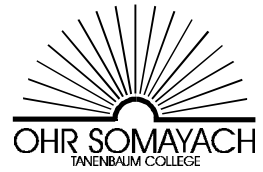




# Ask The Rabbi...



March 19, 1994 Issue #15

This edition contains:

1. What to do when Pesach occurs on Saturday night.
2. An insight into the meaning of *Dayenu*.

Balint from Grinnel, Iowa wrote:

*I'm very confused about how to proceed this Pesach.*

1. *When is the Fast of the First-Born?*
2. *When Erev Pesach occurs on Shabbat when is Bedikat Chametz (checking for chametz)?*
3. *Do we eat bread at all of the Shabbat Meals?*

Also, Professor David Mitchell from SMU asks:

*In the song "Dayenu" we say that if G-d brought us to Mount Sinai and **did not** give us the Torah it would have been enough. How can that be? Could you explain?*

First of all, a few relevant points of Jewish Law:

1. This year, the Fast of the First Born is on Thursday, March 24. It begins at dawn and ends after the Evening services. Preferably, one should not eat until after Bedikat Chametz, but may have a snack after the Evening prayers if hungry. Many people attend a Siyum (a celebration of the completion of a Tractate of the Talmud), a Brit Mila, or a Pidyon Haben on the day of the fast, and are thereby permitted to eat afterwards.

2. Bedikat Chametz is done on Thursday night, immediately following the Evening prayers. After checking for chametz, you should take any chametz that you plan to eat on Friday and Shabbat, and put it in a safe place where it won't be forgotten.

One should burn the chametz on Friday morning, preferably during the fifth daylight hour (check a local Jewish calendar for the exact time). One does not nullify ownership of the chametz on Friday -- rather this should be done on Shabbat during the fifth daylight hour. On Shabbat one may not eat Matzah, because we want its taste to be fresh at the Seder -- so we must use *bread* for the Shabbat night and morning meals. Because bread may not be eaten after the end of the fourth daylight hour, one must eat the morning meal prior to this time.

3. The third meal poses a problem, because there are some Halachic authorities who state that the third meal must be eaten in the *afternoon*, and there are also authorities who rule that one must eat *bread* at the third meal. It is forbidden to eat bread after the end of the fourth daylight hour so what do we do? The preferred scenario is as follows: You get up very early on Shabbat morning, pray, make Kiddush, wash hands for bread, eat

Challah with a light meal, and recite Birkat Hamazon. You then leave the table for a short while, wash again, eat bread, and again say Birkat Hamazon. All of this must be completed by the end of the fourth daylight hour. Later in the day you sit down to a meal of Kosher for Passover food (meat, fruit, salads). If the end of the fourth hour is approaching -- don't risk having another meal of chametz. Wait until later, and eat a meal that is Kosher for Passover.

Havdallah is said during Kiddush at the Seder.

Now about Dayenu. Certainly we don't mean that we could envision life without the Torah, or without *any* of the fifteen "Ma'alot" mentioned in the song of Dayenu. What we mean is that we have reason to be thankful for His bringing us to Mount Sinai -- just *being at Sinai* bestowed upon us great benefit. The incredible unity that we experienced, the cleansing from the effects of the sin of Adam and Eve, and the closeness to G-d that we achieved, were all so precious that they deserve thanksgiving and praise in their own right.

Sources:

- Rabbi S. D. Eider - A Summary of the Halachos of Pesach.
- Yalkut Meam Loez, The Haggadah.
- Otzar Hatefilot, The Haggadah, Iyun Hatefilah.

**ASK THE RABBI will not be posted for the next two weeks due to Pesach. The next posting will be on the 9th of April, G-d willing. A Happy and Kosher Pesach to ALL!**

If you have E-Mail and a question, you can submit it to Ask The Rabbi for possible inclusion in a future edition. Just write your question using your E-Mail program, set the subject to "Ask The Rabbi" and send it to [ohr@virtual.co.il](mailto:ohr@virtual.co.il). We can't include all questions submitted, but we do try to respond to everyone.

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