

PESACH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

When the Beis ha-Mikdash was standing, the only roasted meat permitted to be eaten on the Seder night was the meat of the Korban Pesach. Nowadays, although the Beis ha-Mikdash is no longer standing and we no longer eat the Korban Pesach, we still do not eat any roasted meat on the two Seder nights.

"Meat" includes meat from any animal, which requires shechitah (ritual slaughter), including chicken and turkey. Roasted fish, however, is permitted[1].

"Roasted" includes any type of roasting, including pot roast[2]. Even if the item was cooked first and then roasted it is forbidden. If it was roasted and then cooked, it is permitted according to most poskim. A minority opinion forbids that as well[3].

Fried, barbecued, broiled over an open fire or smoked meat is considered like roasted meat and is forbidden[4]. Liver, which is broiled, is not eaten on the Seder night[5]. If the broiled liver was then cooked, it is permitted according to most poskim mentioned earlier.

Some families do not eat roasted meat during the daytime Yom Tov meals either, but most people do not follow this custom nowadays[6].

Based on the above, it is important to remember that at the Seder it is forbidden to eat the roasted zeroa, which is placed on the Seder Plate. However, it is permitted to eat the zeroa during the daytime meal. In any case, the zeroa should not be discarded, as it is considered a bizyaon mitzvah to do so[7], and one should make sure that it is eaten at an appropriate time.

Question: What is the proper blessing over matzah brei?

Discussion: There are three methods of preparing matzah brei and the blessing will depend on the method used:

If the matzah brei is deep fried - the matzah is submerged in oil - the blessing is mezonos, followed by al ha-michyah. Even if one were to eat a large quantity, he would not be required to recite birkas ha-mazon.

If the matzah brei is pan fried - in little or no oil - it should be eaten only during a meal in which matzah is eaten.

If, before pan-frying the matzah brei, one boils the pieces of matzah in water for as little as a minute,

then the blessing is mezonos, followed by al ha-michyah.

Kneidlach, latkes, chremzil and Pesach cakes made with cake meal or matzah meal are all mezonos, followed by al ha-michyah.

The proper blessing over Pesach cakes or latkes made from potato starch is shehakol. B'diavad, if one made an ha-adamah over them, that will suffice[8].

The blessing over egg matzah[9] (made with either fruit juice or eggs but no water), which may be eaten on Pesach only by a person who is ill or elderly and cannot eat regular matzah[10], is mezonos followed by al ha-michyah. This is considered a bread-family product, so if one eats it as part of a full meal, then it is considered like regular matzah and would require ha-motzi and birkas ha-mazon.

Question: Is it permitted to put matzah in boiling hot soup on Shabbos Chol ha-Moed?

Discussion: It is permitted to do so since soup bowls are considered a keli shelishi, and there is no prohibition of "cooking" a baked item in a keli shelishi[11].

Question: What should be done if some edible chametz is found in one's house or workplace during Pesach?

Discussion: If the chametz is found on Shabbos or Yom Tov, then it should be covered with a utensil or a towel, etc.[12] The chametz, which is considered severe muktzeh, should not be moved at all, not even with one's feet or body[13].

If the edible chametz is found on Chol ha-Moed, it should be disposed of immediately[14]. If possible, it should be burned[15]. If this is not possible, then it should be flushed down the toilet or crumbled and thrown to the winds or cast into a river. Although one is fulfilling the mitzvah of tashbisu by disposing of the chametz, no berachah is recited at this time[16].

Question: On Chol ha-Moed, is it permitted to play word or board games which require writing down the words or the score?

Discussion: Yes, it is permitted. Playing board games is an enjoyable activity that many people engage in for recreation, and in order to spend quality family time together. Thus it is a legitimate festival need and writing is permitted, as it is permitted for any other Chol ha-Moed need.

Still, it is appropriate to deviate slightly from the regular writing style that is normally used during the rest of the year[17].

Question: Is it an obligation or a mitzvah to drink wine on every day of Chol ha-Moed?

Discussion: The mitzvah of Ve'samachta be'chagecha, rejoicing during the holiday, applies to Chol ha-Moed just as it applies to Yom Tov. Nowadays, when the Beis ha-Mikdash is no longer standing and we cannot rejoice by eating the meat of the sacrifices, we can rejoice only by drinking wine[18]. It is, therefore, a requirement for every person to drink at least 3 fl. oz. of wine [within 3-4 minutes] on

each day of Chol ha-Moed.

Contemporary poskim debate whether or not one can fulfill this mitzvah with non-alcoholic grape juice. Some hold that grape juice is just like wine concerning this halachah^[19], while others hold that grape juice is invalid for this purpose^[20].

But the mitzvah applies only to those who enjoy the taste of wine or grape juice and rejoice when they drink them. Those who do not enjoy the taste of wine or grape juice and do not rejoice when partaking of them, are exempt from drinking these beverages. It is for this reason that the poskim write that women are not obligated to drink wine on Chol ha-Moed, since many women are not accustomed to drinking wine and do not rejoice when drinking it^[21].

1.Mishnah Berurah 476:9.

2.Mishnah Berurah 476:1. Aruch ha-Shulchan 476:2, however, questions why pot roast should be forbidden.

3.Peri Chadash, quoted by Be'er Heitiv 476:1, Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 2 and Kaf ha-Chayim 4.

4.See Ha-Seder ha-Aruch 95:5.

5.Aruch ha-Shulchan 476:4

6.See Sha'arei Teshuvah 473:2.

7.Chayei Adam 130:6.

8.Entire Discussion based on Halichos Shelomo 3:10-8, 9.

9.Including: Egg Matzah Crackers, White Grape Matzah, White Grape Bite-Size Matzah Crackers, Passover Tam Tam Crackers and Passover Tiny Tams.

10.Rama, O.C. 462:4. See Igros Moshe, O.C. 4:98. Note that even the ill or elderly cannot fulfill their obligation to eat matzah at the Seder with this type of matzah.

11.Orchos Shabbos 1:42.

12.Mishnah Berurah 446:6. Our discussion assumes that one recited Kol chamira right after the bedikah and on erev Pesach after burning the chametz, or on at least one of those occasions.

13.Although generally it is permitted to move even severe muktzeh with one's feet or body, here it is prohibited because we are concerned that one will forget that it is Pesach and will inadvertently eat the chametz; See Teshuvos Lehoros Nasan 5:30.

14.Note that we are referring here only to chametz which has not been sold to a non-Jew. If one specifically intended to sell all of his chametz, known or unknown, to a non-Jew, then he need not

dispose of the chametz. He must, however, place the chametz among the items that were sold to the non-Jew; see Mikra'ei Kodesh, Pesach 1:74-2.

15. Mishnah Berurah 445:6.

16. Mishnah Berurah 535:5.

17. Based on Mishnah Berurah 545:35.

18. O.C. 529:1 and Beiur Halachah, s.v. keitzad; Mishnah Berurah 530:1.

19. Rav Y. Kamenetsky (Emes l'Yaakov, O.C. 529:1); Rav S.Z. Auerbach (Shulchan Shelomo 529:3); Rav N. Karelitz (Mevakshei Torah, Yom Tov 29:2).

20. Rav M. Feinstein (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 33); Rav M. Stern (Zichron Shelomo, pg. 42); Rav Y.S. Elyashiv (Mevakshei Torah, Yom Tov, pg. 454-26). One may dilute the wine with some grape juice as long as the alcoholic wine taste remains dominant; *ibid*.

21. See Sha'agas Aryeh 65; Maharshah, Nedarim 49b, s.v. ela; Zichron Shelomo, pg. 2.

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Rabbi Neustadt is Rav of Young Israel in Cleveland Heights. He may be reached at 216-321-4635 or at jsgross@core.com.