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לעילוי נשמת ר' יצחק מאיר בן אליהו ובריינא בת אברהם ע"ה ור' גדליה בן אברהם מנחם הכהן ומרים בת ישראל ע"ה

Matzah on Erev Pesach and Its Ramifications for Erev Pesach on Shabbos by Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher

May one use matzah for the Shabbos meals on Shabbos Erev Pesach?

What is the ideal way to fulfill the Third Meal on Shabbos Erev Pesach?

One of the many features of this year's Jewish calendar is that Erev Pesach occurs on Shabbos, creating a number of unique halachic issues. Among these is the issue of eating the Three Meals of Shabbos – what type of halachically-valid bread may one use for the meals? Many people wish to avoid having *chametz* of any sort, but matzah, as will be discussed, is off limits on Erev Pesach. This article will explore the restriction against consuming matzah on Erev Pesach and the ramifications for the Three Meals of Shabbos.

The prohibition of eating matzah on Erev Pesach: The Talmud Yerushalmi (Pesachim 10:1) forbids eating matzah on Erev Pesach. The Rambam (Hilchos Chametz Umatzah 6:12) explains that this is to create recognition that one is eating the matzah on Pesach night specifically for the purpose of the mitzvah.

There are other reasons given for this prohibition, the most well-known of which is that one should have an appetite specifically for matzah by abstaining from it on Erev Pesach (see Bach Orach Chaim 471 s.v. *viha di'amrinan*).

This passage of the Yerushalmi is cited by the Rishonim (Tosafos Peachim 99b s.v. *lo yochal*; Rif Pesachim *dapei haRif* 16a). The Ba'al Ham'aor (ibid. 15b) says that this prohibition begins only at *chatzos* (halachic midday) on Erev Pesach. The Ramban (Milchamos Hashem ad. loc.) says that the prohibition already begins the night of Erev Pesach. The Chok Yaakov (471:7) states that the Ran (ibid. 16a s.v. *Yerushalmi*), as well as other later halachic authorities, forbid matzah only during the day¹ of Erev Pesach, not the night before.

The Mishna Berura (471:12) rules in accordance with the Chok Yaakov, permitting matzah on the night of the 14th of Nissan. However, the Magen Avraham (471:6) seems to forbid matzah even on the night of the 14th, and Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (Igros Moshe Orach Chaim 1:155) says that it is proper to act stringently in accordance with this opinion.

In addition, the Mishna Berura (ibid.) notes that some have the custom to avoid matzah beginning from Rosh Chodesh Nissan. Others avoid matzah thirty days before Pesach (which is Purim).

What type of matzah is included in the prohibition: The Mishna at the start of the final chapter of Tractate Pesachim (99b) forbids eating "close to *mincha*" on Erev Pesach. The Gemara (ibid.) explains that this refers to the start of the tenth (halachic) hour of the day. Tosafos (ibid.) wonder what food the Mishna forbids; matzah, per the Yerushalmi, is forbidden, while the Gemara (ibid. 107b) permits consumption of *minei targima*². Tosafos answer that the Mishna is forbidding *matzah ashira* (lit., rich matzah), matzah made with liquids other than water, since the Gemara says (Pesachim 36a) that one cannot fulfill the obligation of eating matzah with such matzah. Since *matzah ashira* is unfit for the mitzvah of matzah, one may eat it on Erev Pesach. In the modern world, *matzah ashira* is usually commercially available as an item known as "egg matzah" (although an examination of the ingredients reveals that apple cider precedes eggs on the ingredient list, indicating it is the primary liquid used).

The Maharsha, commenting on Tosafos, wonders why Tosafos does not also mention regular matzah that is unfit for fulfilling the mitzvah of matzah, such as matzah not made *lishma* (for the purpose of the mitzvah). The Maharsha answers that since the flavor of

such matzah is the same as the matzah used to fulfill the mitzvah, it is forbidden. The Meiri (Pesachim 99b. s.v. *viyesh shoa'lim*) and Tosafos Rid (ibid. s.v. *samuch*), however, mention both *matzah ashira* and regular matzah that is unfit for the mitzvah.

The Gra (Orach Chaim 444:7) understands that the Rambam forbids eating even *matzah ashira* on Erev Pesach. The Sha'ar Hatziyun (444:1) notes that the Gra seems to rule in accordance with the Rambam. However, the Mishna Berura (471:10) permits *matzah ashira* on Erev Pesach and makes no mention of the Rambam's opinion. Nonetheless, there are those whose custom is to avoid *matzah ashira* on Erev Pesach (Kovetz Halachos Pesach 16:6 with fn. 8).

The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 471:2) rules in accordance with Tosafos (as understood by the Maharsha), permitting only *matzah ashira*. The Mishna Berura (ad. loc.:12) adds that even matzah which may not be consumed on Pesach due to stringencies codified in halacha, such as matzah that is folded, may not be consumed on Erev Pesach, since it is technically matzah.

A question discussed by contemporary *poskim* is whether one may eat matzah that is actually *chametz*. Most *poskim* are lenient, for although the flavor is similar to non-*chametz* matzah, the item is simply not halachically considered matzah, and is not included in the restriction against matzah on Erev Pesach (see Kovetz Halachos Pesach 16:4 with fn. 6). A complication in this ruling is the fact that although many machine-made matzos are labelled as "not for Passover use," it is difficult to ascertain that they are, indeed, *chametz*, as it is entirely possible that while they are not certified *chametz* free (and may NOT be used on Pesach!), one may not assume that they are, indeed, *chametz* for the purposes of the prohibition; a halachic authority should be consulted for practical questions.

The Rema (ad. loc.) adds that regular matzah which is crumbled, mixed with other liquids such as wine or oil, and baked is not regarded as *matzah ashira*. Rather, it retains its status as regular matzah and is forbidden on Erev Pesach. Consequently, cakes, cookies and the like made with matzah meal (eaten on Pesach by those who eat *gebrochts*) would be forbidden on Erev Pesach³.

However, the Mishna Berura (ad. loc.:20) notes that cooked matzah, such as *knaidlach* (matzah balls), is permitted, since one cannot fulfill the mitzvah of matzah with cooked matzah. Matzah that is fried (e.g., matzah brei) is a complex issue, and a halachic authority should be consulted (see Sha'arei Tziyun ad. loc.:20). In addition, a small amount of matzah included in a food – for example, matzah meal added as a binder to a potato kugel – would not pose a problem, as this is certainly not matzah-like.

Issues to consider for the Shabbos *se'udos* when Erev Pesach is on Shabbos: To properly understand the options available for the Shabbos meals of Erev Pesach, several halachos must first be established.

1) It is permissible to eat *chametz* on Erev Pesach only until the end of the fourth halachic hour of the day, while benefit is permitted until the end of the fifth hour (ibid. 443:1).

2) While *matzah ashira* is permitted on Erev Pesach, its consumption on Pesach is the subject of many different views among the Rishonim, ranging from permitted even when water is present with the other liquid to completely forbidden (see Tur Orach Chaim 462). Practically, the Shulchan Aruch (ibid. 462:1) rules that *matzah ashira* that does not contain water does not become *chametz* and is permitted. The Rema (ad. loc.:4), however, says that the custom in the Ashkenazic communities is not to use fruit

³ In truth, finely ground matzah meal may indeed be permitted when combined with non-water liquids and baked, and the Rema may be referring to large pieces of matzah. However, the custom is to avoid all types. See Kovetz Halachos Pesach 16:7 with fn. 7.

¹ This refers to *alos hashachar* (dawn) (Mishna Berura ibid. citing Chok Yaakov).

² The meaning of *minei targima* is the subject of debate. The Rashbam (Pesachim 107b s.v. *targima*) says it is meat and fruits, but Tosafos (ad. loc. s.v. *minei targima*) disagrees, proving that it is food that requires a *mezonos* blessing, meaning it must be food made from grain. According to Tosafos, though, it cannot be *matzah ashira*, as this is forbidden after the ninth hour, so it must be other types of *mezonos* food.

juice and the like in matzah, and one should abide by this custom except in extenuating circumstances such as for an ill or elderly person who requires such matzah. The question arises regarding whether this custom extends to Erev Pesach after the fourth hour. This question will be discussed in greater detail below.

3) According to most opinions, one may eat *Shalosh Se'udos* (the Third Meal of Shabbos) no earlier than half an hour after *chatzos*, also known as *mincha gedola*⁴, and this is the ruling of the Shulchan Aruch (ibid. 291:1). However, the Bahag (cited in the Ran Shabbos *dapei haRif* 43a s.v. *tanu rabanan*) rules that it may be eaten earlier in the day. The Magen Avraham (Introduction to Orach Chaim 291) rules that if one is only able to eat *Shalosh Se'udos* prior to *mincha gedola*, he should do so.

4) The Shulchan Aruch cites several opinions as to what must be eaten to fulfill the Third Meal. The first opinion requires one to eat bread. The second opinion says that chatzot or similar foods that require a *mezonos* blessing suffice. The third opinion says that eating meat or fish suffices. The fourth opinion says that even fruit is enough. The Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 291:2) strongly advises that one have bread for the Third Meal.

5) Although *matzah ashira* would require a *mezonos* when it is eaten as a snack, as it is regarded as *pas haba'a bikisnin*⁵, if one is *kove'a se'uda* (establishes a meal) with it, he must wash and recite *hamotzi*. Thus, one could use *matzah ashira* for the Shabbos meal, since one would be establishing the meal with it⁶.

With these principles, let us examine the options for each of the three Shabbos meals.

The first two Shabbos meals: For Friday night, one may certainly use regular *chametz*. Regular matzah, as well, is an option, as the Mishna Berura is lenient for the night of the 14th. (However, those who avoid matzah earlier would be unable to use matzah.) One could also use *matzah ashira* (egg matzah) for this meal.

For Shabbos morning, assuming one will eat the meal before the conclusion of the fourth hour of the day, one may use regular *chametz*⁷ or *matzah ashira*. However, regular matzah is forbidden.

The greatest complexity arises regarding *Shalosh Se'udos*. As noted, the halacha is that the Third Meal cannot be eaten before *mincha gedola*, which is half an hour after *chatzos*. This makes it impossible to use *chametz*. The question is whether one may use *matzah ashira* after the fourth hour on Erev Pesach. According to the Shulchan Aruch, one may obviously use egg matzah, since, as noted above, the Shulchan Aruch permits *matzah ashira* throughout Pesach. Indeed, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 444:1) says that *matzah ashira* should be used for the Third Meal. The Rema (ad. loc.), however, rules that since in Ashkenazic communities, *matzah ashira* is customarily not eaten, one should fulfill the Third Meal with fruit, fish or meat. The implication of the Rema's ruling is that one cannot use *matzah ashira* even on Erev Pesach, since Ashkenazim do not eat it on Pesach.

However, the Noda Biyehuda (Kamma 21) points out that the Shulchan Aruch (ibid. 471:2) rules that one may eat *matzah ashira* on Erev Pesach until the tenth hour⁸, and the Rema notes that regular matzah may not be eaten, but makes no comment to limit consumption of *matzah ashira* after the fourth hour, indicating that he agrees that on Erev Pesach, *matzah ashira* is permitted past the fourth hour.

⁴ Lit. "the large *mincha*," thus named because it is the earliest time to recite *mincha*, and thus provides the largest window of time to recite it.

⁵ A full treatment of *pas haba'a bikisnin* is well beyond the scope of this article, but the term includes baked bread-type items that are kneaded with liquids other than water, such as *matzah ashira*. See Shulchan Aruch 168:6-7.

⁶ There is a question regarding how much *pas haba'a bikisnin* one must eat to be *kove'a se'uda*. This question is beyond the scope of this article, but Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (Igros Moshe Orach Chaim 1:155) says that for a mandatory Shabbos meal, the usual amount (preferably a *kebeitzah* [egg's-volume], but at least a *kezayis* [olive's-volume]) suffices. Others are more stringent; see Laws of Brachos by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner pg. 501-502.

⁷ The meal itself may run well past the end of the fourth hour, but *chametz* cannot be eaten after that point. In addition, any *chametz* remaining must be removed from one's possession. A full discussion of options for doing so is beyond the scope of this article, but the easiest solution is to flush the *chametz* down the toilet.

⁸ But not after the tenth hour begins, as taught in the Mishna cited earlier.

The Chok Yaakov (444:1) and the Aruch Hashulchan (444:5) say that the Rema could, indeed, permit using *matzah ashira* on Erev Pesach. The Rema (in 444) simply means that since *matzah ashira* is customarily not eaten, such matzah is usually unavailable for use for the Third Meal, and so one has no choice but to use fruit, fish or meat.

However, the Chok Yaakov continues that the Maharil (Hilchos Shabbos Hagadol 15) (upon whom the Rema based many of his rulings) says explicitly that one may not use *matzah ashira* for the Third Meal because one is eating after the time that *chametz* is already forbidden. The Chok Yaakov therefore concludes that the Rema disagrees with the Shulchan Aruch but did not say anything (in 471) because he relied upon what he had written earlier forbidding *matzah ashira*.

The Noda Biyehuda (ibid.), cited in Shaarei Teshuva (444:2), rules that one may eat *matzah ashira* on Erev Pesach until *chatzos*, and one who rules to permit the entire day⁹ "does not lose" if there is some degree of need. According to the Noda Biyehuda then, there would be room to permit using *matzah ashira* to fulfill the Third Meal after *mincha gedola* in the optimal fashion of washing and making *hamotzi*, as this would be a sufficient degree of need to permit it even after *chatzos*.

However, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (ibid.) says that *matzah ashira* should not be eaten after the fourth hour. Indeed, this is the position of many contemporary *poskim*, although some permit it; one should consult with a halachic authority for a practical ruling.

Assuming one is not using *matzah ashira* for the Third Meal, one can eat meat, fish or fruit, as stated by the aforementioned Rema. The Mishna Berura (444:8) adds that one can also use *knaidlach* (assuming one eats *gebrokts*) until the beginning of the tenth hour. After the tenth hour begins, though, all grain-based products are forbidden, as they are included in the prohibition against eating after the ninth hour¹⁰. In addition, says the Mishna Berura, once the tenth hour arrives, one must not eat excessively of permitted foods and risk spoiling his appetite, as ruled in the Shulchan Aruch (ibid. 471:1).

The Mishna Berura (ibid.) cites Acharonim that besides eating later in the day for the Third Meal, it is a good idea to also split the morning meal into two parts, one for the morning meal, and the second for the Third Meal, since there is a minority view that *Shalosh Se'udos* can be fulfilled even in the morning¹¹. The Mishna Berura cautions that one must ensure there is sufficient time to have a break between the two meals, since otherwise one may be guilty of creating needless blessings (see also Mishna Berura 291:14). It must be noted that in the case of Shabbos Erev Pesach, one must ensure that one has sufficient time to wash and eat the bread (or egg matzah) for the second meal (which is serving as *Shalosh Se'udos*) before the end of the fourth hour. Due to the time crunch, most shuls begin Shabbos davening extra early so as to provide extra time for congregants to return home and have both meals.

Perhaps the most novel approach to the *Shalosh Se'udos* question comes from the Aruch Hashulchan (444:6), who says that since it is impossible to fulfill the Third Meal properly with a bread meal¹², the Sages waived the entire obligation of *Shalosh Se'udos* on this Shabbos, much like they waived the mitzvah of shofar and *dalet minim* on Shabbos of Rosh Hashana and Sukkos respectively due to concerns of Shabbos desecration. According to the Aruch Hashulchan, there is no obligation of *Shalosh Se'udos* at all on this Shabbos!

In conclusion, there are a number of options available for one to fulfill the three meals of Shabbos. One is encouraged to consult with his halachic authority as to the ideal approach that he should follow.

⁹ Until the beginning of the tenth hour, per Tosafos mentioned earlier.

¹⁰ Although Tosafos understand *minei targima* as grain-based foods, the Rashbam and others disagree and say it means fish and fruits (as discussed earlier), and the halacha follows the Rashbam's position. See Mishna Berura 471:3 with Sha'ar Hatziyun 4.

¹¹ It is clear from the Mishna Berura that if one utilizes this option of splitting the morning meal in two, one should still have food later in the day to fulfill the majority view that *Shalosh Se'udos* must be eaten after *mincha gedola*.

¹² This seems to be in line with the Aruch Hashulchan's view that one should make a strong effort to have a bread meal for the Third Meal, indicating that this is the primary fulfillment of the Third Meal.

Points to Ponder:

If one splits the daytime meal in two, which half should contain the main part of the meal?

May one begin the meal with chametz bread in the yard and then eat the rest of the meal indoors?

Iyun Halacha is a publication of the Denver Community Kollel

Please consult with a qualified halachic authority for all practical questions of halacha

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