

Relevant Laws for the Week Before Pesach

Birkat Ha'ilanot

What: During the month of Nissan there's a special blessing to make upon seeing blossoming fruit trees. The blessing thanks Hashem for creating a world with no lacking, including beautiful trees that we enjoy. The text of the bracha is (also on artscroll pg 228):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁלֹא חָסַר בְּעוֹלָמוֹ כְּלוּם, וּבָרָא בּוֹ בְּרִיּוֹת טוֹבוֹת וְאֵילָנוֹת טוֹבוֹת לִיהֲנוּת בָּהֶם בְּנֵי אָדָם

Where: Local fruit tree listings: (1) The Meshel's front yard 4656 Thornhurst Drive (2) Crabapple trees along the walking path

Bonus riddle: What are 3 *other* blessings we only make once a year outside of Israel?

Thursday April 10

Taanit Bechorot/Fast of the Firstborn

What: On *Erev Pesach*, firstborn males fast in recognition of Hashem saving them from the plague of the firstborns in Egypt.

When: This year since *Erev Pesach* is on Shabbat, the fast is moved up to Thursday April 10.

But do I have to?: It's customary for firstborns to attend a *siyum* in the morning where they can eat and be exempt from fasting the rest of the day. There will be a siyum at OSTT Thursday morning following 6:20 AM shacharis (approximately 7:10 AM)

Bedikat Chometz

Bedikat Chometz/the search for chometz is moved up to Thursday night this year. Begin after nightfall (8:22pm in Olney), put out 10 pieces of chometz, recite the blessing, search by candlelight or flashlight, and say the *kol chamira* declaration afterwards like on a regular year (Artscroll page 654).

Friday April 11

Biyur Chometz/Burning Chometz

Since we cannot burn chometz on Shabbat, we burn it on Friday. Chometz should be burnt by 12:04pm (in Olney) as if it were actually *Erev Pesach*. Do not recite the second *kol chamira* paragraph at this time since you still intend to eat chometz through Shabbat morning. The declaration is recited on Shabbat morning. There will be a fire for biyur chometz at OSTT from 10:30am-12pm.

Pesach Prep

Make sure your chometz is sold.

Since you cannot prepare for Pesach on Shabbat, be sure to do the necessary seder prep on Friday. This includes preparing the bone, egg, charoset, salt water, and maror. Remember to light a 48hr candle so you can transfer fire for lighting on Motzei Shabbat and Sunday night.

Going into Shabbat, chometz should be locked up and covered except for what you intend to eat at the Friday night and Shabbat morning meals.

More info to come regarding Shabbat Erev Pesach through Pesach. Chag Same'ach!

- Rabbi Ariel Ben-Horin