

Section 5

Chag HaMatzot

Chag HaMatzot, The Feast of Unleavened Bread, commemorates the Exodus from Egypt. *Chag HaMatzot* lasts 7 days from the 15th of the 1st month through the 21st of the 1st month. On the 1st and 7th day of the holiday, *melacha* is forbidden. Throughout all 7 days, it is forbidden to eat or possess what is roughly translated as “leaven”. Because it is the first holiday of the year, *Adderet Eliyahu* also discusses some topics pertaining to holidays in general in its section on *Chag HaMatzot*. I retain these discussions here.

The topics I will cover in this section are:

1. Defining *Mo'ed* and *Chag*
2. The Permissibility to Cook on *Shabbaton*
3. The three Classes of forbidden foodstuffs: *Hametz*, *Mahmetzet*, and *Se'or*
4. Matzah

“Our Torah has set up signs and remembrances for the appointed times so that we would remember what was done in the days of old...and as a result remember and know a pure fear of God ... thus Scripture says ‘you will remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and Adonai your God redeemed you’ (Deuteronomy 24:22) and also ‘you will tell [this] to your son’ (Exodus 13:8)” –Adderet Eliyahu’s Introductory Poem to the Section on Chag HaMatzot

§5.1 Defining *Mo'ed* and *Chag*

§5.1A *Mo'ed*

The word “*mo'ed*” means “Appointed time”. The term “*Mo'ed of Hashem*” is more specifically used to refer to the holidays listed in Leviticus 23. Leviticus 23 begins with the statement “These are the appointed times [Hebrew: *Mo'adei*] of *Hashem*,” and proceeds to list the following days:

1. Shabbat
2. All 7 days of Chag HaMatzot
3. Chag HaShavuot
4. Yom Teruah
5. Yom HaKippurim
6. All 7 Days of Chag HaSukkot
7. Shemini Atzeret

§5.1B *Chag*

Of these days, three holidays are referred to as “Chag”: *Chag HaMatzot*, *Chag HaShavuot*, and *Chag HaSukkot*. These are the holidays on which all male Israelite would perform pilgrimage to Jerusalem as,

it is written: “three pilgrimages you will celebrate (“*tachog*”) for me during the year...three times a year shall all your males appear before the Lord *Hashem*” (Exodus 23:14-17).

The word “Chag” is derived from the root “Chug” which generally refers to the act or concept of circling. For instance, Job 22:14 reads “he walks the circuit (“*chug*”) of heaven”. The sages differ as to how *Chagim* are related to the concept of circling.

Some said that on a *Chag* people would celebrate by circling around the altar in song and dance as it is written: “I will circle your altar” (Psalms 26:6). Others said that they would circle around the sanctuary in song and dance.

Rav Levi ben Yefet held that these holidays were called *chag* because of the pilgrimage to the sanctuary. One generally ascends from places of low elevation to high elevation in a circular motion (for instance by circling up and around a mountain to avoid the steepness encountered when escalating straight up a mountain). Since holy places are generally in a place of high elevation and these holidays required pilgrimage to the Temple, the term “Chag” is a reference to that pilgrimage.

§5.1C *Shabbaton*

Days on which *melacha* except the *melacha* of cooking is forbidden are referred to as *Shabbaton* in Leviticus 23. These include:

1. The first and Seventh day of *Chag HaMatzot*
2. *Chag HaShavuot*
3. *Yom Teruah*
4. The first and seventh days of *Chag HaSukkot*
5. *Shemini Atzeret*

They do not include the 5 intermediate days of *Chag HaMatzot* and *Chag HaSukkot* because *melacha* is permitted on these days. They do not include *Shabbat* or *Yom Kippur* because all *melacha*, including that of cooking, is forbidden on these days.

§4.1D *Shabbat Shabbaton*

Days on which all *melacha* is forbidden including the *melacha* of cooking are referred to as *Shabbat Shabbaton*. Only *Shabbat* (Leviticus 23:3) and *Yom Kippur* (Leviticus 23:32) are called *Shabbat Shabbaton*.

§5.2 The Permissibility to Cook on *Shabbaton*

§5.2A *The Permissibility to Cook*

It is permitted to prepare food on a *shabbaton* (see §4.1C) since we find written regarding the first and seventh day of *Chag HaMatzot*:

“and in the first day there shall be a holy convocation and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no manner of melacha shall be done in them save that which every man must eat that only may be done by you”-(Exodus 12:16).

The permissibility of cooking applies to all holidays that are *shabbaton* even though it is only explicitly stated for the 1st and 7th days of *chag HaMatzot*. The proof for this deduction is that Leviticus 23 states for each *shabbaton*, including the 1st and 7th day of *Chag Hamatzot*, that all “*melechet avodah*” is forbidden. By contrast, Leviticus 23 states that on Shabbat and Yom Kippur all “*melacha*” is forbidden. Since *melechet avodah* is the term used to describe the actions forbidden on the 1st and 7th day of *Chag HaMatzot* in Leviticus 23, it stands to reason that this is a Torah Term that means “all *melacha* except that which is needed to prepare food”. Otherwise, Leviticus 23 would not be consistent with Exodus 12:16, cited above. Since *melechet avodah* is also used in Leviticus 23 to describe what is forbidden on the other days that are *shabbaton* we conclude that all *melacha* except that which is needed to prepare food is forbidden on all these days.

Notes on §5.2A:

The sages give strong arguments in support of their definition of *melechet avodah*. However, one might still question the validity of the sages’ definition on the grounds that the definition of *melechet avodah* as “all *melacha* except food” seems extremely unnatural. This definition is not clearly derived from the more natural definitions of *melacha* and *avodah* discussed in §3.3.

Perhaps, however, an intuitive definition of *melechet avodah* is not required. The sages understood *melechet avodah* as a Torah Term (see §3.1) with its explicit textual definition given in Exodus 12:16. Thus, the term’s definition did not evolve as part of a natural language and cannot be expected to be intuitive. Furthermore, Torah Terms are usually technical in nature which is also consistent with the sages’ definition of *melechet avodah*.

Yet why would the Torah choose specifically the word *melechet avodah* to describe this particular concept? One possibility is that the term emphasizes that both *melacha* and *avodah* are forbidden. This precludes the argument that all *avodah* is permissible on *yom tov* on the grounds that cooking, as a necessary task is considered *avodah*, and therefore that all *avodah* is similarly permitted. This explanation, however, is merely my own speculation.

§5.2B Extent of the Cooking Exemption

The permissibility of performing *melacha* for the purpose of eating raises an obvious question. Namely, how far back in the sequence of *melachot* needed to prepare a meal does this exemption reach? Is it permissible to cut the wheat that will eventually be turned into bread? Or is it only permissible to bake the bread?

The sages hold that only *melacha* that is done immediately before the completion of the food, such as baking and boiling, is permissible. Otherwise, nearly all *melacha* would be permitted on *shabbaton* since nearly all *melacha* can somehow be connected to acquiring food. It cannot be that most *melachot* are permitted on *shabbaton* since the text reads “that which every man must eat that **only** may be done by you”. The qualifier “only” suggests that this is not a wide reaching exemption that includes most *melachot*.

Furthermore, baking and boiling are specifically described as preparation of food (Exodus 16) when Moshe tells the people to bake and boil the manna before Shabbat. It therefore seems that the intent of the text was to permit specifically these specific *melachot* (baking, boiling and the like) on *shabbaton*.

Allowing fire to burn on a *shabbaton* is permissible since fire is required for baking or boiling. Since the fire is already permitted to be burning we may benefit from it for all purposes.

The Rabbanites hold that carrying is permitted on *shabbaton* based on the permissibility of preparing food. However, the majority of the Karaite sages held that carrying is forbidden on *shabbaton*.

§5.3 The Three Classes of Forbidden Foodstuffs

§5.3A The Three Classes

There are three terms that are used to describe the foodstuffs forbidden on *Chag HaMatzot*:

1. **Se'or** refers to a mixture of flour and water that has soured and on account of its souring cannot be eaten. It is, however used to help dough leaven¹. Because *Se'or* is not traditionally eaten, we find that the text does not forbid its consumption but rather forbids that “*Se'or* ... be found in your households” (Exodus 12:19). By contrast, the text forbids “eating” *chametz* and *mahmetzet* (Exodus 12:15 and Exodus 12:20, respectively).
2. **Chametz** refers to any mixture of flour that has leavened. The evidence that *chametz* refers specifically to that which is leavened is that we find the phrase “on loaves of *chametz* bread” (Leviticus 7:13) and we know that bread leavens so “*chametz* bread” likely means “leavened bread”.
3. **Mahmetzet** refers to any mixture of food that contains *chametz* but is not bread. For instance, “Median beer” is *mahmetzet* because it is produced by taking bread, soaking the bread in water and then allowing the mixture to sit in the sun for many days. The mixture is then ground up and mixed with more water so that it can then be drunk as an alcoholic beverage. In general, any alcohol (even if bread is not used as an intermediary) made from any of the grains is considered *mahmetzet*.

§5.3B More on Chametz

Rav Kirkisani stated that there are five grains which when wet can leaven and become *chametz*: durum and bread wheat (“*chita*”), six row barley (“*se'ora*”), two row barley (“*shibbolet shu'al*”), einkorn wheat (“*shippon*”), and emmer wheat (“*cusmin*”)². Rav Aharon ben Eliyahu the younger, however, maintained that any grain which can be shown to leaven through experimentation can produce *hametz*. Rav Bashyatzi agrees with this latter opinion and notes that, although millet (“*dochan*”) is not included in Rav Kirkisani’s list of five grains, experimentation has shown that millet leavens. Any alcohol made from these grains is also forbidden.

¹ I believe this is what we call “sour dough starter” in English.

² These are the same 5 grains as adopted by the Rabbanites

The sages hold that the intent of the biblical text is to forbid *chametz* and *mahmetzet* only in the form of food. Thus, glue or other products that are made from these substances are permissible to own over *Chag Hamatzot*.

Rav Bashyatzi rejects the opinion that all fermented foods including yogurt or fruit wines are *mahmetzet*. Rav Bashyatzi also rejects the opinion that any type of seed like beans or rice are forbidden.

Notes on §5.3:

Historical Notes on the Fermented Foods as Mahmetzet Position

Rav Bashyatzi categorically rejects the opinion that all fermented foods are to be considered *chametz*. Rather, he maintains that only fermented grains are *chametz*.

By contrast the vast majority of modern Karaites maintain that all fermented foods are to be considered either *chametz* or *mahmetzet*. This is based in part on the word for vinegar being "*chometz yayin*" (Numbers 6:3) or "fermented wine" (vinegar may be produced through the fermentation of wine). Many also have a tradition of avoiding certain types of large beans (these types of beans are not equivalent to the set of foods forbidden under the Ashkenazi concept of *kitniyot*); although all to whom I have spoken maintain that avoiding these beans is merely a tradition and not a true biblical requirement.

What is particularly interesting is how dismissive Rav Bashyatzi is of the present day majority opinion. Indeed, he does not offer any evidence to reject the "fermentation theory", rather his discussion of the issue is quite terse. The words below are the entirety of his refutation of the theory:

"and some of the foolish people in today's day who make themselves out to be wise do not eat anything that has soured from what is written "you shall eat no mahmetzet" such as yogurt or fruit fermented in water and they eat neither beans nor rice nor anything made of seeds³ and this is because of their idiocy and their lack of knowledge regarding the words of the sages" – Adderet Eliyahu Inyan Chag HaMatzot Ch 5.

In general Rav Bashyatzi does not use such harsh language nor does he dismiss an opinion so vehemently without providing evidence. Perhaps his tone suggests that at his the time the fermentation theory was not a major opinion that needed to be treated seriously. This is further supported by the fact that *Gan Eden* (published nearly 200 years prior to *Adderet Eliyahu*) makes no mention of the fermentation theory, suggesting that today's majority opinion may not have been widely known several hundred years ago.

That being said, Rav Shmuel Al Maghrebi in his code of law (published around 100 years before *Adderet Eliyahu*) held by the fermentation theory⁴. It is perhaps telling that Rav Shmuel lived in Cairo since the fermentation theory's prominence today is in part due to the fact that it is the historical practice of the Egyptian Karaites. By contrast, Rav Bashyatzi and Rav Aharon both operated in Turkey. Perhaps, today's majority opinion was well known in the West (or at least in Egypt) but less so in the East. This hypothesis, however, is challenged by the fact that the present day Karaite community in Turkey traditionally refrains from consuming fermented foods on *Chag HaMatzot*, just like the Egyptian community.

³ It is important to note that the opinion Rav Bashyatzi is describing here is not identical to today's majority opinion. Unlike the individuals described in the *Adderet*, all Karaites today eat rice and most types of seeds and beans. It is only certain types of large beans which modern day Karaites avoid eating by way of a tradition whose origins has been lost.

⁴ See Leon Nemoy's *Karaite Anthology* 1952 edition P. 198

Arguments for and against the Fermentation Theory

Since the *Adderet* does not provide a thorough treatment of the “fermentation theory” which is today the majority opinion, I will provide a brief discussion of the “fermentation theory” versus the “grain theory” below.

Shared Biochemical Process

Leavening caused by yeast is a special case of fermentation. In both leavening and fermentation, yeast bacteria break down sugars in the starting ingredients and produce carbon dioxide gas. Leavening occurs when the carbon dioxide gas is harnessed to inflate the dough so that the bread rises.

In the case of non-leavening fermentation (such as the fermentation used in wine) the carbon dioxide produced by the reaction is not used to make dough rise. Thus, leavening and fermentation are based off an identical biochemical process but the case of leavening differs in that the carbon dioxide produced in leavening is used to inflate dough and make it rise.

Now the biochemical description above is not directly relevant to the question as to whether fermented foods are permissible. Ancient Israelites would not necessarily have granted sufficient weight to the shared biochemical process behind fermentation and leavening to create a word “*mahmetzet*” which included both concepts by virtue of their shared biochemical origins. Yet, understanding the biochemical background does help us further understand the issue.

Namely, supporters of the fermentation theory may claim that because both fermented substances, such as wine, and substances used to produce leavening, such as *se'or*, would to the ancient Israelites appear to be caused by a similar process: that is, letting raw ingredients sit, “rot”, and produce gas, the word *mahmetzet* could easily have included both the concepts of leavening and fermentation. The fact that vinegar, *i.e.*, fermented wine, is referred to as “*chometz yayin*” or “*chometz of wine*” in the bible (*e.g.*, Numbers 6:3) suggests that ancient Hebrew may indeed have linked the concepts of fermentation and leavening.

On the other hand, opponents of the fermentation theory may claim that the end results of these processes are different enough that biblical Hebrew would have made a distinction between leavening and fermentation. For instance, bread appears quite different from wine even if it is made by a similar process.

To this, however, supporters of the fermentation theory may respond that even those who promote the grain theory forbid the consumption of beer made from grains that could leaven. Yet, in no way does beer resemble bread as an end result; nor does the production of beer necessarily require the production of bread as an intermediate. Beer and bread are only similar in the sense that they are produced through a similar process. Since fermented foods like wines are also produced by this same process it stands to reason that they too should be forbidden. Furthermore, beer and wine resemble each other as an end result far more than do beer and bread.

Supporters of the grain theory might alternatively claim that the focus should be on process as opposed to end results. They would maintain that an integral part of the process is the inclusion of grains. After all, *matzah* is made from grains and is a central aspect of the holiday, which is called in Hebrew Chag HaMatzot. Just like *matzah* is unfermented grains, it stands to reason that *chametz* and *mahmetzet* are fermented grains but not fermented fruit such as wine.

There are, however, two major weaknesses in this argument. First, *chametz* and *mahmetzet*, not being explicitly defined in the bible, must be standard terms (see §3.1). The inclusion of fermented grains to the exclusion say of fermented fruit in the Hebrew language would be a very surprising definition for a standard term. After all, the process of fermenting fruit into wine and fermenting grains into beer are nearly identical. The results too are very similar. Why then would pre-Sinai Hebrew arbitrarily distinguish between the two based on the criteria of grains?

This argument is further bolstered by the fact that Hebrew appears to have linked fermentation to the concept of *chametz* as is demonstrated by the phrase “Chometz Yayyin” (discussed above).

Second, while the Torah certainly grants a level of importance to *matzot* by requiring their consumption and naming the holiday *Chag HaMatzot*, the reason behind why we eat *matzot* is that the bread did not have time to rise. This reasoning applies equally well to fermented foods which also take a long time for preparation. Indeed the verse in the Torah that tells us of the unleavened bread not having time to rise mentions not only bread but also all manner of provisions: “and they baked unleavened cakes of dough which they brought out of Egypt...because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry **neither had they prepared for themselves any victuals**” (Exodus 12:39).

In summary, the “grain theory” fails to make a distinction between the process used in creating wine and in creating other forms of *mahmetzet* such as beer. Furthermore, it fails to argue that the foodstuffs should be defined according to their end results as opposed to their underlying process since it forbids beer which does not resemble bread but greatly resembles fermented liquor such as wine. Finally, the fermentation theory has positive biblical support from the phrase *chometz yayyin* and from the underlying reason behind the requirement to eat *matzot*. Based on these reasons it is my opinion that the fermentation theory is correct.

Wine offered in the Temple

Supporters of the grain theory might note that the daily offering required a drink offering of “strong drink” (Numbers 28:7) and that the Sabbath offering required an offering of “wine” (Numbers 28:14). Since both of these offerings would have been made over the course of *Chag HaMatzot* we may conclude that wine and at least some forms of strong drink are permissible. Yet since wine and all strong drink are forbidden by the fermentation theory, the fermentation theory is incompatible with the requirement to perform the daily offering or Sabbath offering on *Chag HaMatzot*.

To this, supporters of the fermentation theory may respond that many things that are in general forbidden are permitted for the purpose of sacrifices. Thus, one may do *melacha* on Shabbat in order to perform sacrifices (§3.3).

However, supporters of the grain theory may argue that sacrifices are permitted on Shabbat specifically because Shabbat is meant to be a day dedicated to God (notes on §3.2C). Thus there is a good reason for sacrifices to be exempt from the prohibition on *melacha*, but there does not exist a similar reason to assume that the sacrifices are exempt from the laws of *Chag HaMatzot*. The simpler resolution of the contradiction in this case is to adopt the grain theory.

To this, however, supporters of the fermentation theory may respond that one is required to break the neck of a bird for the purposes of some sacrifices (*i.e.*, Leviticus 5:8) whereas outside of this purpose many sages (including Rav Bashyatzki) agree that one must use *shechita*. There is no obvious reason for why the bird should be slaughtered differently in the Temple. Similarly, there is no obvious reason for why *mahmetzet* may be permitted for the purposes of sacrifices and forbidden elsewhere.

Supporters of the grain theory might also add that Leviticus 2:11 seems to explicitly prohibit leaven in at least some sacrifices: “no meal offering which you bring unto *Hashem* shall be made with *chametz* for you shall make no *chametz* nor any *se'or* as an offering by fire unto the Hashem”.

To this supporters of the fermentation theory may respond that the verse does not mention *mahmetzet* only *chametz* and since wine is *mahmetzet* no issue is raised. Nor does the verse mention the offering in which wine would be given, the drink offerings. It mentions only “meal offerings” and offerings made “by fire” (drink offerings were not made by fire).

Other forms of Se'or

It is worthwhile to discuss whether the modern inventions of yeast powder and chemical leaveners are forbidden as *se'or* and whether products created using these substances constitute *chametz* or *mahmetzet*.

Yeast Powder-*Se'or* as defined in the *Adderet* is a mixture of flour and water that has fermented. This mixture is then used to leaven dough. Although yeast powder is used to leaven dough through fermentation just like this mixture, unlike this mixture the yeast powder itself has not fermented. Thus, we may ask if yeast powder is truly *se'or*. In other words, does the bible forbid *se'or* because it is used for aiding the fermentation process or because *se'or* itself is fermented?

The sages hold that *chametz* or *mahmetzet* not for the purpose of eating are permissible. If we hold by this opinion, then since *se'or* is not itself edible, we must conclude that the Bible forbade *se'or* because it is used to induce fermentation to produce edible products not because the *se'or* itself has fermented. Since yeast also is used to induce fermentation to produce edible products, I think it is proper to forbid yeast as *se'or*. The council of sages forbids yeast as *se'or*; although, I am not familiar with their rationale.

Chemical Leaveners- A chemical leavener is a product which produces leaven by creating a gas such as carbon dioxide without making use of the fermentation reaction. Baking soda is an example of a chemical leavener.

Since chemical leaveners do not induce fermentation, it would seem clear that according to the fermentation theory chemical leaveners and products produced with chemical leaveners are permissible. Furthermore, most chemical leaveners act much more quickly than fermentation. Thus, the reason explicitly given in the biblical text for the prohibition on *chametz*, that the dough prepared by the Israelites when leaving Egypt did not have time to rise (Exodus 12:39), does not apply to chemical leaveners. The Council of Sages (Hebrew: *Moetzet HaHachamim*) has taken the position that chemical leaveners are permitted on Chag Hamatzot; although, I am not familiar with their rationale.

The permissibility of chemical leaveners according to the grain theory is less clear. On the one hand, they do cause dough to "inflate" thus yielding a similar result as dough leavened through fermentation. On the other hand, they rise quickly and thus the stated reason behind the prohibition on leaven does not seem to apply to chemical leaveners. It is difficult to make a ruling on this case using the grain theory due to the confusion on what the specific process is that is forbidden in the grain theory and the underlying reason for why this process is forbidden.

§5.4 The Extent to which forbidden foodstuffs must be removed from our jurisdiction

In addition to the prohibition on eating the forbidden foodstuffs we find the following prohibition of having the forbidden foodstuffs in our possession:

- A. "seven days no *se'or* shall be found in your households" –(Exodus 12:19)
- B. "no *chametz* shall be seen to you and no *se'or* shall be seen to you in all your borders" –(Exodus 13:7)

By way of *hekeish* we may know that all prohibitions that apply to one of the three classes of foodstuffs applies to all three since neither one is more severe than the other. Thus, although the text explicitly forbids only the consumption of *mahmetzet*, it is still forbidden for *mahmetzet* to be present during *Chag HaMatzot* in accordance with the two verses cited above.

More specifically, the prohibition on having the foodstuffs found “in your households” prevents us from having *chametz*, *mahmetzet*, or *se'or* under our personal control in any way. Thus, we may not have *chametz* in our households whether we bought a property, are renting a property, or were given a property as a gift. If, however, we are leasing a property to a non-Jew it is permissible for him to keep his foodstuffs in that property since that property is under his control.

We may not own the forbidden foodstuffs over *Chag HaMatzot* whether or not we store them in our property. Furthermore, we may not sell the forbidden foodstuffs to a non-Jew with the intent of purchasing them back after *hag HaMatzot*, as is the practice among some of the Rabbanites.

While the prohibition on having the foodstuffs in “your households” (Exodus 12:19) is an injunction against personal possession of the foodstuffs by individual households, the prohibition on having *chametz* or *se'or* in “all your borders” (Exodus 13:7) forbids public possession of the foodstuffs. This means that under a legitimate Jewish theocratic state it is forbidden for non-Jews to bring the foodstuffs into public space that is under control of the Jewish state. However, it is permitted for them to own the foodstuffs in their private property which is under their control and thus not included in the phrase “your borders”.

Burning is the ideal way of disposing of the foodstuffs before *Chag HaMatzot*, because in this way the food is completely destroyed into ash and no remnants are left.

§5.5 *Matzah*

Matzah is unleavened bread produced from dough made from any of the grains that have the potential to leaven but did not leaven because the dough was prepared and baked sufficiently fast. The *Adderet* records many specific suggestions about how to bake *matzah* in such a way as to best prevent leavening. I do not record these suggestions here.

The sages hold that one is obligated to eat some *matzah* on each of the 7 days of *chag HaMatzot* since we find written “Seven days you shall eat *matzot*” (Exodus 12:15). Rav Levi ben Yefet holds that one should eat *matzah* to the extent which one would normally eat *chametz*. The Rabbanite sages, by contrast, held that one is obligated to eat *matzah* only on the first night of *Chag HaMatzot*.

Although we find written, “Six days you shall eat *matzot* and the seventh day is a holy convocation you shall do no work therein” (Deuteronomy 16:8), it is not requiring us to eat *matzah* only on the first six days and exempting us from the command in Exodus 12:15 to eat *matzah* on all seven days. Rather, the purpose of singling out the seventh day of *chag HaMatzot* from the first six days is to emphasize its status as a holy day.

Rav Yosef Ha-Roeh notes that in some cases we find verses which are given in the imperative but are actually intended as privilege not a requirement. For example, we find written “six days you shall work and do all your *melacha*...” This verse is not requiring *melacha* on the six days of the week but merely permitting it. Yet, Rav Yosef maintains that in the case of eating *matzah* the verse is in fact outlining a true requirement. The reason for this being that there are only two types of verses which are given in

the form of a command when they are in fact informing us of a privilege. These two types of verses are explained below. The command regarding eating *matzah* does not fall into either such category, so Rav Yosef holds that it is a true requirement.

The first such kind of verse is when one is first commanded to do something and then one is forbidden to do something else. For instance, in the case of Shabbat one is first commanded to do *melacha* on the six days and then forbidden to do *melacha* on the seventh. The first command to work on the six days is merely outlining a privilege, not establishing a requirement since it exists only for the sake of emphasizing the second command: the prohibition on *melacha* on Shabbat. Another example is when God tells Adam “from every tree of the garden you will surely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat of it” (Genesis 2:16-17). The first command to eat of every tree of the garden is not a true requirement; it is given only to emphasize the second command: the prohibition on eating from the tree of knowledge.

The second kind of verse given in the form of a command but outlining a privilege is when something was initially forbidden through reason⁵ but then permitted. An example is the command to slaughter animals⁶ or the purchasing of slaves.⁷

In any case, because the command to eat *matzah* on the seven days of *Chag HaMatzot* does not fall into any of the two types of verses described above, Rav Yosef Ha-roeh and the sages conclude that it is a true requirement to eat *matzah* on all seven days of *Chag Hamatzot*.

⁵ I am not sure what is meant by this stipulation that the initial prohibition be “forbidden through reason”. If something should rationally be forbidden, how could the Torah permit it? Also, Rav Yosef’s point makes sense without this stipulation. Perhaps he means something that one may have errantly thought was forbidden by way of reason alone or might have reasonably thought was forbidden because of a prior commandment.

⁶ No verse is provided in the *Adderet* for this example. One might think that he is referring to the famous permission to eat meat given to Noah following the flood (Genesis 8:1-4); but this is unlikely because these verses are not given in the imperative. Rather, it is more likely that he is referring to the verse “you shall slaughter as I have commanded you ...and you shall eat” (Deuteronomy 12:21) which is permitting the slaughter of meat outside the sanctuary for secular purposes, an act which was initially forbidden (Leviticus 17:4-7).

⁷ No verse is provided in the *Adderet* for this example. I cannot think of a verse that could be construed as a command to own slaves.