

HALACHIC ISSUES FOR PESACH 2008/ 5768 KEHAL MACHZIKEI HADAS-CLANTON PARK RABBI YEHOASHUA WEBER

HALACHIC ISSUES FOR PESACH 2008/ 5768, PART 1

Pesach, this year, begins on *motzai Shabbos* April 19th 2008/5768. Some of the dos and don'ts that govern a *Pesach* of the sort, which, incidentally, last occurred back in 2005/5765 might be unclear. When to prepare the *seder*? When to burn the *chametz*? The following *halachic* summary should help.

Question 1: When is our chametz sold?

Ordinarily:

Chametz is sold through your designated *rav* to a non-Jew with the sale taking effect on the morning of the 14th day of Nissan, the morning that precedes the *Seder* night.

This year's problem:

The 14th of Nissan is *Shabbos*. We are prohibited from engaging in transactions on *Shabbos*. We therefore cannot sell our *chametz* in the usual manner.

The solution:

This year, the contract of sale to the non-Jew is drawn up on Friday morning¹, which is the 13th of Nissan. The language of the contract of sale will state the following: "The sale will be effective on Friday, April 18th and will include all *chametz* which is in the area that is designated to be sold as of 12:08 P.M.² on Saturday, April 19th." This language allows us to add *chametz* on Friday night or on *Shabbos* morning to the area that is to be sold.³ All *chametz* that is in the designated area as of 12:08 P.M. on *Shabbos* will be included in the sale. There are, of course, other ways of calculating these *zemanim*, but the complications of a proper *seudas Shabbos* so early in the morning are reason enough to abide by the *Vilna Gaon's* more lenient *zemanim*. Those following the *Magen Avraham's* more stringent opinion would effect the sale by 11:56.

Question 2: When do we search for chametz?

Ordinarily:

We search for *chametz* on the night of the 14th of Nissan, the night before *Pesach*.

This year's problem:

¹ In the morning, rather than in the afternoon, as per Responsa *Maharam Schick*, OC, 120 to maintain, to the best of our ability, the standard times for *mechiras chametz* so as to prevent confusion in other years.

² Although there are other ways of calculating these *zemanim*, given the complications of a proper *seudas Shabbos* so early in the morning, our bulletin reflects the *Vilna Gaon's* more lenient *zemanim*.

³ *Shoel u'Maishiv*, 6, 50. See also Responsa *Rabbi Akiva Eiger*, 1, 159 and *Iggeros Moshe*, OC, 3, 44.

We cannot conduct the search on the 14th of Nissan, which is Friday night, because the search involves moving a light from room to room. We cannot conduct the search on Friday during the day. This is because the search is supposed to be conducted by candlelight (or flashlight)⁴ and such lights are more effective at night.

The solution:

We search on Thursday evening, April 17th, when the stars emerge, at 8:16 PM. At this time, we say the *beracha* of *al bi'ur chametz*, check for *chametz* and say the *kol chamira* (the declaration in which we nullify *chametz* that might inadvertently remain in our possession).

Question 3: When do we burn chametz?

Ordinarily:

We destroy our *chametz* by burning it on the morning before *Pesach*.

This year's problem:

We cannot burn *chametz* on the morning before *Pesach* because it is *Shabbos*. Technically, you may destroy the *chametz* even on *Shabbos* in a different way such as disposing of it via the toilet⁵, but we want to preserve the practice of burning *chametz*, which can only be done before *Shabbos*.⁶

The solution:

To preserve the practice of burning the *chametz*, we burn our *chametz* on Friday, April 18th, at the normal time - before 12:08 P.M.⁷ On *Shabbos*, after we finish eating *chametz*, we dispose of the remaining *chametz* in the manner recorded in question 7.

Question 4: When do we say kol chamira annulling our ownership of chametz?

Ordinarily:

During an ordinary year, we say one version of the *kol chamira* paragraph when searching for *chametz* at night and a second version when burning the *chametz* the next morning. The language we use at night annuls only unknown *chametz*; such language allows us to save some *chametz* to use for breakfast the following morning. The *kol chamira* paragraph that we say during the burning of the *chametz* the following morning is more inclusive. It annuls ownership of **all** *chametz*.

This year's problem:

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

⁵ *Pri Megadim, Meshbetzos Zahav*, OC, 444, 6

⁶ *Rema*, OC, 445, 1

⁷ In the morning, rather than in the afternoon, as per the *Beis Yosef*, OC, 444 quoting the *Mordechai*, to maintain, to the best of our ability, the standard time for *bi'ur chametz* as to prevent confusion in other years

We cannot say the second version of *kol chamira* that nullifies all *chametz*, when burning our *chametz* on Friday morning, because we are keeping some *chametz* for use on *Shabbos*.⁸

The solution:

We say the first version of *kol chamira* when we search for *chametz*, on Thursday night. We do not say *kol chamira* when burning our *chametz* on Friday morning. We say the second version of *kol chamira* on *Shabbos*, before 12:08 P.M., after having disposed of our *chametz* as described in question 7.

Question 5: When do the bechorim fast?

Ordinarily:

The fast normally takes place on the day before *Pesach*.

This year's problem:

We cannot fast on the day before *Pesach* because it is *Shabbos*. We do not push the fast back to Friday either, since fasting on Friday causes people to enter *Shabbos* in discomfort.

The solution:

We fast on Thursday, April 17th. Attendance at a celebration honouring a *mitzva* exempts you from fasting. The popular method is to attend a *siyyum* celebrating completion of a course of Torah study.

Question 6: How do we serve chametz on Shabbos?

The chametz part of the meal:

The menu should contain *Pesachdik* food that is cooked in *Pesachdik* pots and be served on *Pesachdik* or on disposable dishes. Ideally, the only *chametz* served should be the *challo*s over which you make *ha'motzi*. Cover the table with a disposable plastic cover. Eat the *challah* over the plastic tablecloth. The latest time to eat *chametz* part of the meal on *Shabbos* April 19th is 10:59 A.M. After the *chametz/chametz* part of the meal, dispose of the tablecloth in the manner described in question 7. (If you are using this method, please remember to place the candlesticks somewhere other than the table before lighting the *Shabbos* candles). Children should not be given *chametz*. Give them egg matzah instead. Wash up carefully after the *chametz* part of the meal, rinse your mouth and check that no *chametz brakelach* have fallen onto your lap. Make sure that this part of the meal is concluded by 10:59 A.M. There are, of course, other ways of calculating these *zemanim*, but the complications of a proper seudas *Shabbos* so early in the morning are reason enough to abide by the *Vilna Gaon's* more lenient *zemanim*. Those following the *Magen Avraham's* more stringent opinion would stop eating *chametz* by 10:35.

The rest of the meal:

As mentioned, the rest of the meal should consist of kosher *le'Pesach* food, be served on *Pesach* utensils, which should be kept apart from the *chametz* and from *chametz* utensils.

⁸ *Mishnah Berurah*, 444, 10

While many, for obvious reasons, use disposable utensils at these meals, the *kiddush* cup, especially Friday night should be a proper *kos*.⁹

Utensils:

Utensils that are used with *chametz* may not be washed after the *chametz* use on *Shabbos*. Such washing, an act of preparation for the upcoming *Pesach* prohibitions, has nothing to do with *Shabbos* itself and you may not prepare for *Pesach* on *Shabbos*¹⁰. Therefore, for the *chametz* part of the meal you should use paper and plastic utensils and dispose of these utensils in the manner described in question 7.

Alternatively:

Eat no *chametz* at all at the meal. Wash on egg matzah instead. Make sure to eat at least one and a third egg matzos, which, given issues particular to this day, is a sufficient amount for *bentching*.¹¹ Ashkenazim should make sure to finish the egg matzah by 10:59 AM.¹² In contrast to the *challah* stringencies delineated before, you do not have to eat the egg matzah over plastic. There are minority opinions that have reservations about the eating of egg matzah even before 10:59 A.M. because of the prohibition against the eating of matzah on *erev Pesach* and because of potential *beracha* issues. Although the egg matzah option is acceptable, some suggest that those without a tradition of eating egg matzah on *erev Pesach* should opt for the *challah* option delineated above.¹³ As mentioned, there are, of course, other ways of calculating these *zemanim*, but the complications of a proper *seudas Shabbos* so early in the morning are reason enough to abide by the *Vilna Gaon's* more lenient *zemanim*. Those following the *Magen Avraham's* more stringent opinion would stop eating *chametz* by 10:35.

Question 7: What do we do with chametz that remains after the Shabbos meals?

The *chametz*, which remains, may be disposed of in one of four ways, before 12:08 P.M.:

1. Give it to someone who is not Jewish as a gift. Have him/her acquire it by lifting it and have him/her remove it from your property.¹⁴
2. Dispose of it via the toilet.

⁹ *Be'er Moshe* 3, 55.

¹⁰ Where washing is imperative, see *Rema's* leniency in 444, 4 as explained by the *Mishnah Berurah* 444, 14 and the *Arukh ha'Shulchan* 444, 8.

¹¹ Egg matzah is generally equated with cake and not bread in relation to washing and *bentching* issues. Nevertheless, the *Birkai Yosef* in 444 quotes the *Radvaz* in stating that the seriousness of the *Shabbos* meal allows us to govern this egg matzah eating as another form of bread eating in relation to washing and *bentching* issues. From this vantage point, even a *ke'zayis*, i.e., 2/3 of an egg matzah for one who is well or 1/3 of an egg matzah for one who is ill should suffice for washing and *bentching* issues. On the other hand, the *Chida*, seemingly, views egg matzah eating as a form of bread eating as a matter that is specific to the *Shabbos-erev Pesach* conundrum. He therefore recommends doubling the *shi'ur* to a *baiza*, an egg. The ruling above reflects the *Chida's* perspective.

¹² *Bi'ur ha'Gra*, OC, 462 as per the *Rema* OC, 441, 1, who rules that the *chametz* prohibitions are extended to egg matzah, as per those who consider egg matzah to be potential *chametz*.

¹³ See the 1954 controversy in *Erev Pesach she'Chal le'Hiyos be'Shabbos* by Tzvi Cohen. See also *Iggeros Moshe*, OC, 1, 155

¹⁴ SA, OC, 444, 4

3. One may dispose of *chametz* in a trash bag, assuming that he declares the bag "ownerless," and he leaves it outside his property. Please ascertain that the *eruv* is up.
4. Leftover *chametz* may, before 12:08 P.M., be put into the designated area in which we store the *chametz* that we are selling.

Question 8: Does chametz become muktzah on Shabbos afternoon?

Actual *chametz* becomes *muktzah* at 12:08 P.M., when you are no longer allowed to benefit from it. If you find *chametz* after 12:08 P.M.:

1. Find a Gentile who will dispose of it¹⁵ or
2. Cover it with a vessel until *Chol ha'Moed*, and dispose of the *chametz* on *Chol ha'Moed*.

Question 9: May we handle matzos on Shabbos, April 18 & 19?

The problem:

Raw meats¹⁶ and other foods that are inedible in their present condition are considered *muktzah* on a typical *Shabbos*. Matzah cannot be eaten until the evening and are therefore "inedible" on *Shabbos*, April 19th. Are the matzos therefore considered *muktzah*?

The solution:

A special box of matzah that was specifically set aside for the *seder* is *muktzah* on *Shabbos*. Other matzos, even *shemura matzah*, which you might, theoretically, give to a non-Jew or to a small child, both of whom can eat matzah on *Shabbos*, are not *muktzah*.

Question 10: How do we eat Se'uda Shlishis (the 3rd Shabbos meal)?

The problem: We are faced with competing mandates:

- A. Eating the third meal is an important *mitzva*. Many authorities rule that the third meal of *Shabbos* must be bread-based, like the first two meals.
- B. On the other hand, the third meal is ideally eaten on *Shabbos* afternoon, at which time *chametz* is forbidden! Eating matzah at our meals is also problematic - we may not eat matzah on the day before *Pesach*, lest that diminish our appetite for matzah at the *seder*. Eating bread then is certainly forbidden! What do we eat for the third meal?

The solution:

Arrange an early *Shacharis* (ours begins at 7:30 AM) and then eat the day meal. Finish the *chametz* part of the meal before 10:59 A.M. During the afternoon (after 1:16 PM), eat a third meal of fish or meat. Ideally that meal should be finished before 4:42 PM. At the absolute latest, the meal must be finished before 8:06 PM. It is important not to eat this meal so close to *Pesach* that it diminishes your appetite for the *seder*. Obviously, this solution does not satisfy the view that the 3rd meal must be bread-based. Those who wish to satisfy this view as well should split their early meal into two parts, *bentching* after the *challos* and then taking a twenty

¹⁵ *Pri Megadim, Meshbetzos Zahav, OC, 472*

¹⁶ *Arukh ha'Shulchan, OC, 308, 58*

minute break, leaving the table, and then returning before washing and eating again. But you will really have to hurry to eat the bread that goes with your second meal before 10:59 A.M.

Question 11: May we make any preparations on Shabbos for the Seder?

Do not prepare on *Shabbos* for events occurring after *Shabbos*. The *seder* table should be set on Friday. (Why not cover it with a plastic sheet?). The *seder* accoutrements should be in place (*marror* should have been cleaned, *charoses* prepared etc). You may nap with the intent that this will help you at the *seder*, because napping is a normal *Shabbos* activity. Be careful, though, not to state that you are napping so as to prepare for the night. After *Shabbos* is over, you may prepare for the *seder* in general or any of the *seder* foods in particular. Before beginning the preparations, you should *daven Maariv*, or say this abbreviated version of *havdalah*, in Hebrew or English: *baruch ha'mavdil bain kodesh le'kodesh* (blessed is the One who distinguishes between one type of sanctity and another). The full *havdalah* is said at the *seder*, as will be described in question 12.

Question 12: How do you light candles for Pesach night?

When *Yom Tov* begins on a *motzai Shabbos*, we wait to light candles until *Shabbos* is over. Even then, we light from an existing flame. Many light a 24-hour candle before *Shabbos*, which we then use as the fuel for the *Yom Tov* candles. We also light a second 24-hour candle on the first day of *Yom Tov*, and use that candle as the fuel to light candles on the second night of *Yom Tov*, after the first day has ended. Others use the pre-existing flame from the oven range (or pilot light).

Question 13: How do you make havdalah on Pesach night?

Havdalah is included in the *seder kiddush*, before the *she'hechyanu beracha*. The *Yom Tov* candles may be used for the *havdalah* candle. We do not use spices. Some people remove two *Yom Tov* candles from the candlesticks and place them side-by-side, to simulate a multi-wicked *havdalah* candle. If this is not your *minhag*, it is best not to engage in this because some are concerned about the potential halachic issues involved in the separation that follows such a fusion of flames. Instead, simply make a *beracha* on the candles in the candlesticks.

HALACHIC ISSUES FOR PESACH 2008/ 5768, PART 2

CLEANING

We clean our homes of all *chametz* products before *Pesach* because, on *Pesach*, even the ownership of *chametz* is forbidden. The prime contemporary reason for *chametz* eradication is, that, accustomed as we are to eating *chametz* year round, we might, in an act of momentary forgetfulness, consume a piece of *chametz*.¹⁷ Therefore, we only eradicate accessible, "consumable" *chametz*, *chametz* that might be inadvertently eaten. Ripping out car seats to find possible *chametz* crumbs is generally unnecessary.

¹⁷ *Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 4b*

Strictly speaking, all grain products, e.g., liquors, beers and pet foods ought to be disposed of before *Pesach*. Nevertheless, elimination of the sort, in a world in which many people have large quantities of preserved *chametz* products, would entail great difficulty. And so, for many years now, broad swaths of the community¹⁸ have relied on lenient sources that validate the sale of *chametz* to a non-Jew.¹⁹ The *chametz*, which is set aside in a segregated area, is then legally transferred to non-Jewish ownership. Given the potential issues with a sale of this sort, some discard rather than sell their “real” *chametz*.

ALCOHOL

Grain alcohol is a fermentation product, and is, therefore, absolute *chametz*, according to most contemporary authorities.²⁰ Edible items containing grain alcohol such as whiskey, liquor or liquid medications are certainly forbidden. Perfumes and other liquid inedibles in which the alcoholic component can be reconstituted are considered *chametz*, according to some²¹, and should, accordingly, be *kosher le’Pesach*. Totally inedible solid products containing grain alcohol (or any other *chametz*, for that matter), e.g., lotions, soap, shampoo, shoe polish, ink, isopropyl alcohol, pure talc powder, cleansers, shaving lotions, paints, floor waxes etc. are permissible for *Pesach* use. Nevertheless, here too, given *chumras Pesach*, even totally inedible items that have a clear *chametz* base, i.e., wheat & oat based soaps, are best avoided.

BEDIKA

Although the house has been thoroughly cleaned, we are still obligated to do the rabbinic *mitzva* of searching for *chametz* on the night that precedes *Pesach*. As discussed earlier, the search this year occurs on the preceding night, Thursday, April 17th. The *beracha*, *al bi’ur chametz* is recited prior to beginning the search. The *beracha* introduces both the search and the *bittul*, i.e., the nullification that is read immediately after the search. The nullification is a *halachic* disassociation from *chametz* overlooked during the search.²²

It is forbidden to talk at all between the *beracha* and the beginning of the *bedika*. It is best not to discuss matters extraneous to the *bedika* from the moment that the *beracha* is made until the *bedika* and the subsequent nullification are complete.²³ The search is carried out with a single wick candle or a flashlight.²⁴ 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* for the children who are assisting, use a flashlight.

A number of rationales are offered for the *minhag* that some have to hide 10²⁵ pieces of bread before the search begins:

¹⁸ *Bach, OC, 448, Vi'im*

¹⁹ *Tosefta, Pesachim, 2, 6*

²⁰ *Sedei Chemed, Chametz u'Matzah, 8, 28*

²¹ *Levushai Mordechai, 86*

²² *Rashi & Tosafos, Pesachim 4b, Rambam, Chametz u'Matzah, 2, 2*

²³ *Shulchan Arukh, OC, 432, 1*

²⁴ *She'arim Metzuyanaim 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 flashlights where it allows for a more effective *bedika*

²⁵ *Arizal* based on *Bavli, Pesachim 10a*

- a) to add a level of excitement to the search.²⁶
 b) to ensure that some bread is found so that the *bedika beracha* should thereby be validated.²⁷
 c) to ascertain that *chametz* will remain for the burning/*bittul* ceremony the following morning.²⁸
 Some find this tradition disconcerting²⁹ because bandying *chametz* around the home right before *Pesach* is a dangerous thing indeed. Try to limit the potential problem of an unfound piece of *chametz* by limiting the 10 pieces of *chametz* to less than a *ke'zayis*³⁰ (27 grams) each. As in other arenas of conflicting *halachic* opinion, follow your family's tradition. If you are unsure as to what that tradition is, you should place the bread.

The pieces are gathered during the course of the search. Upon concluding the search, the *bittul*/nullification is read. The text of the *bittul* is found in most Haggados. Understanding the text is imperative. People who find Aramaic incomprehensible should familiarize themselves with the meaning of the text or recite the nullification in a comprehensible language.³¹ A free translation of the nullification follows: "All leaven that may be in my possession which I have not seen or destroyed should be considered void and I relinquish my ownership of it. It should be considered as the dust of the ground."

There is considerable debate as to when to do *bedikas chametz*. Although the *bedika* is meant to take place at night, some would begin the checking process right after sunset (well before *halachic* night which begins with *tzais ha'kochavim*, the appearance of three stars in the night sky.³²) The more common tradition is to do the *bedika* after *tzais ha'kochavim*.³³ Although defining *tzais ha'kochavim* is also a matter of considerable debate, here, according to most, it is unnecessary to wait until Rabbainu Tam's later *tzais ha'kochavim*; begin to check at 8:16, the early rendition of *halachic* nightfall.³⁴

BEDIKAS CHAMETZ OUTSIDE THE HOME

Individuals who are leaving for *Pesach* and who will, therefore, not be home the night before *Pesach* perform the *bedika* in their homes without a *beracha* on the night before they leave.³⁵ (Individuals who will not be home for the entire *Pesach* have the option of "selling" large swaths of their home and cleaning and doing a *bedika* on the "unsold part." Apprise your *rav* of the details to ensure the appropriate handling of particulars.) Individuals who will be in a hotel room the night before *Pesach* do the *bedika* in their hotel room with a *beracha*, just as they would at home.³⁶ Those who are spending *Pesach* at friends' or relatives' homes and will be at those homes the night before *Pesach* should listen to the *beracha* of the owner of the house and

²⁶ *Chok Ya'akov*, OC, 432, 14

²⁷ *Rema*, OC, 432, 2

²⁸ *Mahari Weil*, 193

²⁹ *Taz*, OC, 432, 4

³⁰ *Sha'arei Teshuva*, 433, 3

³¹ *Mahari Weil*, 193, *Mishneh Berurah*, 434, 9

³² *Magen Avraham*, OC, 431, 4

³³ *Arukh ha'Shulchan*, OC, 431, 25, *Mishneh Berurah* 431, 1

³⁴ *Mo'adim u'Zemanim*, 3, 286

³⁵ *Shulchan Arukh*, OC, 436, 1

³⁶ *Siddur Pesach ke'Hilkhaso*, 12, 8

perform the *bedika* in the room in which they are staying.³⁷ (Although these individuals will later be reading the nullification, a verbal nullification is not reason enough to validate a personal *beracha*.)

KASHERING

It is best to have special *Pesach* utensils. Earthenware and synthetic material³⁸ utensils are non-*kasherable*. If need be, certain metal and glass utensils may be *kashered*. Silverware, metal pots in which items are cooked via a liquid medium and metal table cutlery can be *kashered* through the standard *hagalah* process, i.e, immersion in a *keli rishon*, a *Pesach* or *kashered chametzdik* pot that has been brought to a boil. Knives with serrated edges or with attached handles or silverware with grooves that cannot be well cleaned are more difficult to *kasher*. The *kashering* should occur at least 24 hours after the surface has been thoroughly cleaned. 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.³⁹ Drinking glasses, in cases of necessity, can be *kashered* through a *milui v'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. Stainless steel and granite sink and countertop surfaces can be *kashered* with boiling water. Enamel and Formica must be covered. Special dish racks, sink racks, washbasins and blechs should be used. Self-clean ovens should be thoroughly cleaned and *kashered* by running a self-clean cycle. Regular ovens should be cleaned thoroughly with an "easy off" type cleaner and set on the highest setting for an hour and a half. Continuous clean ovens, which cannot tolerate abrasive "easy off" type cleaners, are a bit trickier. Keeping the oven at 450 for a few hours should allow the continuous clean properties to deep clean. The cleaning action might need to be supplemented with application of non-abrasive cleaner. Follow that with a one hour broil cycle.

Some claim that regular/continuous clean ovens do not become hot enough to effect a thorough *kashering* and require these ovens to either a) be blowtorched (something that should only be done by people well acquainted with activity of the sort) or b) have special inserts.⁴⁰ These stricter opinions would also require that the regular/continuous clean oven racks be placed in a self-clean oven for a cycle, be changed, be blowtorched or be covered. In this area, as in most areas, follow your family *minhag*. Grates should be placed in a self-clean oven for a cycle 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. If the between-the-grates stovetop area is stainless steel, it can be *kashered* by having the entire area covered with aluminum foil during the burning out process. If the area is enamel, it should be covered. A glass stovetop is trickier. Following the outlined approaches, i.e., covering it with a blech or with aluminum foil can lead to small cracks in the glass. *Kashering* therefore should 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

³⁷ *Shibolai ha'Leket*, 4, 44

³⁸ *Iggeros Moshe*, OC, 2, 92. Although this is a debatable matter, for *Pesach* we are stringent.

³⁹ *Shulchan Arukh*, OC, 451, 26

⁴⁰ *She'arim Metzuyanin be'Halakha*, 116, 2

back and forth over the entire surface so that there is a uniform rise in temperature. B) Use a metal ring in the cook top area and place your pots on top of that so that the pot does not touch the glass top surface. This will affect cooking efficiency. C) The burner area can be koshered. It is only the outlying areas that are problematic, so avoid using the outside areas. Slide pots onto trivets rather than onto the outlying areas. Such care about sliding the pots onto outlying areas should also be exercised by those following course B. Those following course C will face difficulty in cooking with large pots that extend beyond the burner area. 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*.

Metal walled microwaves can be kashered, after a thorough cleaning, by boiling water from a Pyrex dish inside the microwave until a thick steam permeates the entire microwave.

Turntables should nevertheless be changed/covered (a sheet of Styrofoam works well here)

Plastic walled microwaves should, ideally, have their walls covered. 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 periods that precede their *kashering*.

KITNIYOS

Ashkenazim do not eat many legumes (*kitniyos*) - beans, corn, peas, rice, etc. and products containing them as ingredients throughout *Pesach*. Some include peanuts in the ban; some also include *kitniyos* derivatives such as peanut oil. Follow your tradition. If you are unsure as to what your tradition is, you may be lenient with peanuts, peanut oil and the like.⁴¹ The *kitniyos* tradition arose because *kitniyos* were frequently stored together with grain.⁴² Alternatively,⁴³ *kitniyos* were banned because flour and bread like items can be produced from legumes.

Potatoes (from which potato starch is made) while included in the initial ban according to some, were permitted because of famine.⁴⁴ Others claim that potatoes were not banned simply because they were unknown in Europe at the time the ban's promulgation.⁴⁵ Sephardic, Yemenite and Oriental Jewish customs vary from community to community. Please note that imported Israeli foods containing *kitniyos* may be marked Kosher for *Pesach*.

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. Nevertheless, even if they do contain *chametz*, non-chewable pills are swallowed; they are not eaten, they offer no pleasure to the palate, nor are they edible. Such pills are not food and such ingestion is not a form of eating. *All non-chewable, solid medications (all pills and all capsules) are permissible on Pesach, for any and all illnesses, for any and all people. They need no certification and channelling effort*

⁴¹ *Iggeros Moshe, OC, 3, 63*

⁴² *Bais Yosef, OC, 453*

⁴³ *Mordechai, Pesachim, 2, 688*

⁴⁴ *Nishmas Adam*

⁴⁵ *Tiferes Shelomo*

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. Including vitamins within the scope of this leniency is not clear, but I would include vitamins ingested because of a clear medical need, e.g., neonatal pills.

Liquid medications may contain *chametz*. If they do, indeed, contain *chametz*, substitutes should be found if there are no potentially dangerous complications. Liquid and chewable medications that contain *kitnyos* but no *chametz* may be consumed by someone ill (ill to the point that one would be recuperating in bed) or by a young child who is facing even slight discomfort. The prepared 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 need discussion with a competent, halachic authority.

EGG MATZAH AND WHITE GRAPE MATZAH

Matzah made with fruit juice or eggs, including Egg Matzah, Chocolate Covered Egg Matzah, and White Grape Matzah are not permitted according to European tradition on *Pesach*. Although there is room for leniency for the ill and for those who cannot digest regular matzah, you would be hard pressed to rely on this leniency when there is a plethora of other food substances available.⁴⁶ Matzah made with fruit juice or eggs certainly do not qualify for the *seder*.

SEDER MATZAH

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

- a) represent the three kinds of Jews: *Kohen*, *Levi* and *Yisroel*.
- b) represent our three *avos*, our forefathers.
- c) remind us that there are three times during the course of 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 *marror*, and at the end of the meal, for the *afikomen*.

At the beginning of the *seder*, the middle matzah is broken in two. The larger part⁴⁷, the *afikomen*, is hidden. The *afikomen* is eaten as a remembrance for the non-extant *korban Pesach*. The *korban Pesach* was eaten at the end of the meal. The *afikomen* 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 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 absolutely kosher. Nevertheless it is important to use *matzah shemura*, which is "guarded matzah" for the *seder*. This is because

⁴⁷ *Mishneh Berurah* 473, 58

there are opinions requiring the *seder* matzos to be produced *le'shmah*, for the sake of the *mitzva* that is to be done with them. *Matzah shemura* can be either machine or hand matzah. German Jews generally favour machine matzos; most other Jews favour the hand 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.⁴⁸

MARROR

Is a reminder of bitter Jewish suffering at the hands of the Egyptians. Many people use ground horseradish. It is best to grate the *marror* before the *Shabbos* or *Yom Tov* begins. If you did not have a chance to grate the *marror* before *Shabbos* or *Yom Tov* and are grating the *marror* on *Yom Tov*, employ a *shinui*, a change in normal routine. The *shinui* can be achieved by holding the grater upside down or grating onto a piece of paper rather than onto a dish.⁴⁹ *Marror* 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. The commercially prepared horseradish that has water or vinegar added to it is unacceptable.⁵⁰

Many people use romaine lettuce. They should be cleaned thoroughly. Here too, do not allow the lettuce to soak in liquid for more than 24 hours. Therefore, *marror* that was cleaned before *Shabbos* & *Yom Tov* should not be allowed to soak over *Shabbos*. Wrap the washed *marror* in damp paper towels instead. Although the lettuce is not bitter, it 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.⁵¹

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 cooking 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.⁵²

ROASTED EGG

⁴⁸ *Sha'arei Teshuvah* 460, 10

⁴⁹ *Rema, OC*, 504,1

⁵⁰ *Shulchan Arukh, OC*, 473, 5

⁵¹ *Arukh ha'Shulchan, OC*, 473, 16

⁵² *Shulchan Arukh, OC*, 476

This symbolizes the festival offering, the *chagigah*. The *chagigah* was brought on all holidays when the *bais ha'mikdash* stood. 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 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

This is a mixture of nuts, cinnamon, apples and wine. It is a reminder 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 *marror* is dipped in the *charoses* to somewhat temper the *marror's* bitterness. We then shake the *charoses* off the *marror* so that the *charoses* does not totally negate the *marror's* bitterness.⁵³ Because grating *charoses* involves the *halachic* issue of *tochen*, it is forbidden to grate on *Shabbos* (preparation & *tochen*). It is best to grate the fruits or nuts that will be added to the *charoses* mixture before *Shabbos/Yom Tov* and place them in the refrigerator. If you did not have a chance to grate the *charoses* before *Yom Tov* and are grating the *charoses* on *Yom Tov*, some suggest a *shinui*, a change in normal routine. Holding the grater upside down or grating onto a piece of paper rather than onto a dish can achieve the *shinui*.

KARPAS

A vegetable dipped into salt water. Because preparing the salt water involves the *halachic* issues, it is forbidden to prepare it on *Shabbos* (preparation & *me'abed*). Some recommend preparing the salt water before *Yom Tov*.⁵⁴ If your *minhag* is to abide by this stringency, and to prepare the salt water before *Yom Tov* but you forgot, then prepare it on *Yom Tov* and simply reverse the normal preparation process, i.e., if the salt is usually placed in the bowl first, reverse the process by placing the water first.⁵⁵ 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 *marror*. The doubt revolves around the fact that the *marror* is eaten during the meal, after we had already partaken of the matzah. Matzah exempts most items eaten during the course of that normal meal. Items that are not part of a normal meal, i.e., wine, certain desserts, would require their own *beracha*. The *marror* can be viewed as normal, akin to a salad vegetable or abnormal, a *mitzvah* item. And so the *ha'adama beracha* question arises. The *ha'adama beracha* that is made on the *karpas* solves the dilemma and exempts the *marror*, which follows. It is imperative, therefore, to have the *marror* in mind when the *ha'adama beracha* is made on the *karpas*.⁵⁶

FOUR CUPS

The first cup of wine is the *Kiddush*. The second cup is taken at the end of the first part 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

⁵³ *Shulchan Arukh*, OC, 475, 1

⁵⁴ *Chayai Adam*

⁵⁵ *Kitzur Shulchan Arukh*, 118, 4. *The Mishneh Berurah* seems to restrict this stringency to *Shabbos*.

⁵⁶ *Peri Megadim*, *Aishel Avraham*, 473, 4

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 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 ELIAHU

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 all unresolved questions, to await the coming of the prophet Eliyahu and the Messianic era that he will bring. All of 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 *marror*, 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.⁵⁷

MEASUREMENTS FOR THE PESACH SEDORIM

MINIMUM SIZE OF WINE CUPS

- 1 For the *arba kosos* and for *kiddush* (except on Friday night and for *Havdalah*), the cup must hold at least at least 86 millilitres, (the *gematria* of *kos*) or 2.9 fluid ounces. You must drink at least 1.5 oz., i.e, 43 millilitres, from each cup although it is better to drink most of the cup and best to drink the entire cup. Easily accessible 90 millilitre sherry glasses qualify and allow you to achieve that end by comfortably drinking the entire cup for each of the *arba kosos*. If you opt for larger cups as a way of meeting the larger *arba kosos shiurim* recommended by some, please remember that the recommendation to drink most/all of the cup still stands.
2. When the *seder* is on Friday evening, the *kiddush* cup, for the first cup, should measure at least 4.42 fluid ounces in size. This also applies to the *kiddush* cup used every Friday evening, throughout the year. This is because, surprisingly, *kiddush* Friday night is a more important *mitzva* than the four cups on *Pesach*.

WINE

1. Undiluted wine is best for the *arba kosos*. The great variety of delicious, low alcohol wines that are now available allows you to drink the *arba kosos* without becoming intoxicated in the process. (There are those who are *halachically* stringent and use unsweetened red wines that are not *mevushal* for the four cups. Those choosing to follow this stringency should be aware that the rationale for this stringency is applicable to year round *kiddush* as well).

⁵⁷ *Shulchan Arukh*, OC, 472, 4

2. If need be, you may mix the wine with grape juice.
3. If need be, Ashkenazim may dilute wine with water but make sure to have a bit 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 need be, you may use grape juice instead of wine. Wine is preferred, though, because intoxicating wine more aptly captures the “freedom” idea of *Pesach*.⁵⁸
(NOTE. - *The beracha upon all these mixtures is ha'gofen.*)

MINIMUM AMOUNT OF MATZAH SHEMURAH

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

- 1) After the *beracha al achilas matzah*. This is the primary eating of matzah; e.g., this is when we perform the Torah commandment. You should attempt to eat 2/3 of a machine matzah or 1/2 of a hand matzah. Someone ill can rely on the more lenient opinion, which says that 1/3 of a machine matzah or 1/4 of a hand matzah suffices. The matzah should ideally be eaten within a two minute or, if need be, a four minute time span.
- 2) For *korech*, when we eat matzah and *marror* together in a sandwich, 1/3 of a machine matzah or 1/4 of a hand matzah suffices.
- 3) The *afikomen* is also considered very important and it is therefore best to eat 2/3 of a machine matzah or 1/2 of a hand matzah.

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

- 1 & 3) After reciting the beracha, *al achilas matzah* and *afikomen* - an amount of meal that can be compacted into a vessel measuring 1.5 fluid ounces.
- 2) For *korech* - an amount of meal that can be compacted into a vessel holding .75 fluid ounces.

MINIMUM AMOUNT OF MARROR

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

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

1. After reciting the *beracha, al achilas marror* - an amount that can be compacted into a vessel measuring 1.1 fluid ounces.
2. For *Korech* - an amount that can be compacted into a vessel measuring .7 fluid ounces.

If using Romaine Lettuce:

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

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. *Seder* participants should discuss all aspects of the Exodus in detail. One should not limit oneself to the text of the Haggadah. Discussion allows a person to re-examine his or her connection with *yiddishkeit* and Hashem. We focus especially on the young children. This might be because the evil Egyptian decrees (such as the killing of newborn boys) were suffered

⁵⁸ *Peri Megadim, Meshbetzos Zahav, OC, 472*

inordinately by innocent children. Children should participate in the *seder* to the extent of their ability. It is important that they nap 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 *marror* and *matzah*, and ask questions about Jewish life.

CHAMETZ AFTER PESACH

Chametz that was in a Jew's possession during any part of *Pesach* may not be eaten nor may you derive any benefit from this *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*. Many stores have signs saying that they sold their *chametz* and yet they continue doing *chametz* business on *Pesach*. Even if we accept the validity of the sale we may not buy *chametz* there after *Pesach* because of the *Pesach chametz* deliveries.

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A kashere, zissen Pesach

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