

# BECOMING BAR MITZVAH ON A SHABBOS EREV PESACH

EREV PESACH ON SHABBOS

TAANIS ESHTER ON SHABBOS

TAANIS BECHOROS / TAANIS ESTHER / ESSENTIAL CHANGE VS. TECHNICAL  
CHANGE / S'CHACH PASSUL

לע"נ זאב ארי' ע"ה בן יבלחט"א שניאור זלמן גליק

On an Erev Pesach that falls out on a Shabbos, the fast of the firstborn is moved back to the Thursday before.<sup>1</sup> The question arises regarding a child who becomes Bar Mitzvah on such an Erev Pesach: he can't fast on the Thursday before, since he is not yet Bar Mitzvah, and on Shabbos, when he is Bar Mitzvah, he can't fast because it is Shabbos! What should he do?

To understand this, we first need to understand the general concept of a fast which is moved up. The first way to understand it is that the chiyuv from Shabbos is transferred to the Thursday before. The second explanation is, the chiyuv remains on Shabbos, however there is a takanah that the chiyuv can be fulfilled on the Thursday.

These two explanations can be compared to two opinions regarding sukkah. The Halachah is<sup>2</sup> that planks that are four tefachim wide cannot be used as sechach. If however, he flips them on their sides, one opinion holds that they may now be used, as they are no longer too wide, and another opinion holds that they may not, because once they have been declared passul, they become like metal boards that can't be used at all for sechach.

We can say that the logic is that these planks themselves become passul planks, and so too here, the Thursday becomes a fasting day itself.

A practical difference between the two ways would concern someone who didn't fast on Thursday. According to the first way, the fast itself was transferred to Thursday, and therefore he is now making up a missed fast, and that should



1. Rema 470:2.  
2. Sukkah 14a.

not be done on a Friday. However, if we say like the second way, that the fast is still on Shabbos, he still has a chiyuv to fast, and he should do so in Friday.

**2** We can bring a proof for both sides:

The Remah writes<sup>3</sup> about Taanis Esther, that if Purim is on a Sunday, and therefore the fast would be on Thursday, and there is a bris scheduled for Thursday, we make the bris and the seudah on Thursday and fast on Friday. This seems to imply that the fast stays on Shabbos, and we merely fulfil the obligation on Thursday.

A seeming proof for the other way is from when Taanis Bechoros is moved up to Thursday. In general, the minhag is to have a siyum, and break the fast by the seudas mitzvah that follows. In the above case, we make a siyum on Thursday, and this works for the fast which should be on Shabbos. If the fast itself wasn't moved to Shabbos, seemingly we would need to make a siyum on Shabbos as well. On Thursday because we would otherwise need to fast then, and on Shabbos because the obligation to fast was never fulfilled. However, we don't find this behavior mentioned anywhere.

We can't ask on this from our previous point about Taanis Bechoros, since it could be that each takanah was made differently. Especially since Taanis Esther was established on the day of the miracle, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of Adar. Therefore in a year that it is moved up, it is leaving the proper date. Taanis Bechoros on the other hand was never established on the day of its miracle, which was on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, since that is a Yomtov, when we may not fast. Therefore

3. 686:2.

when it gets moved up because of Shabbos, the fast itself is being moved, just like it was initially.

**3** We may be able to say that the question we asked in the beginning, about someone who becomes Bar Mitzvah on Erev Pesach that falls out on Shabbos, is dependent on these two ways:

The minhag is that a father fasts (or attends a siyum) for his young bechor (who isn't yet bar mitzvah). In the above scenario, what the father would have to do would also depend on the two ways. If we say that the fast is transferred completely to the Thursday before, then the father would have to fast, since at the time of the fast his son is still a child. However, if we say that the fast is supposed to be on Shabbos, and we fulfill the chiyuv from Shabbos on Thursday, the result will be that no one will fast! The father won't because at the time of the chiyuv his son will already be bar mitzvah, and the son can't fast because you can't fulfill a chiyuv before you're bar mitzvah for after you're bar mitzvah.

The result will be that for the first twelve years of his life, the child has this concept in chinuch, from his father fasting for him, and the rest of his life he'll fast every year, but on the first year he actually becomes obligated to fast, the year of his bar mitzvah, he is completely pattur! We therefore, seemingly have to explain according to the first way, that the chiyuv is completely transferred, and the father will fast for his son.

**4** Really we can have a way for the child to fulfil his chiyuv even according to the understanding that the fast remains a chiyuv for Shabbos. We find a general concept that a child has to prepare before his bar mitzvah by learning the halachos that are needed for once he becomes bar mitzvah, in order to do the mitzvos properly. This means that even though he is a child, he has a chiyuv to prepare.

So too, we can say here, that since he won't be able to fast on Shabbos, even though he is a child, he has a chiyuv to fast on Thursday, to prepare for Shabbos, and therefore can fulfil it.

**5** From here we see a great lesson. To be able to keep Torah properly once one grows up, and live how Hashem wants, a one must be educated already as a young child. This shows how important it is to give every Jewish child a Jewish education.

## STUDY AID

1. Question about a child who becomes bar mitzvah on an Erev Pesach that falls on Shabbos, and two explanations about moving a fast day.
2. A proof for both sides.
3. How the question is dependent on the two explanations
4. How it works according to the second explanation.
5. A lesson in the importance of chinuch.

Source:

על פי ליקוטי שיחות חלק י"ז ערב פסח