



# Roasting the Korban Pesach when Pesach falls on Shabbos

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

When the first day of Pesach falls on Shabbos, there are a number of unique Halachos.

One of these Halachos is *Hilchesa Lemeshicha* (Halachos which are relevant only once Moshiach has arrived), pertaining to the bringing of the Korban Pesach in the Beis Hamikdash on Erev Pesach, the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan. Im Yirtzeh Hashem, Moshiach will come before Pesach this year and these Halachos will be relevant.

## The Korban Pesach on Erev Shabbos

Each day, the afternoon Tamid sacrifice would be brought in the Beis Hamikdash. The earliest time that this Korban could be Shechted is from the time when the shadows become elongated as the sun begins its setting into the Western sky. This is half an hour after midday or 6 ½ hours after sunrise. (All times mentioned in this discussion refer to Halachic hours – שעות זמניות, calculated by dividing the daylight time between sunrise and sunset by 12). The Korban could be Shechted until the end of the day (sunset).

On a regular day, the afternoon Tamid would be Shechted after 8½ hours. It would be offered on the Mizbeach one hour later at 9½ hours (this time is known as *Mincha Ketana*, the preferable time to daven Mincha). The reason why the Korban Tamid was delayed for two hours after the earliest possible time was because after the afternoon Korban Tamid, no other Korbanos could be offered. The two-hour delay was to enable sufficient time to allow for any private sacrifices to be offered.

The exception to this rule was the Korban Pesach, which was specifically Shechted after the afternoon Tamid.

On Erev Pesach, whether it coincided with Shabbos or a weekday, the Tamid would be Shechted earlier than usual at 7½ hours after sunrise and offered an hour later at 8½ hours. This was to allow sufficient time for the large volume of Korban Pesachs to be Shechted after the Tamid.

When Erev Pesach fell out of Erev Shabbos (as it does this year), the Tamid would be brought at the earliest possible time (6½ hours). This was to allow time not only for Shechting the Korban Pesach, but also to allow for it to be roasted before Shabbos comes in<sup>1</sup>.

Whilst the Shechting of the Korban Pesach overrides Shabbos, the roasting of the Korban Pesach does not override Shabbos. When Pesach falls on a weekday, the Korban Pesach could be placed over the fire at night, since cooking is permissible on Yomtov. But when Pesach falls on Shabbos, the Korban Pesach had to be placed into the oven or over the fire before Shabbos came in.

The Tosefta<sup>2</sup> details other Halachos on how the Korban Pesach would be roasted on Erev Shabbos, as opposed to a regular Yomtov;

1. They would make a cover using planks over the top of the oven. When Pesach fell on a weekday, if the fire died down, more wood could be added. Since on Shabbos wood cannot be added to the fire, the opening of the oven on top would be covered to preserve the heat of the fire to ensure that the Korban roasts properly<sup>3</sup>.
2. On Shabbos one could not remove the Korban from the oven to check if it was completely roasted. The Korban Pesach must be completely roasted. If it were removed and found to be not completely roasted, one would not be allowed to return it to the fire as this would be a violation of cooking on Shabbos. Instead it had to be checked while still in

the oven. On a weekday, one could remove the Korban Pesach from the oven to check it because if it were not fully roasted one could return it to the oven to finish roasting.

## Roasting meat for a regular Shabbos

Once on the topic of roasting meat for Shabbos, there are some practical Halachos which are relevant nowadays as well with regards to placing food in an oven before Shabbos<sup>4</sup>.

Rabbinically one is not allowed to leave food in an oven or on a stove before Shabbos unless the food is cooked to *Machal ben Drusai* – one half cooked. The reason for the Gezeira was a concern that one may stoke the coals on Shabbos to accelerate the cooking. Stoking the coals would constitute the Biblically forbidden Melacha of *Havara* – kindling. If the food was already *Machal ben Drusai* before Shabbos comes in, there is no concern of stoking the coals as there is no need to accelerate the cooking.

If the coals were covered or raked out a stove, the food may be left even if it is not yet cooked to *Maachal ben Drusai*. Covering the fire serves as a reminder to prevent a person stoking the coals. This is why we use a Blech when leaving food over a flame for Shabbos. Covering or removing the coals does not help for an oven<sup>5</sup>.

There is an exception to the above laws in the case of raw meat. The Shulchan Aruch<sup>6</sup> rules that if meat is placed completely raw into the oven or on a stove just before Shabbos it is permissible even without a Blech. The rationale is that since the meat is completely raw, even if one were to stoke the coals, the food

would still not be ready to eat at night. By morning, the meat would cook by itself without any stoking required.

The Heter when the food is raw applies only to meat and not to vegetables and the like. Meat takes a long time to cook and could not become ready to eat at night even if the coals were stoked. Vegetables on the other hand cook easily and the concern of stoking the coals still remains. If there is even one piece of meat in the dish, this is sufficient to render the entire pot as though it were all “raw” and remove the concern of stoking the coals.

(Based on this, many modern-day Poskim write that even the Heter of raw meat does not apply either nowadays as our ovens are capable of cooking food much more quickly).

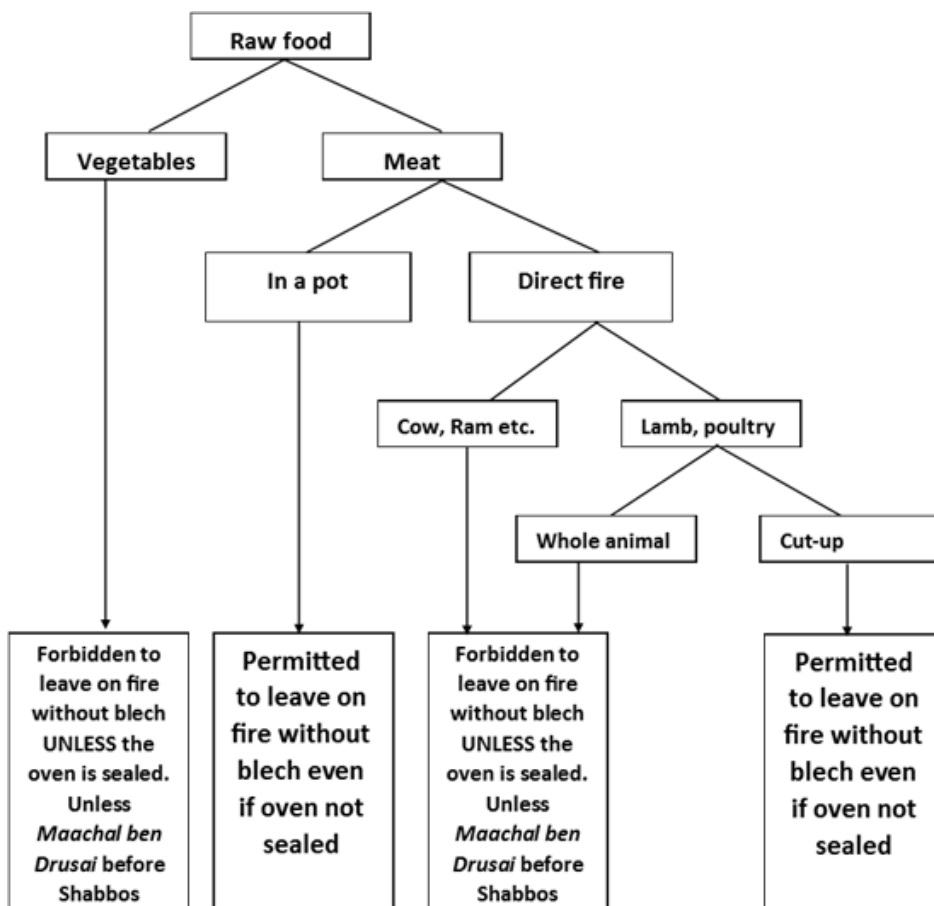
The Shulchan Aruch qualifies that this Heter for raw meat only applies to meat being cooked in a pot. When meat is roasted directly over fire or coals, the heat is more intense and stoking can accelerate the cooking process and so the concern of stoking the coals still applies.

This qualification only applies to the meat of an ox, goat or ram. Since these are larger animals with tougher meat, opening the oven, which would allow air into the oven, will not adversely affect the meat. However if the animal were young goats or lambs or poultry, since their flesh is soft, exposing the meat to air in the middle of cooking would adversely affect the meat. In this case there is no reason to worry that someone would open the oven in the middle of cooking to stoke the coals. Therefore the meat of a kid or lamb may be left in an oven whether raw or partially cooked.

But the Shulchan Aruch goes on to further qualify that this is only where the lamb or kid was cut up. If the lamb is roasted whole, the meat, like the meat of a cow, would not be adversely affected by cool air and so the concern of opening the oven to stoke the coals would still be relevant.

The only Heter that would remain would be if the oven is sealed. Talmudic ovens were often sealed with clay to retain the heat. Since one would need to first open

### Leaving raw food in the oven from before Shabbos



the seal to reach the food inside, this would give sufficient time to remember that it is Shabbos and that one may not stoke the coals.

The multiple Halachos and different cases discussed above can be presented in the accompanying flowchart.

#### **Back to Korban Pesach**

The Korban Pesach which was either a lamb or kid that was roasted whole is an exception to the above. Normally, a whole roasted lamb could not be left in the oven raw or partially cooked (but less than *Machal Ben Drusai*) unless the oven was sealed. Nonetheless the Gemara rules that the Korban Pesach, which is roasted over an open fire, may be lowered into the oven just before Shabbos comes in<sup>7</sup>. There is no requirement to seal the oven.

The reason we are not concerned for stoking the coals is because the Korban Pesach must be eaten in a group and we apply the principle

Bnei Chaburah (who are involved in sacrificial matters) are Zerizin and will remind one another that it is forbidden to stoke the coals.

May we be zoche this Erev Shabbos to offer the Korban Pesach in the Third Beis Hamikdash and eat it by our Seder as we celebrate our redemption from this final exile, with the immediate coming of Moshiach.

1. Pesachim 58a
2. Chapter 7:1-2
3. Chazon Yechezkel on Tosefta
4. See Shulchan Aruch OC 253 and 254
5. This is because the oven concentrates the heat more strongly. Since the coals are neverBased on the Acharonim, some Poskim write that our ovens are different to the Talmudic ovens and have the same status as stoves of the times of the Gemara.
6. Shulchan Aruch Harav 253:8
7. Shabbos 19b and 20a. See Rashi Eiruvin 103a