

Schedule of Korban Pesach Tasks

Pesach 5773 – Ami Meyers

Men and women are equally obligated (Maimonides, Laws of Paschal Sacrifice 1:1)

30 days before (14 Adar – Purim)

Relevant issues:

(A) Offering the correct type of animal

Command:

Offer a year-old sheep or goat as a Paschal sacrifice

More specifically: any age between eight days and one year (hours count!)

(B) Not deriving benefit from a sacrificial animal

Prohibition:

Deriving benefit from a sacrificial animal

Practical tip: Do **not** consecrate the animal immediately – doing so only invites trouble!

(C) Offering an unblemished animal/not offering a blemished animal

Command:

Offer a sacrificial animal without a blemish

Prohibitions:

- (1) **Consecrating** a blemished animal
- (2) **Slaughtering** a blemished animal as a sacrifice
- (3) **Sprinkling the blood** of a blemished animal
- (4) **Burning the fat** of a blemished animal
- (5) **Eating the meat** of a blemished animal
- (6) Offering an animal with a **temporary blemish**
- (7) Offering an animal used as payment for a **zonah** or a **dog's payment**

2 weeks before (1 Nisan)

Relevant issues:

(A) Offering the sacrifice in Jerusalem

Commands:

- (1) Offer all sacrifices in the Holy Temple
- (2) Bring sacrificial animals from the Diaspora to the Holy Temple

Prohibitions:

- (1) Eating sacrifices of lesser sanctity **outside** the holy city of Jerusalem (Hilchos Ma'aseh HaKorbanos 11:5)
- (2) Eating sacrifices of lesser-sanctity **whose meat left** the holy city of Jerusalem (ibid., law 6)

Practical application: Find a place in Jerusalem!

(B) Ensuring that the unfit do not consume of the sacrifice

Prohibitions:

- (1) An impure person eating sacrificial meat
- (2) Eating sacrificial meat that has become impure

Practical applications:

- a. Ensure that you undergo the necessary purification process(es) – sprinkling of the ashes of the Red Heifer, immersion in a *mikveh*/spring
- b. Ensure that all group members promise to do so as well
- c. Ensure that any impure utensils intended for use with the sacrifice undergo a similar purification process

Prohibitions:

- (1) Giving of the sacrifice to one who worships a foreign god
- (2) Giving of the sacrifice to a non-Jew
- (3) Giving of the sacrifice to an uncircumcised Jew
 - even when *halacha*/health prevents him from undergoing a circumcision

(C) Consuming the entire sacrifice/having enough for everyone

Command:

Eat an olive's volume of the sacrificial meat on Pesach night

Prohibitions:

- (1) Leaving over meat from any sacrifice past its time for eating
- (2) Leaving over meat from the Paschal sacrifice past its time

Practical application: Figure out how much consumable meat your animal has, and plan the size of your group accordingly

- have each person pledge a range that they could eat (minimum of 1 oz. to each person's maximum)

(D) **Practical tip:** Remember to collect payment from each member!

7 Nisan (one week before Pesach eve)

Absolute deadline for arriving in the Land of Israel, to undergo Red Heifer purification

Relevant issues:

Supplies necessary/useful for the sacrifice:

Stone utensils:

Prohibitions:

- (1) An impure person eating sacrificial meat
- (2) Eating sacrificial meat that has become impure

Practical tip: Stone utensils cannot become impure (and do not require immersion in a *mikveh* when bought from a non-Jew), so buying them now might make sense

Spit made of pomegranate wood:

Prohibition:

- Eating a Paschal sacrifice heated by a source other than open fire
 - thus requiring the use of a wood – not metal – spit
 - pomegranate wood was preferred

14 Nisan – Pesach eve

Tasks:

- (1) Taking the lamb/sheep up the Temple Mount to the Beis HaMikdash for offering
- (2) Slaughtering it according to Jewish law
- (3) Stripping its hide
- (4) Carrying it (potentially quite a weight) back to the place of its consumption
- (5) Removing forbidden fats
- (6) Removing the innards, placing them alongside the body of the sacrifice on the spit
- (7) Roasting the meat
- (8) Assembling all group members

Approximate schedule (specific times based on Jerusalem time for the year 5773):

Sunrise (5:37 AM): **Determines one's eligibility** to take part in the Paschal sacrifice
– if at sunrise, one was more than 15 km outside the holy city of Jerusalem, he cannot offer the sacrifice, even if he arrives at the Beis HaMikdash long before sunset

Offering the daily morning sacrifice

6:30 AM: Conclusion of daily morning sacrifice; private (non-Paschal) offerings accepted then

1:17 PM: Beginning of daily afternoon sacrifice; all private (non-Paschal) offerings must have been offered by then

2:19 PM: End of offering of daily afternoon sacrifice; beginning time to slaughter the Paschal sacrifice

Note: the slaughter of the Paschal sacrifices would take place in three shifts

– the last group was called “the lazy group” (P'sachim 65a)

5:53 PM: Sunset – end time for offering all Paschal sacrifices (fats for the Altar must go on the Altar before sunset, unless the 14th of Nisan falls out on Shabbos)

Practical tips:

- (1) **Paschal protection:** if insurance for the animal's *kashrus* – both regarding blemishes and regarding internal lesions of the lungs etc. – is available and provides for the nearby provision of an indefinite number of animals until one is found valid, consider buying it
 - so as to preclude the necessity of having to run around Jerusalem on the afternoon before Pesach in search of an acceptable animal

- (2) **Manpower:** ensure that those taking the animal to the Beis HaMikdash (a) can stand the sight and smell of blood (b) know how to slaughter a sheep/goat, check its lungs for lesions, and strip its hide
- (3) **Time to eat:** Set a begin time for the eating of the sacrifice
 - (Maimonides, Hilchos Korban Pesach 9:6) if (a) three members insist on eating (b) at a normal time for people to eat, they may eat without regard to the other members
 - even consuming the entire sacrifice
 - Ra'avad (ibid.) disagrees

Pesach Night

Relevant issues:

Eating the sacrifice properly:

Prohibitions:

- (1) Eating a Paschal sacrifice heated by a source other than open fire
- (2) Taking (“carrying”) the sacrificial meat outside its group

Exceptions:

- (a) Newly-wed bride may turn away from group and eat
- (b) Impolite eater may be kicked out (Maimonides, 2:14)
- (3) Leaving over meat from any sacrifice past its time for eating
- (4) Leaving over meat from the Paschal sacrifice past its time

Command:

Eat the sacrifice with matza and maror

– maror cannot be cooked

Practical application: be careful about cooking the maror by putting it in contact with still-hot sacrificial meat (especially when Pesach falls out on Shabbos).

Clean up

Prohibitions:

- (1) Eating sacrificial meat after the time allotted for its consumption
- (2) Breaking a bone of the sacrifice

Practical application: The sacrificial meat must be removed at (*halachic*) midnight, as it becomes forbidden in consumption, but breaking a bone remains forbidden.

Command:

Burn all leftover sacrificial meat – but not on Yom Tov

Practical application: any leftover sacrificial meat must be preserved until Chol HaMoed, when it must be burned.