

PESACH 2018/5778
קהל מחזיקי הדת - CLANTON PARK
RABBI YEHOASHUA WEBER

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CLEANING

We clean our homes of all *chametz* products because, on *Pesach*, even the ownership of *chametz* is forbidden. The main reason for this is that as we are accustomed to eating *chametz* year-round, we might, accidentally consume *chametz*¹ on *Pesach*. We focus on accessible, edible *chametz*; inaccessible *chametz* is dealt with through *bittul*, i.e., the reciting of the nullification formula both after the *bedika* and before the *chametz* burning. Ripping out car seats to find inaccessible *chametz* crumbs is thus unnecessary.

Strictly speaking, all grain products, e.g., liquor, beer etc., ought to be disposed of before *Pesach*. But this is hard to do in a world in which people have large quantities of preserved *chametz*. So, for many years now, many² rely on sources permitting the sale of *chametz* to a non-Jew.³ The *chametz* that will be sold is set aside in a segregated area and then legally transferred to non-Jewish ownership. Some are stringent and discard rather than sell their *chametz*. **If you are spending Pesach in a different time zone, your sale must reflect that, e.g. in Israel, Pesach starts seven hours earlier, so the sale must take place seven hours earlier.**

ALCOHOL & INEDIBLE CHAMETZ

Grain alcohol, a fermentation product, is *chametz*.⁴ Edible items containing grain alcohol such as whisky, are certainly forbidden. We are stringent with perfumes and with other liquid inedibles containing ethyl alcohol because that alcohol might be grain based.⁵ Such alcohol, even if denatured, i.e., inedible, can be reconstituted and would then be considered *chametz*. Inedible solid products containing grain alcohol (or any other *chametz*, for that matter), e.g., lotions, soaps, shampoo, shoe polish, ink, pure talc powder, cleansers etc. are permissible for *Pesach* use. Nevertheless, here too, given *chumras Pesach*, even inedible items that have a clear *chametz* base, i.e., wheat & oat-based soaps, are best avoided.

BEDIKAS CHAMETZ

The house has been thoroughly cleaned, but we still perform the rabbinic *mitzva* of searching for *chametz* on the night that precedes *Pesach*. The search this year occurs on Thursday night, March 29th. Begin the *bedika* after 7:54. The *beracha*, *al bi'ur chametz* is said before searching. The *beracha* introduces both the search and the *bittul*, i.e., the nullification formula

¹ *Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 4b*

² *Bach, OC, 448, Vi'im*

³ *Tosefta, Pesachim, 2, 6*

⁴ *Sedei Chemed, Chametz u'Matzah, 8, 28*

⁵ *Levushai Mordechai, 86*

recited immediately after the search. The nullification is a *halachic* dissociation from any *chametz* overlooked during the search.⁶

Don't talk between the *beracha* and the beginning of the *bedika*. It is also best not to discuss matters extraneous to the *bedika* from the moment the *beracha* is made until the *bedika* and the subsequent nullification are complete.⁷ The search is carried out with a single-wick candle or a flashlight.⁸ The traditional feel of a candle and the safety and ease of a flashlight can be melded. Make the *beracha*, begin the *bedika* with a candle and, for the finer parts of the *bedika* and for the children who are assisting, use a flashlight.

There are many rationales for the *minhag* to place 10 pieces⁹ of bread before the search:

a) to add excitement to the search.¹⁰

b) to ensure that some bread is found so that the *bedika beracha* is validated.¹¹

c) to ascertain that *chametz* will remain for the burning / *bittul* the following morning.¹²

Some find this tradition disconcerting¹³ because bandying *chametz* around the home right before *Pesach* is dangerous. Limit the potential problem of unfound *chametz* by limiting each of the 10 pieces of *chametz* to less than a *kezayis*¹⁴ (27 grams) each. As in other arenas of conflicting *halachic* opinion, follow your family's tradition. If you are unsure as to what that your tradition is, place the bread.

The pieces are gathered during the search. Upon concluding the search, say the *bittul* (nullification). The *bittul* is found in most *Haggados*. People who don't understand the Aramaic *bittul* text should familiarize themselves with the meaning of the text or recite the following translation¹⁵: "All leaven in my possession, whether I have seen it and whether, I have removed it, should be considered void and I relinquish my ownership of it. It should be considered as the dust of the ground."

BEDIKAS CHAMETZ OUTSIDE THE HOME

If you are leaving home for *Pesach* and won't be home the night before *Pesach*, do the *bedika* at your home without a *beracha* the night before you leave.¹⁶ If you won't be home for the entire *Pesach* you can "sell" large swaths of your home and clean and do a *bedika* on the "unsold part." (Apprise your *rav* of the details.) If you are in a hotel room the night before *Pesach*, do the *bedika* in the hotel room with a *beracha*, just as you would at home.¹⁷ If you are spending *Pesach* with friends or relatives and will be at their home the night before *Pesach*,

⁶ *Rashi & Tosafos, Pesachim 4b, Rambam, Chametz u'Matzah, 2, 2*

⁷ *Shulchan Aruch, OC, 432, 1*

⁸ *She'arim Metzuyanim bi'Halacha, 11, 4* who notes that incandescent electric light is considered "flame" in other *halachic* arenas as well. Responsa *Be'er Moshe* who prefers a flashlight where it allows for a more effective *bedika*

⁹ *Arizal* based on *Bavli, Pesachim 10a*

¹⁰ *Chok Ya'akov, OC, 432, 14*

¹¹ *Rema, OC, 432, 2*

¹² *Mahari Weil, 193*

¹³ *Taz, OC, 432, 4*

¹⁴ *Sha'arei Teshuva, 433, 3*

¹⁵ *Mahari Weil, 193, Mishneh Berurah, 434, 9*

¹⁶ *Shulchan Aruch, OC, 436, 1*

¹⁷ *Siddur Pesach ke'Hilchaso, 12, 8*

then listen to the homeowner's *beracha* and perform the *bedika* in your room.¹⁸ (Although you say the *bittul*, a verbal nullification is not reason enough to require a personal *beracha*.)

KASHERING

It is best to have special *Pesach* utensils. Earthenware and synthetic¹⁹ utensils are non-*kasherable*. Certain metal and glass utensils (not Pyrex or other types of glass used in the oven) may be *kashered*. Silverware, metal pots in which items are cooked via a liquid medium (not pans) and metal cutlery, can be *kashered* through *hagalah*, i.e., immersion in a *keli rishon*, in a *Pesach* pot, or a *chametzdik* pot that first goes through its own *kashering* process. To *kasher* the pot, wait 24 hours since its last use. Then, fill the pot with water. Boil the water, allowing the water to boil over the pot's rim. The pot is now *kashered*. Fill the pot with water and bring the water to a boil. Make sure that all rust and dirt have been removed from the utensils that you are *kashering*. Drop the utensils/cutlery (which should not have been used with anything hot for 24 hours), one by one, into the boiling water. Rinse the utensils/cutlery with cold water after the *hagalah* is completed. Knives with serrated edges or with attached handles or silverware with grooves that cannot be well cleaned are more difficult to *kasher*.

Standard glass used for hot foods is a matter of debate, with Ashkenazim veering towards stringency and equating glass with earthenware and Sephardim veering towards leniency.²⁰ Drinking glasses that were not used for hot *chametz* can, in cases of necessity, be *kashered* through a *milui ve-irui* process, i.e., filling glasses with water for three 24-hour periods and changing the water for each one of those periods. Sinks, stovetops, and all surfaces normally used for food should be readied for *Pesach* use. Metallic sink surfaces can be *kashered*. These surfaces must first be thoroughly cleaned and then dried. The sink should then remain unused for 24 hours. Take a *chametzdik* pot that had not been used in the past 24 hours and *kasher* it. Then fill the pot with water again and bring that water to a boil. The boiling water should be poured on all parts of the sink, including the faucet. The faucet should be swiveled to ensure that the boiling water reaches all of it. Sink filters with small mesh holes should be replaced; filters with large holes can be *kashered* with hot water. Enamel and Formica must be covered. *Chametzdik* dish racks, sink racks, washbasins and *blechs* should not be used.

Self-cleaning ovens should be thoroughly cleaned and *kashered* by running a self-clean cycle. Make sure to clean the areas of the oven which are not reached by the self-cleaning process, i.e., the edges and the sides of the door. Regular ovens should be cleaned thoroughly with an "Easy Off" type cleaner and set on the highest setting for an hour and a half.

Stovetop grates should be placed in a self-clean oven for a cycle (be careful-they might become discoloured) or burnt out on top of the stove by covering them with a kettle, *blech* or a layering of aluminum foil and turning on the flame full force for ten minutes. Ensure that the hot aluminum foil does not extend beyond the stovetop where it can touch, and possibly melt, the plastic knobs. When *kashering* grates, you can also *kasher* stainless steel between-the-grates stovetop areas as well. Before turning on the flames that will *kasher* the grates, cover the entire between-the-grates- area with aluminum foil. This way, the flames will heat - and *kasher* - that between-the-grates area as well. If the area is enamel, it should be covered for *Pesach*.

¹⁸ *Shibolai ha'Leket*, 4, 44

¹⁹ *Iggeros Moshe*, OC, 2, 92. Although this is a debatable matter, for *Pesach* we are stringent.

²⁰ *Shulchan Aruch*, OC, 451, 26

Kashering/covering this area is necessary because a trickling overflow from food inside a pot might connect the food in the pot, to the *unkashered chametzdik* stovetop.

Glass stovetops are trickier because keeping them covered with a *blech* or with aluminum foil can cause small cracks in the glass. *Kashering* should, therefore, occur in one of the following ways. (a) After *kashering* the burners as previously outlined, run a blowtorch over the surface of the glass. Cracks can be avoided by quickly moving the torch back and forth over the entire surface so that there is a uniform rise in temperature. (b) *Kasher* the burner area only. Do this by turning on the burners, full force, for 10 minutes. The outlying areas of the stove will, nevertheless, not be *kashered* because the heat does not extend beyond the burner area. Given that the outlying area have not been *kashered*, it is important that cooking pots not extend - or that they not be slid - beyond the *kashered* burner area. There is, also, the "connecting trickle" problem when spills connect the food in the pot to the *non-kashered* stove top. Placing a metal disc on the burner area addresses these issues. This disc lifts the pot off the stove top and creates a break between the pot and the stovetop.

Microwave ovens can be *kashered*, after a thorough cleaning (including the fan area!), by boiling water from a Pyrex dish inside the microwave until a thick steam permeates the entire microwave. Change/cover turntables (a sheet of Styrofoam works well here). Given the affordability of small microwave units, and the difficulty of cleaning the fan area, consider buying a special *Pesach* unit. Follow standard oven *kashering* procedures for convection microwave ovens that are also used in the convection mode. Follow microwave *kashering* procedures for convection microwaves that are never used in convection mode. As mentioned, all utensils should remain unused for the twenty-four-hour period that precedes their *kashering*. Warming drawers should not be *kashered* because the heat settings do not go high enough to effect *kashering*. The warming drawer should be cleaned, sealed, and not used for *Pesach*.

Broilers, barbecues, and griddles on which foods are broiled or roasted directly, must to be heated to a glow to effect *kashering*. This requires blowtorching (only to be done by people well acquainted with activity of the sort). Or replace the broiler pan and/or the barbeque grates. The empty broiler space must still be *kashered* by cleaning it and setting it to broil for an hour. The part of the barbecue which the food can touch (the part that is level with the grate) must also be *kashered* by heating it to a glow. If you are not *kashering* your broiler, you can still use your oven - just clean the broiler as you would anything else.

KITNIYOS

Ashkenazim do not eat legumes (*kitniyos*) - beans, corn, peas, rice, etc. and products containing them as ingredients, throughout *Pesach*. Most include peanuts in the ban and *kitniyos* derivatives such as peanut oil. Follow your tradition. The *kitniyos* tradition arose because *kitniyos* were frequently stored together with grain.²¹ Alternatively, *kitniyos* were banned because flour and bread like items can be produced from legumes.²² Potatoes (from which potato starch is made) while included in the initial ban according to some, were permitted because of famine.²³ Others claim that potatoes were not banned simply because they were unknown in Europe at the time the ban.²⁴ Sephardic, Yemenite and Oriental Jewish

²¹ *Bais Yosef*, OC, 453

²² *Mordechai*, *Pesachim*, 2, 688

²³ *Nishmas Adam*

²⁴ *Tiferes Shelomo*

customs vary from community to community. Imported Israeli foods containing *kitniyos* may be labelled Kosher for *Pesach*. There has been considerable discussion in our community about the use of quinoa, with established Rabbanim offering opinions on both sides of the debate. My *pesak* for the Clanton Park community is to allow the use of quinoa.

MEDICATIONS

A troubling issue that I confront, *Pesach* after *Pesach*, (and for that matter, Yom Kippur after Yom Kippur) is the spectre of ill people refusing their medications because of that medication's alleged *chametz* component(s). To reiterate a point that I have repeatedly made, few, if any non-chewable pills, contain *chametz* in their ingredient base. Even if they do contain *chametz*, non-chewable pills are swallowed; they are not eaten, and if they do not have a pleasant tasting coating, they offer no pleasure to the palate. *All non-chewable, solid medications that do not have a pleasant tasting coating (most pills and all capsules) are permissible on Pesach, for all illnesses, for all people. They need no certification and channelling effort into researching the ingredient base of these pills exacerbates a climate in which ill people endanger their lives in a mistaken attempt at halachic observance.* Most adult medications fall within the framework of this leniency. Vitamins are not included within this leniency, but I would permit vitamins ingested because of a clear medical need, e.g., prenatal pills.

Liquid or chewable medications are a wholly different matter. Such medications that contain *chametz*, are considered bona fide *chametz* because of their pleasant taste. *Chametz* liquid and chewable medications may nevertheless be used if medically necessary and if no adequate substitutes can be found. One needing such medications should purchase them before *Pesach* and consult a *rav* about how to store and how to consume such medications over the course of *Pesach*. Liquid and chewable medications that contain *kitniyos* but no *chametz* may be consumed by an ill person (ill to the point that one would be recuperating in bed) or by a young child who is facing even slight discomfort. The published *Pesach* lists are valuable in ascertaining the status of these medications. Please remember that there are additional issues involving the consumption of medicines on *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov* that require discussion with a competent halachic authority.

SEDER MATZAH

The three matzos are placed on the *seder* table to:

- a) represent the three kinds of Jews: *Kohen, Levi* and *Yisrael*.
- b) represent our three *avos*, our forefathers.
- c) remind us that there are three times during the *seder* when matzah must be eaten - at the beginning of the *seder* meal, when the *beracha* over matzah is made, for the *korech* (Hillel Sandwich) when the matzah is eaten together with the *maror*, and at the end of the meal, for the *afikoman*.

At the beginning of the *seder*, the middle matzah is broken in two. The larger part²⁵, the *afikoman*, is hidden. The *afikoman* is eaten as a remembrance for the non-extant *korban Pesach*. The *korban Pesach* was eaten at the end of the meal. The *afikoman* is, therefore, also eaten at the end of the meal.

MATZAH SHEMURA

Matzah is prepared from the flour of grains that have not been washed, and have been processed under supervision, completely protected from any contact with water. Matzah must

²⁵ *Mishneh Berurah* 473, 58

be made with *mayim shelanu*, water that has been stored overnight. The matzah can be manufactured either by hand or by machine. The dough must be pummeled constantly. If it is left idle for longer than 18 minutes, it becomes *chametz*. It is rolled into thin sheets and then baked. All equipment used in the preparation of matzah must be constantly cleaned of dough crumbs, and the oven in which matzah is baked must be set at the proper baking temperature. Properly certified matzos are manufactured with care and are kosher. Nevertheless, it is important to use *matzah shemura*, which is “guarded matzah” for the *seder*. This is because there are opinions requiring the *seder* matzos to be produced *lishmah*, for the sake of the *mitzva* that is to be done with them. *Matzah shemura* can be either machine or hand baked. German Jews generally favour machine matzos; most other Jews favour the hand baked version.

GEBROCHTS

Once matzah has been baked properly, leavening can no longer occur, and the product can no longer become *chametz*. Therefore, matzah products such as ground matzah meal, flour or farfel may be cooked in hot water, baked, or blended with any variety of *Pesach* ingredients. People who do not eat *Gebrochts* (they do not allow their matzah to come in contact with water) are concerned that there might be a small bit of raw flour that will become *chametz* if we expose it to water now.²⁶

MAROR

Maror reminds of bitter Jewish suffering at the hands of the Egyptians. Many people use grated horseradish. This year because the first night of Yom Tov is Shabbos, it is imperative that *maror* be ground before the Seder night, because of Shabbos grinding issues. Many recommend even grating the second night's *maror* before Shabbos/Yom Tov begin, because of grinding issues.²⁷ If you did not grate the *maror* before Yom Tov, grate it on Yom Tov with a *shinui*, i.e., a change in normal routine. The *shinui* is achieved by holding the grater upside down or grating onto a piece of paper rather than onto a dish.^{28 29} If you grate on Yom Tov, prepare the amount that is needed for that night only. Preparing extra for the following night would be a violation of *hachana*, i.e. preparing on Yom Tov for the next day. *Maror* that has soaked in liquid of any sort for more than 24 hours has its bitterness muted during the soaking process and is, therefore, disqualified. Commercially prepared horseradish that has water or vinegar added to it is unacceptable.³⁰

Many use Romaine lettuce which should be cleaned thoroughly. Do not let the lettuce soak in liquid for more than 24 hours. If the second day *maror* supply was cleaned before Yom Tov do not let it soak over the first day and into the second. Wrap the washed *maror* in damp paper towels instead. Romaine lettuce, while not bitter, is soft at the edges and has a hard stalk in the middle. This situation is a perfect metaphor for the Egyptian exile. The Egyptian exile, comfortable at first, gradually grew harder and harder.³¹

²⁶ *Sha'arei Teshuvah* 460, 10

²⁷ *Mishneh Berurah* 473, 19

²⁸ *Rema*, OC, 504,1

²⁹ *Mishneh Berurah* 473, 19

³⁰ *Shulchan Arukh*, OC, 473, 5

³¹ *Arukh ha'Shulchan*, OC, 473, 16

ROASTED MEATBONE

This is a symbol for the *Pesach* lamb, which we brought as a *korban* on the eve of *Pesach*. This offering needed to be roasted. One explanation for the required roasting is that poor people insist on boiling rather than roasting their meat because they want to make a broth out of the meat as well. They extract as much as they can from every piece of meat. Only wealthy people can afford to roast their meats, thereby wasting the broth. On *Pesach*, we are all “wealthy” and so the offering was roast. Today, given that we have no *bais ha-mikdash*, and consequentially no *Pesach* offering, we refrain from eating roast meat or fowl at the *seder* lest someone think that we are eating some sort of mock *Pesach* offering.³²

ROASTED EGG

This symbolizes the festival offering, the *chagiga*. In the time of the *bais ha-mikdash*, the *chagiga* was brought on all holidays. The round egg, which can roll on and on, symbolizes the continuous circle of life, the constant flux from pain to joy and the reverse. The egg is therefore also an appropriate sign of mourning. This small symbol of mourning reminds us of the *bais ha-mikdash* and of the *Pesach* offering, both of which we sorely miss.

CHAROSES

A mixture of nuts, cinnamon, apples, and wine. It reminds us of the clay the Jews used to make bricks to build for Pharaoh. The red wine reminds us of the spilled blood, the cinnamon sticks tell us about the straw Jews gathered for these bricks. The *maror* is dipped in the *charoses* to somewhat temper the *maror*'s bitterness. We then shake the *charoses* off the *maror* so that the *charoses* does not totally negate the *maror*'s bitterness.³³ This year because the first night of *Yom Tov* is *Shabbos*, the *charoses* must be prepared before the Seder night, because of *Shabbos* grinding and kneading issues. It is best to even grate the fruits or nuts that will be added to the second night's *charoses* mixture before *Yom Tov* and place them in the refrigerator. If you didn't grate before *Yom Tov* and are chopping the *charoses* on *Yom Tov*, only prepare the amount that you need for that night.

KARPAS

A vegetable dipped into salt water. Especially this year, because the first night of *Yom Tov* is *Shabbos*, prepare the salt water before Seder night. If you forgot to prepare the mixture before Seder night, then reverse the preparation process, i.e., place the salt in the bowl first, then add water.³⁴ Also, if preparing the salt water on *Yom Tov*, only prepare the amount that you need for that night. Preparing extra for the following night would be a violation of *hachana*, i.e. preparing on *Yom Tov* for the next day. The vegetable dipped in saltwater might symbolize the Jewish people who were “down and out” like a vegetable which is near the ground being immersed in the tears of Egyptian slavery. Alternatively, it might remind us of the Jews' passing through the salt water of the Sea of Reeds. A primary reason for the *karpas* is that there is a question as to whether we make the *ha-adama beracha* on the *maror*. The doubt revolves around the fact that the *maror* is eaten during the meal, after we have already partaken of the matzah. Matzah exempts most items eaten during a normal meal. Items that are not part of a normal meal, i.e., wine, certain desserts, would require their own *beracha*. The *maror* can be viewed as normal, akin to a salad vegetable or unusual, i.e., a *mitzvah* item. And so, there is doubt as to whether you make a *ha-adama* on the *maror*. The *ha-adama beracha*

³² *Shulchan Aruch*, OC, 476

³³ *Shulchan Arukh*, OC, 475, 1

³⁴ *Kitzur Shulchan Arukh*, 118, 4. *The Mishneh Berurah* seems to restrict this stringency to *Shabbos*.

that is made on the *karpas*, if it is used to exempt the *maror* of its beracha obligation, helps us resolve this issue. It is imperative, therefore, to have the *maror* in mind when the *ha-adama beracha* is made on the *karpas*.³⁵

FOUR CUPS

The first cup of wine is the *Kiddush*. The second cup is taken at the end of the first of the three parts of the *Seder*. The third cup follows the *bentching*. The fourth cup is drunk at the end of the second part of the *seder*. The number four is used because Hashem used four different verbs, all of which signify redemption, when Moshe was sent to free the Jews. The number four also talks to us about our four *imahos*, our four matriarchs, and reminds us of feminine strength. We are being reminded about the extraordinary role that women (Pharaoh's daughter who saved Moshe, the midwives who saved the Jewish children, Miriam who was responsible for Moshe's birth) played in our redemption from Egypt.

CUP OF ELIYAHU

Some authorities believe that there should be five rather than four cups of wine at the *seder* table. The fifth cup came to be known as the Cup of Eliyahu because the *rabbonim* of old left the resolution of all unresolved questions to await the coming of the prophet Eliyahu and the Messianic era that he will bring. All our *halachic* questions, including our debate as to whether we do or don't need the fifth cup, will be resolved during that Messianic period. The custom of setting up a cup for Eliyahu led to the custom of opening the door during the *seder* for the entrance of this great prophet.

RECLINING

In ancient times, it was customary for royalty to recline during meals. On *Pesach* night, we are all royalty. It is obligatory to eat the joyous, critical parts of the *seder*, i.e. the four cups and the matzah, while reclining to the left. The *maror*, on the other hand, because of its connotations of slavery, is not eaten in a reclining position. Ashkenazic women generally do not recline, Sephardic women generally do.³⁶

MEASUREMENTS FOR THE PESACH SEDORIM

MINIMUM SIZE OF WINE CUPS

The *arba kosos* and *Kiddush* cup should hold at least 98 millilitres (3.3 oz.), of which you must drink the majority, 49 millilitres (1.7 oz.) for each of the *arba kosos*. If 98 millilitres are too much, use a cup that contains 86 millilitres (2.9 oz.). Here too, you must drink at most of the cup, i.e. 43 millilitres (1.5 oz.). This year, because the first night is also Shabbos, the first cup should be at least 133 millilitres (4.5 oz.).

When using a cup larger than the minimum *shiur* can, you can still address your obligations by drinking most of the *shiur*, i.e., the same 49 millilitres (1.7 US fl.oz.), rather than drinking most of the actual cup. It is better, though, to drink most of the actual cup, i.e., 4.1 US fl.ozs. from an 8 US fl.oz. cup, and better yet to drink the entire cup, which would mean drinking all 8 US fl.ozs. from an 8 US fl.oz. Consuming so much wine is taxing. It is therefore best to use smaller cups.

³⁵ *Peri Megadim, Aishel Avraham, 473, 4*

³⁶ *Shulchan Aruch, OC, 472, 4*

WINE

1. Undiluted wine is best. The variety of low alcohol wines allow one to drink the *arba kosos* without becoming intoxicated in the process. (Some are *halachically* stringent and use unsweetened *non-mevushal* red wines for the four cups. Those following this stringency should be aware that the rationale for this stringency is applicable to year-round *kiddush* as well).
2. If necessary, you may mix the wine with grape juice.
3. If necessary, Ashkenazim may dilute wine with water but make sure to have a more than 1/4-cup wine to 3/4 cup water. Sephardim should never dilute the mixture with more than 1/4 water.
4. If necessary, you may use grape juice instead of wine. Wine is preferred, though, because intoxicating wine more aptly captures the “freedom” idea of *Pesach*.³⁷
(NOTE - The *beracha* upon all these mixtures is *hagafen*.)

MINIMUM AMOUNT OF MATZAH SHEMURAH

You must eat the minimum amount of *matzah shemura* three times during the *seder*:

- 1) After the *beracha al achilas matzah*. This is the primary eating of matzah; e.g., this is a Torah commandment. Try to eat 2/3 of a machine matzah or 1/2 of a hand-baked matzah, but if necessary, you can be lenient and use 1/3 of a machine matzah or 1/4 of a hand-baked matzah. The matzah should be eaten within a two-minute time span or if necessary, a four-minute time span.
- 2) For *korech*, when we eat matzah and *maror* together in a sandwich, 1/3 of a machine matzah or 1/4 of a hand-baked matzah suffices.
- 3) The *afikoman* is also considered very important and it is therefore best to eat 2/3 of a machine matzah or 1/2 of a hand-baked matzah.

If you cannot eat matzah, then *matzah shemura* meal (upon which you are permitted to recite *ha'motzi*) is substituted as follows:

- 1 & 3) After reciting the *beracha*, *al achilas matzah* and *afikoman* - an amount of meal that can be compacted into a vessel measuring 1.5 US fl.oz.
- 2) For *korech* - an amount of meal that can be compacted into a vessel holding 0.75 US fl.oz.

MINIMUM AMOUNT OF MAROR

A minimum amount of *maror* is eaten twice during the *seder*. Once after the *beracha*, *al achilas maror*, and once for *korech*.

If using romaine lettuce:

1. After reciting the *beracha*, *al achilas maror* enough stalks to cover an area of 3 by 5 inches.

If using pure, grated horseradish, use the following amounts:

1. After reciting the *beracha*, *al achilas maror* - an amount that can be compacted into a vessel measuring 1.1 US fl.oz.
2. For *Korech* - an amount that can be compacted into a vessel measuring 0.7 US fl.oz.

³⁷ *Peri Megadim, Meshbetzos Zahav, OC, 472*

MAGGID, TELLING THE STORY OF THE REDEMPTION FROM EGYPT

The *seder* is a time to bring our *yiddishkeit* alive. We do this by rereading and re-enacting the Exodus story. Discuss all aspects of the Exodus in detail. Don't limit yourself to the Haggadah text. Discussion allows people to re-examine their connection with *yiddishkeit* and Hashem. We focus on the young children. This might be because the Egyptian decrees (such as the killing of newborn boys) were suffered inordinately by children. Children should participate in the *seder* to the extent of their ability. It is important that they nap beforehand so that they (and we) can enjoy the *seder*. In addition to the Four Questions, children should be encouraged to drink the Four Cups, eat the *maror* and *matzah*, and ask questions about Jewish life.

CHAMETZ AFTER PESACH

Care should be therefore taken when purchasing *chametz* after *Pesach* that this *chametz* should not have been in a Jew's possession during *Pesach*.

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A kasheren und zissen Pesach, Rabbi Yehoshua & Leah Weber