When Passover Begins on Saturday Night

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What practices are to be followed when the first night of Passover falls on a Saturday night?

Many of the practices that are usually performed on the night or the day before the seder are moved back to Thursday or Friday. This is done to assure the proper observance of Shabbat.

Thursday Morning

A first born (whether of the mother or of the father) should fast on the day before Passover. In commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt, it is the custom for synagogues to make סעודה מزادה (a public completion of the study of a tractate of the Talmud) on the morning before Passover. Since the סעודה מزادה is followed by a סעודה מزادה (a festive meal which follows the performance of certain mitzvot), a first born who is present may eat, and having eaten, need not fast that day. Since a fast for the firstborn cannot take place on Shabbat or be moved to Friday, the סעודה מزادה and the סעודה מزادה are held on Thursday morning.

1 Acknowledgments: This responsum is based on “A Statement on Pesah Observance,” issued by the CJLS on 6 Feb. 1974. Thanks to Rabbi Noah Golinkin for his thoughtful paper, “When the First Seder Occurs on Saturday Night,” which I consulted when writing this responsum.

2 S.A. Orah Hayyim 470:1.
Thursday Evening

בריחת המן (search for leaven) is customarily done on the night before Passover immediately after sunset. When Passover begins on Saturday night, the בריחת המן is done on Thursday night. The blessing for בריחת המן is recited. One may elect to keep enough המן for the Sabbath meals. If so, the כל המן (“All the hametz...” formula for nullifying unseen hametz) should not be recited at this time, since one does not want to nullify the hametz reserved for Shabbat. However, if the intention is to use המן, then the כל המן is recited Thursday evening.

Friday Morning

ביירור המן

This day should be treated as an ordinary erev Pesah in regard toביירור המן (removal of hametz). The burning of the hametz should be completed by the fifth hour after sunrise. The stove should be kashered for Pesah. All cooking should be done in Pesah pots and only Pesah utensils should be used. Food required for Shabbat as well as for the first seder should be cooked at this time.

Shabbat Meals

There are two traditional practices that present complications when the first seder is held on a Saturday night:

1. It is customary to refrain from eating matzah on the day before Pesah, so that one will eat the matzah with appetite at the seder.
2. It is customary to eat three meals on Shabbat. At least two of these meals should include food over which Hamotzi is recited.

There are two acceptable ways of dealing with these complications:

(a) Set aside enough hametz for the Sabbath meals. A hametz dish should be provided for the challot. Care should be taken to prevent any crumbs from coming into contact with the other dishes. To avoid such a problem it is recommended that plastic or paper plates and cutlery be used at both the Friday night and Shabbat morning meals. No hametz may be eaten on erev Shabbat beyond a time approximately four hours past sunrise. Hence on Shabbat morning, the Shabbat services should be completed early enough to allow for the ספירת שבת, including challah, to be eaten in time. After the meal, the residue of the hametz should be flushed away or otherwise disposed of since, of course, nothing can be burned on Shabbat. The tablecloth should be carefully removed from the table, shaken outside of the house, and then stored with the other hametz. The כל המן formula should now be recited.

Synagogues that do not have a congregational seder or serve kiddushim during the Pesah holiday may have services early on Shabbat morning, and if they choose, serve a hametz meal, have non-Jewish staff dispose of the hametz and keep the kitchen locked during the holiday. The כל המן formula may be recited by the assemblage, or individually at home.

(b) Have full Pesah meals both on Friday evening and Saturday morning. This is possible because one may use המן (enriched matzah, that is to say egg matzah) for

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3 S.A. Orah Hayyim 431:1.
Though matzah שפיריה may not be used for the seder, it is not hametz. It is produced under strict rabbinical supervision and may be used during Passover. It may not be used for the seder, for it is שרי (rich) and what is required for the seder is הלמא עני (the bread of poverty and affliction). And precisely because egg matzah may not be eaten at the seder, it may be eaten the day of the seder both at the Friday night meal and at the Shabbat lunch.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein in the Igrot Moshe recommends that those who prefer to remove all hametz before Shabbat use מצה שפיריה and that Birkat Hamazon (grace after meals) be recited following the meal.

Rabbi Feinstein maintains that the Rabbis did not require the removal of all hametz before Shabbat and the use of מצה שפיריה because they did not want to put a burden on those who would find it difficult to do so. However,

In regard to those who might object and say that a פס (bread or regular matzah) is needed to say Hamotzi and Birkat Hamazon, Rabbi Feinstein reasons, since one eats them for the Sabbath meals where a פס is required, there is not greater designation as the staple than this.

And he proceeds to buttress his argument with numerous citations.

Egg matzah is easy to obtain nowadays. It would therefore seem preferable to avoid the complications of using hametz in an otherwise Pesahdige house, to use מצה שפיריה (egg matzah) and not challah for the Sabbath meals.

Rabbi Feinstein does, however, impose a restriction to be in accord with those who hold a different view on the use of מצה שפיריה.

They should eat the two meals only during the hours when it would be permitted to eat hametz [until the fifth hour after sunrise].

However, since we hold that מצה שפיריה may be used during Passover (except at the seder), we can use egg matzah until a later hour, until מצה כמנה (approximately 2½ halakhic

* Igrot Moshe, Orah Hayyim pt. 1, p. 274.
hours before sunset). Thus the second Shabbat meal may be eaten at the regular hour, and Shabbat services need not end especially early.

If the option of using מצות טפיה is used, then the מצות טפיה formula is recited Shabbat morning before going to the synagogue. There are some congregations that recite the מצות טפיה together in the course of the services.

스트ורה שלישית

Whether one follows the practice of eating hametz on Shabbat or of making the house Pesahdige and using מצות טפיה, the מצות טפיה should not include either hametz or מצות טפיה. It should consist of a snack of fruit, fish or eggs. The meal should be completed by the time of מנוחה קדומה (approximately 2½ halakhic hours before sunset).

Conclusion

The practices relating to Pesah that begins on Saturday night are as outlined above. The option of making the house Pesahdige on Friday and using מצות טפיה is preferable. There is less chance of making mistakes, and it will provide a day of Shabbat relaxation before the seder. However, having hametz for the first two מצות טפיה on Shabbat, and following the procedure as described, is an alternative possibility.