



Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

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HIGH PERFORMANCE MATZAH

Kenneth Broodo <broke@gardere.com> sent us the following:

Bernie decides to become an aeronautical engineer. He goes to the best schools, studies hard and finally graduates. Soon he gains a reputation as the finest aeronautical engineer in all the land and starts his own company.

His company is such a hit that the President of the United States calls Bernie into his office. "Bernie," says the president, "we want to commission your company to build an advanced jet fighter for the United States Air Force. Go out and design the best jet fighter ever made."

Bernie is tremendously excited. The entire resources of his company go into building the most advanced jet fighter in history. But at the first test flight, disaster strikes: The wings can't take the strain and they break clean off of the fuselage! Bernie's company redesigns the jet, but again the wings break off. They try a third time, but the same thing happens.

Beside himself with worry, Bernie goes to the synagogue to pray. The rabbi sees Bernie and asks what's the matter. Bernie pours his heart out to the rabbi.

After hearing the problem, the rabbi put his arm on Bernie's shoulder and says, "I can solve your problem. Just drill a row of holes directly above and below where the wing meets the fuselage. If you do this I guarantee the wings won't fall off."

Bernie just smiles and thanks the rabbi for his simple advice. But the more he thinks about it, the more he realizes he has nothing to lose. So, Bernie does exactly as the rabbi said. On the next design of the jet, they drill a row of holes directly above and below where the wings meet the fuselage. And the test flight goes perfectly! The wings don't fall off!

Brimming with joy, Bernie goes to the synagogue to tell the rabbi that his advice worked.

"Naturally," says the rabbi.

"But Rabbi, how did you know that drilling the holes would prevent the wings from falling off?"

"Bernie," the rabbi says, "I'm an old man. I've celebrated Passover many, many times. And in all those years, not once — not once! — has the matzah ever broken along the perforation."

WHAT'S THE HAGGADAH

Fred from Tennessee <Fred4@centuryinter.net> wrote:

*Dear Rabbi,
What is the Haggadah?*

Dear Fred,

The Haggadah is a book that Jews read on the first night of Passover. It tells about our slavery in Egypt and the miracles G-d did for us when freeing us. The word *haggadah* means "telling," which comes from the Biblical command: "And you shall tell your child on that day, saying: 'G-d did (miracles) for me when I left Egypt so that I would fulfill the Torah's commandment.'" (Exodus 13:8 and Rashi)

PESACH IN A BOX

Joseph Cohen <jbcohen@webtv.net> wrote:

*Dear Rabbi,
My wife and I are kashering are home for Passover for the first time this year. We are now purchasing Passover dishes, utensils, etc. My question is, when we remove the everyday dishes, where do they go? May we put them in the boxes that held the Passover dishes? Is it better for the Passover dishes to not come in contact with any surface that was touched by everyday dishes? Do we change the plastic*

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containers in our kitchen drawers? Do we cover the inside of the cabinets?

Dear Joseph Cohen,

First of all, congratulations on your first "kosher for Passover" home. Many happy returns.

You can store clean everyday utensils in the Passover containers. After Passover, you can put the Passover dishes back into the same containers. Just be careful not to get them mixed up.

It is customary to cover cupboards and utensil holders that were used during the year and will be used on Passover. If you can't do this or can't obtain new utensil holders, then remove the inserts, clean the drawers completely and put the Passover cutlery directly into the drawer.

And by the way, I must warn you about one of the mysteries of Passover: The Passover utensils come out of a specific amount of storage space, and yet they never seem to all fit back in again! I have never found a rational explanation for this phenomenon!

MEANING OF LEANING

Roger Harper from Walsall, United Kingdom <roger.harper@virgin.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

When and why did the tradition begin of reclining at the Passover meal? In the book of Exodus it seems that the people were instructed for all time to eat the Passover meal with sandals on their feet and staffs in hand as if ready to move on. So why do we lean, which seems to indicate a lack of readiness to move on?

Dear Roger Harper,

Rather than a tradition, reclining while eating the matzah and drinking the four cups of wine is a halacha. Leaning symbolizes freedom and aristocracy. It is first recorded in the *Mishnah* (c. 200 CE), but it dates back much farther than that.

Only the Jews in Egypt were commanded to eat in a state of readiness to leave; they were indeed getting ready to leave Egypt. But that command was specific for those people and for that year alone.

Sources:

- Tractate Pesachim 99b, 108a
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SPIRITUAL EXCISION

Name@Withheld wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

If I marry someone who once ate bread on Pesach, do my children get "karet" (lit. "cut off")?

Dear Name@Withheld,

The Torah says that eating bread on Passover is a serious sin, and carries the punishment of *karet*.

Your question assumes that this punishment of *karet* affects a person's children. Without going into whether this is true or not, it's important to point out that *karet* only applies to someone who intentionally transgresses with full knowledge that the act is forbidden by the Torah. Furthermore, sincere repentance atones even for such acts.

So, if the person you intend to marry was not fully aware of the sin of eating bread on Passover, or has since repented, you need not worry.

REMEMBRANCE

Jacob <tailer@dc.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

Why do you think a Yizkor (memorial) service is traditionally held to remember our deceased loved ones even on some joyous holidays such as Passover and Sukkot?

Dear Jacob,

We mention our deceased on the holy days because remembering them and pledging charity on their behalf, particularly on these holy days, helps elevate their souls.

I would like to suggest that remembering the deceased can actually bring a certain sense of joy. We believe that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and we anticipate a time when we will all be celebrating together once again.

MOMMY, ARE WE THERE YET?

Sharon Kramer Loew <loew@worldnet.att.net> from NY, NY wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

My brother asks on behalf of his two small sons, age 6 and almost 3, (my darling nephews) is it permissible to begin the Pesach Seder early; that is, before sundown, so that the children will be able to stay up for its entirety?

Dear Sharon Kramer Loew,

Unfortunately for your darling nephews it is not possible to begin the Seder before nightfall. But have everything ready so you can begin right at nightfall. Don't rush the proceedings, but do move through them efficiently without wasting time. I also suggest you give the children a nap in

the afternoon so that they will be fully awake and able to participate!

Source:

- Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 472

TOP (KOSHER) DOG

Naomi Kolberg <kolberggroup@pikeonline.net> from Milford, Pennsylvania wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

Is there such thing as kosher dog food?

Dear Naomi,

Dogs don't need to "keep kosher." However, there are kashrut considerations when feeding your dog.

For example, it's forbidden to own or derive benefit from *chametz* during Passover. Therefore, if a dog food contains *chametz*, it's forbidden to own it or give it to your dog during Passover.

Another consideration: It is forbidden to derive benefit from milk and meat that were cooked together. Therefore, if a dog food contains such a mixture, it's forbidden to give it to your dog.

There are brands of dog food certified as Kosher for Passover, not because they are kosher for humans, but because they contain no *chametz*!

PESACH HUT

Saul "The Maven" Caplan from beautiful, politically correct, Safety Harbor, Florida <maven@IntNet.net> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

I deliver pizzas 2-3 evenings a week. Do I have to take the entire week of Pesach off?

Dear Saul "The Maven" Caplan,

On Pesach, it's forbidden to eat, own or derive any benefit from *chametz*. I asked a renowned halachic authority here in Jerusalem about your case. He said that you are not allowed to deliver pizza during Passover. Since you earn wages by doing so, you are thereby considered to be deriving benefit from the *chametz*.

By the way: This pizza shop probably puts meat on some of their pizzas. If so, you may have to find another job. You see, milk and meat that is cooked together is similar to *chametz* in that you are not allowed to derive benefit from it. You should consult with the nearest Orthodox Rabbi about this issue, or get back to us.

Yiddle Riddle

One Shabbat, Reuven invites Shimon's family for dinner. After the meal, Reuven and Shimon say *birkat hamazon* (the blessings after the meal) but they do not say exactly the same words when doing so. The next Shabbat, Shimon invites Reuven's family for dinner. When they say *birkat hamazon*, this time Reuven says exactly the same words that Shimon said last week and Shimon says exactly what Reuven said last week.

A few days later, Reuven invites Shimon's family over for another meal. This time, *birkat hamazon* is even more dissimilar between the two of them. The next day Shimon invites Reuven's family for a meal, and once again, Shimon says the exact words that Reuven said the previous day, and Reuven says the exact words that Shimon said.

Levi thinks that this is due to increasing tensions between the families, so he gets his wife to invite the two families over for meals the next month. During the first dinner, Reuven and Shimon say *birkat hamazon* the same way. "*Shalom al Yisrael* — peace upon Israel," Levi thinks. But the following dinner, they again say *birkat hamazon* differently!

What is going on here?

Answer:

The first Shabbat, the differences between Reuven and Shimon are as follows: Shimon, the guest, adds the blessing for the host into his *birkat hamazon*, but the host does not. This procedure is reversed the next Shabbat.

A few days later it is the 14th of Adar, which is Purim for everyone except those who reside in an ancient walled city like Jerusalem. Reuven, who resides outside Jerusalem, invites Shimon, who resides in Jerusalem, to his home for a meal. Since it is Purim for Reuven but not for Shimon, Reuven adds the Purim addition of "*al hanisim*" to his *birkat hamazon* while Shimon does not. The next day, the 15th of Adar, Shimon reciprocates. The 15th of Adar is Purim for those in Jerusalem, but not for those outside. This time, Shimon says "*al hanisim*" while Reuven does not.

The next month is Pesach. They are invited to Levi's house on the 7th day of Pesach, and they say the normal *birkat hamazon*, including the holiday addition of "*ya'ale v'yavo*." The next day, however, is the 8th day of Pesach for Reuven, who is still a "*chutznik*" — a person visiting the Land of Israel. Therefore, he says "*ya'ale v'yavo*." Shimon, who resides permanently in the Land of Israel, celebrates only 7 days of Pesach, and does not say "*ya'ale v'yavo*."

THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

*Comments, quibbles, and reactions
concerning previous "Ask-the-Rabbi" features.*

Re: Yiddle Riddle: In what situation could two people in the same place be obligated to say *kiddush* on different nights? That is, the night the first one is obligated, the second one is not, and the night the second one is obligated, the first one is not? (Ask the Rabbi # 183):

My 10 year old son, David Rosen, had a different possible answer. Could it not occur in Israel where there is a visiting non-Israeli 12-year-old who is required to keep two days of Yom Tov? He actually turns bar mitzvah on the second day and thus is then obligated for kiddush, whereas he wasn't obligated on the first day (when a resident would have been).

*Martin Rosen, Thornhill, Canada
< mrosen@passport.ca >*

I once heard a ruling that if one crosses the international time line, he continues to count sefirat ha-omer as before and does not go with where he is now. He also will celebrate Shavuos according to his count which will be a day off of everyone else there. Hence, he would be obligated to make kiddush on "his" Shavuos while everyone else would be exempt, while the next/previous night the reverse would be the case. (PS I believe most poskim don't rule this way.)

Micha Kushner < micha.kushner@telrad.co.il >

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