

The Rambam (הלכות חמץ ומצה 8:1) says סדר עשיית מצוות אלו בליל חמשה עשר כך הוא, this is the order of performance of these commandments on the night of the 15th of Nissan. Rambam also (הלכות עבודת יום הכפורים 4:1) utilizes similar language when discussing the laws of Yom Kippur, where he says סדר כל המעשים שביום זה כך הוא, this is the order of all activities on this day. What is the difference between סדר כל and סדר עשיית מצוות אלו and המעשים?

Rambam says in his introduction to הלכות עבודת יום הכפורים, there is one מצות עשה, positive commandment, to perform the service according to the סדר (order) mandated in פרשת אחרי מות. The various sacrifices of the day and הקרבת קטורת are individual acts. However, all the activities of the day of Yom Kippur constitute one Mitzvah. Each act is an indispensable component of one obligation to perform the service of Yom Kippur, עבודת יום כפור. If the Kohen neglects to perform any aspect of the service, the entire service is nullified. Hence the term סדר is applicable as Rambam notes that an order must be followed. Performing any of these actions of the day out of order renders the entire service unacceptable.

As far as the Seder night is concerned, each activity is a separate Mitzvah. The 4 cups, the commandment to retell the story of the Exodus from Egypt, ספור יציאת מצרים, eating Matzo, מרור, Afikomen etc. are all separate obligations. However on Pesach night, one can discharge the obligation to eat Matzo without engaging in ספור יציאת מצרים.

If every act is a separate Mitzvah on Pesach night, then what is the significance of the term “Seder”? Why does the Rambam introduce the term Seder here, after all the term Seder is not mentioned in the Mishna? Pesach has a core Commandment, עקר המצוה, and associated commandments. Using Lulav as an analogy, the עקר המצוה is to pick it up. upon lifting it, one fulfills the core Commandment. However to fulfill the Mitzvah of Lulav כהלכתא, completely, one has to hold the Lulav in the appropriate hand and shake the Lulav during the recitation of הלל. (Hilchos Lulav 7:9). One must go beyond the עקר המצוה to fulfill the מצוה כהלכתא.

What does one accomplish when he does the מצוה כהלכתא? By Lulav there are 2 aspects of fulfillment. The first is ולקחתם לכם ביום הראשון, to take the Lulav on the first day of Sukkot. This is fulfilled by simply lifting the 4 species. There also is a second קיום in Lulav when combined with הלל, that of אז ירננו כל עצי יער. There is a קיום שירה, to recite שירה together with the 4 species and praise Gd through the Lulav.

The core Commandment, עקר המצוה, is to eat Matzo on this night. But there is a

second קיום of מצה associated with והגדת לבנך, of בעבור זה לא אמרתי אלא בשעה, שיש מצה ומרור מונחים לפניך, that all the events and required activities of the evening must be performed in conjunction with Matzo. While eating Matzo on the night of the fifteenth would satisfy the requirement of בערב תאכלו מצות, we would still be lacking something in the fulfillment of ספור יציאת מצרים. Each of the individual מצוות of the night must be associated with Matzo (and מרור) based on בעבור זה לא אמרתי. The obligation of בערב תאכלו מצות must be discharged in conjunction with the other obligations of the evening, ספור יציאת מצרים and אכילת מרור, eating bitter herbs. It is insufficient to simply eat Matzo on this night. Likewise, the obligation of והגדת לבנך would be incomplete if not connected to the מצה and מרור. The term Seder appropriately describes the sequence of events of the night, as they have to flow in the defined order to properly fulfill the secondary קיום ספור יציאת מצרים, associating מצה with the various obligations of the night. In this way it is similar to the binding of Lulav with הלל.

Based on the above, we now understand how to punctuate the section of the הגדה discussing the שאינו יודע לשאול, the child incapable of formulating a question. We apply to him the verse of והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא. We pause. Then the הגדה continues: “when is this statement to be made”? Perhaps the obligation begins on Rosh Chodesh? The answer is ביום ההוא, on that day. You might have thought that the obligation begins during the day period of Passover Eve? No. The obligation begins at the time that Matzo and מרור are placed before you (at night). We now know that Matzo (and מרור) are associated with 2 components of the obligation, the first בערב תאכלו מצות and the second a קיום בספור יציאת מצרים. Since we know the עקר מצוה, eating Matzo, must take place at night, then the secondary קיום of Matzo together with והגדת לבנך must take place at night as well. After all, it would be incongruous if the קיום ספור יציאת מצרים associated with Matzo could take place on Erev Pesach, before the עקר of המצוה of בערב תאכלו מצות is applicable.

Would there be a problem if someone made Kiddush on the night of Pesach and then proceeded to wash and eat Matzo and מרור and כורך and afterwards recited the הגדה? The Matzo and מרור would be lacking the בעבור זה לא אמרתי. The Seder would be incomplete. He would be missing the aspect of לחם עוני דהיינו לחם שעונים עליו דברים (bread of “Oni” translated as bread upon which we answer and relate many stories, i.e. ספור יציאת מצרים). Rashi (Psachim 36a) interprets לחם עוני as bread upon which we recite הלל and the הגדה. Rashi is saying that the Matzo is surrounded by הגדה before it is eaten and הלל afterwards. When does Matzo become a part of the actual Seder? Only when it is surrounded by the הגדה, with ספור יציאת מצרים followed by הלל, שבת והודאה, after eating the Matzo.

When we say מצה זו שאנו אוכלים, we mean the Matzo that we are about to eat. Eating the Matzo demands, is מחייב, recitation of הלל. Matzo must be eaten between the הגדה and the praise, שבח. Therefore if I eat Matzo before reciting the הגדה, it is no longer ספור יציאת מצרים, it loses the קיום of being bound with יציאת מצרים. In order to fulfill בעבור זה לא אמרתי and associate Matzo with Hallel as well as ספור יציאת מצרים, I must eat Matzo between the 2 halves of the הגדה, which encompass שבח והודאה and praise and thanks, שבח.

If that's the case, why not recite all of הלל after we eat Matzo? Once we say לפיכך we are obligated to praise Gd for all the wonders He performed for us as described in ספור יציאת מצרים, the Jew cannot delay the recitation of הלל. After all, how would it appear if the Jew described all these wonderful things that happened not only to our forefathers but to us as well (לנו ולאבותינו) without expressing "thanks" to Gd! We don't want to be כפוי-י טוב, show a lack of appreciation! So we say the initial parts of הלל and recite the concluding blessing of אשר גאלנו וגאל את אבותינו to show that we appreciate the impact of Gd's miracles on us as well as our forefathers. We must say (at least) partial praise, מקצת שירה, for this. Beit Shamai and Beit Hillel disagree whether מקצת שירה is defined by one or two chapters of הלל, however both agree that we must offer some praise at this point.

The Yerushalmi (Pesachim 59a) says that one may not eat Matzo on Passover Eve (considered like בועל ארוסתו בבית חמיו). In what way is this analagous to בועל ארוסתו? Rendering a woman an ארוסה, betrothed, with the blessing of הארוסות אשר אסר לנו את הארוסות is, confers upon the bride the status of מקודשת, separate and forbidden to all, including her soon to be husband. נשואין is a מתיר, it permits the wife to the husband only, while retaining the prohibition on all others. The Yerushalmi says that Matzo also requires a מתיר. The מתיר for Matzo is בערב תאכלו מצות, the obligation begins at night.

If Matzo requires a מתיר why can I eat Matzo during the rest of the year? The answer is that Matzo becomes Matzo only when leaven, חמץ, becomes forbidden. I could have thought that the מתיר of Matzo is בערב in conjunction with sunset, שקיעת החמה. The Abudraham and the Vilna Gaon say that since the Yerushalmi compared Matzo to a betrothed woman, ארוסה, the מתיר is similar as well. Just as there are 7 blessings that are מתיר the ארוסה, the מתיר for Matzo includes 7 blessings that are part of the Seder. The full מתיר is the obligation to eat Matzo coupled with reciting the הגדה and the associated blessings. הגדה requires לחם שעונים עליו דברים הרבה. Instead of 7 blessings creating the מתיר, the ספור יציאת מצרים is an integral part of the מתיר for Matzo. Therefore if I eat Matzo on the night of Pesach before the הגדה, I have not eaten anything that's forbidden (as defined by בערב תאכלו מצות), but I lack the full

מחיר that comes with the recitation of the הגדה. And ספור יציאת מצרים can only be fulfilled after nightfall.

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