the Exodus from Egypt.

2. In telling the story, one needs to relate the entire development, and begin with the degradation and end with the praise [see *Pesachim* 115a]. However, to fulfill the mitzva of *zechira*, one only needs to mention the Exodus from Egypt.
3. The mitzva (on Seder night) is to explain the reasons for the mitzvot of that night, as is brought in the Mishna (*Pesachim* 116a): Rabban Gamliel would say that anyone who didn't say these three things on Pesach did not fulfill his obligation and they are Pesach, matza and *maror*. Pesach due to what, etc., matza due to, etc., *marror* due to, etc.”⁶

ב. בסיפור צריך לספר כל ההשתלשלות, וצריך להתחיל בגנות ולסיים בשבח, ולקיים מצות זכירה סגי בזכירת יציאת מצרים לחוד.
ג. מצוה לספר טעמי המצוות של אותו הלילה, כמ"ש במשנה (פסחים קט"ז ע"א) רבן גמליאל היה אומר כל שלא אמר שלשה דברים אלו בפסח לא יצא ידי חובתו, ואלו הן פסח מצה ומרור, פסח על שום מה וכו' מצה על שום מה וכו' מרור על שום מה וכו'.

As mentioned in Rav Chaim's first answer, the ideal mitzva of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* involves telling the story to one's children or others in a question and answer form. Does this require a person to tell the story himself, or is it sufficient for someone else at the table to do so for him?

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach addresses this question concerning a married son with children visiting his parents (or in-laws) where someone else at the table (e.g., the grandfather) will tell the story. Rav Shlomo Zalman rules that it is sufficient that any one of the people at the table tells the story, and it need not be specifically a father to his children.



Halichot Shlomo, Pesach 9:31

If many people are sitting together [at the Seder], there is no obligation on each one of them to tell the story of *yetziat mitzrayim* to his children himself; rather, it is sufficient if one of the participants tells everyone.

33. הליכות שלמה | פסח ט:טא

רבים המסובים יחד, אין חיוב על כל אחד מהם לספר סיפור יציאת מצרים לבנין בעצמו, אלא די בכך שאחד המסובים יספר לכולם.

It is clear from these sources that the children (if there are) must be the focal point of the Seder and the telling of the story, as this is the purpose of this night: Transmitting our heritage and the basis for our nation and faith to the next generation. For this reason, the **Rema** stresses in the source below that one must ensure that the children are involved in the Seder experience and understand the story being told on their own level.



Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 473:6

...He lifts the plate that has the matzot on it and says [from] “This is the bread of affliction” until *Ma Nishtana*.

34. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תעג:ו

...ויגביה הקערה שיש בה המצות ויאמר: הא לחמא עניא, עד מה נשתנה.

6. In the continuation of the piece, Rav Chaim writes that these three ideas are actually explicitly mentioned in the Rambam (*Hilchot Chametz Umatza* chapter 7) in the context of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim*. In halacha 1, he discusses the special role that children play at the Seder, that one must tell the story to them even if they don't ask about it, he should teach them according to their level, etc. In halacha 4, he discusses the concept of beginning with the degradation and concluding with the praise. And in halacha 5, he writes that anyone who has not discussed the three items of *pesach*, *matza*, and *maror* has not fulfilled his obligation. The Rambam then concludes that all of these ideas he has mentioned previously are considered aspects of the *Haggada*. The implication of the Rambam is that all three of the elements discussed here by Rav Chaim are included as a part of the mitzva of the *Haggada*, thus differentiating it from the daily mitzva of *zechira*.

Rema: They should say it in a language that women and children can understand, or explain to them the topic at hand. And this is what the Ri of Londari did [that he recited] the entire *Haggada* in the vernacular so that the women and children would understand.

Then he should instruct that it [the Seder plate] be removed from the table and placed at the end of the table as if one has already eaten, so that the children see this and ask [about it].

הגה: ויאמרו בלשון שמבינים הנשים והקטנים, או יפרש להם הענין וכן עשה ר"י מלונדרי כל ההגדה בלשון לע"ז, כדי שיבינו הנשים והקטנים.

ואז יצוה להסירם מעל השלחן ולהניחם בסוף השלחן כאלו כבר אכלו, כדי שיראו התינוקות וישאלו.

RACHTZA

The **Gemara** in **Pesachim** states that even though one has already washed his hands before eating the *Karpas*, one must wash his hands again before the *beracha* of *hamotzee* because he experienced a lapse of concentration (*hesach hada'at*) in between while reciting the *Haggada* and *Hallel*.



Masechet Pesachim 115b

...Why do I need two washings of the hands? He has already washed his hands once. They say in response: **Since he needs to recite the *Haggada* and *Hallel* in between the two dippings, perhaps he will divert his thoughts and his hands will touch a ritually impure object.**

35. מסכת פסחים קטו:

...למה לי נטילת ידים תרי זימני? הא משא ליה ידיה חדא זימנא! אמרי: כיון דבעי למימר אגדתא והלילא – דילמא אסוחי אסחיה לדעתיה ונגע.

The *Rishonim* write though that if one guarded his hands carefully and ensured they didn't touch anything unclean, he does not have to wash again.



Shibolei Haleket, Seder Pesach 218

Since the reason is dependent on a lapse of concentration, if it is clear to him that he guarded his hands well and didn't touch holy scripture or other things that render his hands impure, he doesn't need to wash his hands again, for his hands are still pure from the first washing.

36. שבולי הלכת | סדר פסח ריח

וכיון שתלה הטעם בהסח הדעת אם ברור לו ששימר ידיו היטב ולא נגע בכתבי הקודש או בשאר דברים המטמאין את הידים אינו צריך לחזור וליטול ידיו שהרי ידיו טהורות מנטילה ראשונה.

Nevertheless, the **Beit Yosef** rules that one should not follow this, in order not to nullify the decree of the Sages.



Beit Yosef, Orach Chaim Siman 475

It seems to me that one shouldn't do this intentionally, in order not to nullify a decree of the Sages, who instituted to wash [one's hands] two times on the night of Pesach.

37. בית יוסף | או"ח סימן תעה

ונראה לי, דאין לכוין בכך, שלא לבטל תקנת חכמים שתקנו ליטול פעמיים בליל פסח.

The **Bi'ur Halacha** writes that if one purposefully had no lapse of concentration, one should still wash one's hands, but without a *beracha*. He adds that the best suggestion in this scenario is for him to touch something unclean (e.g., using the bathroom), after which he may wash them and recite a *beracha*.



Bi'ur Halacha, Siman 475

One definitely needs to wash one's hands again (similar to what is written earlier in *siman* 168:7), especially if he did not intend from the outset [that the washing should relate to his] eating. Nevertheless, one should not recite a *beracha* (as was explained there). The best option in this case is to render one's hands unclean before washing so that he will be able to recite a *beracha*.

38. ביאור הלכה | סימן תעה

בודאי צריך לחזור וליטול ידיו וכדלעיל בסימן קנ"ח ס"ז ובפרט כשלא כוון מתחלה לאכילה עכ"פ אין לו לברך, וכמבואר שם והנכון שבאופן זה יטמא ידיו קודם הנטילה כדי שיוכל לברך.

MOTZEE-MATZA

The consumption of matza is another one of the primary mitzvot of the Seder night and is mentioned explicitly in the Torah. But the **Gemara** in **Masechet Pesachim** cites a dispute whether the eating of matza nowadays without the *korban pesach* (Paschal offering) is a Torah or rabbinic obligation.

Ⓜ Masechet Pesachim 120a

Rava said: The mitzva of **matza nowadays**, even after the destruction of the Temple, applies by **Torah law**; **but** the mitzva to eat **bitter herbs** applies by **rabbinic law**. **And in what way is the mitzva of bitter herbs different from matza? As it is written**, with regard to the Paschal offering: “They shall eat it **with matzot and bitter herbs**” (*Bamidbar* 9:11). **When there is an obligation to eat the Paschal offering, there is likewise a mitzva to eat bitter herbs; and when there is no obligation to eat the Paschal offering, there is also no mitzva to eat bitter herbs.**

But if so, the same reasoning should apply to **matza as well**, as **it is written: “With matzot and bitter herbs.”** **The verse repeats** the obligation to eat **matza**, as it states: “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month **in the evening, you shall eat matzot**” (*Shemot* 12:18). This verse establishes a separate obligation to eat matza, unrelated to the Paschal offering. **And Rav Acha bar Ya'akov said:** Nowadays, **both this**, the mitzva to eat matza, **and that**, the mitzva to eat bitter herbs, apply by **rabbinic law**.

The **Rambam** rules that eating matza is a Torah obligation, which is the ruling accepted by the other *Rishonim*.

Ⓜ Rambam, Hilchot Chametz Umatza 6:1

There is a Torah commandment to eat matza on the night of the fifteenth day [of *Nisan*], as it is written: “In the evening, you shall eat unleavened bread” (*Shemot* 12:18), everywhere and for all time. It did not render the eating dependent upon the Paschal offering. Rather, this is an independent mitzva and the mitzva is in effect the entire night. But on the rest of the festival eating matza is optional; if one wants, one eats matza, if one wants he eats rice... But on the night of the fifteenth alone there is an obligation, and when one eats a *kezayit* (olive-size piece), one has fulfilled one's obligation.

On every Yom Tov, like Shabbat, there is an obligation of *lechem mishneh*, reciting the *beracha* of *hamotzee* at each meal on two whole *challot*. The *Rishonim* dispute whether the broken matza used on the Seder night may be counted for *lechem mishneh* or not, in which case another matza would need to be added.

39. מסכת פסחים קכ.

אמר רבא: מצה בזמן הזה דאורייתא ומרור דרבנן. – ומאי שנא מרור דכתיב על מצות ומררים בזמן דאיכא פסח – יש מרור, ובזמן דליכא פסח – ליכא מרור. מצה נמי הא כתיב על מצות ומררים! – מצה מיהדר הדר ביה קרא בערב תאכלו מצת. ורב אחא בר יעקב אמר: אחד זה ואחד זה דרבנן.

40. רמב"ם | הל' חמץ ומצה ו:א

מצות עשה מן התורה לאכול מצה בליל חמשה עשר שנאמר “בערב תאכלו מצות”, בכל מקום ובכל זמן, ולא תלה אכילה זו בקרבן הפסח אלא זו מצוה בפני עצמה ומצותה כל הלילה, אבל בשאר הרגל אכילת מצה רשות רצה אוכל מצה רצה אוכל אורז... אבל בליל חמשה עשר בלבד חובה ומשאכל כזית יצא ידי חובתו.

**Rashi, Pesachim 116a**

So too here with the broken – [It is used] to recite the blessing *al achilat matza*, and two whole matzot are used for the *beracha* of *hamotzee*, for [the Seder night] is no worse than any other Yom Tov where one needs to recite the blessing [lit. cut] over two whole loaves. One recites the blessing over one of the whole matzot.

41. רש"י | פסחים קטז.

אף כאן בפרוסה – לברך על אכילת מצה ושתי שלימות מיייתי, משום ברכת המוציא, דלא גרע משאר ימים טובים שצריך לבצוע על שתי ככרות שלימות, ובוצע מאחת מהשלימות.

According to **Rashi**, we require two whole matzot for the standard *beracha* of *hamotzee*, plus the broken matza for the additional *beracha* of *al achilat matza*. But the **Rambam** argues, stating the following:

**Rambam, Hilchot Chametz Umatza 8:6**

After that, he recites *al netilat yadayim* and washes his hand a second time, for he had a lapse of concentration while reading the *Haggada*. He takes two matzot, breaks one of them and places the broken part together with the whole matza and recites the blessing of *hamotzee lechem min ha'aretz* [the blessing on bread].

42. רמב"ם | הל' חמץ ומצה ח:ו

אחר כך מברך על נטילת ידים ונוטל ידיו שניה שהרי הסיח דעתו בשעת קריאת ההגדה, ולוקח שני ריקין חולק אחד מהן ומניח פרוס לתוך שלם ומברך המוציא לחם מן הארץ.

The halacha is in accordance with the opinion of Rashi that we take three matzot and give a portion of the whole matza as well as of the broken matza to each person. But how much must one eat from each matza? The **Rosh** cited below offers his opinion:

**Rosh, Pesachim 10:30**

Therefore, the people are accustomed to taking three matzot... out of those three matzot, one breaks the middle one into two and keeps one half for the *Afikoman*, and leaves the other half between the whole ones. On the first [matza] one recites the *beracha* of *hamotzee*, and on the piece one recites the *beracha* of *al achilat matza*. **One eats both of them together, a kezayit from each one.** And one uses the third one for the sandwich of Hillel, for since they instituted three [matzot], we use each one for a mitzva. One who wants to properly fulfill both obligations should recite [the *berachot* of] *hamotzee* and *al achilat matza* and then cut up both the whole matza and the broken matza.

43. רא"ש | פסחים י:ל

הלכך נהגו העם לעשות שלש מצות... ומאותן שלש מצות יבצע השניה לשנים וישמור החציה לאפיקומן ויניח חציה בין שתי השלימות ועל הראשונה יברך המוציא ועל הפרוסה יברך על אכילת מצה ואוכלן ביחד מכל אחת כזית ומן השלישית יעשה כריכה כהלל דכיון דתיקון שלש מכל חדא נעביד בה מצוה חדא והרוצה לצאת ידי חובת שניהם יברך המוציא ועל אכילת מצה ויבצע מן השלימה ומן הפרוסה כאחד.

According to the Rosh, one must eat a *kezayit* of matza from each matza. The **Bach** wonders though why one must eat two separate *kezayit* portions. Why is an additional *kezayit* for *hamotzee* necessary in addition to the *kezayit* used for the mitzva of matza?

⌘ Bach, Orach Chaim Siman 475

Regarding what he wrote that one needs to eat a *kezayit* from each one, that is due to the fact that there is no definition of eating for less than a *kezayit* (*Pesachim* 32b; *Yerushalmi, Yoma* 2:1). However, this is astounding: One can understand [that one needs to eat a *kezayit*] from the piece of matza upon which one recites the *beracha al achilat matza*, it is logical that one needs [to eat] a *kezayit*. But regarding the whole matza upon which one recites the *beracha* of *hamotzee*, what is different from [the halacha of] other bread, upon which one recites *hamotzee* even though one doesn't eat a *kezayit*?

44. ב"ח | או"ח סימן תעה

ומה שכתב שיאכל כזית מכל אחד. היינו לפי שאין אכילה פחותה מכזית (פסחים לב:; ירושלמי יומא פ"ב ה"א) מיהו תימה בשלמא מן הפרוסה שמברך עליה על אכילת מצה שפיר דבעי כזית אבל מן השלמה שמברך עליה המוציא מאי שנא ממשאר פת שמברך עליו המוציא אף על פי שאינו אוכל כזית.

The ***Shulchan Aruch*** rules in accordance with the opinion of the Rosh and the ***Mishna Berura*** resolves all the questions of the *Bach*.

⌘ Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 475:1

And he should eat a *kezayit* from each one simultaneously. If he is unable to eat two *kezayit* portions simultaneously, he should eat [the *kezayit*] of the *hamotzee* first and then [the *kezayit*] of *al achilat matza*.

45. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תעה:א

ויאכלם בהסיבה ביחד כזית מכל אחד, ואם אינו יכול לאכול כשני זיתים ביחד, יאכל של המוציא תחלה ואחר כך של אכילת מצה.

⌘ Mishna Berura 475:9

From the broken matza one definitely needs to eat a *kezayit*, for one recites the *beracha* of *al achilat matza* over this, and there is no definition of eating for less than a *kezayit*. However, regarding the broken matza used for *motzee*, we hold that we recite a *beracha* of *hamotzee* even over less than a *kezayit* (as discussed earlier in *siman* 210). However, since there are some *poskim* that hold that the *beracha* of *hamotzee* is recited over the broken matza and the *beracha* of *al achilat matza* is recited over the whole matza, therefore one needs [to eat] a *kezayit* from each.

46. משנה ברורה | תעה:ט

מן הפרוסה בודאי צריך כזית דהא מברכין על אכילת מצה ואין אכילה פחותה מכזית אבל פרוסת המוציא הלא קי"ל דהמוציא מברכין אפילו על פחות מכזית וכנ"ל בסימן ר"י אלא משום דיש פוסקין שסוברין דברכת המוציא קאי על הפרוסה וברכת על אכילת מצה קאי על השלמה לכך צריך מכל אחת כזית.

The ***Mishna Berura*** continues by stating that *bedieved* (after the fact), one fulfills one's obligation even if he ate only one *kezayit* from either of the matzot.

⌘ Mishna Berura 475:11

And then [the *kezayit*] of *al achilat matza* – *Bedieved*, if he ate one *kezayit* either from the whole matza or the broken matza, he has fulfilled his obligation.⁷

47. משנה ברורה | תעה:יא

ואח"כ של אכילת מצה – ובדיעבד אם אכל כזית אחד בין מהשלמה ובין מהפרוסה יצא.

7. It should be noted that some *poskim* limit the notion of eating two *kezayit* portions to the head of the household or one running the Seder alone, while everyone else may consume one *kezayit* alone. This is the opinion of Rabbi Akiva Eiger (on *Orach Chaim* 167), and is accepted as well by Rav Eliashiv (*Seder HaAruch*, p. 456).

We have already explained that ideally one should consume two *kezayit* portions at the Seder during *motzee-matza*. We now need to clarify the exact size of a *kezayit*, which is subject to a dispute among the *Rishonim*. The **Rambam** holds it is the size of a third of an egg (approximately 18 grams), while **Tosafot** hold it is the size of half of an egg (28 grams). The **Shulchan Aruch** rules in accordance with Tosafot:

Ⓝ Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 486:1

[With regard to] the measurement of a *kezayit*, some say that it is half the size of an egg.⁸

48. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תפ"א

שיעור כזית, יש אומרים דהוי כחצי ביצה.

It seems from the *Rishonim* that a *kezayit* should be measured by volume. However, a number of Sephardic *poskim* hold that the custom is to measure it by weight due to the difficulty of measuring by volume. According to this opinion, each *kezayit* measures approximately an entire standard machine matza.

Ⓝ Kaf Hachaim, Orach Chaim 168:45–46

The accepted custom nowadays by G-d fearing people is to measure all the measurements i.e., a *kezayit* of matza on Pesach... by weight, and one should not deviate from this.

49. כף החיים | או"ח קסח:מה-מו

...וכן המנהג עכשיו פשוט אצל בעלי היראה לשער כל השיעורים דהיינו כזית מצה בפסח... כולם במשקל... ואין לשנות.

This is the ruling of most contemporary Sephardic *poskim* as well, such as **Rav Ovadia Yosef** and **Rav Mordechai Eliyahu** (see Responsa *Yechaveh Da'at* 1:16). By contrast, most Ashkenazi *poskim* measure a *kezayit* by volume, which measures approximately a third of a standard machine matza, as is brought by **Rav Eliezer Melamed** in the *Peninei Halacha*.

Ⓢ Peninei Halacha, Hilchot Pesach 16:24

It is clear according to the basic halacha that all halachic measurements are based on volume and not weight.

50. פניני הלכה | הל' פסח טז:כד

אולם מעיקר הדין ברור שכל השיעורים עוסקים בנפח ולא במשקל.

8. We should note that there is a very famous discussion of whether the size of eggs have decreased over the last few centuries. Some *poskim*, such as the *Noda B'Yehuda*, claim that they are now half the size of what they used to be, and therefore the measurements brought here must be doubled. According to the *Mishna Berura* (486:1), ideally this approach should be followed for mitzvot of Torah origin, such as eating matza at the Seder. Nevertheless, most *poskim* hold that if one is eating two *kezayit* portions in any case based on the previous few sources, it is unnecessary to double the measurements yet a second time, and doubling it once is sufficient. Although this is an extremely important issue, it is beyond the purview of this *shiur*. For more information, see the *Piskei Teshuvot* (486:2) and *Haggada Kinor David* by Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon (published by Mossad HaRav Kook in Hebrew and in English) in the section on *motzee-matza* at length. [Addition of the English editors]

Matza Shemura

The **Gemara** teaches that one is obligated to have *matza shemura*, "guarded matza," on Pesach.

ח Masechet Pesachim 40a

Rava reconsidered and **then said**: It is not only permitted to soak the grains; it is actually a **mitzva to soak** them, as it is stated: **"And you shall guard the matzot"** (*Shemot* 12:17). The Gemara explains this statement: If it is **not** the case that grain **requires soaking**, for what purpose is **guarding** necessary? If you claim that this verse is referring to **guarding when kneading**, that cannot be the case, as **guarding grain while kneading is not** considered **guarding**. If one failed to protect the wheat from becoming leavened up to that point, it is of no use to be careful while kneading it. Consequently, this mitzva to guard the dough cannot be referring to the kneading stage.

As Rav Huna said: In the case of **dough prepared by gentiles**, if one knows that it has not become leavened, a person may **fill his stomach with them** on Passover night, **provided that he eats an olive-bulk of matza in the end**, to fulfill the obligation to eat *matza*. The Gemara infers from this statement: With regard to the *matza* that he eats **in the end, yes**, he fulfills his obligation with this *matza*. But with regard to the *matza* he ate **in the beginning, no**, he does not fulfill the mitzva with dough prepared by gentiles.

What is the reason that one cannot fulfill his obligation to eat *matza* with dough prepared by gentiles? It is **because he did not perform** his duty to **guard** this dough. **But one** can **perform** his duty to **guard it from** the time of **baking and onward**. **Rather, isn't it** correct to **conclude from** this *beraita* that the grain **must be guarded from the beginning...**

On a simple level, it seems from the Gemara that the dough must be guarded to ensure that it does not rise and become chametz. However, *Rishonim* dispute whether there is an additional element to this "guarding."

ה Rambam, Hilchot Chametz Umatza 5:8

"And you shall guard the matzot" – Meaning that you must be careful with the matza and guard it from any possibility of becoming leaven.

ו Rashi, Pesachim 38b

And you shall guard the matzot, make the guarding for the sake of matza – For all guarding that one does in order that it doesn't become *chametz*, have intention that it be for the sake of matza for the mitzva.

51. מסכת פסחים מ.

הדר אמר רבא: מצוה ללתות, שנאמר ושמרתם את המצות אי לא דבעי לתיתה – שימור למאי? אי שימור דלישה – שימור דלישה לאו שימור הוא, דאמר רב הונא: בצקות של נכרים אדם ממלא כריסו מהן, ובלבד שיאכל כזית מצה באחרונה. באחרונה – אין, בראשונה – לא. מאי טעמא – משום דלא עבד בהו שימור. ולעביד ליה שימור מאפיה ואילך! אלא לאו שמע מינה – שימור מעיקרא בעינן...

52. רמב"ם | הל' חמיץ ומצה ה:ח

"ושמרתם את המצות" – כלומר: הזהרו במצה ושמרו אותה מכל צד חמוץ.

53. רש"י | פסחים לח:

ושמרתם את המצות עביד לה שמירה לשם מצה – כל שימור שאתה משמרה שלא תחמיץ התכוון לשם מצה של מצוה.

According to **Rambam**, the primary requirement is to guard the matza from becoming chametz. According to **Rashi**, an active guarding is necessary with intention that the matza be suitable for the mitzva of eating matza. The **Mishna Berura** writes that *lechatchila*, we act in accordance with the opinion of Rashi.

⌘ Mishna Berura 453:21

This means that the matzot that we eat on the first two nights to fulfill the mitzva of “in the evening you shall eat matzot” require an additional element of guarding, and the fact that there is no concern that they might become chametz is not sufficient. Rather, we need an additional element of guarding for the sake of the mitzva of matza, as it is written, “and you shall guard the matzot,” meaning that one needs to guard it for the sake of matza.

54. משנה ברורה | תנגכא

ר"ל המצות שאוכלין בשתי הלילות הראשונות לקיים בהן מצות בערב תאכלו מצות הם צריכין שמירה יתירה ולא די לנו במה שאין לנו ריעותא של חשש חימוץ אלא שצריך שימור יתירה לשם מצות מצה דכתיב ושמרתם את המצות והיינו שצריך שישמור לשם מצה.

Commentaries further dispute in which stage the guarding must begin. There are three opinions regarding this, all of which are alluded to in the **Shulchan Aruch**.

⌘ Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 453:4

It is best to guard the wheat used for making matza for the mitzva that no water touch them from the time of harvesting, and at least [they should be guarded] from the time of grinding. In extenuating circumstances, it is permitted to take flour from the marketplace.

55. שולחן ערוך | או"ח תנגד

החטים שעושים בהם מצת מצוה טוב לשמרן שלא יפלו עליהם מים משעת קצירה, ולפחות משעת טחינה. ובשעת הדחק מותר ליקח קמח מן השוק.

According to the *Shulchan Aruch*, *lechatchila* one needs to guard the wheat from the time of harvesting, and if that is not possible, it should be guarded at least from the time of grinding. *Bedieved*, guarding from the time of kneading is also acceptable. Today, all matzot that are kosher for Pesach are *shemura* at least from the time of grinding, while those that are marketed as being “*shemura matza*” are guarded from the time of harvesting, as per the ideal of the *Shulchan Aruch*.

The *Shulchan Aruch's* ruling here applies only to matza eaten on the first two nights (in the Diaspora), the “*matzat mitzva*,” but during the rest of Pesach, there is no requirement to consume *shemura matza*. However, there are *Rishonim* that hold that one needs to eat *shemura matza* all seven days. The **Bi'ur Halacha** cites this opinion in the name of the **Rambam**, and this was also the custom of the **Vilna Gaon**.

⌘ Bi'ur Halacha 460:1

See the Rambam, *Hilchot Chametz Umatza* 5:9, and it is clear from there that his opinion is that all matza that one eats on Pesach must be guarded.

56. ביאור הלכה | תסא

ועיין ברמב"ם פ"ה מדה' חמץ ומצה דין ט' ומוכח שם דדעתו דאכל מצה שאוכל בפסח צריך שימור.

The practical halacha is that on the first two nights, one must use *shemura matza* (ideally from the time of harvesting, but at least from the time of grinding). However, on the remaining days it is not necessary, though one who does so is praiseworthy.



Peninei Halacha, Hilchot Pesach p. 171

Some are careful to eat only *shemura matza* all of Pesach. There are two reasons for this: One is that some authorities hold that although there is no obligation to eat matza all of Pesach, nevertheless one who does eat has fulfilled a mitzva...

And the second reason is that some authorities hold that one of the reasons for eating *shemura matza* is due to the concern that it will leaven, and out of all our foods on Pesach, matza is the most likely to leaven. Therefore, if the wheat is not guarded from the time of harvesting, there is a concern that it may have become chametz.

57. פניני הלכה | הל' פסח עמ' 171

יש מדקדקים לאכול בכל הפסח מצות שמורות. ושני טעמים לכך: האחד, שיש סוברים שאמנם אין חובה לאכול מצות בכל הפסח, מכל מקום האוכל מקיים מצוה...

והטעם השני שיש סוברים שאחד מהטעמים לאכילת מצה שמורה הוא מפני חשש החימוץ, שכן מכל המאכלים שלנו בפסח המצה היא העלולה ביותר להחמיץ, ולכן אם לא ישמרו את החיטים משעת קצירה ישנו חשש שמא החמיצו.

Machine Matza

Ever since the beginning of the production of machine-made matza, it has been the subject of much controversy. Some *Acharonim* prohibited using it due to a concern of becoming chametz during the production as well as because perhaps machine matza is not considered to have been prepared for the sake of the mitzva (which might require a human element). Others, though, permitted it.



Responsa Avnei Nezer, Orach Chaim 537

I heard and my stomach has become ill for once again there are those who want to make machine matzot. Already the great and true *tzadikim*, his honor the Gerrer Rebbe *zt"l*, the holy Gaon of Tzanz *zt"l*, and the holy Gaon of Chechanov all prohibited using them definitively, for their impurity is on their side and underneath them shall remain the leprous mark, for it is chametz.⁹

58. שו"ת אבני נזר | או"ח תקלז

שמעתי ותרגז בטני כי נתעורר מחדש לעשות מצות על מאשין. וכבר התעוררו הגאונים הצדיקים והאמתים ה"ה כבוד אדמו"ר זצ"ל מגור והגאון הקדוש זצללה"ה מסאנדז והגאון הקדוש זצללה"ה מטשעכנאווי לאסור אותם בהחלט יען כי טומאתם בשוליהם ותחתיהם תעמוד הבהרת כי חמץ המו.

9. This is a poetic manner (using the analogy of leprosy) of forcefully expressing the idea that the machine matzot would become chametz and therefore may not be used. [Addition of the English editors]



Mikra'ei Kodesh (by Rav Moshe Harari), Pesach Ch. 7, Footnote 79

The opinion of [some of] this generation's rabbis: Hagaon Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach told me that one may fulfill the obligation of the mitzva of matza at the Seder with machine matzot as well, and one may recite the *beracha* of *al achilat matza* on it. I asked him if there was a preference for hand-made matza or machine matza, and he answered me that if they supervise very well, then the hand-made matzot are preferable.

HaGaon Rav Ovadia Yosef writes that it is an ideal mitzva to try to take hand-made matza by G-d fearing people who are expert in halacha for the first night, in order to comply with all the opinions. Nevertheless, in extenuating circumstances one may fulfill his obligation on the first night with machine-made matzot as well, and one may even recite the *beracha* of *al achilat matza*. During the rest of the festival following the Seder night, even those who are careful to eat only *shemura matza* from the time of harvesting may eat machine-made matza...

In practice, one should ideally use hand-made matzot on the first two nights if possible, as this fulfills one's obligation according to all opinions. One who is unable to do so may rely on the *poskim* that hold that machine matzot are considered to be made *lishma*, for the sake of the mitzva (due to the presence of those supervising, who have this in mind). On the remaining days, where only the Rambam and those who follow his opinion recommend eating *shemura matza*, and in his opinion the definition of *shemura matza* is that it is properly guarded from chametz (and there is no need of intention for the sake of the mitzva), one can eat machine-made *shemura matza* even *lechatchila*, as today there is no concern of them becoming chametz when properly supervised.

59. מקראי קודש (הרב משה הררי) | פסח, פרק ז, הערה עט

דעת רבני דורנו: הגאון הרב שלמה זלמן אוירבך זצ"ל אמר לי שאפשר לצאת ידי חובה מצת מצוה בליל הסדר גם באכילת מצת מכונה, וכן אפשר לברך עליה את ברכת על אכילת מצה. ושאלתי האם עדיפות מצות יד או מכונה, וענה לי שאם משגיחים "היטב היטב" אזי מצות יד עדיפות.

הגאון הרב עובדיה יוסף כתב שמצוה מן המובחר להשתדל לקחת למצת מצוה של הלילה הראשון מצה שמלאכתה נעשית בעבודת יד על ידי יראי שמים הבקיאים בהלכה, וזאת כדי לצאת ידי כל הדעות. ומכל מקום בשעת הדחק יוצאים ידי חובתו בלילה הראשון גם במצה הנעשית על ידי מכונה חשמלית, ואף רשאים לברך עליה את ברכת על אכילת מצה. ובשאר ימי החג לאחר ליל הסדר אף המקפידים לאכול רק מצה שמורה משעת הקצירה רשאים לאכול מצת מכונה...

SUMMARY OF HALACHOT OF THE SEDER NIGHT I

Kadesh

1. **The basis for the four cups**
 - a. **Gemara** – Everyone is obligated in the mitzva of the four cups.
 - b. **Rambam** – Drinking wine is an expression of freedom.
 - c. **Rashi** – Four cups correspond to the four expressions of freedom in *Parshat Va'era*.

2. **The amount of wine one needs to drink for *Kiddush***
 - a. **Tosafot** – A cheek-full.
 - b. **Ramban** – The majority of the cup (and ideally the whole cup).
 - c. **Shulchan Aruch** – Mentions both opinions.
 - d. **Mishna Berura** – Ideally one should drink the majority of the cup, but *bedieved*, a cheek-full is sufficient.
 - e. **Mishna Berura** – One should ideally drink it at one time.

3. **The size of the cup**
 - a. Must contain a *revi'it* of wine.
 - b. **Rav Chaim Naeh** – 86 cc.
 - c. **Chazon Ish** – 150 cc.
 - d. **Bi'ur Halacha** – For Torah obligations, the higher *shiur* should be used, while for rabbinic obligations (including the four cups), the lower *shiur* may be used.

4. **Reclining**
 - a. **Rambam** – Reclining is an expression of freedom.
 - b. **Ra'avyah** – Today it does not apply since people do not usually recline.
 - c. **Shulchan Aruch** – Reclining must still be practiced today, though with regard to women, only prominent women must recline.
 - d. **Rema** – Women follow the Ra'avyah and do not need to recline.
 - e. **Ben Ish Chai** – Sephardic women should recline.

Urchatz

1. **Shulchan Aruch** – One washes hands but does not recite a *beracha*.
 2. **Mishna Berura** – The reason is to fulfill the opinions that a food dipped in liquid requires *netilat yadayim*.
-

Karpas

1. **Mishna** – One dips the vegetable so that there should be a distinction for the children.
 2. **Rambam** – One must eat a *kezayit* of *Karpas*.
 3. **Rosh** – Less than a *kezayit* is enough.
 4. **Shulchan Aruch** – One should specifically eat less than a *kezayit* to avoid doubts concerning the *beracha acharona*.
 5. **Mishna Berura** – Even if one ate a *kezayit*, one does not recite a *beracha acharona*.
-

Yachatz

1. **Gemara/Shulchan Aruch** – One breaks the matza in two as a poor man does, keeping one to use later for *afikoman*.
-

Maggid

1. **Gemara Berachot** – Ben Zoma holds one must mention *yetziat mitzrayim* every night, and this is the halacha.
2. **How, then, is telling the story on Pesach night different from all other nights?**
 - a. **Minchat Chinuch** – On Pesach night the mitzva is to tell another person.
 - b. **Rav Chaim Soloveitchik** – There are other unique aspects to the mitzva on the Seder night.
 - i. Questions and answers.
 - ii. Must begin with the negative part of the story and conclude with the positive.
 - iii. Must give the reason behind the mitzvot of the night.
 - c. **Rema** – One must ensure that everyone at the table can understand the telling of the story.

Rachtza

1. **Gemara** – One must wash again in case his hands have become unclean during the interim.
 2. **Beit Yosef** – Don't intentionally try to keep one's hands clean.
 3. **Bi'ur Halacha** – Even if they are clean, one still washes but without a *beracha*.
-

Motzee-Matza

1. **Gemara** – It is a dispute whether the obligation is from the Torah or a rabbinic one.
 2. **Rambam** – The halacha is that it is a Torah obligation.
 3. **Rashi** – Two whole matzot are needed for *lechem mishneh* aside from the broken one. This position is accepted as halacha.
 4. **Rambam** – The broken matza counts as one of the two for *lechem mishneh*.
 5. **Rosh** – One must eat a *kezayit* from each matza.
 6. **Mishna Berura** – One has fulfilled the obligation if one ate only one *kezayit*.
 7. **Shulchan Aruch** – The halacha is in accordance with the opinions that a *kezayit* is half the size of an egg.
 8. **Most poskim** – One measures the *kezayit* by volume.
 9. **Kaf Hachaim** – Can measure the size of a *kezayit* by weight.
-

Matza Shemura

1. **Gemara** – There is an obligation to guard the matza.
2. **Rambam** – Guarding means to guard it from rising.
3. **Rashi** – Guarding it means guarding for the purpose of using for the mitzva of matza.
4. **Mishna Berura** – *Lechatchila* we are stringent for the opinion of Rashi.
5. **Shulchan Aruch** – Ideally it must be guarded from the time of harvesting, and at least from the time of grinding; today's *shemura matza* is from the time of harvesting.
6. **Rambam** – One should eat such matza all of Pesach.

7. ***Peninei Halacha*/other opinions** – There is no obligation to eat *shemura matza* during the rest of Pesach.
8. ***Avnei Nezer*** – One may not use machine matza on Pesach.
9. ***Mikraei Kodesh*** – Most *poskim* today allow using machine matza, though many recommend using hand matza for the Seder if possible.

FURTHER IYUN

The Fifth Cup in Halacha and Hashkafa

Rav Otniel Fendel (Participant, the Manhigut Toranit Program)

We are all familiar with the *minhag* to fill a fifth cup, commonly known as the cup of Eliyahu. What is the source for this *minhag*? Does it have any halachic significance, and how does it relate to the mitzva of drinking four cups of wine at the Seder?



over it; this is the opinion of Rabbi Tarfon. And others say, “G-d is my shepherd.” The *beraita* brings both the opinion of Rabbi Tarfon and other *Tanna'im* who hold that there is a fifth cup; they only argue as to what is recited over it.

The Mishna in *Masechet Pesachim*¹ concludes the order of the drinking of the four cups as follows:

מזגו לו כוס שלישי מברך על מזונו רביעי גומר עליו את הלל ואומר עליו ברכת השיר בין הכוסות הללו אם רוצה לשתות ישתה בין שלישי לרביעי לא ישתה.

They pour for him the third cup, and he recites over it Grace after Meals. [They pour] the fourth cup, he concludes *Hallel* over it and says *Birkat Hashir*. Between the [first two] cups, if one wishes to drink he may drink, but between the third and the fourth he may not drink.

The Mishna makes no mention of a fifth cup. However, the ensuing Gemara² quotes a *beraita* as follows:

The Rabbis taught: The fifth cup – one concludes *Hallel Hagadol* (the great *Hallel*)

Although the *beraita* as we have quoted it is not the version that appears in the printed version of the text, it is the version quoted by the overwhelming majority of *Rishonim* (**Rif, Rambam, Ran, Ba'al Hamaor, Rosh**). How can we reconcile this *beraita* that states that there is a fifth cup with the Mishna mentioned above that only mentions four? Is this a *machloket Tanna'im*? If so, surely the Gemara should have pointed this out, as it often does: “*Mani matnitin, d'lo k'Rabbi Tarfon,*” who is the author of the Mishna? It is surely not Rabbi Tarfon.”³

Rashbam's Understanding of the Mishna and *Beraita*

The *Yerushalmi*⁴ explains that the reason one may not drink between the third and fourth cup is that one might become drunk, “for drinking during the meal (i.e., the preceding cups) doesn't

1. Mishna, *Pesachim* 10:7.

2. *Pesachim* 118a.

3. This question is raised by the *Milchamot Hashem*, Rosh, and Ran, among others.

4. *Yerushalmi*, *Pesachim* 10:6.

cause drunkenness, but after the meal does cause drunkenness.”

The **Rashbam**,⁵ commenting on the Mishna, brings the *Yerushalmi* and explains that the concern for drunkenness is that one won't be able to complete the *Hallel*. From the Mishna it is clear that there is no mention of a fifth cup, and based on the *Yerushalmi* and Rashbam, perhaps there is even a prohibition of reciting *Hallel Hagadol* over the fifth cup because it will turn out that one has drunk an intoxicating cup of wine (the fourth cup) before the conclusion of *Hallel*.

The **Rashbam** reconciles the *beraita* with the Mishna by stating that the correct version of the *beraita* is “the fourth cup” (and not “the fifth cup”). However, many *Rishonim* retain the version of the *beraita* citing a fifth cup, and the disparity between the Mishna and *beraita* therefore must be addressed.

Other Opinions of the *Rishonim*

The **Ba'al Hamaor**⁶ and **Ra'avad** hold that the *beraita* indeed argues with the Mishna that stipulated four cups, but the *halacha* follows the Mishna, and not the *beraita*.⁷ The **Ba'al Hamaor** does add though that if one wants to drink the fifth cup (even without reciting *Hallel Hagadol*), we cannot rebuke him, as it is permitted in principle.

The **Ramban**⁸ understands that the *beraita* is not arguing with the Mishna. Rabbi Tarfon is merely adding that if one wants to drink a fifth cup, he needs to recite the *Hallel Hagadol* over

it. The Ramban explains that if one wants to drink wine after the four cups it is prohibited, as it looks like one is starting a second Seder (which would be prohibited from the Torah in the times of the *Beit Hamikdash*, for one cannot eat from two separate *korban pesachs*) unless he says *Hallel Hagadol* with it (which would show that this is actually an extension of the first Seder). The Ramban concludes, though, that the *minhag* of all of Israel is not to drink after concluding *Birkat HaShir*.

The **Ran**⁹ suggests two ways to reconcile the Mishna and *beraita*. The first is similar to the Ramban: If one wants to drink more wine, one must recite *Hallel Hagadol* over it. His second answer is that it is actually a mitzva *min hamuvchar* – the best way to perform the mitzva – to drink the fifth cup and recite *Hallel Hagadol* over it. The Ran states that the opinion of the Rambam leans towards his second answer.

The **Rosh**¹⁰ quotes **Rabbeinu Yonah** who prohibits drinking after the four cups of wine, as one has an obligation to learn the *halachot* of Pesach and tell the story of *yetziat mitzrayim* the entire night, and we are concerned that one might fall asleep due to the consumption of alcohol. Rabbeinu Yonah bases this on the Tosefta¹¹ that states: “One is obligated to occupy himself with the laws of Pesach the entire night.”

In summary, some *Rishonim* hold that it is permitted (*Ba'al Hamaor*; *Hasagot HaRaavad* on the Rif) or even a mitzva (Ran and possibly Rambam) to drink the fifth cup, while others

5. Rashbam, *Masechet Pesachim* 118a s.v. *bein gimmel l'dalet lo yishteh*.

6. *Ba'al Hamaor* on the Rif, 26b s.v. *katav HaRif*.

7. The Ramban argues vehemently with the *Ba'al Hamaor* on this point.

8. *Milchamot Hashem* on the Rif.

9. Ran on the Rif, 26b s.v. *chamishi*.

10. Rosh, *Pesachim* 10:33.

11. Tosefta, *Pesachim* 10:8.

hold that it prohibited to drink the fifth cup either according to the strict letter of the law (Rabbeinu Yonah and perhaps the Rashbam) or due to the accepted minhag (Ramban, Rosh).

What is the underlying argument between the *Rishonim* as to whether the fifth cup is forbidden, permitted, or recommended?

The Nature of the Mitzva of *Sippur Yetziat Mitzrayim*

Perhaps we can explain that this argument hinges on the very nature of the Torah obligation of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim*. One could posit that those *Rishonim* who prohibit drinking the fifth cup hold that the nature of the mitzva is not just to tell the story and praise Hashem, but also to focus on the *halachot* of Pesach, and in order to do this, one has to have lucidness and cannot be inebriated in any way (more than the four cups that the Sages instituted).

The **Griz**¹² explains that the Torah speaks to us in two different fashions: One is by way of story and narrative, and the other is by way of mitzvot, *chukim* and *halachot*. He parallels these two elements with the makeup of the *Haggada* and concludes explicitly that the mitzva of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* on the Seder night includes both aspects: There is an obligation to tell the story of *yetziat mitzrayim* as well as an obligation to explain the practical mitzvot of the night.

On the other hand, the *Rishonim* who permit drinking the fifth cup understand that the focus of the mitzva of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* is transmitting the story in any form, and if one wants to drink and tell it while inebriated, one still fulfills the obligation.¹³

The Scope of the Mitzva

Another understanding of the *machloket* is that it revolves around the scope of the mitzva. According to those who permit drinking, the mitzva is only until the latest possible time one can partake of the matza and maror.¹⁴ However, according to Rabbeinu Yonah, the obligation exists the entire night until the morning, as mentioned in the Gemara and *Haggada* regarding Rabbi Akiva and the other *Tanna'im* in Bnei Brak.¹⁵

From Rabbeinu Yonah's words¹⁶ it seems that he holds that both elements are true, namely that the nature of the mitzva of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* includes learning the *halachot* of Pesach as well as the story, and the scope extends until the morning, and does not apply only during the meal. Accordingly, even if one has completed the meal, we are still concerned that a person should not become drunk, as the obligation of learning *Hilchot Pesach* is still incumbent upon him until dawn.

12. *Chidushei HaGriz Hachadashim, siman 37.*

13. See for example Ramban, *Sefer HaMitzvot* 157, where he stresses telling the story and singing and praising Hashem.

14. According to this approach, the deadline would be *chatzot*, in accordance with those opinions that give this as the deadline for consuming the *korban pesach* as well as the *afikoman*.

15. Rabbeinu Yonah himself in his *Seder Leil Pesach paskened* like Rabbi Elazar Ben Azaryah that one has to finish eating by *chatzot*. This seems to contradict how we have explained Rabbeinu Yonah here. Furthermore, Rabbeinu Yonah only mentioned the obligation of learning *Hilchot Pesach* and doesn't refer to continuing with *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* until dawn. One could argue that this is an independent obligation not connected to the mitzva of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim*. However, the *Tur* and *Rosh* quote him as including discussing *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* together with the obligation to study *Hilchot Pesach*; accordingly, it sounds like both are included within the mitzva of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim*. In the body of the article we have stated Rabbeinu Yonah's opinion based on how the *Tur* understood him. However, this matter requires further analysis.

16. *Tur* quoting Rabbeinu Yonah. See previous note.

When clarifying the opinion of the Rashbam we are left slightly in the dark. As mentioned previously, he states that the reason for not drinking between the cups is lest one becomes inebriated and is unable to recite *Hallel*. Arguably, after *Hallel* is recited on the fourth cup, he might not have a problem of adding a fifth cup. This is how the *Ba'al Hamaor* understood his opinion. On the other hand, the Rashbam earlier in his commentary brings another reason for not drinking in between the third and fourth cup¹⁷ that it looks as if one is adding onto the cups instituted by the Sages. This reason might apply even after the end of the Seder. Alternatively, there might not be a problem of adding once the Seder has ended. Yet another possibility is that the Rashbam would actually agree with Rabbeinu Yonah as we have explained him above.

The Opinion of the Ran and Rambam Revisited

As mentioned, according to the Ran's second answer, it is actually a mitzva *min hamuvchar* to drink the fifth cup over *Hallel Hagadol*. The Ran states that the words of the Rambam lean toward this understanding as well. However, the actual words of the **Rambam** are somewhat ambiguous, as he states as follows:¹⁸

And afterwards, he recites the *birkat hamazon* over a third cup and **drinks** it. And afterwards, he **pours** a fourth cup and finishes the *Hallel* over it. And he recites the *Birkat*

HaShir and that is: May all of your creatures praise you, etc. And he recites the blessing *Borei Pri Hagefen* and does not taste anything afterwards the entire night, except for water. And he should **pour a fifth cup** and say upon it the *Hallel Hagadol* (*Tehillim* 136)... **And this cup is not obligatory like the other four cups.**

The Ran understands that the word *limzog* (to pour) means to drink. The fact that the Rambam used this language regarding the other cups as well might support this as well. Furthermore, he states that this fifth cup isn't an obligation similar to the four cups, implying that it may be drunk, just that the level of obligation is different.¹⁹

What is the logic behind the opinion of the Ran (and possibly Rambam)? The opinions which forbid a fifth cup seem logical because the nature or timeframe (or both) of the mitzva of *sippur yetziat mitzrayim* do not allow for excessive drunkenness. However, the opinions of the Rambam and Ran seem puzzling: If the mitzva of *sippur* can co-exist with (and perhaps even be enhanced by) drunkenness, why, then, is the fifth cup only recommended and not obligatory like the other four?

The **Netziv**²⁰ explains the distinction of the Rambam and Ran between the obligatory four cups of wine and the fifth cup, which is only a mitzva *min hamuvchar*, in the following way. The first four cups parallel the four expressions of redemption. The fifth cup parallels the expression "*veyadatam et Hashem* – And you will know

17. Rashbam, *Pesachim* 108a, s.v. *bein shelishi*.

18. Rambam, *Hilchot Chametz Umatza* 8:10.

19. On the other hand, one could argue that the Rambam only mentioned pouring and did not state that one drinks or says a *beracha*, something that he stated regarding the other cups. This implies that here he only pours but does not actually drink it. In addition, the Rambam's formulation "and does not taste anything afterwards the entire night, except for water," which clearly refers to liquids, also implies that the fifth cup is not drunk. If it were drunk, the Rambam probably would have mentioned it before giving this general principle that nothing may be consumed after the cups.

20. *Meromei Hasadeh*, *Pesachim* 118a.

Hashem,²¹ which expresses a certain level of knowing Hashem through *Ruach Hakodesh* and prophecy which was not accessible to all. Hence, it was never instituted as an obligation. He states further that since today we no longer have prophecy until Eliyahu HaNavi will return, the *minhag* arose that no one drinks the fifth cup. This is the reason that we now refer to the fifth cup as the cup of Eliyahu.

A Second Explanation of the Rambam and Ran

Rav Eliashiv²² explained that in relation to the *Afikoman* and the drinking of the four cups of wine, according to Rabbi Elazar Ben Azarya the four cups of wine are also only until midnight, for the telling of *yetziat mitzrayim* must be “at the time when matza and maror are placed in front of you.” If so, the *chiyuv* of telling the story of *yetziat mitzrayim* extends specifically until midnight. However, if one started beforehand, one can continue as an extension of the original obligation. Accordingly, this could be another explanation for the distinction of the Rambam and Ran. According to the Rambam and Ran there is no independent obligation to tell the story the entire night, rather it is an extension of the original mitzva and has a special *geder* of mitzva *min hamuvchar*, and one who does so is praised. However, it is not an independent

obligation and hence, the Sages never instituted the fifth cup as an obligation, for this would imply a new and independent obligation. Furthermore, we now understand why Rabbi Tarfon stated that one must recite *Hallel Hagadol* over the fifth cup. This is not a new obligation, but an extension of *Hallel Hamitzri* and *Nishmat*. Drinking the fifth cup without reciting *Hallel Hagadol* would signify some independent obligation which doesn't exist.

This is in contrast to Rabbeinu Yonah and possibly the Rashbam who held that the obligation continues the entire night.

The Fifth Cup in Halacha

The *poskim* also have differing opinions regarding the fifth cup, which are based on many of the different principles and approaches outlined by the *Rishonim*, as we will see.

The ***Shulchan Aruch***²³ does not mention a fifth cup at all, and the ***Rema***²⁴ only mentions that someone who has a great need to drink may drink a fifth cup provided that he recites *Hallel Hagadol* on the cup. However, the ***Chok Yaakov***²⁵ states one should fill (*limzog*) one extra cup, and this is called the cup of Eliyahu HaNavi.²⁶ This is also mentioned by the *Shulchan Aruch Harav*.²⁷

The simple understanding of the *Chok Yaakov* is that we only pour the fifth cup,²⁸ not drink it, and other *Acharonim* do not mention drinking it

21. *Shemot* 6:7.

22. *He'arot Rav Eliashiv, Masechet Pesachim* 120b.

23. *Shulchan Aruch* o.c. 480.

24. 481:1.

25. *Chok Yaakov* o.c. 480:6.

26. The *Chok Yaakov* also brings the *minhag* that in many places, people do not lock their rooms that they sleep in on the Seder night, so that if Eliyahu HaNavi comes, he will find the door open and we will run out to greet him. He noted that there is support for this custom from the *Talmud Yerushalmi*.

27. *Shulchan Aruch Harav* 480:45.

28. Although the Ran argued that when the Rambam used the word *limzog*, he meant to drink it; here it seems more difficult to say that this is the intention of the *Chok Yaakov*: The Rambam used that language for the other cups as well, and also compared

either. At the very least though, we have a later source that records the custom of adopting the notion of the fifth cup in some manner.

The *Chok Yaakov* also adds a novelty that this cup connects us to concepts of faith in the final redemption. This is in fact the first record of classifying this cup as the cup of Eliyahu. It seems that the *Netziv* quoted above adopted this position and elucidated it further.

The *Aruch HaShulchan*²⁹ brings the minhag of the **Geonim** that only one who is very thirsty or sick can drink the fifth cup (as the Rema ruled), but concludes as follows: “However, we have never heard or seen such a thing that people act in such a manner.” He then brings the opinion of Rabbeinu Yonah brought in the Tur and Rosh, that one is obligated to delve into the story of *yetziat mitzrayim* the entire night and tell of the wonders and miracles that Hashem did for us, and that if one drinks wine, he will fall asleep shortly thereafter. From the *Aruch HaShulchan*’s formulation, it seems that he holds like Rabbeinu Yonah that not only is there no mitzva to drink the fifth cup, but there is also a prohibition.

Drinking from the Fifth Cup

Up to this point we haven’t seen any of the *Acharonim* who states that one should drink the fifth cup. The *Tzitz Eliezer*³⁰ in his responsa quotes the following in the name of the *Ya’avetz*: “We prepare a big cup and we call it the cup

of Eliyahu, but to drink from it, who ever mentioned that?” He continues that the *Ya’avetz* said that when he was with the *Chatam Sofer*, the cup for Eliyahu stood raised above all the other cups, but no one ever drank from it. The *Ya’avetz*’s custom was to leave it out covered over the entire night, and in the morning to make *Kiddush* over it to fulfill the dictum of the Sages that since we have fulfilled one mitzva with it, we should use it for another.

Evidently, the *Chatam Sofer* never drank the fifth cup at all, while the *Ya’avetz* would only drink from it in the morning after reciting *Kiddush* over it. Perhaps the *Chatam Sofer* held like the *Netziv* that the fifth cup represents the final redemption and prophecy, and therefore would not drink from the cup at all, until the arrival of Eliyahu HaNavi and the renewal of prophecy.

However, the *Divrei Yetziv*³¹ states in the name of the **Rokeach**³² that we pour the fifth cup, recite *Hallel Hagadol*, and drink the fifth cup without leaning. He adds in the name of the *Manhig*³³ that the fifth cup is parallel to the expression “and I will bring you into the land” and is connected to the land.³⁴ The *Divrei Yetziv* concludes with the words of the Ra’avad³⁵ that “there is definitely what to rely on concerning this custom from the words of Rabbi Tarfon, and it is a mitzva to do as he says, and they have already connected this cup to the expression of *v’heveiti*. And even the *Tanna Kamma* stated

the fifth cup to the other four cups, which the *Chok Yaakov* does not do. Hence, we have presented the simple reading of his position as just pouring without drinking.

29. *Aruch HaShulchan*, o.c. 481:1–3.

30. Responsa *Tzitz Eliezer* 2:28.

31. Responsa *Divrei Yetziv*, o.c. 207 and 212.

32. *Rokeach*, *siman* 283.

33. *Sefer HaManhig*, *siman* 51.

34. This is also the opinion of the Ra’avad in his *Hasagot* on the Rif, as opposed to the *Netziv* who connected it to prophecy.

35. *Ibid.*

that one cannot drink less than four cups but regarding adding a cup, he did not say that it is prohibited.” It seems that the *Divrei Yetziv* holds that one can and even should drink the fifth cup.

Concluding Thoughts

The **Maharal**³⁶ explains that the fifth cup focuses on *parnasa* (sustenance), which is an even higher level of redemption than *yetziat mitzrayim*. For although Hashem is above the Heavens, He still cares for each creature, giving them the sustenance they need. This care for each individual, explains the Maharal, is a more complete redemption and is signified by the fifth cup. This is also the theme of *Hallel Hagadol*, which on the one hand describes G-d's loftiness, yet also states, “He gives bread to all his creatures.” The final redemption according to the Maharal will remove any deficiencies that we have.

Rav Shaar Yashuv HaKohen in his introduction to the *sefer zikaron* for his father, Rav David HaKohen (known as “The Nazir”),³⁷ recalls that his father, who waited for the return of prophecy all his life, said that this is the secret of the fifth cup, and when prophecy returns, we will once again have the custom to drink the fifth cup.

36. Maharal, *Sefer Gevurot Hashem*, siman 65.

37. Introduction to the book “*Ish ki Yafti*”.



Quito, Ecuador

קייטו, אקוודור

טבת תשנ"ג

נה. קיצור "ליל הסדר" לאנשים שאינם יודעים עברית

שאלה:

קהילתנו עומדת לארגן סדר פסח ציבורי לאנשי הקהילה. רוב האנשים לא יודעים לקרוא עברית, ולכן הייתי רוצה לדעת האם יש אפשרות לקצר קטעים מסוימים מההגדה שהם לא מעכבים, או האם זה בלתי אפשרי?

תשובה:

אם לפי שיקול דעת הרב חשוב¹ להשמיט או לקצר² חלק מן ההגדה, אפשר לעשות כך בפיוטים של "נרצה"³. אין להשמיט חלקים של "מגיד"⁴, אבל אפשר לקרוא חלק נכבד מהם בלועזית⁵ כדי להקל על המסובים ולהגביר את ההתעניינות. את הקטעים שהם ברכות, פרקי הלל או מן התפילה (בסוף הלל) יש לומר בלשון הקודש⁶. כדאי להשאיר את החלקים היותר ידועים בעברית, כדי לשמור על הטעם המיוחד של הסדר המסורתי.

¹ יש ענין חינוכי-פסיכולוגי בקריאת ההגדה המסורתית בשלימותה, כדי שלא ירגישו כאלו אין צריך ח"ו להתאמץ ולקיים המצוות בשלימותן והידורן, ורק במקום צורך גדול אפשר לקצר במקומות הפחות עיקריים.

² כגון לומר רק את הקטעים האחרונים המסכמים של "אחד מי יודע" או "חד גדיא".

³ מזמורים אלה הם מאוחרים בהשוואה לשאר חלקי ההגדה ואינם מעיקר מצוות היום (סיפור יציאת מצרים, הלל, מצה, מרור וד' כוסות).

⁴ משום שזה עיקר סיפור יציאת מצרים.

⁵ רמ"א או"ח סי' תעג, סעיף ו. פסקנו בעבר (ב"מראה הבוקר" ח"א, ז, 2) שאין לומר את התפילה בלועזית באופן קבוע מגי סיבות, וכולן לא שייכות כאן.

א. קשה לתרגם באופן השומר על הכוונה האמיתית של העניין - בסיפור יציאת מצרים אין מצוה מיוחדת על אמירת כל מלה. המלים הן דרך להגיע ליעד של סיפור יציאת מצרים. בנדון דידן, אדרבה - סיפור יציאת מצרים יהיה יותר מושלם אם יאמרנו בשפה שמבינים. הרב א"י הכהן קוק זצ"ל כותב ב"אורח משפט" (סי' קכח ס"ק לד): "חייב כל אחד לדעת פירוש פשוט בהגדה מתחילת 'עבדים היינו' עד 'הרי זה משובח' ולתרגם לבני ביתו שיבינו, ואחר כך 'מתחילה עובדי ע"ז' ויפסח מצה ומרור' ויבכל דור ודור חייב עד ברכת 'גאל ישראל'.

ב. יש סגולות רבות בתפילה שנתקנה ע"י אנשי כנסת הגדולה, התלויות בלשון - סברא זאת שייכת במקצת גם כאן, אבל לא כמו בתפילה, שהרי 'מגיד' הוא ליקוט של מאמרי חז"ל שלא נכתבו מלכתחילה כדי לצרפם לסדר פסח.

ג. מסוכן לשנות את התפילה בגלל כניעה לזרם הריפורמיות - אולם בהגדה, שעיקר תקנתה הוא העברת המסר ולא הנוסח המדויק, לא מורגשת הקריאה בלועזית כל כך כשינוי מהותי של המנהג הקדום. נוסף על כך, כבר מקובל מדורי דורות בחוגים של יראים ושלמים לתרגם קטעים של ההגדה בלועזית (מה שלא היה נהוג בתפילה). על-פי הצעתנו ישארו חלקים של ההגדה בלשון הקודש, והמקור לא ישבח אפוא לגמרי.

⁶ עיין בנימוקים ביחס לתפילה בהערה 5.

