

REDEMPTION OF FIRST-BORN SON (PIDYON HABEIN)

INTRODUCTION TO PIDYON HABEIN

Introduction to Pidyon HaBein

A Jewish mother's first-born male child must be “redeemed” by giving money to a cohen if the below criteria apply. Pidyon ha'bein is a mitzva for the father of the boy. Anyone may do the actual redemption (including a woman) as long as the father appoints him or her as his emissary to do so.

NOTE If the father has not done the pidyon, the boy redeems himself when he reaches 13 years old.

THREE CRITERIA FOR PIDYON HABEIN

Three Criteria for Pidyon HaBein

There are three criteria for Pidyon HaBein:

1. First child born of a mother must be male.

NOTE If a woman miscarries a fetus that has already developed limbs, any male child born after that is not considered a first-born male (bechor) and no pidyon is done.

2. Boy must not have been born by caesarean section.

NOTE A boy who was born normally after his brother was born via caesarean section is NOT a bechor.

3. Mother may not be the daughter of a cohen or levi (priestly family or assistants) and the father may not be a cohen or levi.

HOW TO DO PIDYON HABEIN

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To do Pidyon Ha'Bein:

- Pidyon ha'bein is done at least 30 days after the boy was born.
- The boy's father gives six genuine American silver dollars to any cohen. If there is no father, consult a rabbi.
- The boy's father says the blessing al pidyon ha'bein and she'hecheyanu.

NOTE If the boy redeems himself, consult a rabbi about the blessing.