



פרשת תזריע
פרשת החודש
ניסן תשע"ו
שנת הקהל

CLEAN WITH CONFIDENCE

This past Monday a group of 40 ladies braved the erev-Pesach rush to join a practical halocha shiur on cleaning for Pesach.

Rabbi Johnson addressed the balance of cleaning thoroughly as required by halocha, while remaining calm and not becoming stressed and overwhelmed.

Practical suggestions and guidelines left the participants even more empowered as Yomtov approaches.

A recording of the shiur is available through the Kollel website www.kollelmenachem.com.au/pesach-shaalos

You may also submit your Pesach Shaalos online from this website for a prompt response.

MEN'S SHIURIM

Rabbi Stern gave a fascinating shiur exploring contemporary Teshuvos on issues of Chometz and Bedikas Chometz.

The series continues this Tuesday night, 8:30pm in Kollel with a shiur by Rabbi Johnson on the topic Minhogim on the Menu - understanding the reasons behind the food which we customarily do not eat on Pesach.

SHU" T SHIUR

Join us this Sunday morning 9:30am in Kollel to study a Teshuvah on the topic of using spelt and oats Matzah for those who are gluten-intolerant.

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא
חידוש Chiddush



In this Edition

When does your calendar begin? **P.1**

Questions on Cleaning for Pesach **P.2**

When does your calendar begin?

There is much confusion as to when the year begins. The first of Tishrei is called Rosh Hashanah, the head (or beginning of the year), but when we count the months of the year we begin from Nissan. But this was not always the case.

There is an enigmatic Midrash; *When Hashem chose His world, He established for them Rosh Chodesh. When He chose Yaakov and his descendants, He established for them the month of redemption.*

At the outset of Creation, Tishrei was the undisputed start of the year and was established as the first of the months. This remains true for the world at large and so we count the reign of non-Jewish kings from the month of Tishrei.

But with the first Mitzvah given the Jewish people, when He chose the descendants of Yaakov to be His people, Hashem distinguished us from the Nations. *Hachodesh Hazeh Lachem Rosh Chodashim - this month (no longer Tishrei, but rather Nissan) will be for you (the Jewish people) the first of months.*

Whether we count our months from Tishrei or Nissan is not just arbitrary. There is deep significance. Our Rosh Chodesh is not the Rosh Chodesh of Creation, but the Rosh Chodesh of Geulah (redemption). In this distinction lies the true reality of how we as Jews view ourselves, the world and how we are to live within it.

The Gemora brings a debate between the Tanaim (Mishnaic sages) concerning when the world was created. Rabbi Eliezer asserts that the world was created in Tishrei. According to Rabbi Yehoshua, the world was created in Nissan.

Based on a Tosfos, the mystics explain that their opinions are not contradictory. Creation and time exist on various levels. Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua differed in their approach as to which plane of creation should be emphasized.

The actual, physical creation of the world took place in Tishrei. But the creation as it arose in Hashem's thought was in Nissan.

The world was created with an express purpose, to actualise Hashem's desire to be revealed and manifest within the finite world and for us to discover

Him. This purpose, Hashem's thought, became hidden within the actual creation. Hashem's presence and the G-dly vitality which pervades Creation is hidden and obscured by the veil of nature.

Tishrei reflects the worldly reality of our world, the façade of the natural order. This is how the world was created and how it was to remain until the Jewish people were chosen and entrusted with their first Mitzvah.

We count from Nissan. As Jews, we are not bound or limited by Creation. Through Torah and Mitzvos and by way of our Neshomo, a part of Hashem Himself, we are able to transcend the limitations and worldliness of the world.

The month of Nissan is called the month of Geulah, not just because of the liberation from Egypt which took place in Nissan, but because the month itself expresses and embodies the theme of redemption.

What is redemption? The Geulah is a state where the true reality of the world as a manifestation of Hashem will finally be revealed. The limitations and veil of nature will be removed and no longer conceal Hashem's presence.

The Rebbe has taught us that the key to the Geulah is to live the Geulah. Our personal Geulah is the catalyst for the collective Geulah.

In our lives we face many levels of concealment and sources for struggle in actualising our true being - the Neshomo within us which craves a relationship with Hashem and to fulfil His Mitzvos.

Our animalistic soul, the drive of our selfish desires and living for worldly indulgence is one level of obstruction. The *hanochos haolom*, the worldly perspectives and ways of thinking; how we view society, wealth, the nature of the world and what is truly important is another veil of concealment.

When we express our Neshomo and strive to see the world around us and everything that happens as Hashem's presence, we achieve *Hachodesh Hazeh Lachem Rosh Chodashim*, the experience of Geulah.

May we merit the fulfilment of our sages' teaching that in Nissan we were redeemed and in Nissan we will be redeemed in the future.

Questions on Cleaning for Pesach

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

Pesach is the season for questions. In preparation for Pesach and the myriad of Shaalos that arise, Kollel Menachem is offering an email Shaalah service.

We invite you to submit your halachic question on any aspect of Pesach at www.kollelmenachem.com.au/pesach-shaalos.

Below are some of the questions which have been submitted on cleaning for Pesach.

Perspective

Cleaning the house for Pesach is a serious task, to avoid the Torah prohibition of possessing Chometz on Pesach. But it should not be a source of dread or feeling stressed and overwhelmed.

Preparing for Pesach is a Mitzvah and must be done with joy. There is even a halocha that one should not complain about Pesach being a 'burden'.

Therefore in guiding our preparations It is important to understand the difference between what is halachically required, what is hiddur (a stringency) or custom and what is unnecessary. This is to prioritise and now where to focus our cleaning energy.

Do I need to clean rooms in which I never bring food?

Any room where Chometz may have possibly been brought require cleaning for Pesach. If young children are in the house, the entire house needs cleaning since they can (and do) carry Chometz throughout the house.

For those who do not have young children at home and have rooms where they are certain no Chometz is brought, these rooms do not need to be cleaned for Pesach.

Cars, prams, offices, lockers etc. all need to be cleaned.

What about high up shelves?

Shulchan Aruch rules that high up ledges (above hand's reach) do not require searching / cleaning for Pesach.

This would include on top of bookcases, high up wardrobe shelves and the like. There might be dust, but dust is not Chometz.

How am I required to clean my couch for Pesach?

Couches require thorough cleaning for

Pesach. They can be the seat of a lot of Chometz crumbs (and many other long-lost objects).

The exposed parts of the couch should be thoroughly vacuumed and wiped down. If removable, the cushions should be removed and underneath them should be vacuumed. If not removable, the seams between the seats should be thoroughly vacuumed using the vacuum nozzle and wiped down.

Down the sides and back of the couch should be vacuumed using the nozzle as far as one can reach. For anything beyond reach and inside the cavity of the couch, we may rely on the *Bittul Chometz*. One is not required to unstitch or dismantle the couch.

If one wants to be more *mehudar*, the seams and down the sides of the couch should be wiped with a strong cleaning product to render any remaining crumbs completely inedible.

Do I need to clean in the cracks between my floorboards?

The Shulchan Aruch rules that one is not required to pull up their floorboards even if one can see actual pieces of Chometz. This is because to do so would be a *Tircha*. Instead we rely on *Bittul* for the crumbs which are out of reach.

Chometz pieces or crumbs that can be reached should be removed. For very small crumbs one should mop the floors with a strong cleaning product ensuring that the liquid goes into the cracks to render them completely inedible. The same would apply for under skirtings.

Do I need to clean behind and under my fridge and freezer?

Based on the above halocha, one is not required to move heavy furniture which is not usually moved, in order to clean behind or underneath them. To do so would also be a *Tircha* and one can therefore rely on *Bittul* for anything that they cannot reach.

One should clean as far as they can reach (use a vacuum with a nozzle).

The same applies for other heavy furniture which is not usually moved including; bookcases and sideboards. Light moveable furniture (beds, chairs, tables, couches) should be moved for cleaning.

I have a hole in my bag lining and am worried that there is Chometz stuck inside. Can I use the bag?

Based on the above, one would not be required

to unstitch the lining to clean your bag since to do so would be a *Tircha*. Instead we rely on *Bittul*. The rest of the bag should be cleaned since sometimes Chometz is placed into it.

Do rooms or cupboards included in my sale of Chometz need to be cleaned?

Whilst there is an opinion that cleaning and bedikas Chometz is still required (since the sale only takes effect in the morning of erev Pesach), accepted halocha is that all houses, rooms and cupboards being sold do not require bedikas Chometz.

A way to minimise the need for cleaning is to put away items which will not be used over Pesach.

Do I need to clean my seforim?

According to the Alter Rebbe, crumbs are insignificant and do not require removal. Therefore *meikkar hadin* (strict halocha) one does not need to clean out their seforim. Care must still be taken not to use the seforim near food (since a tiny crumb may fall into the food and even the tiniest crumb cannot be consumed).

Nonetheless many have the hiddur to clean through seforim by shaking out the pages. Alternatively one could take out the seforim they wish to use over Pesach and cover over the rest of the shelves and include them in the sale of Chometz.

Practical advice for those seforim which are regularly used at the table with food (bentchers, siddurim, chumash, chita"s), is to but copies to be kept for Pesach use.

Clothing and linen

Clothing and linen which have already been washed do not need to be cleaned and checked for Chometz if they were put away in the closet.

Pockets of jackets, coats and pants need to be checked and shaken out. It is customary to do this when burning the Chometz.

If a person never places food items into their pockets, the pockets do not need to be cleaned.

It is customary to have separate tablecloths and kitchen towels for Shabbos. Nonetheless the towels used year round do not need to be sold. They can be washed and put away.