



לקוטי שיחות
PROJECT
LIKKUTEI
SICHOS

Sicha Summary

Chelek 16 | Bo | Sichah 2

The Rambam:

The 55th *mitzvah* is... that we are commanded to sacrifice a lamb for Pesach on the 14th day of the month of Nissan.

The source of this commandment is G-d's statement (exalted be He), “The entire community of Israel shall then slaughter it in the afternoon {immediately preceding Pesach}.” (*Shemos* 12:6)

And the 56th *mitzvah* is that we are commanded to eat the Pesach lamb on the night of the 15th of Nissan, keeping all the conditions which are stated... The source of this commandment is G-d's statement (exalted be He), “Eat the meat on this night, roasted over fire...” (*Shemos* 12:8) (*Rambam, Sefer Hamitzvos, Positive Mitzvah* 55, 56)

The Question:

In his introduction to *Sefer HaMitzvos*, Rambam lays down the principle that if one *mitzvah* is contingent on another, or if one *mitzvah*'s objective is only realized through another *mitzvah*, both are to be counted as one *mitzvah*. (*Sefer Hamitzvos*, Root 11) Now, to fulfill the *mitzvah* of sacrificing the Pesach lamb, one must have a designated portion of the lamb to consume. The eating is the intended culmination of the sacrifice. (See *Mishneh Torah, Korban Pesach* 2:14) Why, then, does Rambam count the sacrifice and the consumption of the Pesach lamb as two separate *mitzvos*?

To understand this, we need to address another, similar question: Even though there is a specific verse commanding the consumption of a sin offering (*Vayikra* 6:18), Rambam does not consider the consumption of a sin offering as its own *mitzvah*. Rather, he groups the consumption of all

sacrificial offerings, both of higher and lower sanctity, into one *mitzvah*. (*Sefer Hamitzvos, Positive Mitzvah 89*) Being that the Pesach lamb is also one of these sacrificial offerings, why is its consumption not included within the *mitzvah* of eating sacrificial flesh?

The Explanation:

The solution lies in Rambam's wording: "We are commanded to eat the Pesach lamb on the night of the 15th of Nissan, **keeping all the conditions which are stated** — that it be roasted, that it be eaten in one house, and that it be eaten with *matzah* and bitter vegetables."

The Pesach lamb is distinguished from all other sacrificial offerings in that the Torah provides several detailed laws for its consumption. These novel conditions differentiate the Pesach lamb, and cause it to be classified as its own, unique *mitzvah*.

This explanation augments another answer offered by Rabbi Avraham, the Rambam's son. He posited that because the Pesach lamb must be offered on the afternoon of the 14th of Nissan, and it must be consumed that evening (the eve of the 15th), the two different time-periods indicate that they are two separate *mitzvos*. (*Maaseh Nissim, 5*)

This answer is somewhat difficult, being that there are *mitzvos* whose components take place at different times, yet they are considered one *mitzah* (such as the recital of the *Shema* once in the evening and once in the morning).

Based on the above, however, we can expand Rabbi Avraham's answer to mean that the two distinct times represent the unique nature of the *mitzvah* to eat the Pesach lamb: It must be eaten in its own specific "time" because it is set apart in its very identity by virtue of its many "conditions."

The Second Pesach:

If, due to forces beyond a person's control, he was unable to fulfill the *mitzvah* of the Pesach lamb, there is a second opportunity to do so one

month later, on the 14th of Iyar. Rambam similarly divides the offering and consumption of *Pesach Sheini* (the Second Pesach lamb) into two separate *mitzvos*. We can understand this division the same way we have explained the division of the first Pesach lamb into two *mitzvos*.

But why is the *mitzvah* of eating the Second Pesach not included in the *mitzvah* to eat the first Pesach lamb? They are both essentially one obligation — to eat the Pesach lamb, ideally in Nissan, and if not, then in Iyyar!

There is an important distinction between the two obligations of eating the Pesach lamb. The first Pesach lamb is eaten on the night of the 15th of Nissan, a holiday commemorating the Exodus from Egypt. The significance of the historical events that took place on this day is the impetus for the *mitzvah* of eating the Pesach lamb. The make-up sacrifice, however, is not intrinsically connected to the day of the 15th of Iyar; it just happens to be the day designated for this sacrifice.

These two *mitzvos* of consumption, therefore, are not the same. The first obligation derives from a unique time — the holiday of Pesach. The second is thematically untethered from the time of its obligation.

This point also explains another difference between the two Pesach offerings. Hallel is recited while eating the first Pesach lamb, but it is not recited when eating the second Pesach lamb. Because the first Pesach is eaten on the night of the Exodus, Hallel is recited. The Second Pesach, however, is eaten on what otherwise would be a mundane night, and so Hallel is not recited. (See *Pesachim* 95b)

The Deeper Dimension:

The slaughter of the Pesach lamb represents our rejection of Egypt's idolatrous mindset and our subjugation to Pharaoh. The consumption of the sacrifice represents us "ingesting" our faith in, and dedication to, G-d.

These are two critical steps in the development of the Jewish nation on Pesach; therefore, they are divided into two separate *mitzvos*.

This is also why the individual Jews who were unable to join the original Pesach sacrifice lobbied Moshe for another chance, even though legally they were exempt because the time had passed — because the Pesach sacrifice represents the crucial first steps of becoming a Divine servant.

Reciting Hallel while consuming the offering, however, is not linked to the actual eating but to the special time of the holiday. This is not a fundamental element in becoming a Divine servant, and so it is not included in the ritual of the Second Pesach lamb.