

Torat Imecha



HILCHOT PESACH



The Torat Imecha Halacha curriculum is prepared by Rabbi Eli Ozarowski.

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Torat Imecha Hilchot Shabbat continues after Pesach.

Cleaning for Pesach

1 – Cleaning for Pesach (Part 1)

1. The Torah forbids owning any chametz during Pesach, even if one does not intend to eat it (Rambam, *Hilchot Chametz Umatzah* 1:2). Therefore, one is required to clean their home before Pesach to ensure that no edible chametz remains in their possession over the festival. While many people take the opportunity to do a full “spring cleaning” before Pesach, the actual obligation is only to remove chametz, not dirt or dust.
2. Only chametz that is edible by a dog falls under the prohibition of ownership during Pesach. Chametz that has become moldy, rotten, completely covered with dust, or otherwise entirely inedible—that even a dog would not eat—is exempt from this prohibition and does not need to be removed (*Shulchan Aruch*, O.C. 442:2; *Mishnah Berurah* 10).

2 – Cleaning for Pesach (Part 2)

1. As mentioned previously, the prohibition of owning chametz on Pesach applies only to chametz that is edible by a dog. Some *poskim* hold that this applies only to edible chametz larger than a *k'zayit*, meaning that small crumbs—such as those from bread, crackers, or cereal—do not need to be removed (*Magen Avraham*; *Mishnah Berurah* 434). Others maintain that even crumbs are included in the prohibition and must be cleaned and disposed of (*Piskei Teshuvot* 431; *Minchat Asher*, *Haggadah*).
2. The common practice follows the stricter opinion. Many contemporary *poskim* take an in-between approach; that one must search for and remove all edible chametz that one might come to eat. This includes whole pieces of breakfast cereal (e.g., whole Cheerios), small pretzels, croutons, or any other small but edible pieces of chametz. In contrast, tiny crumbs on the floor that no one would ever eat do not

need to be searched for or cleaned according to strict *halacha*, and one may be lenient in this regard. As mentioned previously, all agree that inedible crumbs, dirt, or dust are not included in the obligation to clean.

3 – Machshavah

Preparing for Pesach often involves long hours of cleaning, which can sometimes feel tedious and overwhelming. The process can be exhausting, frustrating, and even stressful. However, one way to counter these negative feelings is by shifting our perspective and focusing on the deeper, symbolic meaning behind our efforts.

Chazal teach us that *chametz* represents the *yetzer hara*—the evil inclination—because, like leavened dough that rises and expands, it symbolizes arrogance, pride, and self-importance. Just as *chametz* inflates, so too does our ego, distancing us from humility and self-improvement.

With this in mind, our cleaning can take on a greater significance. The Radbaz suggests that as we meticulously remove crumbs from our homes, we can also reflect on the process of removing negative traits from within ourselves. Each act of scrubbing, sweeping, and searching can serve as a spiritual exercise—an opportunity to rid our *neshamot* of arrogance, impatience, and other undesirable qualities that may have accumulated over the year. This internal cleansing is not easy, just as physical cleaning is not easy, but it is deeply meaningful and worthwhile.

If we approach Pesach cleaning not just as a physical chore but as a spiritual journey, we may find ourselves feeling more fulfilled and less frustrated. By simultaneously engaging in both physical and spiritual cleansing, we can elevate the experience, transforming it from a burden into an opportunity for personal growth. In this way, our cleaning will accomplish more than just ridding our homes of *chametz*—it will help rid our hearts of *spiritual chametz* as well.

4 – Cleaning for Pesach (Part 3)

1. One must clean all locations in one's house in which *chametz* may have potentially been brought by anyone, including children (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 433:3; Mishna Berura 433:19). In most homes, this includes all rooms, such as the living room, dining room, hallways, bedrooms, bathrooms, and basements (R. Shimon Eider, *Halachos of Pesach*, p.70). In some homes, storage rooms or attics need not be cleaned, if one is certain that *chametz* was never brought there during the rest of

the year by anyone (Shulchan Aruch, *ibid.*), including children, such as if the room is normally locked.

2. One must clean the kitchen and surfaces where food is normally placed extra carefully (e.g., food pantries, counters, refrigerators, tables). Even those opinions that do not require cleaning crumbs less than the size of a *k'zayit* agree that one must carefully clean these areas to prevent even tiny crumbs of chametz from being mixed in with Pesach food and being accidentally consumed (Bedikat Chametz Ubiuro 3:3; Oholei Halachah p.25). For this reason, many cover these surfaces with an additional covering to ensure that no chametz crumbs are mixed in with Pesach food.

5 – Cleaning for Pesach (Part 4)

1. One should check all locations within rooms that may have chametz present. However, one is not required to clean or search in places that are difficult to reach. For example, one need not exert excessive effort to move heavy bookshelves in order to search for chametz since one would not normally move the bookshelves for any reason, and any potential chametz would not be accessible on Pesach (Shulchan Aruch Harav 433:19; Oholei Halachah p.26). Alternatively, chametz is not put in closets that are very high. Children also cannot reach there and thus do not need to be checked (Peninei Halachah, Pesach 4:4). Any possible chametz in such locations will be nullified when reciting the Bitul Chametz declaration before Pesach.
2. Some poskim hold that one's books and *sefarim* must all be checked for chametz (Chazon Ish, O.C. 116:18). Others hold that they need not be checked at all (Chazon Ovadia, Pesach). A third opinion, which is widely accepted practically, suggests that no checking is needed, but books that may have been used around chametz should not be brought to the table on Pesach without checking to prevent consuming them accidentally (R. Moshe Feinstein, cited by R. Eider, Halachos of Pesach, p.72; Peninei Halachah 4:7). Bentchers should ideally be put away for Pesach (R. Eider, *ibid.*).

6 – Cleaning for Pesach (Part 5)

1. One must also clean one's car, assuming that chametz was occasionally brought inside (R. Eider, p.71, and other contemporary poskim). If there are small, edible crumbs in the car (e.g., edible pieces of Cheerios or crackers, common with young

children), one should try to vacuum them or take the car to a car wash, since it is difficult to clean these crumbs in other ways. In cases where this is difficult, one should consult with a rabbinic authority.

2. Outside porches and yards need not be cleaned for chametz. The reason is that it can be assumed that birds have consumed any remaining edible chametz. If one knows that chametz was present there on the night of Bedikat Chametz, one should include that area as part of one's search, since it is not assumed that the birds consumed that chametz in such a short time (Shulchan Aruch 433:6; Mishnah Berurah 433:27; Bedikat Chametz Ubiur, ch.3).

7 – Cleaning for Pesach (Part 6)

1. In addition to cleaning one's home, one must also clean and check for chametz in the workplace the last day one is there before Pesach. The reason is that, as discussed previously, one may not own chametz on Pesach, even if it is located in a place one will not use during the festival (Piskei Teshuvot 433 and other contemporary poskim).
2. When cleaning for chametz, one easy way to ensure any remaining chametz is not edible even according to those who require cleaning small crumbs is to use a cleaning solution or cleaning spray and make sure it comes in contact with every part of the surface. This renders any potential crumbs inedible, even if one does not actually dispose of them.

8– Cleaning for Pesach (Part 7)

1. One who has cleaned their house thoroughly for chametz must still perform the required Bedikat Chametz (search for chametz) on the night before Pesach. Some poskim maintain that one must still search the entire house in an exacting manner as if one did not clean at all beforehand (see Piskei Teshuvot 433; Sidur Pesach K'hilchato 13). However, many poskim hold that one need not search every nook and cranny that was cleaned well in the preceding days. Rather, one searches the house normally and verifies from those who cleaned that the previous, more thorough, cleaning was done properly (Kaf Hachaim 433:85; Halichot Shlomo, Pesach ch. 5; Peninei Halachah 4:8). For example, one need not scrutinize each drawer in a closet or cabinet during *Bedikat Chametz*. Rather, one can give a quick look to make sure

there is no obvious chametz and confirm with family members to ensure that it was cleaned properly.

2. Poskim disagree as to whether one who plans to be away from one's home for the entire Pesach must clean the house beforehand or may simply sell the entire house. Many contemporary poskim recommend cleaning at least a portion of the house, such as one room, so that one can fulfill the mitzvah of removing and searching for chametz (Peninei Halachah 4:11; R. Yaakov Ariel, cited in Oholei Halachah, p.43). It is advisable to consult with one's local rabbi concerning the details of this situation.

9 – Machshavah

Pesach is known as *Zeman Cheiruteinu*, the time of our freedom. However, our freedom from Egypt was not merely about escaping physical servitude—it was a spiritual liberation that allowed us to redirect our lives toward serving Hashem. True freedom is not the absence of responsibility, but the ability to live with purpose and devotion. The Exodus gave us the opportunity to break free not only from Egyptian oppression but also from the spiritual limitations that had weighed us down, enabling us to embrace a higher calling. As the Mishnah says, only one who engages in Torah study is considered “free.”

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook (Maamarei HaReiyah, vol. 1, p. 158) explains that deep within every person is a desire to serve Hashem with complete devotion. Yet, the yetzer hara and worldly temptations often cloud this inner drive, creating barriers to true spiritual freedom. The more we struggle against these distractions, the more we refine ourselves and attain real *cheirut*—the ability to serve Hashem with body and soul. Pesach cleaning, though physically demanding, mirrors this inner battle. As we remove the chametz from our homes, we symbolically remove the spiritual obstacles that prevent us from fully dedicating ourselves to Hashem. This process helps us internalize that true freedom is not about indulging in worldly pleasures but about breaking free from them, so we can serve Hashem wholeheartedly.

Let us approach our Pesach preparations with this perspective in mind. Every effort we put into cleaning is not just a chore—it is an act of spiritual refinement. As we work to rid our homes of chametz, we should also strive to free ourselves from the distractions that pull us away from Hashem. In doing so, we prepare not just our physical space but also our hearts, ensuring that when we sit down at the Seder, we are truly free—ready to embrace our role as *avdei Hashem* with joy and devotion.

Erev Pesach on Shabbat

This year, Erev Pesach (14th of Nissan) falls on Shabbat, presenting many important halachic questions regarding the proper observance of its many halachot and customs. Over the next two weeks, we will outline many of the key guidelines for this unique situation without delving into the basic halachot in detail. For further information, please refer to the following resources:

1. <https://consumer.crckosher.org/publications/erev-pesach-that-falls-on-shabbos/>
(Chicago Rabbinical Council)
2. https://halachipedia.com/index.php?title=Erev_Pesach_That_Falls_out_on_Shabbat
(Halachipedia)
3. <https://www.ou.org/holidays/when-erev-pesach-falls-on-shabbos/> (OU)
4. <https://www.star-k.org/articles/wp-content/uploads/erev-pesach-on-shabbos.pdf>.
(Star-K)

For specific questions, it is advisable to consult a local rabbinic authority.

10 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 1)

1. In a typical year, it is customary for the community rabbi to give a special *derashah* (sermon) on “Shabbat Hagadol” (the Shabbat before Pesach) about Pesach-related topics (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 430:1). This year, however, it is customary for the *derashah* to be delivered on the Shabbat a week before Erev Pesach (Mishnah Berurah 429:2). Some rabbis also give a special *derashah* on Erev Pesach itself (Chazon Ovadia, Pesach, p.253).
2. In a typical year, the Fast of the Firstborn is observed on Erev Pesach (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 470:1). This year, however, it is observed on Thursday (Rema, O.C. 470:2). Most people nowadays attend a *siyum* (completion of a Talmudic tractate) to exempt themselves from this fast. Therefore, a firstborn should attend a *siyum* this year on Thursday. Some hold that Sephardim are not required to even attend a *siyum* this year, though it is recommended if possible (Chazon Ovadia, Pesach, p.254), while others hold that Sephardim also must attend a *siyum* this year (R. Mordechai Eliyahu, Ma’amar Mordechai, Moadim, ch.10).

11 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 2)

1. *Bedikat Chametz* (searching for chametz) is usually performed immediately after nightfall on the night of Erev Pesach. This year, however, it is performed on Thursday night since it cannot be conducted with a candle on Shabbat (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 444:1). All of the usual rules and restrictions apply, such as using a candle (or flashlight) and refraining from eating or performing other activities beforehand (R. Eider, "Halachos of Pesach," p.364). The *berachah* ("Al biyur chametz") and the *Bitul Chametz* (declaration of nullification of chametz) are recited as usual (Mishnah Berurah 444:1).
2. *Biur Chametz* (burning chametz) is usually performed on Erev Pesach between the fifth and sixth halachic hour of the day. This year, however, it is performed on Friday. It is recommended to do so at the same time of day as other years to prevent confusion (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 444:2; Mishnah Berurah 444:9), but one who is unable to burn the chametz then may do so later in the day as well. This year, one does not recite the *Bitul Chametz* a second time when burning the *chametz*, but instead does so on Shabbat morning (details to be discussed in a later post). Any chametz reserved for consumption on Friday and for the Shabbat meals should be set aside in a secure location (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 444:1).

12 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 3)

1. *Mechirat Chametz* (sale of chametz) is normally performed on Erev Pesach between the fifth and sixth halachic hour of the day. This year, it is customary in most cases to perform it on Friday at this time to prevent confusion, even though in principle, it can be performed all day (Maharam Schick, O.C. 205; R. Eider, "Halachos of Pesach," p.366). However, there are differing opinions about the structure of the sale and when it takes effect (see, e.g., Piskei Teshuvot 444:17; R. Yosef Zvi Rimon, "Erev Pesach Shechal B'Shabbat," p.46). According to all approaches, chametz intended for use on Friday and Shabbat is not included in the sale. One should consult a local rabbi for more details if necessary.
2. Many forms of *melachah* are not permitted on Erev Pesach after midday, similar to Chol Hamoed (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 468:1). This year, however, these restrictions do not apply on Friday (Bi'ur Halachah 468:1). It is important to note that certain restrictions do apply every Friday afternoon of the year after the tenth halachic hour of the day (such as heavy labor or work that takes a long time to complete)

(Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 251:1). Nevertheless, all food preparations for the Seder, such as checking lettuce for insects, may and should be completed Friday afternoon.

13 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 4)

1. Matzah is forbidden to be eaten on Erev Pesach. This year, matzah may not be eaten on Shabbat (to be discussed further in upcoming posts), but it may be eaten on Friday. Some have the custom to refrain from eating matzah from Rosh Chodesh Nissan onward (Mishnah Berurah 471:12). Additionally, some permit using matzah for the Friday night meal (see Mishnah Berurah, *ibid.*), while others recommend avoiding it (Igrot Moshe, O.C. 1:155).
2. One should preferably avoid eating chametz food this Shabbat, even on Friday night (except for challah or rolls used for Hamotzi, which will be discussed in the next post), to prevent complications with disposing of leftovers and maintaining a kosher for Pesach home (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 444:3). It is also best to use disposable dishes for any chametz that is eaten (see R. Zvi Cohen, "Erev Pesach Shechal B'Shabbat," p.12; R. Yosef Zvi Rimon, "Erev Pesach Shechal B'Shabbat," p.50).

14 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 5)

1. Since there is a mitzvah to have *Lechem Mishneh* and consume bread at the Shabbat meals, there are two approaches to fulfilling this requirement when Erev Pesach falls on Shabbat. The first is to use regular chametz at the meals, eating carefully to minimize crumbs, and disposing of any leftovers properly, such as by using a special plastic tablecloth to collect them or by sweeping the floor. It is recommended to use bread that produces fewer crumbs, such as pita or fresh rolls (Shulchan Aruch, O.C.444:3; Star-K, <https://www.star-k.org/articles/wp-content/uploads/erev-pesach-on-shabbos.pdf>).
2. The second approach is to use egg matzah for *Lechem Mishneh* (Igrot Moshe, O.C. 1:155), though Sephardic poskim and some Ashkenazi poskim do not recommend this option (see, e.g., Teshuvot V'hanhagot 2:211; Star-K; Chazon Ovadia, Pesach, p.264). Although the *berachah* on egg matzah is usually *Mezonot*, one who uses it in place of bread may recite Hamotzi on it, provided one eats at least a *k'zayit* (approximately 27 grams) and consumes additional foods at the meal (Mishnah Berurah 168:24). Some Sephardic poskim allow a third approach of using whole

cooked matzot (Chazon Ovadia, Pesach), while other Sephardic poskim do not recommend this (Ma'amar Mordechai, Moadim, ch.10).

15 – Machshavah

This year, when Erev Pesach falls on Shabbat, we encounter unique halachic challenges that require careful attention, as we have learned throughout this week. At the same time, this rare occurrence presents a tremendous opportunity—to experience the sanctity of Shabbat and the holiness of Pesach in seamless succession.

Shabbat holds special significance as a day when Hashem grants us the ability to imitate Him by resting on the seventh day and elevating ourselves above the physical world. Through Shabbat, we experience a taste of *Olam Haba*, the World to Come. Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon, quoting his father-in-law, Rav Eliyahu Blumenzweig (*Erev Pesach Shechal B'Shabbat*, p.31), suggests that by using Shabbat to transcend the material world in this manner which resembles Hashem, we merit the extraordinary, almost Divine role, of determining the Jewish calendar and the dates of the Moadim (festivals).

This year, when these two dimensions of holiness converge, we have a unique opportunity to harness the qualities of Shabbat as spiritual preparation for Pesach. We can use the time to review the Haggadah, reflect on the themes of the holiday, and prepare ourselves for the Seder in a more elevated way. May we take full advantage of this special occasion, allowing the sanctity of Shabbat to uplift us so that we enter Pesach with true spiritual freedom and joy.

16 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 6)

1. On Shabbat that falls on Erev Pesach, challah or bread may not be eaten after the beginning of the fifth halachic hour of the day, as in other years (Mishnah Berurah 444:4). In the New York area, this is approximately 10:10 a.m. (according to the opinion of the Magen Avraham) or 10:30 a.m. (according to the opinion of the Vilna Gaon). Therefore, davening is often scheduled much earlier than usual so that one can complete eating chametz at the Shabbat day meal before this time. Any remaining chametz should be disposed of before the end of the fifth halachic hour, which is approximately 11:30 a.m., by cutting it into pieces smaller than a *k'zayit* and flushing them down the toilet or disposing of them outside of one's property (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 444:5 and Mishnah Berurah 444:21). The floor should also be

swept at this time. One then recites the *Bitul Chametz* (declaration nullifying chametz) (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 444:6; Mishnah Berurah 444:22).

2. Ashkenazim who use egg matzah instead of challah or bread for the Shabbat meals should also finish eating it by the latest time for chametz, since in a regular year, egg matzah may not be consumed by Ashkenazim after that time according to many poskim, except by children or the elderly (Rema, O.C. 462:1; Sha'ar Hatziun 444:1; Igrot Moshe, O.C. 1:155). Some are more lenient and permit egg matzah to be eaten until halachic midday (Noda Biyehudah, Kama, O.C. 21, explaining the Rama), or even until the tenth halachic hour (Aruch Hashulchan, O.C. 444). Sephardim, who permit the consumption of egg matzah on Pesach, may eat egg matzah as part of *Seudah Shelishit* until the tenth hour (approximately 4 p.m.). However, as mentioned last week, many Sephardic poskim rule that *mezannot* should always be recited on egg matzah even when using it as the mainstay of the meal, unless one eats more than approximately 240 grams of egg matzah (Chazon Ovadia, Pesach, p.264; Yalkut Yosef, O.C. 168:10; Ma'amar Mordechai, Moadim, ch.10).

17 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 7)

1. On Shabbat that falls on Erev Pesach, challenges arise regarding how to fulfill the mitzvah of *Seudah Shelishit/Shalosh Seudot* (eating the third meal). This is because on Erev Pesach, one may not eat chametz after the fourth hour and one may not eat matzah all day. In addition, after the tenth hour, one may not eat other foods made from matzah that are permitted earlier in the day (e.g., cooked matzah dishes such as matzah balls and baked foods made with matzah meal) (Halichot Shlomo, Pesach, ch.8) (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 471:1). One option for fulfilling *Seudah Shelishit* is to eat it in the afternoon. One can eat fruits, vegetables, and *shehakol* foods, such as meat or chicken, eggs, fish, or cakes made of potato starch (Rema, O.C. 444:1). One may also eat permitted *mezannot* food (such as matzah balls and dishes) if one eats *seudah shelishit* before the tenth halachic hour of the day (approximately 4 p.m.) (Mishnah Berurah 444:8). For Sephardim, and Ashkenazim who are lenient to eat egg matzah until the tenth hour (see yesterday's post), egg matzah and *matzah ashira* may also be used until the tenth hour. Some poskim permit eating cooked matzah (made by placing a whole matzah in boiling water or hot soup on the fire before Shabbat, removing the pot from the fire, and removing the matzah after the liquid cools somewhat) and reciting Hamotzi on it (Yechaveh Da'at 1:91; Magen Avraham 444:2), while many others do not recommend this (Ma'amar Mordechai, Moadim;

Sha'ar Hatziun 444:1). Whatever one eats, one should make sure to have an appetite at night at the Seder.

2. A second option is to eat *Seudah Shelishit* in the morning, before the latest time for eating chametz, by using challah or egg matzah. Although *Seudah Shelishit* is normally eaten in the afternoon, a morning meal fulfills the mitzvah according to some opinions, which may be relied on in this situation (Mishnah Berurah 444:8). To do this, one should divide the morning Shabbat meal (discussed previously) into two parts. After the first part (which includes Hamotzi and a first course), recite *Birkat Hamazon*, take a break or take a walk for fifteen minutes (some say thirty minutes; see Piskei Teshuvot 444:6), and then recite Hamotzi again (before the latest time for chametz), and eat the rest of the meal. Many follow both approaches, dividing their morning *seudah* with bread or egg matzah into two, and also having a *seudah* in the afternoon without bread or egg matzah (Mishnah Berurah, *ibid.*).

18 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 8)

1. We mentioned previously that one must finish eating chametz on Shabbat by the end of the fourth halachic hour. Before this deadline, one should make sure to rinse one's mouth thoroughly to remove any remaining chametz. One may also use a dry toothbrush to clean one's teeth (R. Eider, "Halachos of Pesach," p.390) or liquid toothpaste with a dry toothbrush. Those who follow the opinions that permit brushing teeth normally on Shabbat may brush as usual.
2. After the end of the fifth halachic hour, chametz becomes forbidden for benefit and is also considered Muktzeh (Mishnah Berurah 444:21). This means it may not be moved after that time. If one did not dispose of large pieces of chametz before the deadline, one may ask a gentile to dispose of them (*Ibid.*). If no gentile is available, one should cover the chametz until after the first days of Yom Tov and then burn it (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 444:5).
3. It is permissible even for Ashkenazim to eat Kitniyot dishes at the Shabbat meals this year, though one should finish eating them at the same time as the prohibition against eating chametz takes effect (same as every year). When preparing/cooking/eating them, one should ideally use disposable dishes rather than Pesach dishes to comply with all opinions. When necessary, one may follow the lenient opinions that allow using Pesach dishes for Kitniyot if they are not used for 24 hours afterwards. When heating them up, one may use the hotplate to be

used for Pesach, but one should be careful that the foods do not spill or touch the hotplate surface directly. Ideally, one should place foil on top of the hotplate and then switch the foil with new foil (cut before Shabbat) after finishing with the Kitniyot dishes (R. Rimon, Erev Pesach Shechal B'Shabbat).

19 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 9)

1. No preparations for the Seder may be made until after Shabbat ends, due to the prohibition of *hachanah* (preparation on Shabbat for after Shabbat, or in this case, for Yom Tov). This even includes activities which do not involve *melachah*, such as setting the table, heating food, or arranging the Seder plate (Kaf Hachaim 444:45). Some poskim permit taking food out of the freezer on Shabbat afternoon without verbalizing why one is doing so (see #2 below) if doing so after nightfall will prevent the food from being ready in time for the meal at night (Piskei Teshuvot 514:1), while others forbid this (Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchatah).
2. One may rest on Shabbat afternoon in order to be awake for the Seder at night, and one should encourage children to do so as well. However, most poskim do not allow explicitly stating that one is resting for this purpose, as that would constitute *hachanah* (Mishnah Berurah 290:4; R. Rimon, "Erev Pesach Shechal B'Shabbat," p.85).

20 – Erev Pesach on Shabbat (Part 10)

1. After Shabbat ends, women who do not recite Ma'ariv should say "*Baruch Hamavdil bein kodesh l'kodesh*" before engaging in preparations for the Seder (Mishnah Berurah 299:36). They may then light Yom Tov candles with the *berachah* of "*L'hadlik Ner shel Yom Tov*." As on other festivals, some women recite "*Shehechyanu*" at candle lighting, while others listen to it being recited as part of Kiddush (Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchatah 44:4). Candles should be lit from an already existing fire, as one may not create a new fire on Yom Tov (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 502:1).
2. The Kiddush recited at the Seder is known as "**YaKNeHaZ**," representing the order of *berachot* in Kiddush, which also incorporates Havdalah (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 473:1). The one reciting Kiddush first recites the *berachah* of *Hagafen* on the wine ("**Y**ayin"). Next the *berachah* of Kiddush for Yom Tov is recited, concluding with "*Mekadesh Yisrael V'hazmanim*" ("**K**iddush"). Then, the *berachah* of *Borei meorei ha'eish* is recited over the fire ("**N**er"). For this purpose, one should join the Yom Tov candles together (Beer Moshe 8:184) or join a match with one of the Yom Tov candles (see Mishnah

Berurah 298:6), and place the match down in a safe location. Some recommend simply using the candles lit for Yom Tov without joining them (Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchatah 62:18; Yom Tov Shenit K'hilchato ch.1). Afterward, the special Havdalah *berachah* separating Shabbat from Yom Tov is recited ("Havdalah"). Finally, the *berachah* of *Shehechianu* is recited ("Zeman").

21 – Machshavah

The Gemara (Pesachim 66a) recounts an episode from a year when Erev Pesach fell on Shabbat, like this year. The Sages were uncertain whether the Korban Pesach should be offered on Shabbat or delayed until afterward. Hillel, who had recently arrived in Eretz Yisrael from Bavel, responded that he had received a tradition from the great sages Shmayah and Avtalyon that the Korban Pesach is indeed offered on Shabbat. He explained that just as the Korban Tamid (the daily offering) overrides Shabbat, so too does the Korban Pesach. The underlying principle seems to be that a *Korban Tzibbur* (communal korban), which is brought on behalf of the entire nation, has the power to override Shabbat.

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook (Olat Re'iyah, p. 178) explains—echoing a hint in Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah (Introduction to Zevachim)—that although each group offers its own Korban Pesach, it is still given the status of a communal offering. Since every individual participates in the same korban on the same day, it attains a communal status, allowing it to override Shabbat when Erev Pesach falls on that day.

Rav Kook further elaborates that the Korban Pesach represents the unity of the Jewish people. Even though it is brought by distinct groups, each with its own members and perspectives, it nevertheless unites the entire nation as one. Similarly, despite the diversity within Am Yisrael—different groups with different approaches—the celebration of Pesach affirms our shared values and common destiny.

This message carries particular significance this year, when Erev Pesach coincides with Shabbat, and during this time, when we are still seeing some divisions within our people. The lesson of this unique year, as taught by Hillel, is that despite its being brought by distinct groups, the Korban Pesach was still offered on Shabbat because of its communal nature. So too, our shared destiny and collective purpose bind us together as a single *tzibbur*, a unified entity.

However, this unity is not automatic—it is something we must actively strive for. Just as the Korban Pesach must be brought separately by each group and still brings the nation together, we too must work to recognize the value of every group and individual within Am Yisrael. The message of the Korban Pesach is not just a statement of unity but a call to action: to strengthen our sense of connection, to seek understanding, and to build bridges even in times of discord.

May this Pesach inspire us to deepen our commitment to one another and bring us closer to the time when we will once again eat “from the Pesachim and from the Zevachim” (as we recite at the end of Maggid) in the rebuilt Beit HaMikdash, speedily in our days.

Chol Hamoed

The halachot of Chol Hamoed are quite complex and ideally should be reviewed in more detail and with the guidance of a rabbinic authority. In the next three posts, we will offer a very brief summary of certain general principles that will help explain the ideal attitude toward Chol Hamoed (we hope to elaborate on the halachot of Chol Hamoed at some future date).

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1. Chol Hamoed is, as its name implies, a combination of "*chol*" (weekday) and "*moed*" (holiday). The halachot of Chol Hamoed reflect this in-between status. In principle, most of the activities forbidden on Shabbat are forbidden on Chol Hamoed as well (see Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 530:1; Mishnah Berurah 530:1; R.Dovid Zucker and R.Moshe Francis, "Chol Hamoed," [in English] p.5). However, most normal activities performed for benefit on Chol Hamoed are ultimately permitted. Therefore, one may, for example, cook or drive a car on Chol Hamoed, provided it is related to Chol Hamoed or the last days of Yom Tov (Shulchan Aruch 541:5; Mishnah Berurah 530:1). However, one may not perform *melachot* that are considered "*ma'aseh uman*," (done by a craftsman), meaning that only a skilled worker knows how to do them (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 541:1). For example, one may not engage in complex carpentry or home repairs for which a professional is usually called ("Chol Hamoed," p.20).
2. Many poskim hold that even activities forbidden on Yom Tov that do not take significant effort are permitted on Chol Hamoed (Piskei Teshuvot 530; "Chol Hamoed K'hilchato" 2:9). For example, one may turn on a light on Chol Hamoed for any reason, or tear a piece of paper regardless of the purpose, since these actions do not require significant effort. Writing is also permitted on Chol Hamoed for any Chol Hamoed purpose (including pleasure). It is customary to write at least the first line in an unusual manner (*shinui*), such as with a slant (Mishnah Berurah 545:35). In addition, one may use a smartphone or computer on Chol Hamoed normally if they are used for purposes related to Chol Hamoed or enjoyable activities (such as writing to a friend to say hello) (Peninei Halachah, Moadim 11:13).

Chol Hamoed (Part 2)

1. Chol Hamoed is a time for rejoicing. For this reason, one should try to have festive meals each day on Chol Hamoed (see Mishnah Berurah 530:1). Having matzah at these meals is also encouraged, though not obligatory (ibid.). In addition, Chazal designated Chol Hamoed as a time for Torah study. Therefore, one should try to devote some time each day to studying Torah with one's children or family (Talmud Yerushalmi, Moed Katan 2:3; Peninei Halachah, Moadim 10:6).
2. Some poskim recommend wearing Shabbat clothes on Chol Hamoed (Maharil, cited in Mishnah Berurah 530:1). Most recommend wearing nicer clothes than usual, but they need not be as festive as Shabbat clothes (Sha'ar Hatziun 530:4; Aruch Hashulchan 530:4). All agree that one may not wash clothes on Chol Hamoed except for cases of extreme need, which should be discussed with one's rabbinic authority (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 534:1).

Chol Hamoed (Part 3)

1. In light of the halachot discussed yesterday and today, one should try to take off work on Chol Hamoed (Sefer Chol Hamoed K'hilchato 9:35; "Sefer Chol Hamoed," [English] p.62). However, those who will otherwise suffer a significant loss (e.g., one will be fired from one's job or the company will undergo a major loss) are permitted to work on Chol Hamoed (Ibid.). Poskim disagree as to whether one who may choose to take vacation days from work specifically in the summer if this is important for them or their family, if that means one has to work on Chol Hamoed instead (R. Moshe Feinstein and R. Yaakov Kamenetsky permit in certain cases while others disagree; see "Chol Hamoed," p.62). One should consult one's local rabbinic authority concerning any such questions.
2. One may engage in activities that will prevent a significant loss, even if they involve forbidden *melachah* or the work of a professional craftsman (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 537:1). In addition, health-related activities are permitted (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 532:2; Mishnah Berurah 532:5). Thus, one may go to the doctor on Chol Hamoed if necessary. However, one should not schedule a routine check-up or dentist appointment on Chol Hamoed simply because one is home then (R. Moshe Feinstein, cited in "Chol Hamoed," p.46).